

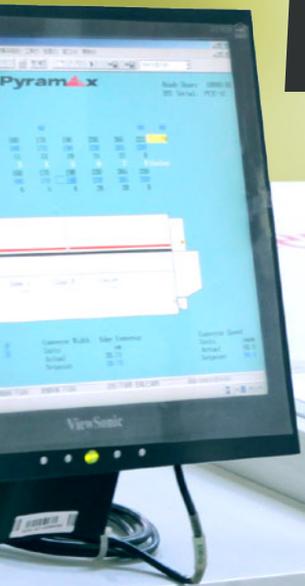
Test & Measure

RIGOL Makes Waves

in the Test & Measure Industry

Bob Bluhm

Vice President of
Rigol Technologies



**USB
Compliance
Testing**

**Charge
Measurement
Techniques**

Transforming Test & Measure

Interview with Bob Bluhm
*Vice President of
RIGOL Technologies*

RIGOL Technologies is an industry-leading supplier of test and measurement equipment. With headquarters in Beijing, China, RIGOL's steady growth has prompted company branch expansion to North America and Munich to supply their growing global demand. The customer draw comes from their full-portfolio test equipment that offers accurate and reliable testing results at an affordable price.

We spoke with Bob Bluhm, Vice President of RIGOL Technologies, about the biggest challenges the company faces, the plan for consistent growth, and how they plan on transforming the entire industry through innovation.



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What products and services does Rigol offer for engineers?

RIGOL is a full-portfolio test and measurement supplier. Our portfolio includes RF products, time-domain products, power supply products, and precision measurement products. We offer an oscilloscope line that ranges from 50 MHz to 1 GHz which includes Mixed Signal Oscilloscopes (MSOs) and integrated arbitrary waveform generators. We have two spectrum analyzer lines that range from 9 kHz to 3 GHz that include tracking generators and options for measuring filters, amplifiers, etc.

The portfolio includes function and arbitrary waveform generator lines from 20MHz to 350MHz, RF generators that range from 3 GHz to 6 GHz output frequency, two series of DC power supplies that range from 80 W to 195 W, and a Digital Multimeter (DMM) line. In addition to our hardware portfolio we offer PC SW packages that extend our analysis capabilities for RF, Power and Time measurements as well as remote instrument control.

What is your strategy in fitting in the Test and Measure industry since there are a lot of companies that specialize in high performance test equipment?

All of the customers we have spoken to in the US and worldwide are looking for a greater return on their R&D budgets. Customers have critical time to market needs with heavily scrutinized and shrinking test budgets. This dynamic has driven more alternatives as customers are looking for the lowest cost, reliable alternative to solve their technical issues. There is commoditization happening within in the test and measurement market. This is where RIGOL fits nicely in the market as customers are looking for ways to reduce their overall cost of test and meet their testing/design challenges. Our instrument lines offer customers all of the advanced features they are looking for but are priced anywhere from 30-50% percent below the traditional incumbents. We offer a 30 day no questions asked return policies with 3 year standard warranties.

We have historically targeted the low-end general-purpose side of the market but with our new capabilities and expanding portfolio we are moving into the midrange, commercial markets.

How do you differentiate Rigol’s price or value from other companies that offer test and measurement products?

I would define value in the form of an equation. If you define value as the sum of features, capabilities, performance, and quality, divided by price you arrive at a “value” a product brings to a customer. Each customer places different weighting on parts of this equation with price being just one element of that equation.

Consumers today are demanding to have the features, capability, quality, and performance in their products and want that at lower prices than they have historically gotten. This is our value proposition, we offer

unprecedented value to the customer by bringing more capabilities, performance and more advanced features at a significantly lower price. We are increasing the value that the customer gets for their T&M budget.

In terms of the industry and products that you offer, what kind of innovations is Rigol doing?

RIGOL is bringing increased technical capability at entry level pricing. Take our UltraVision technology for example; it is a hardware architecture that enables very fast waveform capturing rates of up to 140,000 acquisitions per second, intensity-graded display, long record length capabilities and hardware waveform recording, replaying and analysis. This technology greatly increases the ability for the customer to find infrequent events in their systems and quickly manage and analyze large amounts of acquisition data. Ultravision starts in our new DS1000Z Series with a price under 600 US Dollars.





