

# THE COOL GUYS

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*MEP Middle East* lists five of the best HVAC companies operating in the GCC and finds out what they expect from 2012 and how the first quarter of the year treated them

## ALDES MIDDLE EAST

Sharjah based subsidiary of French firm plans to open a new office in Qatar in 2012

Aldes Middle East was established in 2002 as a regional base in the UAE but was present locally since 1982.

This 100% owned subsidiary from Aldes Group has 135 employees and manufacturing facilities for HVAC and fire protection products, covering the UAE & GCC (Oman, Bahrain, KSA and Qatar).

Aldes Middle East has built a first factory in 2002 and, despite the financial crisis affecting the Middle East regional construction market, Aldes Middle East has continued the expansion of its business by building and shifting to a new factory in 2010, five times bigger (8000m<sup>2</sup> factory, state-of-the-art facilities and 10 lines of production).

The company policy is to directly go on the market and to work directly with final customers. Aldes Middle East is thus trying to work at all level of sales, from regulatory bodies to consultants and to MEP contractors.

Aldes Middle East is also working closely to a distributor in Bahrain and a distributor in Oman since few years and since 2011 with a distributor in KSA.

On the UAE market, Aldes Middle East regional headquarter is located in Sharjah while another office is based in Abu Dhabi. The plan is to open a new office in Qatar in 2012; and obviously, with a long term approach, to open new branches in other GCC countries.

### WHAT WAS 2011 LIKE FOR YOU AS A HVAC COMPANY?

2011 was a year of contrast, with a difficult first semester and a good second semester. It was also a year of contrast geographically wise. Dubai, Sharjah and northern emirates performed exceptionally well whereas Abu Dhabi was clearly on the negative side.

At the same time Qatar did register a significant growth in our share of turnover when Bahrain dropped dramatically due to the political situation. As usual Oman registered a safe and steady growth.

Overall we registered a growth of 8.1% in 2011 compared to 2010.

### HOW DOES THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2012 COMPARE TO THE PREVIOUS YEAR?

Q1 2012 is starting on a very positive sign



Gaetan Pierrefeu,  
managing director of  
Aldes Middle East.

with a double digit growth keeping the same pace as the second semester of 2011.

We do see ongoing significant successes in Qatar as well as a total change of trend of Abu Dhabi.

Aldes, due to its history, is not well established in Saudi Arabia but we are on the way to settle there and register significant sales.

### WHAT SPARKED THE GROWTH IN FIGURES?

In an ever-changing environment, we have to adapt ourselves and adapt our structures and organizations to answer the market needs.

The first reason behind the good results of 2011 and the good start of 2012 is the dynamism and professionalism of our sales forces. As all suppliers in the MEP field we have suffered during the crisis time in 2009 and 2010.

But we have also decided to invest heavily in our human resources first in term of geographical coverage, then in term of qualification and competencies and also in term of training whenever it was required.

We also have been increasing the level of flexibility of our staff to answer sudden changes of trends of different markets whether geographically or in our product portfolio.

The second reason is our long term marketing which is now bringing results in term of specifications as well as the introduction of system and new products on the markets. The Istone Fire Smoke and Heat Dampers or BAPSI Twin air outlet with integrated con-

stant airflow regulation are two such products we hope will be successful.

And last but not least, we have a state of the art production facility with a high level of flexibility and productivity which enable to produce locally, with European level quality.

### WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR THE COMING YEAR AND BEYOND?

Growth shall be driven by our activities in fire protection and in air distribution and for sure Qatar and Saudi Arabia will lead the way in terms of growth.

The situation in the UAE will not be too bad, but it is mostly dependent on the influx of cash from the currently running projects.

### WHAT IS YOUR OUTLOOK FOR THE INDUSTRY?

Our industry has a good future. Astonishingly, until recently the HVAC downstream segment was not considered a key element in installations. People were making statements such as 'a grille is a grille or ducts are ducts'.

But when we are increasingly going for a safer and cleaner environment, every product in the installation is important and crucial to make sure that the sizing is done properly to reach the right level of efficiency.

The green building trend will for sure revive the HVAC industry with higher level solutions and added value systems which should generate significant revenue growth.