

Blog Article

Clariant generates a buzz in Charlotte, NC with the opening of new innovation center

Charlotte, October 6, 2021 – After being included in [LinkedIn's 2021 roundup of top companies in Charlotte](#), North Carolina, Clariant continues to make its mark with the opening of our new Industrial Applications Innovation Center to support North America's Paints and Coatings industry »Beyond Color« as an expansion of the current facility in Mt Holly just outside the city.

With exciting innovations underway, we decided to check in with marketing and technical segment managers, Marc Chan of Industrial & Consumer Specialties (ICS), and Mouhcine Kanouni of Additives, to learn more about how the two businesses will work together inside the new facility.

Regarding each business sector, what can we expect from the new Industrial Applications Innovation Center?

Mouhcine: We are excited to expand our laboratory capabilities to prepare and apply new coatings formulations in the areas of Advanced Surface Solutions like waxes and Light/Heat Stabilizers. These areas are in high demand from our customer base. This new laboratory will feature equipment and resources to support testing of these novel coatings. The goal is to provide high level technical service and support to our customers for their development of new coating formulations that meet and surpass performance goals.

Marc: The ICS business naturally works alongside our Additives colleagues. Our collaborative work extends our expertise in dispersing agents to markets that parallel the architectural and decorative industries where we have a proven track record of enhancing color and stability in our focused markets. Looking beyond, we see vast opportunities to approach the powder coating and wood stain verticals and provide exceptional capabilities for our customers to improve their formulations and meet consumer demands. Our materials from the product ranges of [Polyglykol](#) and [Emulsogen®](#) serve as a backbone to disperse lignans in wood stains, or potentially offer improved emulsification properties for waxes.

How does Clariant work with customers when developing performance-based products?

Mouhcine: Our first step is to understand our customer's performance requirements in their coating formulations and the drivers behind the criteria. Are they meeting regulatory specifications, sustainability targets, or a specific performance objective? We then seek to develop an additive solution looking at our existing portfolio or new innovative ideas to meet those requirements that would closely resemble our customer's own formulation. As such, we feel our custom solution is optimized to reach a high performance-based coating.

Marc: From the initial contact developed by marketing, to the outreach of our experienced account management team and engagement of our technical department, our goal is to set the bar for a customer experience that emphasizes transparent communication of technology transfer, application development and validation, followed by approval to finalize a customer's developmental performance products. Keeping in mind that each customer is unique, we approach the opportunity individually to customize the process and incorporate the needs of all stakeholders. Needless to say, all hands are on deck with these opportunities to assure success across the board.

How do you approach developing a Sustainable solution for a customer challenge?

Mouhcine: Sustainability is core to Clariant. As such, our constantly evolving product portfolio of waxes and light stabilizers is very much focused on offering state-of-the-art performance and sustainable solutions. We have built a legacy over the years to be very successful in developing new products that push the limit of performance and sustainability. Within our portfolio, we have introduced wax solutions that provide customers and players along the value chain with key sustainability benefits that help meet their targets when formulating more sustainable coatings. For example, our Licocene® TERRA line is made from renewable feedstock with at least 50% RCI (Renewable Carbon Index) content and our Ceridust® VITA line is from natural origins with real renewable content – at least 98% RCI. We also look at sustainability from the perspective of meeting the most stringent regulatory requirements in the market where changes and labeling standards drive the development of more sustainable solutions.”

Marc: The ICS business has the largest expanse of products with Clariant's EcoTain® labeling. This positions us to offer outstanding performance solutions that meet global labeling requirements while also supporting our customers' sustainability goals. When approaching solutions, we examine the sustainability goals of our customers and consider the performance properties that have effect on process improvements that impact carbon footprint. We also disperse many organic materials with low VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) options from our Dispersogen® product line. The sourcing of our renewable and non-food bio-based raw materials as well as green improvements in our production processes allow for efficient means to reduce an overall carbon footprint. Our commitment to sustainability is an extension of the value Clariant brings to the coatings market.

What are a few of the latest trends in the Paints & Coatings Industry and how is Clariant staying ahead of the curve?

Mouhcine: The latest trends that our team of technical experts has observed in the Paints & Coating industry over the recent years has been customers asking for novel additives that enable improved performance in weathering and surface effects. We are collaborating with customers to develop new additives solutions that meet the constantly evolving regulatory environment. Hostavin® 3315 DISP (benzotriazole UV absorber) and Hostavin 3070 DISP (Oligomeric HALS Dispersion) for water-based coatings are a great example where both features are met, best in class weathering performance as well as best in class when it comes to sustainability.

Marc: The consumer demand for product functionality fits incredibly well with the multi-functional nature of the compatibilizer additives we have in our repertoire. A good majority of our products in ICS offer several critical performance effects that reduce the complexities of formulating.

For example, Dispersogen PLF 100 impacts dispersing pigments into colorant concentrates in multiple ways. This product enhances color, offers extended shelf life, and reduces foam during production and associated leaching effects. Lastly, it decreases the need for excessive viscosity modifiers, whereby reducing complexity and cost in the final formulation.

Our technical team also places high emphasis on exploring future technologies that lie within our scope to manufacture. We meet on a regular basis to discuss these options and how Clariant would be capable of implementing either a product that is readily available or if a project could be created to fill those gaps and address demands.

We recently created a project to explore opportunities in metal surface preparation, specifically cleaning. Ideation led to four distinct projects, the first being a digital selection tool to define requirements based on the process and narrow down to desired parameters of equipment capabilities. From this, options are recommended, and related information suggested for download. It all begins with customer inquiry.

As a whole, we are thrilled with the collaborative nature the new Industrial Applications Innovation Center presents to Clariant where our global network of industry experts are constantly in search of innovative, sustainable solutions to meet market demands, and as always, the unique specificities of each customer.

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Marc Chan, Marketing Manager, Business Unit Industrial & Consumer Specialties (ICS). (Photo: Clariant)



Mouhcine Kanouni, Technical Segment Manager Coatings & Ink, Business Unit Additives. (Photo: Clariant)

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STEFANIE NEHLSSEN

Phone +41 61 469 63 63
stefanie.nehlsen@clariant.com

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Clariant is a focused, sustainable and innovative specialty chemical company based in Muttenz, near Basel/Switzerland. On 31 December 2019, the company employed a total workforce of 17 223. In the financial year 2019, Clariant recorded sales of CHF 4.399 billion for its continuing businesses. The company reports in three business areas: Care Chemicals, Catalysis and Natural Resources. Clariant's corporate strategy is based on five pillars: focus on innovation and R&D, add value with sustainability, reposition portfolio, intensify growth, and increase profitability.

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