

VEVY EUROPE IS FIFTY YEARS OLD

Interview with Mr. Vincenzo Rialdi, Managing Director

HISTORY OF THE COMPANY

What are the distinguishing features of one of the enterprises that have made history in the sector of Italian cosmetics ingredients?

Vevy Europe was one of the first Italian enterprises to concentrate its efforts in the sector of innovatory raw materials for the dermo-pharmaceutical and cosmetics industry. *Vevy Europe* was founded in 1959 as a professional laboratory, based on an idea my father Giorgio had. He is a medical doctor and a researcher, and he is presently *Vevy Europe's* Chairman and Scientific Director. Subsequently, the company made a name for itself because of its involvement in the research and production of excipients and active principles that are highly specialized for application to the skin. In 1987, *Vevy Europe* added a microelectronics and computer science division. We have always focused our attention on innovation and quality of our products and we usually work according to multidisciplinary criterion with know-how concerning not only chemistry but also bio-chemistry and pharmacology. We are very attached to our Quality Management System that complies with ISO 9001:2008 requirements and with the EFfCI GMP Guidelines. It has further been improved by the introduction of basic elements involving health, environment and safety on the job. This management tool is so integrated in the everyday life of our company that it is one of its supporting structures.

Sales are well distributed between the dermo-pharmaceutical and cosmetic fields, and more than half of our production, which is "Made in Italy", is exported all over the world.

CROSS SECTOR POLICY AND RESEARCH

Vevy Europe is a cross-sector company; how was the choice of investing in different sectors made? How are the sectors interconnected?

Vevy Europe's activities have been sub-divided into several divisions in an effort to achieve rationalization and synergy of structures and resources. The Fine Chemistry division is the macrodivision that partially includes other divisions. For instance, the Division of Analytic Chemistry and Research, which operates within the Fine Chemistry division, supports the main division, while at the same time offers third parties its analysis skills and research know-how concerning cosmetics, pharmaceuticals and similar sectors. The division of Advanced Technologies, managed by my brother Raffaele, began developing software and systems to meet the in-house needs of the company and its laboratories. Presently, this division also uses its know-how to carry out projects for external customers involved in very different sectors.

The Publishing division is chiefly engaged in two publications that are very well known in the field: the "*Relata Tecnica*", which is a journal containing scientific papers targeted at people working in the technical sector (presently, it is exclusively issued on-line) and "*Lexicon Vevy Europe Skin Care Instant Reports*", which is a technical newsletter with less complex language, that also provides suggestions and stimuli on how to market end products.

What impulse is given to research and innovation?

The impulse for research and innovation is continuous: *Vevey Europe* lives and feeds on research and manufactures what it invents without following the latest fashions and trends. The challenges to be met in research are faced with enthusiasm, while at the same time obtaining new products and stimulating their applications.

Our products are supported and upheld by broad scientific documentation and testing all of which is carried out within our own laboratories and production facilities that have been set-up to have great flexibility.

What guidelines and requirements identify the production and distribution of the products countermarked with the DCG (Dermo Cosmetic Grade) trademark?

Our DCG (Dermo Cosmetic Grade) trademark has been specially studied to state that each individual product of the Fine Chemistry Division is designed and developed for application on the cutis. Furthermore, each product is tested according to strict protocols in the toxicology and cryptotoxicology fields, as well as for enzyme kinetics and dermatological activities. We also update all of the products included in the above-mentioned division on the basis of the most recent scientific progress and in compliance with the national and international standards of this sector.

Therefore, the DCG is a kind of regulation, a formal commitment towards the users of our products, that provides them with greater serenity and certainty with regards to their use.

ASSOCIATIVE LIFE

How does Mr. Vincenzo Rialdi face his entrepreneurial role within the company?

I began working for this company when I was a boy, somewhat as a game during summer vacations and I carried out all kinds of tasks. It was an extremely useful and educational experience because it allowed me to acquire an overall and in-depth knowledge of the enterprise. After completing my education, which was followed by other types of work experience, I decided to become fully involved in the company, and that is what I have been doing every day for the last twenty five years.

In addition to statutory and management responsibilities, I have other operational ones that include: development of Quality systems, several research projects and scientific training, all of which allow me to truly, and often creatively, apply my enthusiasm for this job.

Mr. Vincenzo Rialdi is also the new Chairman of Mapic, the Group for Raw Materials for the Cosmetics Industry which is part of Aispec-Federchimica, and he is a board member of EffCI, the European Federation for Cosmetic Ingredients: how does Mr. V. Rialdi face his industrial association commitment?

I firmly believe in dynamic cooperation that can lead to comparison, initiatives, ideas and opportunities for improvement within the association.

Life in an association offers an important opportunity for individual growth, and moreover, it forces us to open up to a view that is much broader than the one in which we usually operate. I believe that the aim should be to make the group and the sector grow in order to increase their credibility and reliability.

The enterprises that belong to this group and that invest resources in it may then indirectly benefit from the outcomes of some developments to which they have contributed. If we then consider that customers may be shared by all partners, it is important for cooperation among enterprises to be transparent and responsible.

Nowadays, Mapic and EffCI are a wonderful reality. Over time, we have achieved some truly important goals thanks to the constructive communication among all the

operators whose co-operation led to the creation of very important shared workshops, such as those organized by EFFCI-Colipa and Mopic-Unipro.

We are proud to say that Mopic (in Italy) and EFFCI (in Europe) are now acknowledged as the reference Group and Federation for our sector, respectively.

Like EFFCI and Mopic, we issued a series of *position papers* to make shared positions known in order to point the sector towards consistent and proactive behavior.

I would like to work on a campaign aimed at providing consumers with correct information. By working together, Mopic, Unipro and various consumer associations can make it possible to contend with the lack of information and with misinformation, and to help the end users understand how our business system is regulated and controlled, as well as how reliable it is .

MARKET AND FUTURE

What is your point of view about the current market and what future scenarios do you foresee in the cosmetics sector?

First of all, I believe in high quality work and in a conscientious respect for the standards that are the basic requirements which are needed to provide the market with safe products and continuity. Furthermore, I strongly support Quality in its corporate organizational meaning since Quality is a tool that allows us to offer reliability and certainties to our customers.

While some fashions may sometimes offer interesting revenues, I think that they are a poor investment for the future and that they are not useful with regards to stability. On the contrary, a sector working in a serious, linear and transparent manner sends messages to the market that positively condition future trends.

Nowadays, cosmetic ingredients are expected to include specialized services, which range from their supporting documents to specific and qualified suggestions regarding application . Customers have become "mature consumers" who are able to distinguish and understand what they use far better than in the past, and thus it is important for them to be provided with correct and complete information. Cosmetic products, which are increasingly specialized and differentiated nowadays, are considered essential goods. Generally speaking, goods that are considered important for the quality of life are usually less affected by financial crisis and economic slumps than others, and they hardly ever become non essential goods.

I believe that this interpretation of our sector may lead to continuous improvement and growth. Furthermore, I like to think in terms of a "desired future", to be reached through strategic planning: a very useful tool for facing changes, an active system to live with and ride them.

50 years is a long time – would you tell us the secret for keeping a company stable for such a long time?

There is no secret, no magic formula. I believe that choosing goals, asking yourself direct questions and giving yourself honest answers is a positive and real way to fully live your entrepreneurship and therefore to support your Enterprise.