

Spotlight on:

Becker Acroma

Becoming a Global Wood Coatings Leader ... With a TEAM 150 Strategy

It's the right fit at the right time — as we enter the European market with global leaders known for quality and custom solutions.

Sherwin-Williams recently acquired Becker Acroma (now part of the Global Finishes Group), the European market leader in wood finishes for industrial applications. This historic company is headquartered in Stockholm, Sweden with 950 employees, nine production facilities, nineteen mixing/trading facilities and thirteen technical centers.

With the acquisition of Becker Acroma — and European wood coatings company, Sayerlack (headquartered in Pianoro, Italy) — Sherwin-Williams is growing sales and “adding flags” on the TEAM 150 journey to a global presence in 150 countries.



Becker Acroma management team, back row, from left: **Thomas Bergdahl** (Managing Director [MD], North Europe), **Flemming Heide** (MD, Asia), **Kaj Brandt** (Becker Acroma GM; VP & GM for Europe, Product Finishes), **Carlos Johansson** (MD, Eastern Europe), **Friedhelm Heck** (MD, Central Europe); front row, from left: **Bill Fiorillo** (MD, North America), **Stefano Antoniazzi** (MD, South Europe). Not pictured: **Magnus Bergendorff** (CFO).



This marks a historic time of growth for the Global Finishes Group. It's a remarkable opportunity for Sherwin-Williams to pursue a leadership position in Europe — in wood coatings and grow market share in key product finishes market segments.

Who is Becker Acroma?

This Swedish powerhouse is one of the world's largest manufacturers of industrial wood coatings. You'll find Becker Acroma coatings on kitchen cabinets, home and office furniture, flooring, joinery and more — including products designed by IKEA, the Swedish global retailer famous for stylish home furnishings at affordable prices.

Becker Acroma is led by General Manager **Kaj Brandt**, Chief Financial Officer **Magnus Bergendorff**, and six managing directors — representing Northern, Southern, Eastern, and Central Europe, as well as North America and Asia.

Like Sherwin-Williams, Becker Acroma is a stable, well-established company, with a history dating back nearly 140 years. In 1874, Wilhelm Becker created the first Swedish paint and varnish maker to combine production,

retail and wholesale in the same business. From humble beginnings, Becker Acroma has grown into a major force in wood coatings technology.

“Just Right” Fit

Dennis Karnstein, senior vice president of Europe, Product Finishes, has been leading the Sherwin-Williams integration team during the transition. “Becker Acroma fits in well with our Team 150 vision to become a more global company,” says Dennis. “And long term, they'll help us expand into platforms other than wood coatings with European customers.”

Becker Acroma

Headquarters:
Stockholm, Sweden

Employees: 950

Production facilities: 9

Mixing/trading facilities: 19

Technical centers: 13



“Becker Acroma has taken an entrepreneurial approach for years,” says Kaj. “We are known as a solutions partner, with “engineered solutions and customized products. Adding the Sherwin-Williams muscle, with a very structured system for going to market and with paint as the core business will be a powerful combination.”

Kaj adds, “There are so many different cultures in Europe — many proud, small countries, all speaking different languages. Becker Acroma has been able to integrate these together. We meet the Northern Europe demand for production products and speed, while we also provide the craftsmanship and customized needs of Southern Europe.”

Technology Leader for a Green World

It’s the right time — to join forces with a leader in “green” coatings. Around the world environmental regulations are sparking a new demand for compliant non-solvent products.

Europe is ahead of the game — with regulations in place for ten years. Becker Acroma began tackling this issue more than 30 years ago, when they pioneered the development of UV and water-based coatings. Their engineers continue to break new ground in coatings technology and innovation.

“There will be a lot of technology sharing back and forth between Becker Acroma and our Global Finishes group,” says Dennis.

“Becker Acroma has an entrepreneurial environment — and that creates a will to work hard. People work like it’s their own family’s business. I see that atmosphere in Sherwin-Williams as well. From the first day we knew of the acquisition, people have been very positive ... we welcomed this,” explains Kaj.

