

Green and clean

• It all began fifty years ago with the production and sales of car-care products on a small scale. Today, Lahega Kemi AB is a leading Swedish player for car wash and car-care as well as healthcare hygiene products. Now it is ready for its European market launch with product labels and marketing brochures in 24 different languages and safety data sheets in 15. With Lahega's climate-neutral degreasing agent, the company shows that it's possible to be environmentally adapted and still have fully-efficient products.

"With our modern production plant and advanced development laboratory, we are now ready to launch our different brands throughout Europe," says Christer Ekstrand, Lahega's director sales & marketing international accounts.

Lahega Kemi AB is a family-run business in its second generation which develops, produces and sells chemotechnical cleaning and maintenance products to the auto and sanitation industries. Lahega combines the names of the three original founders – Larsen, Hegelund and Ghandri. Presently, the company, based in Helsingborg, has a workforce of 83, a steady annual growth of about 15 per cent and a turnover of €20m.

Environmentally adapted

Lahega has four export business areas: car-wash, car care, hygiene and retail. "Carwash is our leading area representing about 40 per cent of our turnover with WashEye as the brand name and which includes detergents, shampoos and rinse agents which are constantly being improved to fall in line with new demands and needs from authorities, customers, the auto industry and water recycling systems," says Ekstrand. He says that the secret behind the success of WashEye is the climate-neutral degreasing agent without emissions showing that it is possible to be environmentally adapted and still have fully efficient products.

The second business area is car care, representing 25-30 per cent of the company turnover. Here, the company's brand name is No 1 – used mainly by professionals – which is a series of some thirty different products such as compounds, polishers, waxes and protective sealing to car paint rectification and valeting.

Hygiene, the third business area, represents about 20 per cent of the company's turnover. "Our hygiene business is mainly geared to hospitals. Key products – marketed under the brand name Liv – are surface and hand disinfectants as well as skin cleansing products such as soaps and creams."

Retail is Lahega's fourth and most recently introduced business area which consists a range of car care products – Autorange – for private consumers as well as products for truck care – Truckrange.

Strong domestic market

Lahega's complete product range is manufactured at their Helsingborg plant which currently has an annual capacity of 12 million litres of liquid chemicals. "Through our comprehensive network of distributors, we provide our car care products to 90 per cent of the auto wholesalers in Sweden, we are a total supplier to Volvo Truck in the Nordic countries and we supply carwash products to the leading gasoline chain in our region, Statoil. Then, our hygiene products are firmly established among half of the 22 hospital regions in Sweden despite the fact that this business area has only existed for the last three years," says Ekstrand.

During the 1990s when Lahega dabbled in the market with "green" products that were seldom up to standard, it was decided to invest in improved know-how. As a result, the com-

pany employs 11 chemists whose accent on environmental work permeates throughout all the company's operations. "To give examples, alkaline cleaning and degreasing agents now used work just as effectively as environmentally-hazardous thinning agents. Furthermore, we have a rigorous control of all raw materials used in our production. In addition, we are already fully prepared to meet the new EU chemical legislation – REACH – coming into full force in 2009, and we are years in front of our competitors when it comes to adjusting our products and raw materials before being introduced within the EU," says Ekstrand.

Going international

According to Ekstrand, the company has now consolidated sufficiently to branch out into mainland Europe. "We have studied the European market closely and fully realise that there is a different auto culture when it comes to car care between northern and southern Europe. As a result, five different brands are to be launched throughout mainland Europe, one of them being a climate-neutral degreasing product for cars. We have sold this product in Sweden for many years and we know



Lahega is ready to launch in Europe

it is effective. The climate compensation means that we invest in a power production project in India. Electricity produced by coal and gas is replaced by electricity produced with biomass and agricultural waste. By that we fulfill the EU environmental legislation."

Initially, Lahega will focus on countries around the Baltic as well as the Nordic countries and Germany where they intend to build up a network of distributors like they already have in Sweden. Ekstrand also adds that all their product labels and marketing brochures have already been produced in 24 different languages as well as safety data sheets in 15 languages so that everything is well prepared for the European market launch.

Asked about visions for the coming years, Ekstrand emphasises the company's intention to increase their annual turnover to €55 million as a result of forthcoming efforts on the European market. "In order to accomplish this, we will need a completely new production plant to meet increased demands. But such a project is already in hand. Nevertheless, we already have the land to build on while municipal and planning permission has been granted," Ekstrand concludes.

