

Helios Coatings Italia S.r.l. – Socio unico
Via Strada del Confini, 41, 36056 Tezze Sul Brenta (VI), Italy

HELIOS COATINGS ITALIA: A SUCCESSFULL YEAR BEHIND AND AN EVEN MORE SUCCESSFUL TO GO

Interview with Bine Pangršič, Managing Director Helios Coatings Italia
Riese Pio X, 22.12.2021

Helios Coatings Italia was renamed at the beginning of 2021. Could you give us a short summary about this intensive year?

After the breakthrough year of 2020 when we managed to secure long term prospects and the future of Ecopolifix with the purchase of Riese Pio X real estate plant, the year 2021 shall go down in the history books of Helios Coatings Italia: It was the decisive year in which we have undertaken key steps to unleash the full potential of our company and determine future steps on the way to greatness. The year started with the merger of Ecopolifix and Helios Italia and the formation of Helios Coatings Italia – a full-fledged system solutions provider of the KANSAI HELIOS Group. Under the new company name we immediately started a series of measures to strengthen our appearance, for example, the introduction of the new packaging and the revision of the Helios Coatings Italia and Ecopolifix websites. Within a short period of time many of our customers, agents, employees, and partners also connected with us on our newly created LinkedIn channel and we really enjoy and appreciate this intensive interaction – especially in times when personal contacts were not possible on a daily basis. In terms of numbers, we will finish the year with historical high results outstripping last year's revenue for more than 30 %. In this never-seen-before supply chain disruption crisis we established very early in the year that continuity of production and product supply is key. Despite a series of unprecedented events such as force majeure, price hikes and RM shortages we managed to finish the year successfully

What makes Helios Coatings Italia special for the Italian market and what are the company's strengths?

Helios Coatings Italia is an industrial solution system supplier. As a specialist in the entire industrial coatings sector, we offer the full assortment of liquid coatings, e-coat, adhesives and sealants, in addition to our high-quality powder coatings, car refinishing coatings and architectural coatings. In addition to our strength as a system supplier, R&D is also one of our core strengths – not only in Italy, but especially in combination with other production sites and Kansai Paint. We draw on immense experience, state-of-the-art laboratories and experts to provide perfect systems for our customers. By using all synergies within the KANSAI HELIOS Group, we are constantly developing our coating systems in accordance with new regulations, growing market requirements and in line with new trends. Confirming our strategic commitment to expand our operations in the architectural segment, we recently obtained the Qualideco certificate for sublimation bases for wood-effect decoration.

What were the most important projects in 2021?

I would like to highlight three projects in particular. On February 1st, 2021 Helios Coatings Italia introduced the new internal organization which is based on a pillar structure to support our transformation process and tackle new challenges in our future strategy and vision. In June 2021, following the groups ESG management strategy, we obtained a green electricity certificate which confirms that all our electricity is coming from 100 % renewable sources. As part of our intensive investment cycle, we received new production machines, such as new mixers and extruders, to increase the level of product quality and to improve our productivity during the summer months. However, this was only introduction to another project that will in my opinion turn out to be the most important project in the history of this company, the "Iceberg project".

Could you give us a short insight into this “Iceberg project”?

A decisive moment for the future of Helios Coatings Italia happened in September 2021. We managed to purchase in Riese Pio X an adjacent real estate. As an add on, the new real estate is already equipped with two solar power plants that will cover 3–4 % of our annual electricity consumption. This transaction paved the way for a completely new strategy development plan of Helios Coatings Italia. Based on this new acquisition we are preparing a completely new project that envisages revamping of our complete production facility turning it into a new state-of-the-art automated powder production plant with capacities 100 % higher than today. Comprehensive project planning is already underway, more details will be revealed soon. Just as a first step the plan for next year is to replace another mill, replace 3 mixers and install a completely new line.

Employee commitment and team spirit has become a very important issue for many companies. Are there any steps you are doing to retain your employees and motivate them?

Indeed, we put a lot of efforts into our employees – on one side connected to their health, their safety and their wellbeing as well as their professional and personal development on the other. Team Spirit is one of our greatest strengths! For example, just recently we presented an additional incentive to our team members, because every strong team also deserves a little time out to gather energy and simply take a breath. In October 2021 we celebrated, together with all employees of Helios Coatings Italia, the Management Board of KANSAI HELIOS and the Mayor of Riese Pio X, Mr. Guidolin Matteo, the opening of our new small company garden called HELIOSLAND. This green area offers us all a time-out area. Employees can meet there to have lunch together, drink coffee or simply escape from the desk for 5 minutes.

What are the business goals for 2022?

Next couple of months will still be difficult. Availability on RM is not getting better, additional shortages and missing RM will be present at least throughout entire Q1 of next year. Prices are continuing to surge. However, our stock levels are improving in the last couple of months. Our production is showing very good results and we plan to continue with these trends also in the future. Sales wise we want to continue our expansion on all key markets, whereas our focal project remains the aforementioned “Iceberg project”. This is our future, this is the birth of Helios Coatings Italia 4.0.

We would like to seize this occasion to say thank you to all our employees, customers, partners, distributors, agents and all people which we were cooperating together in 2021: Thank you for your trust, support, and your valuable contribution! We are looking forward to new interesting projects and steps towards the formation of Helios Coatings Italia 4.0.