European News

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Hyperion Materials & Technologies Acquires TEMSA

US-based Hyperion Materials & Technologies, a global materials science company specialising in advanced hard and super-hard materials for various industries and applications, has announced an agreement to acquire TEMSA Transformaciones y Estudios Metalúrgicos SL, along with its sister companies PLUSDUR SL and METADUR SL. In addition to serving its existing customers, TEMSA will become a vital part of expanding the Hyperion business to Europe. This business uses Hyperion's global footprint to provide specialised, precision finishing capabilities for tailored, high-quality wear components and tooling.

"TEMSA is exactly the partner we have been looking for to expand and enhance our custom wear part offering in Europe. Its engineering expertise, investments in machining technology, and competence working with tungsten carbide, has made the company a go-to supplier for turnkey hard materials projects," comments Ron Voigt, chief executive officer at Hyperion. "We are energised by the capabilities and talented employee base that TEMSA brings to the Hyperion family. We look forward to working together to build long-lasting relationships that will benefit Hyperion and TEMSA customers."

For almost 40 years TEMSA, a worldwide leader in tooling manufacture, has gone beyond its limits, always focused on helping customers across a wide range of industries meet complex tooling requirements. With a team of 100, including engineers, highly skilled machine operators and technical experts – at a 8,000m^2 production facility in Barcelona, Spain – TEMSA will provide a strong complement to Hyperion's European operations.

"We are thrilled to join TEMSA's expertise in high precision tool manufacturing in ultra-small batches with Hyperion's global competence in hard materials," says Xavier Collell, CEO of TEMSA Group. "By joining forces with Hyperion and its unique competences, we look forward to achieving new solutions for our customers and leveraging our combined technological expertise to drive market innovation."

A Change to WAFIOS' Executive Board

After 51 years at WAFIOS, Martin Holder has stepped down from the executive board and is starting his retirement, with the new executive board made up of Dr Ing Uwe-Peter Weigmann, speaker of the board, as well as new members Dipl Ing Jörg Eisele and Dipl Ing Martin Mayer. Dr Ing Uwe-Peter Weigmann studied forming technology at Technische Universität Berlin. During his doctoral studies, he worked with Prof Dr Günter Spur as a senior engineer in the field of manufacturing technology and machine tools and obtained a doctorate in the same area. He has been part of the executive board, heading up Engineering, since 2008. In 2012, he was appointed speaker and broadened his remit to include HR and assumed responsibility for Sales and Finance in 2017.

Jörg Eisele joined the company back in 2004. After successfully completing his degree in mechanical engineering, Eisele began his career at WAFIOS as an assistant to the head of design, where he focused on developing innovation management. Alongside his work, he studied for an MBA at the Technical University of Munich, which he completed in 2009. At WAFIOS he went on to lead the tool center and, later, the technical development department for various machine areas.

Since 2017, Jörg has been responsible for the entire tube and wire division, including the technical development, sales and commissioning departments for various machines, such as spring coiling, wire bending, CNC tube bending, straightening, chain manufacturing and eMobility machines. As of 2021, he also assumed overall responsibility for sales at WAFIOS.

Martin Mayer joined WAFIOS AG in February 2023 and is responsible for the tool centre and mechanical production. After successfully completing his degree in mechanical engineering, majoring in design and development, at Esslingen University of Applied Sciences, he joined NAGEL Maschinen- und Werkzeugfabrik GmbH in Nürtingen as a development engineer in 2007. Mayer left the company 15 years later as technical director.

Hilti Group Reports Growth in Challenging Environment

In 2024 Hilti Group increased sales by 1.5% in local currencies compared to the previous year. In Swiss francs sales declined by 1.4% to CHF 6.4 billion (€6.82 billion) due to negative currency effects. Jahangir Doongaji, CEO of Hilti Group, explains: "In a negative market environment, we saw slight growth in local currencies. In addition, we made good progress in implementing our strategic priorities in 2024 and invested significantly in our future."

High interest rates further softened the global construction market in 2024, especially in Europe, where Hilti Group's sales declined by 0.2% in local currencies. In the Americas growth was at 2.2%, with a double-digit increase in Latin America. Sales in Asia/Pacific grew by 4.7%, with the region benefiting from positive developments in North Asia. In the eastern Europe, Middle East, Africa region sales grew 5.9%, with strong contributions from the Middle East countries.

The continued appreciation of the Swiss franc, against the major currencies, led to a negative currency effect of -2.9 percentage points on sales in the full year comparison. For 2025, the Hilti Group expects a similar market environment and comparable sales growth in local currencies.