“In the last six months RIGOL has introduced six new products and we will introduce almost that many more in the next six months.”

Talking about connectivity, RIGOL is a member of the LXI Consortium. We have LXI connectivity in addition to USB connectivity.

We put a lot of effort and investment into introducing new products. In the last six months RIGOL has introduced six new products and we will introduce almost that many more in the next six months. The other thing that we are bringing to the marketplace in terms of innovation is the response time to our customer's needs. One of our key values is our focus on customer's needs and we have turned custom features for customers in weeks to help them solve their problems.

What kind of feedback do you get from your customers about Rigol's products that they use?

Many of our customers are surprised by the quality that extends not just from the packaging of our product but to the fit-and-

finish, feature set, ease of use, capabilities and low price compared to the key brands in the marketplace. I was just at DesignCon and it was exciting to hear the feedback from delighted and excited customers who had purchased a RIGOL product and were looking at other lines to fill out their bench. Other customers, who were seeing the products for the first time, were in disbelief with the capability that the products offer for a low price. One of the most exciting parts of the role I am in right now is getting these products in front of customers and hearing their feedback. RIGOL is committed to the continuous improvement of our products.

What are some of the biggest challenges that you face right now in trying to move the company forward?

Number one is brand recognition. Second is managing the speed at which new products are being introduced and managing the growth. We continue to grow our commercial team (Sales and Marketing) to handle the growth and be able to keep up with customer interest, demands and feedback. The third challenge is perception. The price can fool many people into making false assumptions about the quality of the products. The perception issue is a challenge that customers will overcome as they try the instrumentation. The last is channel development and adding strong partners to our great base.

Talking about growth in your business, how are you distributed across the globe and in the market center?

The US represents roughly 20 percent of the worldwide sales, so from the international perspective, ~80 percent of our business would be considered international. We are really just getting started in the N. American channel. The company was founded in China, and it has had more time to establish its channels throughout Asia.

What is the culture like in Rigol?

The culture at RIGOL is one of the reasons why I joined the company. If I had to define it in a few words, I would say it's young, entrepreneurial, energetic, and customer-centric. The decision-making is very fast and there are no "sacred cows" that we have to work around. This company is not a public one, so we do not have to answer to shareholders every ninety days. We have long term strategies and can stay focused on the development and investment of that vision.

There are four elements of RIGOL values, and RIGOL is a company that truly "walks its talk." Since I first met the RIGOL management team in 2007 I have witnessed how they have held true to these values as they've grown. The values are simple. First, we should always be creating and delivering customer value. Second, we create platforms targeted



RIGOL's DG1032Z Arbitrary Waveform Function Generator



towards people development. Focusing on the passion and growth of an individual brings out the best in them. Third, we should always be innovating. This extends past products and into how we run every part of the company. Lastly, we will be persistent in all that we do. The company is quite new, and we recognize that there are a lot of incumbents that have a fifty-year advantage on us, so we need to keep that persistence and focus on customers to continue innovating for our customers and partners. These values and the culture around them resonate with me and my beliefs.

What excites you the most about the future of Rigol Technologies?

For RIGOL, the growth potential and our ability to transform the T&M industry is what most excites me. I have spent my whole career in Test and Measurement and love the extreme challenges that it brings to the designer. Designing products that can measure microvolts to kilovolts and capture events that range from nanoseconds to days presents such design challenges. My passion is helping to re-define expectations around the value of test and measurement equipment. To be in a company that shares this passion, core set of values and vision is what I love doing.

Is there anything about Rigol that you would like to share with the readers?

There are a couple of other facts about RIGOL that might be interesting to your readers. RIGOL has its biomedical line of equipment that is sold in China. There is over 800,000 square feet in the Beijing facility, and in May of this year, we will be opening a new, 380,000 square foot manufacturing facility in Suzhou. At that time that we introduce a new manufacturing facility and we will also be creating another new R&D design center in addition to the R&D teams in Beijing. The growth rate of the company continues to exceed my expectations—past what I thought would be possible at the early stages and these changes are another step in keeping up with that growth.

There is no shortcut to developing a brand and there is no shortcut to developing trust with engineers and customers. It is a continuous process to develop innovative products that bring value to our customers, continuously improve our quality, and respond to customer's needs. RIGOL's company's vision, values and people are aligned to make this happen. ■

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