



SWISS SCC Annual Meeting 2011

The annual meeting 2011 took place in Zurich the 21st-22nd of January

About 120 members were expected. On the agenda one important point, the replacement of the vice president of the SWISS SCC and the election of a candidate was noted. After many years of service, *Catherine Schneider* decided to step back as vice president. *Catherine* had filled her position in the board for +10 years and she had organized many seminars and annual meetings. She had taken the Winterseminar in Champfèr forward together with her colleague *Dr. Marion Fröschle* to what it is right now. It is a highly valued scientific seminar with a strong emphasis on networking between industry peers. The president *Dr. Philippe Auderset* and the whole board thanked her for her outstanding work. The new vice president became *Dr. Fred Zuelli* from Mibelle Biochemistry and his position of Scientific Affairs could excellently be filled by *Petra Huber*, who has got the *Kurt Pfeiffer* price together with her students 2 years ago for their work in cosmetic sciences at the University of Applied Sciences in Wädenswil, part of the University of Zurich. We welcome *Petra* in the board and wish her much success in her new role.

After the general meeting the conference program started with 3 Swiss companies who represent typical Swiss cosmetic companies.

We started with *Walter Hunkeler*, from Soglio-Produkte AG, a manufacturer of cosmetic products with local raw materials from the Alps. Soglio is located in a Valley behind St. Moritz in the Engadin and the Maloja pass, in the frontier area to Italy. The region is called Bergell. It's far outside the big



Audience

cities and the big industry. *Walter Hunkeler* and his wife started with simple cosmetic products, hand-made, after they left the industrial region of Basle. They had decided to »step-in« to a new and different life. With time the hand-made cosmetics grew into an interesting niche that makes use of all kinds of natural ingredients they could get from the alpine nature around them. They still follow this approach and became a company that could offers jobs in a valley that people normally have to leave if they want to get work. The products are still made by hand, filled by hand and labeled by hand. In the mean time you can find the hand-made cosmetic products not only in Switzerland, but even outside Switzerland.

The second Swiss cosmetic producer was the company M. Opitz AG which works in two directions nowadays. They have excellent and quite flexible toll manufacturing facilities, but the origin of the company, founded by *Mila Opitz* in 1938, is still the brand *Mila d'Opiz*. The company focus was products for cosmeticians, beauty salons and schools for beauticians. In the past and today the main interest of the M. Opitz + Co. AG is a harmonic combination of nature and natural care. The presenter of this Swiss company was nobody else than the grandchild of the founder and strong lady, *Caroline Magerl-Studer*, part of the board of the company. She told the story of her grandmother who lead the company with a strong



The four leaving board members



Gala evening at Bruno Weber Park

scepter, how the name of the brand developed and how the company became what it is now. A Swiss company with a strong international business in the luxury niche of the brand Mila d'Opiz and a flexible toll manufacturing business which is also known well outside Switzerland. The third company was Mibelle Cos-

metics AG, a subsidiary of the big Swiss supermarket chain Migros. Mibelle cosmetics AG represents the high-tech toll manufacturer, who has to design many products within short time, safe, developed with the newest technologies and present in every cosmetic sector, including baby care and sun care. *Dr. Bernhard Irrgang,*

the head of product development presented the work of Mibelle. The throughput of formulations is extremely high and the know-how needed to get this work done has been developed during many years. Mibelle Cosmetics AG is not only working for the mother company Migros but also for other customers. They are one of the big toll manufacturers who supply e.g. big drugstore chains in Germany and other countries with cosmetic products. From the very simple and cheap product categories up to selected product categories Mibelle supplies its customers.

The conference part for the first day was over and after a short break and refreshing, the whole group of participants met in the hotel lobby for a surprise evening. Coaches transported all participants to a nearby park, the Bruno Weber Park. *Bruno Weber* is an artist who creates fantasy sculptures made of small mosaic tiles. The sculptures are partly quite big and the park looks like a fairy tale island. After an introduction during an aperitive in a welcome tent, a guided tour through the park was organized. Although the conditions were harsh with -5 °C, many participants joined the tour. Inside the park we had our gala dinner in a room that was just finished. During the dinner the official good-bye to the board members, who stepped back during the last year and this year, was celebrated. *Jean-Daniel Walther, Walter Kehrlé, Dr. Marion Fröschle and Catherine Schneider* got a big applause from the audience for their excellent work. As a special thank you they all got wines from the year when they started to work for the board and a voucher for a luxury wellness weekend.

For the musical entertainment a group of young men, without any instruments, were hired. Bliss, the name of the group, made such good music of different styles, imitating instruments perfectly well, that with closed eyes, one got the idea, that a full instrumentation was used. The time flew and the coaches came much too fast, to bring us back into

the hotel. The last discussions about the impressions of the day were held at the bar with a last drink.

The second day started on time with the marketing of Swiss innovative power. Three speakers from different companies and services made their contribution. The first speaker was *Dr. Stephan Feige* from htp St.Gallen with his subject »Swiss, a brand with future«. Swissness is often used for Co-Branding with the brand Switzerland e.g. Juvena of Switzerland, la Prairie Switzerland, Swiss (the airline). Companies of different industry segments try more and more to use the Swiss roots for market success. Spontaneous associations with Switzerland are characterized by the most Swiss products, followed by the beautiful landscape. Swiss products in general have a good image. The chances for growth abroad are good since Switzerland generally has a good reputation especially for care and luxury goods. The image of Swiss products and services is very stable. Studies made 16 years back and last year confirmed the image. Since the brand Swiss is not a product brand but a value brand the use for any co-branding is huge.

The second speaker, *Prof. Dr. Jürg Simon* from Lenz & Staehelin, looked into the same subject from a juridical point of view »Legal situation for the marketing of Swissness«. Swissness in practice at court means that 50% of total production cost and a substantial part of the fabrication must take place in Switzerland to be able to claim Swiss made. This practice goes back to the year 1934 and does not include any research, development and marketing costs. These rules are on the way to be updated. For the time being a self regulation is in force and companies may claim »Swiss made« if produced 100% in Switzerland, totally redesigned with typical new key elements and totally new use or if a fabrication in Switzerland in value is at least 50% of total production cost (raw materials, interim products, additives, wages, common fabrication costs). The main production procedure is not mentioned. The



New SWISS SCC Board

Swiss Cross from the flag is often used. However this use is still officially not allowed, but already common practice. The official use of the Swiss Cross will become a part of the new rules currently under development in Bern.

The last speaker of the day, *Dr. Bernhard Cloëtta* spoke about the work of the Swiss Cosmetic and Laundry Association to work on a solution for the industry branch. The SKW is standing for 90% of the industry members. They support companies with requirements around export, Swissness, technology and international regulatory needs. The network goes into the politics, federal agencies, NGO's = Non-governmental Organisations (consumers, environment etc.), national and international associations, Colipa, Economiesuisse and IG Industry Swiss. A part of the new rules within the old law is the use of the Swiss Cross which will be well defined, no misleading to the help organization of the Red Cross or the crest of the Swiss Confederation. They are watching a better protection of the Swiss origin abroad, protection of »Made in Switzerland« and flexible and practicable rules for e.g. raw materials.

Dr. Philippe Auderset shortly summarized the two days, thanked all speakers, organizers and delegates and closed the annual meeting, wishing all a good journey back home.

Next SWISS SCC activities

Advanced-Training in Olten 2011, November 17 with focus on »Law and Order, forensic and social requirements«

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