Wurth Group Maintains Sales Level

Würth Group closed 2024 with sales of €20.2 billion according to its preliminary annual financial statements. This corresponds to a year-over-year decrease of 0.9% and 0.4% when adjusted for currency effects. As a result of the lower sales volume and higher costs, the Group's preliminary operating result stands at €900 million, which is below the previous year. The persistently weak economic situation, particularly in the manufacturing industry, had a major impact on Würth Group's sales development.

Robert Friedmann, chairman of the central management board of the Würth Group, underlines: "Given the economic and political conditions, I am pleased to report that Würth Group was able to maintain its sales level of €20 billion. This development was primarily driven by the trade related areas, which showed a stable sales trend. In 2024, we stuck to our counter cyclical strategy and invested when others scaled back. Our focus is on keeping goods available and maintaining our delivery readiness for our more than four million customers worldwide."

In Germany, the Würth Group's domestic market, the Group companies generated sales of €8 billion, down 4.1%. The companies outside Germany were able to achieve slight sales growth due to acquisitions, among other things.

Bossard Achieves Strategic Progress in 2024

BOSSARD
Proven Productivity

In an environment of subdued demand and a strong Swiss franc, Bossard Group faced declining sales in the 2024 financial year – decreasing by 7.7% to CHF 986.4 million (€1.05 billion), whilst the previous year reached CHF 1.07 billion. In local currency, the decline amounted to 5.8%. Adjusted for acquisitions, sales in local currency were 7% lower than in the prior year. Sales development in the individual regions showed a mixed picture. While demand in Europe stabilised in the second half of the year, America experienced a drop in sales and Asia saw satisfactory growth. Sales in the fourth quarter declined by 2.3% to CHF 236.6 million (prior year: CHF 242.2 million), a drop of 1.1% in local currency and an organic decrease of 5%.

The restrained demand evident since the second quarter of 2023 was intensified by continuing customer inventory reductions and the strong Swiss franc. Bossard took advantage of the economic headwinds to make significant strategic progress. Technological expertise was strengthened, among others, through the successful introduction of the new IT platform in nine additional business units; market positions were expanded locally; as well as Bossard's presence in growth industries enhanced through organic growth and targeted acquisitions.

In Europe, Bossard posted a fourth quarter growth of 6.1% to CHF 136.5 million (in local currency: +7.2%). Adjusted for acquisitions, growth in local currency amounted to 0.1%. The acquisitions in Belgium and France with Dejond Fastening N.V and Aero Négoce International SAS – laying the foundation for further growth in a new market and in the aerospace industry. The acquisition of the German Ferdinand Gross Group, announced in mid-October, also enables Bossard to further expand its already strong market presence in Germany and eastern Europe. The transaction was concluded at the beginning of January 2025.

In the final quarter of 2024, sales in America declined by 27.9% to CHF 51.1 million (in local currency: -27%). Lower demand, mainly due to weakening demand in the electromobility and agriculture sector, persisted through the end of the year.

Sales in Asia increased by 15% to CHF 49 million (in local currency: +16%) in the fourth quarter. Business developments in the region were increasingly positive over the course of the year and continued to consolidate in the fourth quarter. In China, the first signs of growth became evident and demand in most of the other regional companies was likewise satisfactory. In India, Bossard benefited from the 'Make in India' initiative and in Malaysia from nearshoring trends that had a particularly positive impact in the semiconductor and electronics industries.

Bufab Concentrates on Strategy

BUFAB

Bufab Group net sales declined by -4.1% to SEK 1.86 billion in 2024 (2023: SEK 1.94 billion), with organic growth down 1.5%, as well as order intake somewhat lower. Erik Lundén, president and CEO at Bufab, comments: "During the year, we have successfully implemented our strategy across the business. We strengthened the added value we deliver to customers by an expanded service and product portfolio."

"One example is the implementation of a record number of new logistics solutions during the year that strengthen our customer relationships and provide us with an increased growth rate," continues Erik. "We also acquired VITAL, a leading Italian distributor of C-parts, and divested the manufacturing companies Bufab Lann and Hallborn Metall. In conclusion, we are in a good position to be able to deliver on our profitability target."

Bufab reported an increased gross margin in the fourth quarter, in a continued cautious market. The acquisition of VITAL, with net sales of €48 million, strengthens Bufab's position on the Italian market. During the fourth quarter the market trend continued to be cautious, resulting in organic growth of -1.5%. However, the organic growth showed an improvement compared to the third quarter, when it was -2.6%.

Erik concludes: "We continue, according to plan, to implement our strategy and our short-term priorities remain – to capture market share, gradually improve our margin and deliver a strong cash flow." ■