

Dematic president envisions big sales

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By Julia Bauer

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GRAND RAPIDS -- John Baysore, new president and chief executive officer of the U.S. branch of Dematic barely had his bags unpacked before he headed to his first trade show.

Baysore, 47, hit the road just one day after starting Jan. 8 for Dematic at the biennial ProMat 2007 show in C

"I met 40 of our customers, all of our top competitors and a number of our suppliers," he said.

Baysore will meet with the company's 1,200 employees in early February. But this week, he is just eager to g at Dematic headquarters, 500 Plymouth Ave. NE.

He worked the past 17 years in the Detroit area, most recently heading ThyssenKrupp Fabco. That business i sold, so Baysore knew he needed to start the search for another executive post.

"When they were ready to sell, I looked at four opportunities. This was my first choice," he said.

Baysore succeeds Prashant Ranade, who led Dematic for three years until he resigned in November. Ranade board member of the corporation and teaches at Grand Valley State University.

An Ohio native, Baysore grew up north of Cincinnati and graduated with a bachelor's degree in welding engi from Ohio State University.

He was attracted by Dematic's technology, size and locale.

"I think it's the right size, with \$500,000,000 in sales. I have a vision of growing that to \$1 billion," he said.

The company's products are high-tech and top quality, two factors that figure into a profitable future. Industrywide, the conveyor business trails economic recoveries, because its systems are in greatest demand as companies expand. In a sluggish economy, fewer businesses upgrade or install material-moving systems.

"Our business bottomed out in early 2005," said spokesman John Raab. "We've been going at a 3 to

5 percent growth rate since then."

The 60-year-old conveyor business, started in Grand Rapids as Rapistan, was spun off just a year ago from German parent corporation Siemens AG. Managers say they are pleased to be more independent, with fewer demands for complex reports to the \$9 billion business.

Now, Dematic is the U.S. arm of the Dematic GmbH & Co. KG of Offenbach, Germany.

The Baysore family is growing on the home front, as well. With children age 9, 8, 7, 5 and 2, the Baysores are expecting their sixth child in May.

After work, Dematic's new president said his No. 1 role is as spectator-parent for a broad range of his children's sports and music activities. A former barefoot water skier, Baysore said he is heavily into winter sports and is looking for some fellow hockey players to join him in a few pick-up games.

"I played several times a week in Detroit," Baysore said.

Two of his children also play hockey, and all the youngsters are homeschooled.

"We're a little conservative and a little old-fashioned," Baysore said of his family.