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MALAYSIA's largest cable maker, Universal Cable Bhd, plans to produce more specialty cable products as part of its growth strategy to be the biggest cable maker in the Asean region.

"Instead of selling standard cable products, we are looking at manufacturing cables according to customers' individual needs, giving it a more personalised touch," managing director Tan Kok Hong said.

He said this entails coming up with new products such as fire-resistant and automotive cables that will bring in higher margin to the company as well.

"We strive to be a diversified company that can cater to all industries' cable needs," Tan said.

He did not disclose the company's annual research and development allocation, saying that money is invested as and when a new product is being developed.

Tan said he does not discount the possibility of acquiring a company to accelerate its plan to become the largest cable maker in Asean.

Already one of the largest cable and wire makers in the Asia-Pacific region, Universal Cable holds a 20 per cent share of the local cable market.

The company recorded a rev-

Universal Cable aiming for top spot in Asean

enue of RM670 million last year. With a presence in 30 countries around the world, 40 per cent of its revenue comes from exports.

The Australasia region is the company's biggest export market, contributing half of export sales, followed by the Middle East, with a quarter of export sales.

Tan said recent successes include securing a job with Qatar Gas, the operator of the world's largest liquefied natural gas project.

The company also has the distinction of being the first local cable manufacturer to have been awarded the American Bureau of Shipping type test of recognition which allows it to supply cables to mobile floating platforms.

Meanwhile, Tan said while a slowdown in the global economy seems to be expected, it has yet to feel the impact of it.

"We feel that our presence over-

seas puts us in a much better position to weather through a slowdown should it happen," he said.

Tan said the company currently has a 50 per cent market share of the local oil and gas cable industry, which it entered into six years ago.

Besides cables and wires, Universal Cable also manufactures aluminium rods.

The company operates three plants in Johor Bharu.

Around 90 per cent of its revenue comes from the production of cable and wires, with most of its cables used for the power industry.

Universal Cable is a subsidiary of listed company Leader Universal Holdings Bhd, a group which was formed with the merger of Universal Cable and the Leader Group in 1990.

The group made a net profit of RM84.9 million against RM2.8 billion in revenue in 2007.



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