

Made in China. By The World



China is known to manufacture goods for the entire world. It is the one point from which all technology, toys and even processed food reach the rest of the world. But this time, the tables turned. This time, the world came together to build something in China.

Novelis is the world's largest aluminum roller and recycler. But being the largest does not and would not limit their ambition to grow larger. An ambition to build their first aluminum sheet manufacturing plant in China. It was a goal easier set than achieved. It was a challenge that created new winter-woven challenges. This plant was here to test their patience, commitment, passion and courage to no end.

It all began a few years ago. China was coming up as the fastest growing market for aluminum products and an emerging market for automobile production. Many of Novelis' customers like Jaguar, Land Rover, Audi, Mercedes-Benz, BMW and Ford were making investments there. This was the inception of the idea of a China-based plant.

Fabrication of a light-weight automotive product supplied locally would be the first of its kind in China, putting Novelis years ahead of its closest competition. But it needed a standard of quality that Novelis could swear by.

The team knew it required expertise from around the world to put this plan into action. But one thing the group never falls short of, is a reach beyond measure. A team of experts were called from across the globe. People who had never even heard of each other were suddenly partners who relied on each other's intuitions and instincts to take major decisions, giving shape to this lucid dream. It was literally an unfamiliar turf for these people, who did not know the language or have a palate for the local food. They had no family or friends in the country. But they did have one thing in common, the determination to make this plant come alive. And it was this dream alone that turned strangers into friends, a strange country into home and unfamiliar food into comfort.

They began to trust each other, just as much as they trusted this project. A trust so strong that it led to decisions that took every ounce of their strength. Instead of acquiring an existing company, they decided to build this plant, right from scratch. They chose to be wholly owned rather than being a joint venture. They wanted to own their technology and protect it.

And 8 months and 35 cities later, they gave their dream a home, Changzhou. They introduced the global experts to the local experts, to understand the way the local market worked and to become conducive to those. "Thanks to a knowledgeable and trustworthy local team coupled with the expertise of our global team, we were able to move quickly."

says James Liu. 7 months after its inception, Novelis officially broke ground on 15th November, 2012.

The plant today is set to be one of its kind. It provides employment to the locals and has the most sophisticated technology in China. Despite pressures of outperforming themselves and dealing with several languages, cultures and time zones, they call this journey, an experience of a lifetime. While it negated all benchmarks set by the world, it creates its own every day.