JEREMY HANSON



Drying benefits nature

Torkkapparater has done thousands of installations

• Drying industrial wastes such as municipal sludge, sawmill leftovers, pulp and paper mill excesses by using advanced mechanical solutions from Torkkapparater AB provides fuel, heat, fertilizer and other energy-saving benefits.

Founded in 1937, Torkkapparater has prospered during three generations of growth that began with a patent for a rotating heat exchanger. This innovation remains after thousands of installations as the centrepiece of the company's tumbler specialisation.

Torkkapparater's industrial customers are involved with chemicals, mining and forestry. More recently, these have been joined by environmentally-oriented operations that produce renewable energy, recycle and manage waste.

Today, Torkkapparater has refreshed itself by becoming a company that delivers turnkey systems as solutions for waste management. Torkkapparater's newest developments – turnkey pellets factories and sludge drying operations – represent state-of-the-art solutions that deal with today's most urgent issues.

Turnkey systems suppliers

"We are experts in thermal processing of solid materials," says Ulf Bojner, owner, CEO and grandson of the founder. "Torkkapparater offers turnkey systems for drying, cooling, pyrolysis and other thermal processing of solid materials. Our customers are found in most industries around the world. Our systems are distinguished by unsurpassed quality and design that give our customers appropriately adapted equipment and sustainable solutions combined with competitive overall economics."

Bojner says that Nordic countries were early to grasp leadership in biofuel techniques, and currently many operations convert wood into pellets that are being used to replace petroleum as a fuel.

"For more than 40 years now, Torkkapparater's equipment has delivered dried material that has been used as biofuel. Today, our expanded product line includes machinery for material handling, robotic solutions for stacking sacks on pallets and equipment for plastic wrapping

and strapping," says Bojner.

"We have devised comprehensive concepts so that sawmills or heating plants can rely on us as their sole supplier. Our first pellets system commenced operations in February at a sawmill on the Swedish island of Gotland. From sawdust to sacks, it's working great. Now, we are beginning deliveries of turnkey solutions to the potential Scandinavian market of some 200 sawmills."

Investment in China

"In China's near future, tremendous stress will be placed on sewage treatment systems in this already challenged nation when climate changes alter the snow melt-off and rainfall conditions," says Bojner. Therefore, the Chinese government has decided to build around 300 new sewage treatment plants.

A Torkkapparater sludge drying test system was ordered last year that will produce 4-7mm round granules that can be used as fertilizer for planting trees in an effort to halt expansion of China's deserts. Torkkapparater delivered this in November and it will soon be operational in Chong-Ching, a city in the central China. Torkkapparater's sludge drying systems in China are being installed in cooperation with ITT Flygt's pumping assemblies.

Recommendations are being made to China as a result of artificial forest fertilization studies by the Swedish University of Agriculture in cooperation with other participants within the forest industry. This research revealed that sludge-based fertilization increased forest growth by 40 per cent. Besides supplying some of China's needs for wood, additional forested areas will also absorb large amounts of greenhouse gas emissions.

"Our systems are not exclusively for biofuels and fertilizers. We have dried an assortment of nearly everything from gunpowder to detergents, from food additives to minerals," says Bojner. For instance, Torkkapparater's machinery handles fishing industry leftovers to separate them into oils and meal for fodder.

In addition to the EU and China, Bojner foresees doors of opportunity opening for Torkkapparater also in South America and Indonesia.

Middle East order for Alfa Laval

Alfa Laval has received an order for crude oil treatment at a gas turbine power plant in Saudi Arabia. The order value is about €10m. Delivery is scheduled for 2008.

The order is for the Rabigh Power plants expansion project which consists of 16 gas turbines generating an extra 960 MWe of capacity. The order includes separators, plate heat exchangers and crude oil booster pumps.

"This order confirms that the activity level within Energy and Environment is increasing," says Lars Renström, CEO and President of the Alfa Laval Group. "It is important to notice that Alfa Laval's well established local service organization in Saudi Arabia is a key factor when a customer places the order."

A power plant in Saudi Arabia with an

installed capacity of 960 MWe produces electricity enough to support more than 1 million people with their total daily need. This production capacity will ease the load on generating utilities facing an annual demand increase of 7 per cent due to rapidly expanding population and industrial base.

Alfa Laval is a leading global provider of specialized products and engineering solutions based on its key technologies of heat transfer, separation and fluid handling and are used in power plants, aboard ships, in the mechanical engineering industry, in the mining industry and for wastewater treatment, as well as for comfort climate and refrigeration applications. Alfa Laval posted annual sales of about €2.7 billion in 2007 and has some 11,500 employees.