

# Nederman and Luwa join hands for a 'cleaner' tomorrow

With its expertise in air filtration and control, Nederman Group has now acquired Luwa Group which has a strong presence in the global textile space, thereby creating a stronger entity across the world. To know more about what lies ahead, **K. Prabhakar** had an interaction with the senior management of both the companies



Tomas Hagstrom, Senior Vice President and Head of Division – Process Technology at Nederman Group (center) along with Ulf Mattisson, CEO, Luwa Group and P.K. Singh, President, Luwa India

When Nederman Group acquired Luwa Group late last year, it certainly caught everyone by surprise in the global textile industry, more so because Luwa as a brand has had a formidable reputation for a long, long time. And now that the initial brouhaha over the acquisition has settled down, Luwa is all set for a new and exciting period of growth. We caught up with Tomas Hagstrom, Senior Vice President and Head of Division – Process Technology

at Nederman Group along with Ulf Mattisson, CEO, Luwa Group and P.K. Singh, President, Luwa India, to get from them more details about the acquisition and the exciting initiatives that have been lined up for both the companies.

Nederman Group with its headquarters in Sweden and staff strength of 2,300 employees is a \$450 million dollar company with four divisions. It offers products and solutions in the space of industrial air filtration that meet high

expectations on quality and profitability. The company's mission is to protect people, planet and products from the harmful effects of industrial processes. The products include consumables like filter media, ducting, portable filter units, engineered systems and systems for monitoring and controls. The group has a presence in 35 countries. Luwa Group stands for well-engineered, innovative systems, plants, and solutions for textile and other industries. Its fields of activity include textile air engineering, industrial air engineering, eco engineering and control engineering.

Elaborating on the operations of the process technology division from his office at Charlotte, USA, Hagstrom says: "In this particular division, we do a lot of large systems in process equipment. Luwa is one of the companies that now fall in my division. As you must be aware, Mikropul, Pneumafil and LCI are the other three brands in the Nederman Group. Luwa is a very big and successful company. What we are trying to do is to continue to strengthen the Luwa Group as it is. We also want to introduce some changes to serve our customers better. This would include implementation of Internet of Things (IOT) and Industry 4.0 initiatives."

"With this acquisition we are also widening our global footprint, especially across key markets in the Americas, Europe and Asia. We would like to reach the top position and therefore with Luwa we will come up with new offerings and innovations to make our performance better," he adds. As to how Luwa will complement Nederman's business and what triggered the acquisition, Hagstrom says: "The basic idea was to become a world leader by strengthening our position in the key regions. Further, the acquisition will now provide us with technology to develop not only new solutions for textiles but even for other sectors. Essentially, we can now combine the competencies of both Nederman and Luwa. Also, with Luwa's established set-up in India, we can channelise our other engineered products from the Nederman Group into India or neighbouring markets like Bangladesh. This also gives us an opportunity to bring our initiatives such as Vision Clear Air

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2025 to this region."

In recent times, Nederman Group has strongly focused on digitalization and as Hagstrom puts it: "While we have not launched anything in the textile domain, we have launched the Mikropul Assist. It is, in simple words, a system that helps the customer use the product in a more efficient way. It helps in measuring all the critical parameters. We can support the customer throughout the lifecycle

of the equipment. We are working on similar things in the Luwa space." Meanwhile, with Ulf Mattisson having taken over as the CEO of Luwa Group after having earlier managed key business portfolios at Nederman Group, one question that comes to mind is whether there will be any major changes in the pipeline.

"It has been around eight months since the acquisition and we are in the process of gauging each other's strengths and the challenges that lie before us before we evolve a strategy," Mattisson says. "We have not come out with launches in the air engineering space but may soon introduce such initiatives in the Luwa Group. We have done it in our other divisions. These are part of our initiatives for a better connect with our customers. They can now have all the critical information on their tablets, phones or on the cloud. It helps with predictive maintenance, improving quality, saving energy – the possibilities are endless," he adds.

Pointing out the importance of Indian operations in the global scheme of things, Mattisson says: "With Luwa's manufacturing facility, we are in a much stronger space than before in India. We see a lot of products being produced here and then exported to other markets. While the Nederman Group has already had an assembly unit located in Pune for some time now, having a manufacturing set-up is altogether a different ball game."

"I think we have very competent manufacturing facilities now both in India and China. We would like to focus more on them and see how best we can continue to invest in these facilities for further consolidating our presence in this region," Hagstrom adds.