

CATALYST *with a special* COATING

Borchers is a coating additives and speciality catalysts manufacturer that solves problems through coatings systems across the spectrum of chemistries, applications and end markets. Exciting times are ahead as new products emerge amid a key acquisition announcement. Profile by Andy Probert.

Borchers has a rich 213-year heritage in the chemical space, making it one of the oldest operating companies in the world.

In 2020, the company was acquired by Milliken, a similarly and globally diversified manufacturer with a century-and-a-half in materials science expertise.

Borchers has firmly established itself as a global speciality chemicals company known for its innovative high-performance coating additives and catalyst solutions.

Headquartered in Westlake, Ohio, Borchers carries a respected portfolio of additives for the coatings, inks and adhesives markets with a comprehensive range. ▀





of cobalt-free driers, dispersants, rheology modifiers, wetting agents, polymerisation catalysts and adhesion promoters.

Coming under Milliken's wing will further build the parent company's comprehensive solutions portfolio, aligned with the company's strategic objective to develop a global range of growth platforms.

Interesting chapter

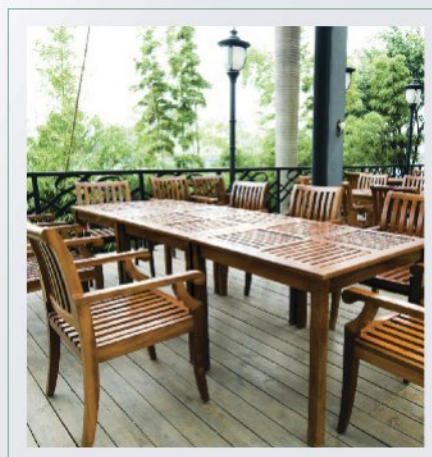
At the January 2020 acquisition process, Devlin Riley, CEO of Borchers, attested: "We are ecstatic about partnering with Milliken to further invest in our business, build out our global platform and continue providing innovative and satisfying solutions to our customers.

"Combining our capabilities and approach with the depth of Milliken's technology and innovation will allow us to provide exemplary solutions to the markets we serve."

Borchers' Technical Marketing Manager, Andrew Recker, said the acquisition would

further help enhance Borchers' stance in its chosen markets as its portfolio had transcended over time.

Within the last few years, as cobalt and VOCs have become more significant environmental concerns, Borchers has focused on providing drying solutions,



such as Borchers' OXY-Coat high performance cobalt-free oxidative drying catalyst, to help formulators meet new regulatory requirements.

"It will be an interesting and exciting time with all the positive changes that will flow from this acquisition," said Mr Recker, adding that its products, under the Borchers brand, inevitably touch many parts of our lives every day.

"I think it will be an important investment as it will release new resources and new chemistries. There's a lot of cross-over chemistry available from fibre treatment and textile markets that can be applied to the coating industry. That will be a tremendous advantage."

Impacting customers' products

Borchers has an R&D and full test facility in Germany, and high-tech and support teams in Shanghai, China, to serve cus-



tomers in Asia. The US domestic market retains around 60% of the business compared to exports.

Mr Recker said: "We strive to make an impact more profound with each new product we develop, every project on which we collaborate and every personal relationship we nurture. Our products and services make the world safer, more colourful and perform better every day."

Borchers has environmentally-friendly alternatives to toxic metals which improve the performance and non-yellowing of alkyd coatings. Products can range from cobalt-based promoters for radial tyres to providing barrier coatings that prevent the degradation or spoiling of food in flexible or rigid packaging.

Borchers makes the catalysts that help create the insulation protecting homes and



provides solutions that bring out the best colour and performance in coatings to beautify and protect the home or car.

"We pride ourselves on building strong customer relations through fast response

times and an ability to collaborate on producing speciality solutions to fit their needs," Mr Recker added.

"We also work closely with other raw material suppliers to better understand future technologies and market needs, which inevitably require new product solutions."

Staying ahead of the game

Being based in Ohio is strategically excellent, given the proximity of customers in the automotive industry, and coatings players and polymer developers in Pittsburgh and Cleveland serving the coatings, adhesive, metal finishing and corrosion prevention segments.

In recent times, Borchers has focused on high-performance catalysts, and within that strategy, devising novel chemistries and unique oxi-additive catalysts, through



commercial products like Borch Oxy Coat and Borch Dragon.

“Over the years, we have pushed hard to provide sustainable solutions to catalyst needs that are VOC- and cobalt-free,” underlined Mr Recker. “This new cobalt-free initiative has taken off in the last decade, and we’ve pushed it further to get high performance and offer better sustainable options. These are built for market value focus.”

The company remained active during the pandemic crisis and maintained traction in its manufacturing despite the adverse conditions. Of other existing challenges, Mr Recker said that regulation was seen as a positive, explaining: “We have the insight to stay ahead of the game when it comes to regulation, and we focus on providing solutions to those changes in the market.

“So where it would be seen as a challenge to customers in terms of VOC reduction, heavy metals and cobalt replacement, we have been working on those solutions and have them in hand with a lot of supporting data to help implement those changes. In terms of environmental impact, we have stayed ahead of the game.”

Further investments in high-performance catalysts, sustainable solutions and R&D is helping to provide new business for Borchers’ customers.

“We are always looking further and thinking of ways to drive our customers’ business, said Mr Recker. “We focus less on the products that we produce but more on the customer and their markets. Many B2B suppliers focus on their chemistry, but we look closer to the market, the end-user and the solution that offers the best fit down the value chain.”

Solutions-driven and close relationships

Mr Recker continued: “Usually a customer comes to us for solutions, whether it be to meet regulation or formulation change to drive better performance. So we have close relations with the customer and develop closely with the market.

“We are very open and try to tailor a specific solution to them. One part of our value proposition is how quickly we service our markets. We have an agile team that can finish within weeks, whereas a competitor would typically take months.”

To exemplify this, he pointed to the recent launch of Borch Dragon, a high performance product that’s cobalt-free and provides unique curing benefits in adverse conditions, allowing paint coatings to be added in a broader range of temperatures. ▀



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"We also have more products on the market with customers in alkaloids having trouble getting VOC-reduced and cobalt-free alternatives," noted Borchers' Technical Marketing Manager. "We also have other products that we are working on, such as anti-skins, and we are very skilled and have a high competency in that space."

According to Mr Recker, there is a general assumption that a lot of projects are driven by sustainability and a defensive stance to protect the business.

"However, at Borchers we take a different approach as we can make performance gains and that can help differentiate our customer's product."

He concluded: "We are very much in tune with the markets and clients, and continue to move projects along due to our diverse offering. This will continue to grow, and there is a lot of optimism within Borchers for the future." ■

For more information contact at Borchers: cust.service@borchers.com or visit: www.borchers.com