

Lantal – Transportation Fashion: Growth Boost through Continuous Innovations

The Swiss Lantal – Transportation Fashion (www.lantal.com) – founded in 1886 by the family Baumann in Langenthal - has been able to generate during the last three years in Langenthal and in Melchnau 60 new jobs, mostly in production-near areas. Dr. Urs Rickenbacher, Delegate of the Board and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), told Textination in an interview that their strongest business field is in the areas textiles and services for interior decoration of planes – here they rate themselves as world market leader with 70% market share in seat coverings and 30% in carpets.

Further areas are textiles for busses, trains and cruise liners. A new innovative product are the pneumatic air cushions for plane seats which shall be continuously integrated in the business class of all SWISS long-range aircraft, beginning spring 2009. The pneumatic systems stand for comfort and weight savings, insofar as they use for the padding of plane seats air instead of foam. Right now they are working on pneumatic seat cushions for the economy class. Lantal is also satisfied with the development of the demand for additional services, like the cutting and finishing of whole seat casings, curtains and carpets. “I am delighted about the close cooperation with the wool spinning plant Huttwil, which belongs to our enterprise since beginning of this year”, stated Dr. Rickenbacher.

In 2007 compared to 2006 the Lantal – Transportation Fashion has been able to raise their net sales to 115,476 (106,207) Mill CHF with a high export share of 95 (94) %. The sales per employee increased to 274,000

(257,000) CHF. The investments in assets in kind amounted to 3,678 (2,766) Mill CHF. The number of employees was 422 (412) plus 14 (14) trainees. After the summer holidays five new apprentices were hired.

The subsidiary Lantal USA was founded in 1979 in Rural Hall/North Carolina and produces on location with 86 employees exclusively flat woven fabric, mostly for the transportation industry and additionally for the furnishing sector. For the coming years Lantal expect a further qualitative growth with more employees. Especially in the areas of the newly established engineering as well as in the further build up supply chain managements will additional job slots be generated in the near and far future.

Right now the company is very satisfied with the development of business of the sales, they are end of July already around 6% higher than the year before. To this result aviation and bus/ train industry have contributed nearly equally. Since the end of last year they are recording, especially in the carpet area, a topmost order stand in the history of Lantal. Also the flat area is running especially positive. This year the capacities in the carpet- and flat-area will be expanded massively, after the priority in the past three years had been in the area velour machines. The capacities here had been expanded in this time by comparably 50%.

At the Aircraft Interiors Expo Americas in Longbeach/USA from 9 to 11 September Lantal shows especially a new generation of carpets. “The new carpet will beat in the matter of weight all so far known and existing

best brands". They are evaluating currently the area shipping intensely to be able to set a new important course at year's end for the enterprise.

In Switzerland alone 28 persons are employed in development and design. The company focuses, besides on sustainability on all levels, on responsible energy management. In the Swiss production locations are two of the most important factors the water-reprocessing plant of the dye works as well as the reduction of CO₂-emissions during the whole production process. For this last one they are cooperating closely with the Swiss Energie Agentur des Bundes (Energy Agency of the Confederation). These accredited recently the

efforts of Lantal with the CO₂ -certificate 2006/07 – this for the third time since 2002. With the heat recovery in the dye works all waste water above 50 degrees Celsius is collected in a 100,000 litres tank to store the heat. By use of a heat exchanger the fresh water for the dye works is then heated. A similar system of heat exchange is used for drying the coils and strands. Additionally there are in a special processing unit all waste water cleaned so far as to be able to channel them into the public purification plant.

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