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BUSINESS

JOURNAL



A leader in synthetic yarns

FULGAR[®]



The premises of San Marco in Marcon, Italy



San Marco logistics - the company exports to more than 55 countries



The company organizes training courses and seminars



A family business - the Geremia-Tamburini family

New products and new markets for a challenging future

At present, the Italian economy often hits the headlines, and in most cases the news is not good. However, every crisis is a chance, too, to rethink the business model, to modernize and to invest in the future. This is what the San Marco Group from Marcon in Italy is doing. The group is a nationwide leader in paints and varnishes for the professional building sector and has achieved its leadership position through continuous investments. Colorificio San Marco is the major production company of the group. “We stand out from the competition thanks to our comprehensive product portfolio,” says Marketing Manager Pietro Geremia, who represents the fourth generation in the family business. The company’s strategy is clear: to become a real multinational player and a recognized leader in the European paints and varnishes industry. With a staff of 250 and seven production plants worldwide, San Marco achieves an annual turnover of around 70 million EUR.



Founded in the 1950s by Cavalier Pietro Tamburini, San Marco has always been a family company. Today, five members of the founder’s family are involved in the operative business, all of them in key positions. The daughter of the founder, Dr. Alessandrina Tamburini, is the current honorary president. All important decisions are taken by groups of managers from different company sectors. Quality, innovation and technological excellence as well as safety and sustainability are key issues of the company’s business approach. “We constantly update our production equipment and processes to keep up with the latest technological development. Also, every year, around 5% of the annual turnover is reinvested into R&D projects,” explains Mr. Ger-

emia. San Marco Group has grown through both internal development and acquisitions, in Italy and abroad, for example in Slovakia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Norway. That way, San Marco Group has developed a complete offering of paints and varnishes to satisfy a wide range of customer needs. “Moreover, we are continuously expanding our solutions for the professional painter’s needs,” Mr. Geremia elaborates. “Our products are organized in to systems, or cycles, that is bundles of products created to solve a specific need related to painting and restoring a building.” Given the growing assortment of products and brands, training and education are high on the company’s agenda. “At our training center in Marcon, we offer courses and seminars for ex- ▶

ternal stakeholders,” says Mr. Geremia. “Every year, more than 1,200 professional painters attend our courses. Currently, we offer twelve different types of course. International training, including seminars, language courses as well as sales and business manner courses, is an important issue, too.” The portfolio of the San Marco Group encompasses the brands San Marco, specializing in coatings for the building sector; Eurobeton, which produces ready-mixed products; ABC, a specialist for water-based products for the group’s trademarks in Southern and central Italy; and Tjaeralin, covering the Northern European markets and specializing in wood. San Marco Adriatica produces and sells emulsion paints for the Croatian market, Novacolor boasts ‘made in Italy’ top-level decoration, and Disegno is dedicated to floorings. “All brands in the portfolio have a specific role to play, like in a music orchestra, and we will continue on this route in our future acquisitions,” Mr. Geremia continues. Colorificio is a household name in its industry, offering a unique range of colours, paints and solutions. At present, the decorative paints are a mainstay of the business. Every year, the company launches four to six new products in this field. One of the latest innovations introduced at the end of 2012 was the new brand Disegno, boasting resins for floorings. This is a completely new field for the San Marco Group. All the products are made of three components, and the finished products have special effects and high decorations. Conventions are used to present the latest innovations, to explain the company’s philosophy and business strategy, and also to strengthen customer relationships. “Last year, we went on a cruise along Italy, Turkey, Greece and Croatia with around 350 people. It was a fantastic occasion to improve the relationships with our customers and to get to know their business needs better,” adds Mr. Geremia. For this year, Colorificio

San Marco plans to launch six new products. “We always try to improve our existing products and to develop new and innovative ones,” says the marketing manager. “We are putting greater and greater emphasis on environmental protection and sustainability. In 1982 we launched our line Unimarc with a set of manufacturing principles that make these water-based products both people and environmentally friendly. In 2005 we brought out Supernatural, a line without any solvent, and in 2009 we developed Green Spirit, a choice of natural products with a high technological content and only little environmental impact. Last year, we made a voluntary agreement with the Ministry of Environment and started to measure the life cycle assessment of our products in order to achieve EPD-Environmental Product Declaration. We were the first company to receive EPD certification for paints,” says Mr. Geremia. At present, Colorificio achieves between 30 and 35% of its annual turnover through export activities. Russia, France, the Middle East and Eastern Europe are key export markets. In the coming year, the company aims to enhance its international activities by improving its market position in already existing markets and by entering new ones. “We are thinking about acquisitions abroad and about joint ventures, particularly in Russia, Turkey, India and South America,” says Mr. Geremia. “In Italy, we are going to focus on market niches, such as floorings or building restorations. Disegno is the first step in this direction. Of course, we live in a challenging time, but do not stay back. Instead we invest in resources and efforts to prepare for the future.” ■

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