

**W**HEN IT FIRST BEGAN, FIMEX S.A. de C.V. focused its operations on one specific task: casting and machining bronze bushes. Over the years, the company has expanded its product line, and today its specialized work in bronze and steel can be found all over the world. “We constantly focus on creating products that are increasingly complex and meet more high quality standards,” says Guillermo Oyarzabal, president of FIMEX.

The company, which provides integrated solutions in casting and machining, is located in Guadalajara, the second-largest metropolitan area in Mexico. The city is one of the country’s main industrial and economic centers. Guadalajara is situated in the central region of Mexico, approximately 1,000 miles south of the United States.

**IN THE FAMILY**

FIMEX started out as a family business in 1965. According to Oyarzabal, it began as a small company with only five employees. FIMEX initially focused its operations on casting and machining bronze bushes for Caterpillar, the world’s largest manufacturer of construction and mining equipment, diesel and natural gas engines, and industrial gas turbines.

While working on bronze bushes, employees at FIMEX began to formulate new alloys. The company soon saw an opportunity to specialize in parts with highly technical specifications. During the following years, it expanded its product line. “In addition to the bronze pieces, we started to work with iron and steel,” notes Oyarzabal. The company started casting iron for several components, including valves and pumps. In 1973 it began casting steel for the heavy transportation industry.

Over the years, the company remained in the family, but grew from five employees to approximately 300 personnel. The company’s operations take place in its Guadalajara location, which covers 12,000 square meters of property. The plant itself consists of slightly more than 8,000 square meters.

FIMEX currently has two divisions: bronze and steel. “In bronze we focus on small pieces and high volume,” says Oyarzabal. “Our steel division, however, is much more diverse.” The company works with refractory steel for the cement industry. It also creates components needed by clients in the industrial valve sector. Some of its steel products are made specifically for the oil industry, while others are sent to various construction companies. In the transportation market, FIMEX creates pieces that are used in the suspension system of passenger buses, as well as components for passenger train cars.

Through its wide array of products, FIMEX reaches many different clients in the cement, machinery and heavy equipment, specialized transportation, mining, and petrochemical industries. According to Oyarzabal, spreading out its operations has enabled the company to reduce risks. If one sector experiences an economic downturn, others may prosper.

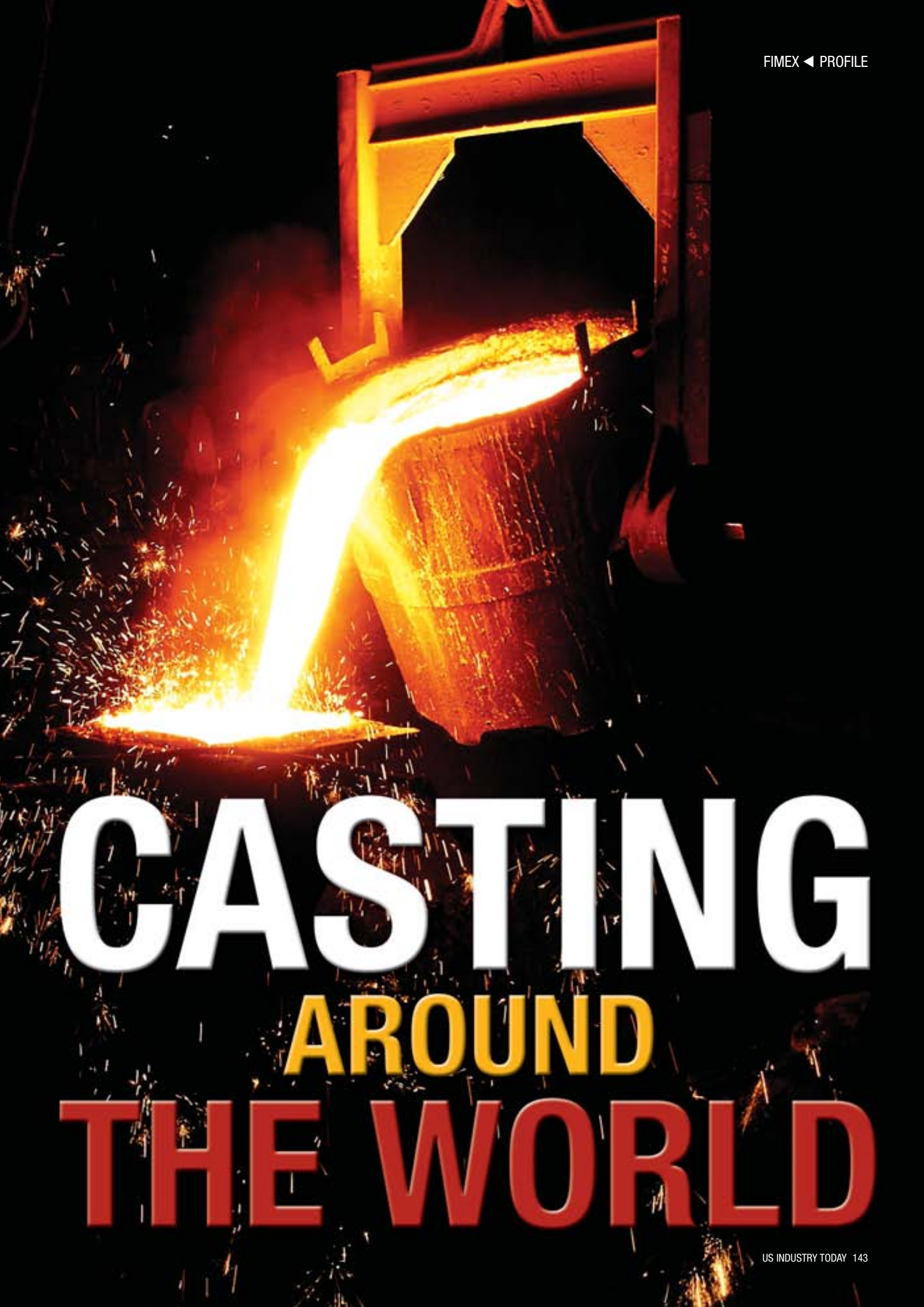
This recently occurred in an incident relating to the current housing market situation in the United States. Oyarzabal notes that one of FIMEX’s clients is a provider to American construction companies. With the building sector at a near halt in the United States, the client has not needed many new parts from FIMEX. Due to the company’s diverse portfolio, however, FIMEX has not suffered greatly from the effects of this downturn. The wide range of industries helps the company maintain balanced and steady growth.

