

3. Production Departments and Their Equipment

Élan Pharma is one of the most important producers in Ticino of effervescent granulates and tablets in various types of packagings. Machineries and equipments are of high technological levels and production flexibility. The production moni-

toring is carried out by a QC service in accordance with the local and international health requirements.

4. Products

Efferverscent tablets of:

- Vitamin C 225 mg

- Vitamin C 500 mg
- Vitamin C 1000 mg
- Paracetamol 500 mg
- Ibuprofen 200 mg

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Emanuele Centonze SA (ECSA)*

Chemical Trading in Southern Switzerland

What is Trading

Trading is matching demand and supply between buyers and sellers which do not know each other and which are geographically hundreds or thousands of kilometres away. In the last two decades the role of trading in international business has increased substantially because of improved world-wide communications and of progresses in manufacturing specialisation according to comparative production costs.

Trading in chemicals relates mainly to chemical raw materials (bulk products which are required in the mass production), bought and sold in thousands of tons and which bear prices ranging from 500 to 3000 USD/MT).

Key Success Factors in Chemical Trading

The basic of the saga is to succeed in buying at favourable prices and terms. Therefore, the critical point for the trader is to have a superior know-how of world-wide supply possibilities and to be well

informed about price trends, cyclical price fluctuations, sporadic shortages and surpluses, etc. Nearly equally important is the know-how about the customers, their overall requirements, their assortments, their required quality, and consistency standards.

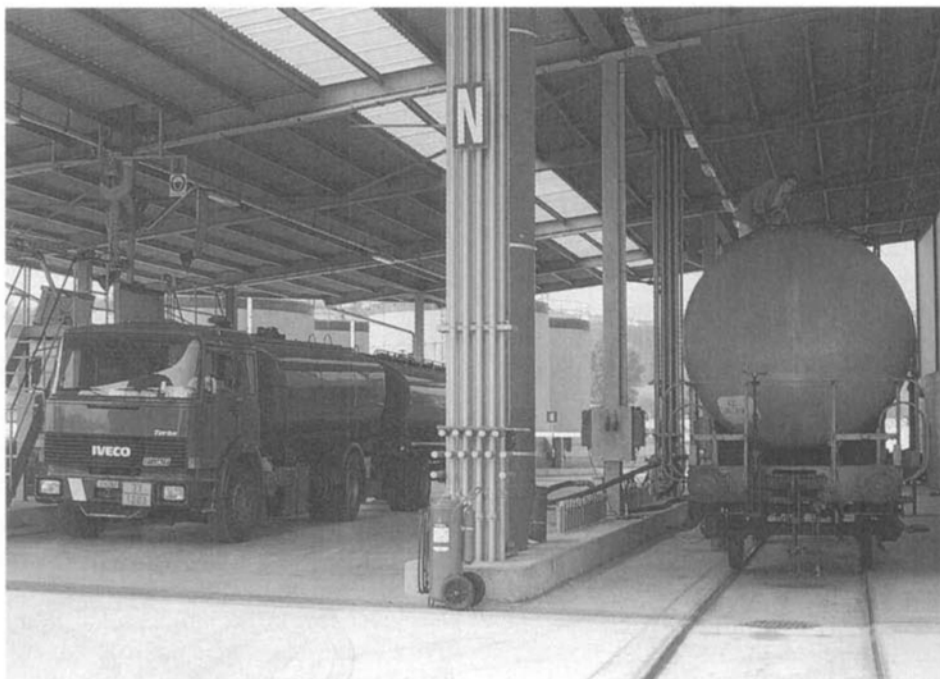
Last but not least a successful trader should not disperse his energies trying to catch every fly but has to concentrate his efforts on defined market segments on which to build up a recognised competence about customers, products, and suppliers.

Opportunities and Threats

Being able to move thousands of tons around the world with as sole equipment a phone and a fax (and even avoiding any financing costs) constitutes the attractiveness of trading. On the other side there are also some high risks involved with this business: currency exposure (the trader normally has to buy in one currency and sell in some others), adverse price fluctuations which are at norm, quality surprises which are not uncommon as well as unforeseen delivery delays not due to 'force majeure'. Not to speak of insolvent customers.

