

## Susan Koshy: Moulding Success in the Plastic Industry

Written by Valsala Menon

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Mrs. Susan Koshy seems like just another easy going home maker. But as we talk to her, as we continue to listen to her polished, well articulated voice and demeanor, we experience a sense of awe as she unravels the threads of her experiences as a successful entrepreneur.

Immediately after graduating in mechanical engineering from Trivandrum Eengineering college, Susan was offered a lecturer's post at Delhi women's Polytechnic. She worked there for six years. Mean time, she got married to Mr. Koshy who was then posted at Chandigarh. A few years later, Mr. Koshy secured an offer to work for OEN India Ltd at Kochi and Susan too accompanied her husband back to Kerala.

While at Kerala, Mr. Koshy's colleague came to know about Susan being a qualified mechanical engineer and he offered to give her assistance to start a venture of her own. Thus, Susan, after giving it considerable thought, decided to venture into plastic moulding. With a loan of 3.75 lakh from State Bank of Travancore, Susan set up her own business of plastic molding in 1980.- West End Plastics.

Since OEN India Pvt Ltd was into relay manufacturing, they needed plastic molding for their relays. For ten long years, Susan had bulk orders from OEN. She employed four young men to assist her in her work.

"Plastic is melted into a molten state and through a barrel and tube, it is injected into the mold. Ours is a fully automatic machine which we procured from Mumbai." – explains Susan. Her regular clients were OEN, Keltron Controls and Alind at Thiruvananthapuram.

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“This is a very profitable venture and I had my four boys to assist me in my work- smiles Susan. For ten years after commencement of business, she had bulk and repeated orders from OEN, but all of a sudden they stopped placing orders with them”.

At about the same time, Mr. Koshy set up his own relay manufacturing unit at Thodupuzha. Now, her husband too is one of her clients.

After a brief span, OEN’s sister concern FCI has started placing bulk orders with Westend. “It has been 30 years since I started out with my plastic molding factory at Thiruvankulam. Now I have employed eight persons and since the mould has to be reworked at times, I have employed girls here too. Switches relay plastic parts, small cups and saucers- the plastic moldings industry has several multitudes of options”.

“There are two types of plastics- thermo plastics and thermo setting. Thermo plastic can be recycled, whereas, thermo setting cant be reused. Hence, I use thermo plastic”- explains Susan who is very passionate about her endeavor. “Initially I used to work on transparent plastics too- smiles Susan.

“I am happy that at the very least, I have been able to provide employment to a few young men and women. I feel grateful to God that I have been successful over the past 30 years”- affirms Susan. She has two sons and a daughter, who are married and pursuing different professions on their own.

She plans to expand into yet unexplored arenas of plastic molding in the near future. May the eternal entrepreneurial spark and unflagging enthusiasm in you remain bright and glowing forever!