**EXPORT EMPHASIS**

During its early years, many of the pieces created by FIMEX were distributed in the Mexican market. In the 1980s, however, company officials began investigating international opportunities. In 1986 the company started exporting its products to other countries.

**WITH ITS KNACK FOR CREATING HIGHLY TECHNICAL PRODUCTS THAT MEET ITS CLIENTS’ DETAILED NEEDS, FIMEX, A FAMILY-OWNED COMPANY IN GUADALAJARA, MEXICO, HAS ESTABLISHED ITSELF IN TOP INTERNATIONAL MARKETS. RACHEL HARTMAN TAKES A LOOK AT HOW THE COMPANY’S CASTING AND MACHINING SOLUTIONS REACH LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.**





# CASTING AROUND THE WORLD



Pictured: FIMEX's specialized work in bronze and steel can be found all over the world.

Today, this Mexican company sends the bulk of its products across the border. "In our bronze division, we are basically focused on exporting," Oyarzabal explains. "Ninety-eight percent of our bronze pieces are exported." The steel division also caters to the international market. "In steel, we export around 60 percent of our products. The remaining 40 percent stays in Mexico."

"Our main clients are in the United States and Canada," says Oyarzabal. "Some of our products go to Central and South America, and we occasionally export to Europe also." Many of the



# Atlas Pacific Corporation

Atlas Pacific produces brass and bronze ingot and zinc die cast ingot to almost any specification, and to customer specifications.

We supply phosphorous copper shot and waffle. Additionally, we purchase all types of scrap. We strive for best quality. We have a state of the art laboratory staffed by a chemist. Atlas Pacific is ISO 9001:2000 certified.

For more information please visit our website at [www.atlaspacific.net](http://www.atlaspacific.net) or contact Ramiro Carrillo at 909-421-1200.





company's customers, including Caterpillar and KOMATSU, have a strong global presence. "Through our clients, our products reach places all over the world."

Due to increasing opportunities for exporting, the company has established itself with global leaders. "The technology we use and our high quality systems have allowed us to participate in these competitive markets," Oyarzabal explains. The company meets various quality standards, including the ISO: 9001. It also takes its commitment to environmental conservation seriously, and meets the requirements established by PROFEPA, which refers to the Mexican Attorney General for Environmental Protection.

In Mexico, the company has taken on a leading role in the area of cement. "We are the leader when it comes to refractory steel

pieces for the cement industry," explains Oyarzabal. At the same time, he credits the company's success to international opportunities. "If it weren't for the exporting business, we wouldn't be here today," he says.

#### HIGHLY TECHNICAL

Working for clients with highly renowned brand names and very specific needs requires state-of-the-art technology. Employees at FIMEX continually work to develop new processes and better equipment. Workers use the latest technology to design, develop and produce molds and high precision tools. They use advanced software such as CAD/CAM for the production processes.

This emphasis on technology has helped FIMEX establish itself in niche markets. Oyarzabal explains that clients with highly specific needs are often hesitant to start a relationship with a new provider. "They need to make sure that the provider can meet their various requirements regarding quality before giving the green light to start working on prototypes," he says. "We meet the requirements they need, and our clients trust us to fulfill their standards of quality."

FIMEX not only meets requirements; it strives to give customers more than the mere minimum. "In the vast majority of cases, the products we make are designed by our clients," says Oyarzabal. FIMEX workers take the design and create a product that fulfills all of the requirements a client establishes. "We give our clients an 'extra' when it comes to quality," he adds. These characteristics have helped the company build strong relationships with its customers.

In the coming years, the company plans to continue its innovative strategies, adding high-quality equipment and systems. "We want to produce at a faster rate and make products that meet higher standards and requirements," says Oyarzabal. "This will enable us to keep participating in niche markets."

Currently, FIMEX produces approximately 550 tons of bronze pieces per year. In its steel division, it has an annual production of around 1,500 tons. Oyarzabal notes that the company is currently looking for ways to increase these production levels.

The future for FIMEX is one that will involve advanced technology and higher efficiency rates. Company officials feel these tools will help FIMEX continue to participate and thrive in the international scene. From small bronze pieces to heavy steel parts, the company will keep providing casting and machining solutions for its wide variety of companies. In doing so, the family-run business will set the pace for Guadalajara's industrial market for years to come.



**Proud to be a supplier of foundry  
consumable products and technical  
service to FIMEX S.A. de C.V**

*Partners in Performance*