Actual Trends

Emerging and newly developed countries (China, Taiwan, Korea, Brazil, Mexico etc.) are increasing, with the help of western technology, both quantity and quality-wise their production of basic chemicals. On the other hand western coun-



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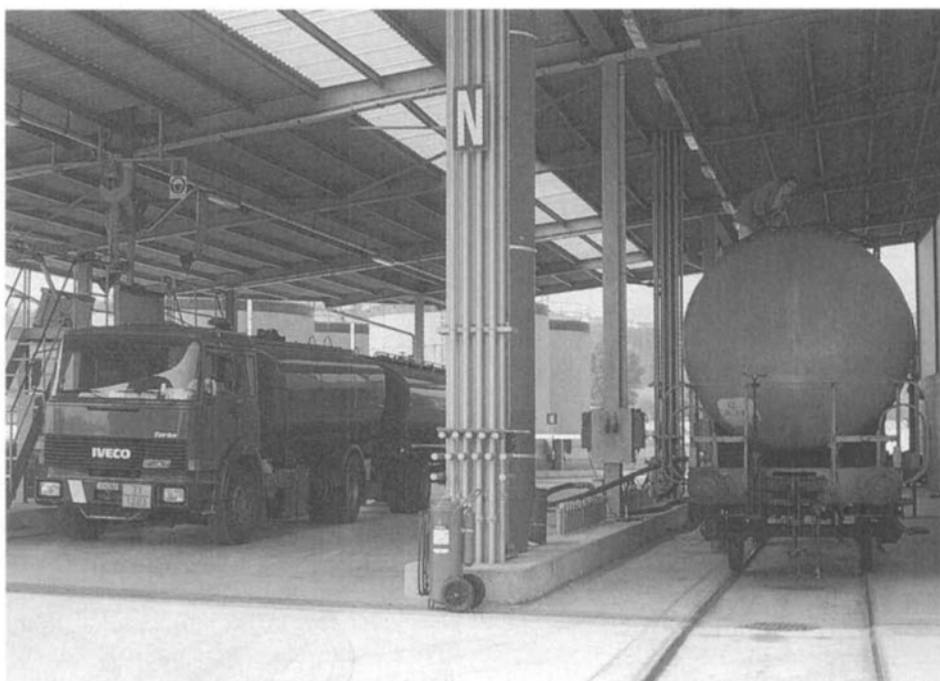
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tries are gradually dismissing risky, labour intensive and polluting activities, focusing on more sophisticated high-tech products. Lower labour costs combined with larger economies of scale due to market size strengthen the competitiveness of the new sources in the Third World and allow to overcome large distances and high transport costs. Another trend is that traditional 'pure' Traders are moving more and more towards distribution activities while traditional distributors get increasingly involved into trading in order to fully exploit the synergies between these two activities.

The Role of ECSCA in Trading

Up to the mid seventies ECSCA had confined his role to a pure local distribution activity in southern Switzerland. A broad assortment in raw materials and technical products combined with in depth knowledge of all branches using chemical products was the result of this phase. The limitation of market size forced ECSCA to take a broader view of his involvement in chemicals. The awareness of its skills combined with the advantages of the geographical location of Ticino as a link between northern and southern Europe and

the exposure to the large and fast growing region of Northern Italy, has led ECSCA to recognise the opportunities of trading and the synergies with his established distribution activity. Furthermore the high standard of logistical support required by the distribution activities of ECSCA, (railroad connection, storage facilities also for liquid products, own trucks, etc.) has busted the strategical decision to develop Trading as a related 'diversification'. Since then the trading operations of ECSCA have expanded very rapidly and constitute now a substantial profit centre of the company which potential is still not fully exploited.

Forbo Giubiasco SA*

Quintessence of Know-how, Innovation, and Quality

The manifold properties and varieties of plastics marked a fully new epoch in floor culture. In Giubiasco we started to work in this field already at the very beginning of this evolution.

