Swindell Dressler International Company is one of the world's leading kiln companies, having built more than 1000 production kilns and 50 ceramic plants in 35 countries.

HISTORY
Swindell Dressler International Company, located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Melbourne, Australia has served the ceramic industry since 1915 when it was founded by Philip Dressler as “American Dressler Tunnel Kilns, Inc.” The company revolutionized the firing of ceramics by the introduction of the tunnel kiln concept, the first being muffle kilns designed for sanitaryware firing. The first kiln was built for Universal Sanitary Manufacturing Company in New Castle, Pennsylvania (now Universal Rundle). The company recently built its 18th kiln for the Universal Group. The first refractory tunnel kiln was completed for Norton Company in 1919. This kiln was 354 feet long, oil-fired and fired Norton's “Alundum” refractory.

In 1930, “American Dressler Tunnel Kilns, Inc.” merged with “William Swindell and Brothers” furnace company and became known as “Swindell-Dressler Corporation”. In 1850 William Swindell had established his business repairing furnaces in local iron plants and eventually expanded his company to building furnaces for the iron and steel industries. The new company was now able to offer metallurgical furnaces to the steel and aluminum industries as well as ceramic kilns to the refractories, whitewares, tile and abrasives industries.

Pullman Incorporated of Chicago purchased Swindell Dressler in 1959 and the company expanded further in the fields of heavy engineering and construction. In 1970, a name change was made to Pullman Swindell to reflect the corporate image of the parent company. Pullman Swindell designed and built plants for a variety of purposes in countries such as Poland, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Indonesia, Columbia, Venezuela, and Mexico.

In 1980, Wheelabrator-Frye Inc. acquired Pullman Incorporated and all its assets. Pullman Swindell was teamed up with The Rust Engineering Company and remained in Pittsburgh. Backed by 75 years of solid experience, Rust was the sixth largest engineering firm in the USA. The Swindell furnace group was shortly thereafter sold and the remaining original ceramic group regained their familiar name of Swindell Dressler in 1981, as a Subsidiary of Rust International Corporation.

In the mid 1980's Swindell Dressler moved its headquarters to its present location in Coraopolis, Pennsylvania (in Pittsburgh) where the engineering, sales, and administrative offices are located as well as research and development and fully equipped electrical and assembly shops. The company has also operated in Melbourne, Australia since the early 1960's.

In 1991 the company was purchased by a group of private investors from Pittsburgh. Their purpose was to revitalize the company by expansion in the international markets as well as continued service to the American markets.
SWINDELL DRESSLER TODAY

Swindell Dressler specializes in designing, constructing and installing kilns and complete plants for the worldwide ceramic industry. Products include bell kilns, shuttle kilns, tunnel kilns, dryers and kiln car moving systems as well as the design and construction of complete plants. Because different types of kilns are used in different parts of the ceramic industry, Swindell Dressler has three industrial groups, each specializing in their segment of the industry. These industrial groups are structural clay products, whitewares and technical ceramics.

Structural Clay Products
This group includes face brick, paving brick, quarry tile, roof tile, sewer pipe, flower pots and structural tile.

Whitewares
This group includes sanitaryware, dinnerware, floor and wall tile, electrical porcelain and nucleated glass products.

Technical Ceramics
This group includes refractories, abrasives, spark plugs, ferrites, carbon products, ceramic colors, electronic ceramics, automotive catalytic converter substrates and advanced ceramics.
ENGINEERING

Swindell Dressler has a large, experienced engineering department with many engineers having more than 20 years with the company. All drafting is done on computers with AutoCAD software and all engineering computers are networked. The engineering department has staff engineering groups specializing in structural design, combustion engineering, electrical design and hydraulic design for kiln car moving systems.

R & D

Swindell Dressler operates a sizeable combustion and firing laboratory. Burners and burner modifications are tested here. New firing systems are tested and computer modeling is used to study heat transfer inside of kilns. The lab includes a test kiln to simulate firing face brick in a Low-Set\textsuperscript{TM} tunnel kiln and another test kiln to simulate tunnel kiln firing conditions for other products and higher temperatures. In addition to the two tunnel kiln test kilns, the lab also has a shuttle kiln for test firing.

One of many CAD stations

Swindell Dressler engineers discussing a job.

Burner modifications being tested in firing lab.

One of two test kilns for simulating tunnel kiln conditions.
MANUFACTURING

Swindell Dressler's Pittsburgh manufacturing facility has two buildings with more than 70,000 ft.² of assembly area in both buildings. Tunnel kilns and shuttle kilns are prefabricated in our plant and then taken apart in sections for shipment to the job site. Bell kilns, up to a certain size, can be totally factory built and shipped to the job site in one piece.

60,000 ft.² assembly area.

10,000 ft.² assembly area.

Bricklayers working in a tunnel kiln module.

Transfer car assembly.

Wiring of control panels in the Electrical Shop.
KILNS AND PLANTS
FOR STRUCTURAL CLAY PRODUCTS

Face Brick
Swindell Dressler has been a major supplier of kilns to the face brick industry for more than 70 years constructing not only kilns and dryers, but complete plants as well.

Low-Set™ Brick Making Process
In 1994, Swindell Dressler introduced the Low-Set™ brick making process which makes it possible to substantially speed up the times to dry and fire the brick for most clays.

Conventional Set Brick Making Process
There are situations where conventional settings up to 14 high, are preferred. Swindell Dressler also builds these types of kilns and plants.
Complete Plant Engineering and Construction
Swindell Dressler has designed and constructed 46 complete plants for the structural clay products industry with state-of-the-art automation and technology.

Other Structural Clay Products
Swindell Dressler also builds kilns and plants for structural tile, sewer pipe, flower pots, quarry tile and other clay products.
SANITARYWARE

Wide Single Deck Kilns
Swindell Dressler has been building kilns for the sanitaryware industry since 1915. For many years, Swindell Dressler's multi-deck fired muffle kilns were the standard, whereas, today Swindell Dressler's wide, direct-fired single deck tunnel and shuttle kilns are the new, state-of-the-art.
DINNERWARE
Swindell Dressler builds tunnel kilns for the dinnerware industry using low profile, fast-fire designs.

ELECTRICAL PORCELAIN
Oxidation or reduction firing.
Swindell Dressler supplies both tunnel kilns and shuttle kilns for this industry.
KILNS AND PLANTS FOR TECHNICAL CERAMICS

- Refractories
- Abrasives
- Spark Plugs
- Ceramic Colors
- Carbon Products
- Electronic Ceramics
- Automotive Catalytic Converter Substrates
- Advanced Ceramics

Swindell Dressler built their first refractory tunnel kiln in 1919 and their first complete refractory plant in 1965.

The technical ceramics industrial group is quite diverse including kiln firing temperatures from 1000°C to 1800°C with the most popular kiln types being bell, shuttle and tunnel kilns.
Shuttle Kilns Firing Technical Ceramics

Tunnel Kiln Firing Basic Refractory to 1800°C

Tunnel Kiln Firing Technical Ceramics
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