

Granlund 60 years anniversary Interview



Jukka Vasara

- Appointed Granlund Vice-President in 2018
- M.Sc. in Mechanical Engineering from the Helsinki University of Technology
- In 1989, became Managing Director at Granlund Kuopio
- Over three decades of experience with focus on Hospitals, Clean rooms, Building Energy Saving and Air Conditioning
- Committee member of ISO/TC 209, CEN/TC 243 and CEN/TC 156 WG 18

1. Congratulations for the 60th anniversary of Granlund! Tell us about the history of the company, how did it start and developed to what it is today. What are the key values that drive the company?

Jukka Vasara, Granlund Vice-President: Olof Granlund and Antti Oksanen founded the company in Helsinki in 1960. Since that the company has grown over the decades from a Helsinki-based HVAC engineering office to a real estate and construction expert group operating throughout Finland and abroad.

In the early 1960s, HVAC technology developed rapidly with the intensification of construction activities after the post-war period of scarcity. Olof and Antti saw the potential of the design business, joined forces and experience, and set up an office with seven employees in the beginning.

Today we have over 1,000 customers in 30 countries and employ over 1 000 professionals. We aim to be a workplace that boosts motivation, offers opportunities, and helps people to develop. We value **diverse expertise**, and our workplace atmosphere is based on mutual respect.

2. I assume COVID-19 also disrupted the anniversary celebrations. How do you plan to commemorate this milestone?

JV: Granlund's anniversary year has been exceptional worldwide. Due to the corona pandemic, the festivities will move to post-corona time.

We were supposed to have a big party in honour of the 60-years, but the party had to be cancelled due to the corona pandemic. We decided to postpone the celebrations until next year when the situation is hopefully better.

3. What are the most important technology and market trends that will influence Granlund and the real estate & construction industry sector? Where do you see Granlund in 10 years?

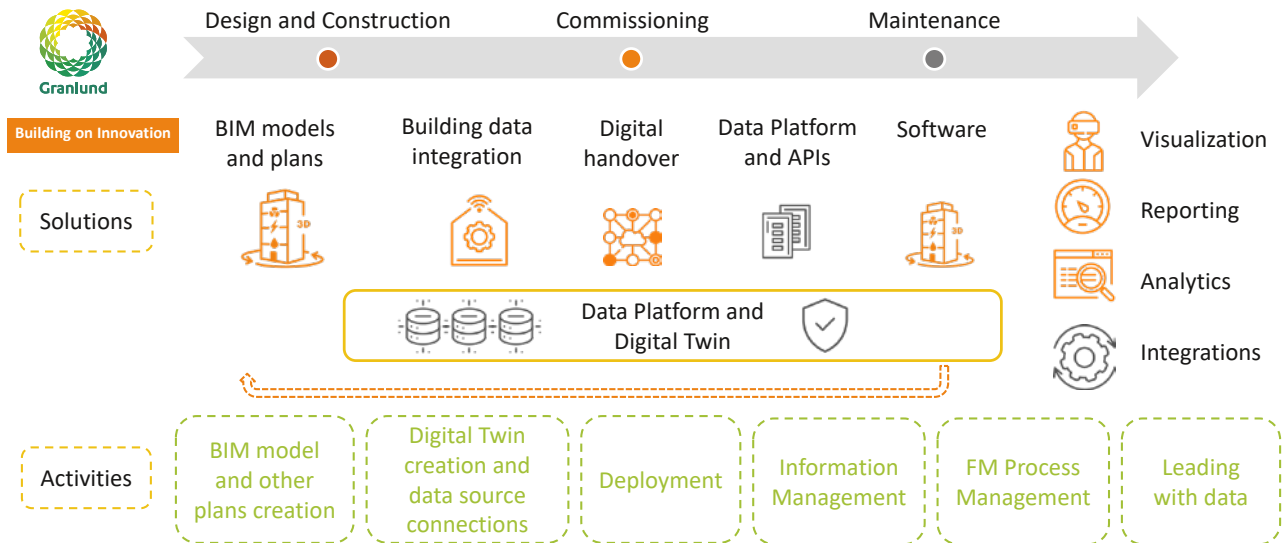
JV: Granlund has grown throughout its history, but the growth has accelerated massively in recent years. Last year's turnover was just over 91 M€ and the aim is to double the turnover within the next five years.

Our key goal is to make properties more functional and smarter and to improve human well-being in the built environment. Our areas of expertise include technical building services design, property, energy and environmental consultation, software and renovation.

Granlund intends to strongly expand in service expertise: we will take on an even bigger role in the service management and energy efficiency in properties, the quality of indoor conditions and the functionality of technology.

Granlund's growth strategy in 2016–2020 focused on promoting well-being, user orientation and new solutions. The strategy has realised very well as planned. Granlund focuses on its strengths, namely on technical building services design, property and energy consulting

Digital Life Cycle Management



and real estate management software. Also, renovations planning, building development and digital property services have emerged alongside. During the next strategy period, responsibility and productivity will be emphasised in our own and our client's operations. We want to contribute to raise our industry to a new level regarding both of these areas. Success also means strong development of customer orientation and quality.

4. High performing, low carbon buildings – compliant with European regulatory trends – need a holistic approach, considering the entire building life cycle from design till operation. Digitalisation is key in this context. What is your take on this? Which innovations and solutions can Granlund offer for transforming the building sector?

JV: We promote energy and environmental responsibility in the society through properties. Energy efficiency, carbon footprint reduction and environmental responsibility are crucial aspects in all of our design, renovation and consulting projects. In addition, our software, Granlund Manager provides state-of-the-art technology that generates energy savings. We want to be an impartial expert partner to our customers and participate in joint efforts to build a better tomorrow. Therefore, we commit in making objective decisions according to sustainability principles. For us, quality control means first and foremost responsibility for our actions.

Our success is based on active development and innovation. We constantly seek, develop and test new procedures, software, and service. We are on the front-line of deploying advanced digital tools and operating models, such as virtual technologies, the Big Room, Lean and BIM models. Each year, we invest approximately 6–8 per cent of consolidated net sales in research

and development. Our goal is to develop sustainability technologies and new ways to manage information in order to serve the users of properties even better. A good example is the digital twin that will transform property maintenance and services.

5. The EU launched a Renovation wave strategy aiming to double the annual renovation of buildings by 2050. Do you follow these policy trends? What do you see as challenges when it comes to building renovation?

JV: Granlund is actively following EU policies on energy and renovation areas. In fact, we have been developing and implementing EU policies together with other European organisations in several R&D projects, e.g. latest under Horizon 2020 program.

It would be important for these renovation projects to focus on energy-saving solutions. According to Granlund's experience, the biggest savings for society will be achieved when HVAC and automation systems are renovated in accordance with modern technology.

Repairing buildings is always more challenging than building new constructions. However, it is important to find solutions that can achieve good indoor air and energy savings.

6. Granlund has been a valued REHVA supporter for a decade. What do you consider as important values of REHVA as supporter? How can REHVA support our industry sector better?

JV: In my opinion, REHVA's most important tasks are to raise the profile of the MEP services industry at EU level and to harmonize practices. One great example of REHVA's operations has been the guidelines in the Covid-19 pandemic for HVAC systems. ■