

INORGANIC VENTURES

**BLENDING KNOWLEDGE
WITH PASSION**



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BLENDING KNOWLEDGE WITH PASSION

For the better part of three decades Inorganic Ventures has been a leading manufacturer of certified reference materials and is now targeting the lucrative mining sector



Regardless of the size of the operation or where on the planet it is taking place, one of the most fundamentally important, but often overlooked, phases of the mining process is the testing of materials that are extracted from the earth. It may sound like one of the least important undertakings companies have to face, what with the massive costs and labour intensive nature of processes such as exploration and production, yet it is only after accurate tests have come back with positive results that these phases of the project can commence.

Headquartered in Christiansburg, Virginia, Inorganic Ventures has, since 1985, been manufacturing high quality certified reference materials. It is capable of making almost any reference material for inductively coupled plasma (ICP), inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry (ICP-MS), ion chromatography (IC), atomic absorption, wet chemistry and quality control applications. The company's distribution network, operated from its foreign distribution centre in Madrid, covers North America, Europe, Asia, South America and Africa.

The first inorganic certified reference materials manufacturer to be accredited to ISO Guide 34 and to offer a 100 percent satisfaction guarantee, it is quality and customer service that defines Inorganic Ventures. "Our speed of delivery and turnaround times," explains executive vice president, Michael Scott, "are second to none and really help differentiate ourselves from others in the industry."

With stock items leaving the same day as ordered and custom blends taking no more



QC chemist Heather Fisher-Clarke prepares a sample for the ICP

than five days to manufacture, the company is able to guarantee these turnaround times anywhere in the world. “As a business,” states vice president of operations, Christopher Gaines, “we focus on doing one thing and we believe very firmly on doing it the best.”

Rather than being a catalogue house, what Inorganic Ventures does is manufacture one product and that is inorganic certified reference materials for certain instrumentations. In complementing this it places a great deal of time and resources into delivering technical support and educating clients on how to do a better job of analysing their test results through various books and articles.

“A lot of companies in this field handle both organic and inorganic materials,” Scott continues, “but I personally don’t know of anyone else on the market that concentrates solely on inorganic reference materials the way we do. We live, eat and breathe this business and it is that degree of focus that makes us truly unique.”

It is this dedication that today sees Inorganic Ventures turning increasingly towards international expansion. “While there is certainly still room for growth in the US market,” Scott states, “it is on the international stage where we are identifying enormous potential through the activities



Group discussion on a custom CRM quotation

of our distributors who are present in more than 50 countries.”

Where the company identifies much of the growth coming from in the future is from the mining sector, particularly in regions such as South America, South Africa and parts of Europe. “Our largest customer account to date,” Scott says, “is with a large multinational mining company, and it is these kinds of

clients that we are looking to target going forward.”

In order to achieve its growth targets the company has taken, and continues to take, proactive steps to better position itself to capitalise on the vast number of opportunities it has identified throughout the world. “In the last few months,” Scott says, “we have successfully finished doubling the capacity of our US facility. Meanwhile, we are in the process of moving our European distribution centre from Madrid to Santander on the border of France.”

While such developments are of critical

importance to the business achieving its long term goals, Scott is just as keen to emphasise that this is a company that understands that it has to go if it wants to grow. “The way we will grow the business in the short-to-medium term is by travelling, by introducing

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Countries in which the company has distributors present

Inorganic Ventures to people all over the world and by building long-lasting relationships with customers. Any good business can display product quality and good delivery capabilities, but it is strong, mutually beneficial relationships that every client cherishes and this is what we build.”

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Technical support chemist Thomas Kozikowski reviews ICP data



Manufacturing chemist Briana M. Hudson mixes a custom CRM



Michael Scott (far) and Christopher Gaines review quarterly figures

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Travelling to those regions and territories where the company has seen the potential to grow will be fundamental to Inorganic Ventures’ ability to identify distributors that can assist in the company gaining a foothold within the marketplace. “We are a member of the Economic Development Process here in the US,” Scott reveals, “and it is through some of the international visits organised through this that we have been able to reach out to

the right kind of people. Then what we find is that once these people have our product in their hands they recognise just what it is that we have and what we can offer.”

By emphasising things like the building of relationships and by providing high quality technical support it is clear that the way Inorganic Ventures does business is about more than just the end result. It is equally about doing the little things that seem to have

gotten lost or been forgotten about over the past 20 to 30 years.

Up until now there has been little evidence to suggest that there has been a concerted effort from companies within this highly technical, niche industry to broaden their scope outside of what is admittedly a healthy home market. “There are locations out there,” Scott says, “in South America for example, which people assume are a decade behind in terms of technology and innovation. In truth, that is perhaps how we felt until we began travelling and exploring these places, whereas now we know first-hand that these parts of the world are a lot further along than some give them credit for.”

With the knowledge that there are opportunities outside of its home market

waiting to be grasped, Inorganic Ventures is now in the process of aggressively targeting potential distributors and clients, both near and far. The company is equally aware that with its soon to be relocated European facility it is perhaps better placed than any other business of its type. “Having a facility outside of the US doesn’t sound like that big of a deal,” Scott concludes, “but what it does is allow us to be just as competitive as any local or multinational manufacturer and to bring our knowledge, expertise and dedication to customer service to a worldwide audience.” **BE**

For more information about Inorganic Ventures visit: www.inorganicventures.com



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