LANXESS expands its X-Grade range of finishing products

Concealing leather defects sustainably

Leverkusen – Specialty chemicals company LANXESS has added two new products to its X-Grade range of finishing agents. “Now we have a complete portfolio for all types of leather, all applications and all possible leather defects that have to be concealed,” states Bianca Verstegen, head of Global Product Management Finishing in the Leather business unit. Small and medium-sized hide blemishes such as holes and scratches can be removed sustainably with the innovative X-Grade range. In addition, the microcapsule-based technology gives noticeably more uniform print retention, making the surface structure very natural-looking.

New products round off the range

The new finishing auxiliary Euderm X-Grade FH has excellent filling properties and good adhesion. It can be used on all types of leather, but is particularly suitable as a prebottom on full grain leather. It was specially developed for use in hot, humid production conditions.

Euderm X-Grade SOFT was developed by LANXESS for particularly soft nappa leather with a natural grain pattern. This transparent prebottom with excellent adhesion is suitable for both full grain and snuffed leathers, whether aniline-dyed or pigmented. It reduces the amount of base coat required and preserves the natural surface structure of the leather.

Other products for improving the grading results are already well established on the market. They include the prebottom Euderm X-Grade CGS for upgrading snuffed leather and splits, Euderm X-Grade FGS for full grain leather and Baygen X-Grade ST for patent. Euderm X-Grade SF, a filler for base coats with excellent covering power, cut-through resistance, print retention and flex
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resistance, was launched in 2012 and has proved particularly suitable for automotive leather, but also for soft shoe and bag leathers.

Megatrends of mobility and urbanization affect the leather market

Increasing prosperity is leading to a growing demand for furniture, garment and shoe upper leather, especially in the emerging economies of Asia and Latin America, and as people become wealthier, more and more of them are fulfilling their desire to have their own personal means of transport. India, China and Brazil are becoming major car nations, and local production is growing at a tremendous rate. “Around 80 percent of our worldwide production of X-Grade brands is used in the automotive industry,” says Verstegen. “Our expertise and the development of cost-efficient and environment-friendly formulations help our customers in the automotive sector to survive in this hotly contested market. We therefore expect to grow with the market.”

Each animal hide has only one grain side for making into exclusive leather goods. To ensure that this valuable natural resource is handled responsibly, and also to meet the growing demand for high-quality, natural-looking leather, it is necessary to provide splits with the best possible finish so that they can be used as well. In doing this, the profitability factor must not be ignored. “Our X-Grade range provides tanners with a comprehensive set of tools and new technical possibilities for producing good-quality leather goods even from inferior-quality raw material and thus for maximizing the area yield,” says Verstegen. And the technology is economical, too, as fewer coats are required than with conventional finishes and the area yield is higher. That saves both time and material. So the products are making an important contribution to LANXESS’ “Sustainable Leather Management” initiative.
Individual solutions to individual problems

The products in the X-Grade range can be used in the prebottom and/or in base coats, also in combination with conventional base coats. Depending on the intended use, they can be applied by spraying (air, HVLP, airless) or by roll coating. Existing methods can continue to be used. “This is an advantage in many countries or in special applications where the products are sometimes still applied by the hand stucco method,” explains Verstegen.

The filling effect of all X-Grade products is based on a microcapsule technology specially developed for the leather sector.

Detailed information can be found on the Internet at www.lanxessleather.com, where it is also possible to order the English brochure “Leather upgrading energized by LANXESS” free of charge. This gives an overview of the complete X-Grade range plus examples of recipes sorted according to type of leather and application.

The Leather business unit belongs to LANXESS’ Performance Chemicals segment, which posted sales of EUR 2.2 billion in fiscal 2012.

LANXESS is a leading specialty chemicals company with sales of EUR 9.1 billion in 2012 and roughly 17,200 employees in 31 countries. The company is currently represented at 50 production sites worldwide. The core business of LANXESS is the development, manufacturing and marketing of plastics, rubber, intermediates and specialty chemicals. LANXESS is a member of the leading sustainability indices Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI) World and FTSE4Good as well as the Carbon Disclosure Leadership Index (CDLI).

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Forward-Looking Statements.
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