

Nigeria's A Place Of Opportunities For Every Industry – Bruno Bouygues

By Daniel Anazia

FOLLOWING a visit to the country, Bruno Bouygues, President/CEO, GYS, France, a French company that manufactures welding equipment to assemble steel, has said that Nigeria is a place of opportunities for every industry.

He spoke when he visited Rutam House, The Guardian head office in Lagos.

The company has factories as well as commercial subsidiaries in France, Germany, UK, Italy, India, Morocco and China, and over 750 employees around the world.

Bouygues stressed that Nigeria was a country with enormous business opportunities in manufacturing, construction, real estate, oil and gas, which are major sectors of the country's economy.

He stated that GYS supplies products to neighbouring African countries but not Nigeria. Therefore, according to him, his purpose of visiting Nigeria, though a short stay, is to prospect for clients, make partnerships and organize distributions for his company's products.

"I am very enthusiastic about the dynamism of the Nigerian economy. Lagos is incredibly a big city, though with a lot of traffic. Even though I knew Nigeria was a very big country, I didn't measure the size until I arrived here," he said.

Bouygues further stated that over the next 10 years, he hopes to open factories in Africa, and this is to show that the visit to Nigeria makes it a very interesting place because there is a big market for his kind of business.

He spoke further: "I think Nigeria is the right market for many types of products. First, I was very surprised at the level of proficiency in international business.

Nigeria is very much used to deal in the sub-region but everywhere in the world. I saw a lot of talents in the entrepreneurs, which looks globally.

"What I saw is different from the image of Nigeria that is painted out there in developed climes. We may have an image of Nigeria of the past but not of the modern Nigeria. I was very impressed with the real estate development, oil and gas with shipyards particularly on the Island. I'm also impressed with the technical engineers that the country has.

"When you are in the field of welding, you have to discuss with engineers on what are the problems. The level of knowledge I encountered is incredibly good and I was immensely impressed with them. I work in the field of welding and automotive equipment. Nigeria is a place of opportunities for every industry."

He explained that GYS is a French family-owned industrial group that engineers and manufactures arc welding, spot welding and automotive battery service (bsu, chargers, boosters, starters, jumper cables, testers) equipment.

It was founded in 1964, in Laval, France by



Bruno Bouygues

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He noted that between 1959 and 2001, after the acquisition, significant investments were quickly made to modernize the historical French factory.

Simultaneously, the management decided to expand the transformer-based welding machines range with the manufacturing of GYS first inverter electrode welding machine.

From 2004 to today, the group has expanded its three product families: Arc welding equipment – arc welder, TIG welder, MIG welder and Plasma cutter; Automotive body repair equipment – spot welder, dent puller, MIG welder, lifting equipment, and rrvetting equipment; and Battery service equipment – battery charger, battery starter, booster and jumper cables.

Following the firm's continuous investment in research and development, and the acquisition of knowledge, it is now one of the world's technological leaders and a major player in the design and manufacture of welding machines, battery chargers and car body repair equipment.

On the company's invest in the Future policy, Bouygues explained that the new market realities and ever-changing milieu coupled with the size of the company, require fast adaptation to new demands.

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Guy Yves Stephany with the purpose of manufacturing autotransformers on behalf of EDF, following its decision to change the electrical voltage in the western part of France from 110V to 230V.

Narrating the company's trajectory, Bouygues stated that it was bought by two industrial holdings between 1980 and 1996. During the same period, the company expanded its portfolio of welding products. In 1997, the current management acquired it.

"The company had at the time a strong local brand in France for its battery charger range. The sale of welding products was more confidential and mostly concentrated in agricultural and automotive markets," he stated.