From its foundation in 1905, *Linoleum-Giubiasco*, in the course of the decades has created a modern and continuously market-oriented enterprise, that has specialised in the development and production of high-quality synthetic material floor coverings. *ColoRex* pressed floor coverings belong to them and have been conceived for the most exacting demands.

Produced in the most modern plants, our products are exported all over the world. At the same time our assortment covers a wide range of the most varied floor coverings for all public and private circles, amongst which our products linoleum and *Novilon* hold leading positions. These lines of products determine more than all the others the successful and growing development of *Forbo Giubiasco SA* (turnover: 77 Mio. CHF; total staff: 173 (15.10.94); main activities: producer of vinyl floor coverings).

As a business unit for high-quality pressed floor coverings *Forbo Giubiasco SA* has the product and the central marketing responsibility for floor coverings for the following countries: Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Spain, and Hungary.

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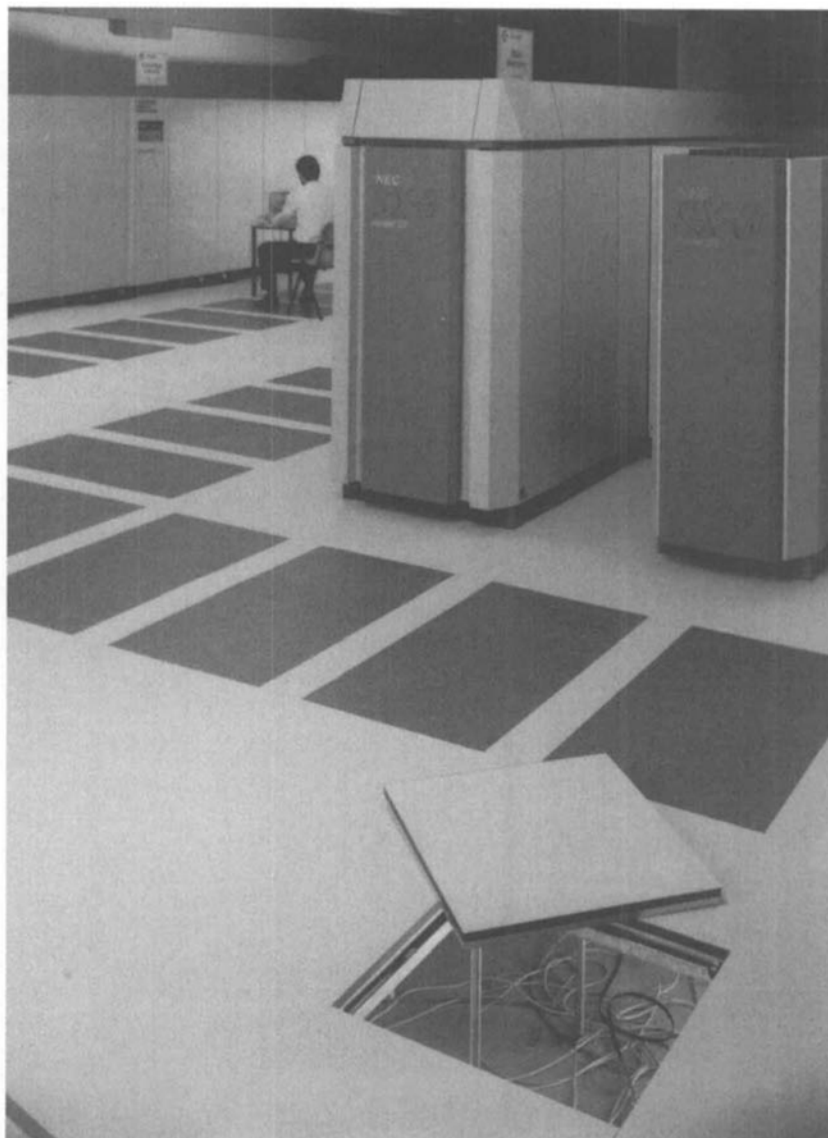


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