

“Evonik's value proposition : more value – less resources” ...

Dr. Gaetano Blanda, Senior VP, Coatings Additive Business, Evonik

Dr. Gaetano Blanda the Senior Vice President of Coating Additives business at Evonik was recently in India with a mission of intensifying Evonik's activities in the Indian Coatings market. Paintindia took this opportunity to interview him and quiz him about Evonik's current strategy for the Indian Market. Dr. Gaetano Blanda is the Senior Vice President and General Manager of the newly shaped Coating Additives Business Line since 2017. Dr. Blanda, studied chemistry in Germany and France. After his PhD he finished his chemical education with a Post Doc at the Max-Planck-Institut für Kohlenforschung, Mülheim a. d. Ruhr (Germany) and also has an Executive General Management education at INSEAD Business School.

He started his professional career at Goldschmidt GmbH, where he took over different positions in Germany, Italy and Asia. In 2008 he joined former Evonik Tego Chemie GmbH, which is part of Evonik Industries AG. In his position as Vice President Asia Pacific he was responsible for Additives, Silicone resins and co binder in the coating and ink market. In 2013-2016 he headed as Vice President the Adhesive Resins Product Line within the Evonik Resource Efficiency Segment.

Could we have an insight into how the Coatings Additives portfolio integrates into the larger parent organisation at Evonik, especially in relation to the coatings industry?

The business line Coating Additives is part of the segment Resource Efficiency within the Evonik organization. Out of 9 business lines which are part of the Resource Efficiency segment 43 business lines have a significant footprint as a supplier into the coatings industry. Apart from Coating Additives we are talking about the business lines Coating & Adhesive Resins, Crosslinkers and Silanes. As part of the Performance Materials Segment of Evonik the business line Acrylic Monomers is serving the coating industry to with their acrylic monomer resin/ emulsion building blocks. All in all Evonik is one of the key players in the coatings raw material arena.

For the benefit of our readers, could you highlight some of the salient acquisitions made by Evonik in the Coatings Additives space of late?

As of January 1st, 2017 the performance materials division of Air Products became part of Evonik and significant part of that business is dedicated to the coatings industry. Relative to Coatings additives the products which are well known under the brand names Surfynol,



Dynol, Carbowet, Zetaspers and Aerase became part of the Evonik Coating Additives offerings and form a 100% complementary addition to our existing strengths in the field of wetting and dispersing agents and defoamer to name a few product groups.

As of September 1st, the silica products of the Huber Group became part of Evonik too and here the Alumina-Silicate products known under the brand name of Zheolex will form another addition to the Coating Additives portfolio and further strengthen our leading position in the field of coating extender materials and as a replacement product for TiO₂.

Do you see this avenue of inorganic growth being a driver for the continued expansion of the Coatings Additives business?

As the new Coating Additives set up we have the clear ambition to become the undisputed number one supplier serving the coating market with coating additives products. Our plan is to grow ahead of the market with particular emphasis to delight our customers through our specialty additives portfolio and innovative technical solutions which support the regional specific needs. We continue to seek for growth opportunities both organically and inorganically where it provides fit to our strategy.

What factors do you see shaping the growth of the coatings industry in India, and how does it align and/or differ from the global trends?

The Indian coatings market just became the second biggest market in the APAC region surpassing the Japanese Market. Looking at the per capita consumption of paint & coatings in India there is obviously a huge growth potential. With a raising rising wealth of the Indian population and further growth of the “middle class” there is no doubt that India will continue to be one of the major growth drivers for the coatings market in IndiaAsia. Until today the decorative

coatings market with a huge number of medium to small players and a few dominating companies builds the lion share of the market and there is a very high consciousness on the cost/performance balance in that market. We have also witnessed a significant growth to water based architectural coatings in India over the past years which is important to our business. We see more opportunities with the government's ' initiative of smart cities and housing for all by 2022. The Make-In-India push, a further internationalization of the market but also the awareness for sustainable and resource efficient formulations and ingredients will surely move the demand towards products which ultimately are more environmentally friendly and efficient. Evonik's offerings very much fit to this expected trend and the value proposition of our enterprise: more value – less resources.

What is Evonik's strategy to cater to the significant number of players in the

Small and Medium Scale of the coatings sector?

Speaking for Coating Additives we are since long well equipped to serve all players of the coating industry independent of the size of their business. We have a well-established network of sales channels in India which are capable to cater both small to medium market players as well as the large companies in the market. As a supplier of highly specialized products and a quite diverse product portfolio we put great emphasis on training and educating our channel partners which ensures that the quality of their service meets our expectations. It is very important to keep contact with all customers including small and medium sized paint producers who are often very dynamic and serve unique and different market segments. With our strong product portfolio, strong R&D capabilities, technical support and global manufacturing presence we offer our customers complete solutions for

the coatings and as well as printing inks industry. We have a clear ambition to lead in our markets. By working on key challenges and offering innovative solutions to the market we are able to differentiate ourselves from similar players in the market.

With the Make-In-India push to spur manufacturing in the country, does Evonik Coatings Additives see a near-term opportunity to intensify its presence by setting up manufacturing facilities in India?

With the recent acquisitions we are fortunately already today in the position to produce some of the products we offer to the Indian coatings market domestically (Zheolex Al-Silicate as an example). Given the potential we see within the Indian coatings market we constantly challenge ourselves for options on extending this local production footprint. ■



Your window to the Indian Coatings, Inks and Allied Industries