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Following the steady international growth of Ilva products and brands, the IVM Group keeps its leadership in wood coatings. Ross Davies spoke to IVM Group vice-president Federica Teso on recent investments in IVM state-of-the-art production facilities and Ilva dedication to environmental issues.



Federica Teso,
vice-president

Iva Polimeri was founded in Italy in 1946, specialising in the field of wood coating. After building a reputation as one of the leading European companies in this sector, it was acquired by the IVM Group in 1986. In 2007, the company merged with Milesi and Intercoating, two other prominent wood coating enterprises, becoming part of IVM's new subsidiary group, IVM Chemicals Srl.

Iva's products are manufactured at IVM Chemicals, Parona, which has the reputation of being one of the world's largest and most modern facilities for the production of wood coating. With a surface area of over 150,000

square metres, IVM Chemicals values its main plant highly as explained by company vice-president, Federica Teso: "We have made huge investments in the premises regarding everything from the standardisation of processes to product testing so as to guarantee the very best products for our clients. From the choice of location to its construction, nothing has left been to chance."

In the two years 2009/10 IVM Chemicals has planned investments in its facilities for about €30 million with construction of modern offices that will house general management, a commercial department and finance and control divisions, expanding the >



surface area by 6000m² and providing a further 200 positions. Does the company have any further investments planned? "Of course, we are currently finishing construction of a new department dedicated to the production of water-based products, wax effect products and new automated warehouses," answers Mrs Teso.

Another important investment is the expansion of the company's research and development laboratories, in the site at Bareggio, which will enlarge surface area by 2500m². This R&D division, in which IVM Group invests approximately 8 per

cent of its turnover each year, employs over 200 researchers and technicians dedicated to exploring the development of high-technology components in the field of wood coating.

"To assure constant development in conjunction with market demands, we created two technical divisions – one for R&D, headed by a research and development director, and one aligned with innovative technology headed by our innovation and technology director. Whilst the labs are equipped with the latest technology, our technicians specialise in developing spe-

cific solutions so as to satisfy our customers' demands, whether they are small businesses or conglomerates," explains Federica Teso.

Growth through marketing

With the IVM Group's average annual turnover reaching over €370 million, what are Ilva's target customers and geographical markets? "Well, as one of the premier groups in the high-technology sector wood coating, we have businesses in Italy, Spain, France, Germany and Poland, and with a network of distributors that distribute Ilva

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products in over 70 countries world-wide," says Mrs Teso.

To cater for such worldwide demand, IVM Chemicals has a department entirely dedicated to marketing activities which concentrates on a broad range of customers whether they be small independent businesses or industrial giants.

"Our mission is simple – to supply innovative technical solutions to our customers. The IVM Group of which IVM Chemicals is part, has maintained since its inception the same initiatives – a constant and steadfast push for new technology and strategies using the best experts in the field of wood coating," explains Mrs Teso. Ilva is also in regular attendance at the world's most

important exhibitions and events dedicated to wood coating, having been present this year at Maderalia in Valencia, Spain and Budma in Poznan, Poland.

Passionate about the environment

Concerning, environmental issues, IVM Chemicals has implemented a series of measures to comply with ecological regulations, by using new technologies in the formulation of products so as to lower carbon emissions.

"With Ilva products we are proposing a new way in thinking concerning coating. For example, we have created new products such as Hecopur® (a varnish free from harmful solvents), Poliallilico® (free

of styrene) and Ozocare (which limits the production of ozone)." In addition to its own production measures, Ilva also offers suggestions and advice to clients concerning the use, transport and disposal of products and their residues, in keeping with its stringent concerns for the environment.

Mrs Teso sums up the company's mission: "The fundamental objective for IVM Chemicals is to continue to satisfy the demands of the market and of our clients by developing products using advanced technology guaranteeing elevated standards regarding quality whether they be aesthetic or technical." □