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Siegwerk strengthens position in China

Siegwerk, No.3 ink producer worldwide, has established a Center of Competence for Flexible Packaging in Shanghai. "This concentration of know-how is part of Siegwerk's Asia strategy", CEO Herbert Forker says. "It enables us to significantly support all activities in this region with expertise, technology and human resources to provide optimum support for our customers."

To build up the necessary organizational structures, Marco Si took over as General Manager in December 2007 after working for DuPont's Asian business for nearly 15 years. His predecessor in Shanghai, Liu XiaoBo, is now the regional business unit (BU) Head of Flexible Packaging.

The main part of restructuring in the Asia-Pacific area includes relocating the BU's regional Center of Competence from Malaysia to Shanghai to enable easier access to the huge Chinese market and react quicker to customer needs. The production facility will be expanded to better accommodate future demand in the fast-growing Chinese market.

"We have received excellent feedback from the market regarding our solution-oriented approach," says Siegwerk Board Member Ralf Hildenbrand, President Flexible Packaging. "The customers immediately started several projects to test and qualify more efficient structures using our solutions. I'm highly optimistic that we will be able to reach our ambitious mid- and long-term goals in China, thanks to our motivated and committed team."

In order to support the local teams, senior technology experts from several Siegwerk sites have been added. They will focus on high-end toluene-free products to reap the benefits of the shift to toluene-free inks across the region.

Ink containing toluene has been abolished for use in food packaging in Europe over 20 years ago. This demand is shifting to Asia, mainly driven by the large branded goods companies and the increasing awareness of sustainability. One large food manufacturer is now using Asian-made packaging printed solely with toluene-free ink in China and other main markets in Asia. Experts are sure that further market participants will follow this model soon.

Media contact



Nathalie Müller-Samson

Manager Corporate Communications

Tel: +491622002727

Email: [nathalie.mueller-samson\(at\)siegwerk.com](mailto:nathalie.mueller-samson(at)siegwerk.com)



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