Blending it All Together ... Takes a Team

Kaleidoscope: *Why is an integration team so critical to a successful acquisition?*

Dennis Karnstein, Becker

Acroma Integration Team leader:

The integration team is the face of Sherwin-Williams to a new company — and makes them feel like part of the family. During the discovery phase, we identify their “best practices” to share with our entire organization. Then, as we understand their business, we share ours so they can benefit from being a part of our family.

David Calabria, Integration Team, Sales & Marketing:

During integration, we’re champions for Becker Acroma — we build relationships, answer questions and defend their position. When they join a 30,000-employee company like Sherwin-Williams, they need someone to see their position.

K: *What is most challenging about being on the integration team?*

Dennis: The global nature of our business requires most of the team to travel extensively during integration. Being away from family

and friends for an extended period of time can be challenging. With cultural and language barriers, the team is challenged to ensure we communicate messages correctly and in a timely manner.

David: Being on the team demands patience. We’re the conduit in between — and must do right by both companies. You depend on a team effort, often working 8 a.m. until late at night. And being away from home requires that I have a fantastic wife! We’re in it together and we feel privileged to have this opportunity to grow.

K: *What is most rewarding?*

Dennis: Seeing the best of Sherwin-Williams, Becker Acroma, and Sayerlack blended into one organization. A year ago, we had very little business in Europe and now we have a leadership position in the industrial wood business with significant opportunity in other key product finishes segments. We’re proud of the new TEAM 150 flags we can celebrate as a result of our global expansion.

David: It’s been very exciting — it keeps us thinking every day! We’re helping to bring strong companies together and expand our footprint.



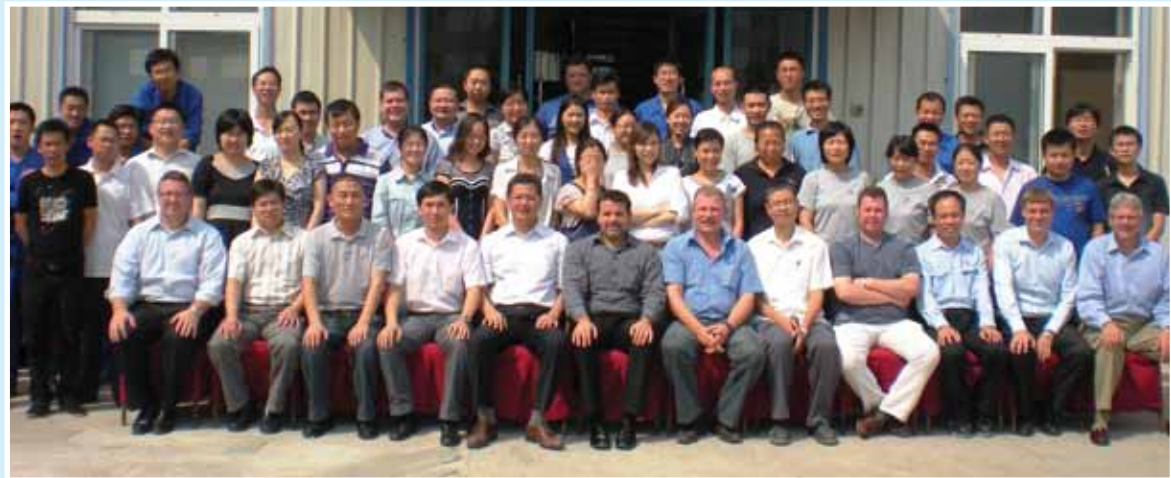
Back row (from left): Ken Gabele (Regulatory), Scott Cloudy (Sales and Marketing), David Calabria (Sales and Marketing), Joe Randene (Operations-Sayerlack), Kerry Wilkinson (Human Resources), Ben Meisenzahl (Finance), Allen Kitchen (Information Technology), Stephen Surmacz (Project Management). Front row (from left): Art Kirby (Technical), Dennis Karnstein (Senior Vice President, Europe), Graham Buchan (General Manager, Sayerlack), Curtis Warren (Information Technology), Tarik Labib (Information Technology).

Spotlight on:

Becker Acroma Employees Around the



NORWAY TEAM



CHINA TEAM



GERMANY TEAM



FRANCE TEAM



Becker Acroma



IRELAND TEAM

World



CANADA TEAM



DENMARK TEAM



UK TEAM



VIETNAM TEAM



SWEDEN TEAM



ITALY TEAM