



Apollo has landed at H.B. Fuller



A new partnership to increase quality and service, the British Apollo and American H.B. Fuller are far more than suppliers of chemical products but, together, have become expert advisors to help optimize RV design and production

Words Peter Hirtschulz

At first glance, the headline seems a little confusing. But with a name inspired by the cutting-edge NASA space programme, Apollo was launched in 1972 by Robert Saunders, it makes sense to introduce the merger of Apollo and H.B. Fuller this way. The Apollo business grew and remained under the Saunders family's guidance for 50 years becoming the United Kingdom's largest independent manufacturer of liquid adhesives,

coatings and primers for the roofing, industrial and construction markets. Now the company has decided to open a new chapter in its history, transferring ownership to leading global adhesives manufacturer, H.B. Fuller, to accelerate strategic growth in the UK and Europe

Aboutcamp BtoB had the chance to interview Ian Cornelius, Managing Director of Apollo and Ralf Fuhrmann, Business Director of H.B. Fuller/Kömmerring in charge of the RV- and commercial transportation vehicles markets.

Aboutcamp BtoB: Mr. Cornelius, first of all congrats to the 50th company birthday. One of the gifts for this historical event is to secure the future with a new caring mother!?

Ian Cornelius: Thank you, and yes, we

made the decision to be part of the H.B. Fuller network in order to secure the economic and innovative future of our company. The new partnership with H.B. Fuller will turbo-charge Apollo's future performance and growth.

Aboutcamp BtoB: What are the benefits for Apollo?

Ian Cornelius: We now have a strong global partner that is able to take advantage of our premium products and our unique production skills to expand across Europe and possibly worldwide. Joining H.B. Fuller will strengthen our market position and further our innovation activities with the help of international experts.

Aboutcamp BtoB: Mr. Fuhrmann, what is the benefit for H.B. Fuller in



Ian Cornelius

**this merger?**

Ralf Fuhrmann: As already said, we as the H.B. Fuller group will widen our product range and will be able to use certain production skills that are used in the UK but not yet in Europe or the rest of the world where that may provide an advantage for our customer's production. We thus support mutual understanding and joint innovative development within the framework of our industry.

Aboutcamp BtoB: What is Apollo's current position in the UK market?

Ian Cornelius: We are currently the largest independent UK-manufacturer of liquid adhesives, coatings and primers for the roofing, industrial and construction markets. In the RV-market, while a smaller part of our overall portfolio, we are the strongest supplier in the field of sandwich panel bonding.

Aboutcamp BtoB: What are the main pillars of the successful Apollo business?

Ian Cornelius: On the one side we supply premium products in the field of adhesives, that are tailor-made for our clients and their individual products and production requirements. We do not only supply products but we partner closely with our clients to determine the best solution for them. Our experts first listen, then seek to understand and then consult with customers to use the best solution for their production needs.

Aboutcamp BtoB: What is the strategy of H.B. Fuller concerning the merger with Apollo in example?

Ralf Fuhrmann: In the RV production, there are different sealants and adhesives in use - including sandwich panel production, assembly bonding and interior finishing, furniture production, various inside and outside sealing as well as glazing applications. All these individual processes are handled differently in markets worldwide.

H.B. Fuller is able to provide the most common and usable production skills required by each geographic market. This joining of our two teams of experts



Ralf Fuhrmann

will provide opportunities for both businesses to leverage the application expertise in one part of the world to benefit teams in other regions.

Aboutcamp BtoB: What do you like about the production skills and products at Apollo?

Ralf Fuhrmann: Apollo has a unique know-how of panel sandwich production with liquid moisture cure PUR adhesives in the UK market, such as their FASTACK product range. Everyone using chemical curing adhesives normally looks for long working time in combination with short press times to achieve required handling strength. That's exactly what FASTACK is offering, so cycle times can massively speed up and efficiency and output in production can increase.

H.B. Fuller offers similar technology as well as reactive and thermoplastic hotmelts, waterone adhesives for sandwich panel, flat lamination and furniture production, Eternabond® sealing tapes, and KÖMMERLING-branded elastic and structural adhesives in Europe and the United States. The merger with Apollo means that the H.B. Fuller network is now able to offer the full portfolio needed to produce high-performing solutions specifically for the UK RV-market.

Aboutcamp BtoB: Mr. Cornelius, apart from the production skills, what is the product orientated advantage of this merger?

Ian Cornelius: There are number of additional benefits; firstly, in the current climate where materials are difficult to source, it gives wider global reach from both a sourcing and manufacturing point of view. It also gives Apollo access to world-class, global R&D resources. In return, Apollo has deep expertise in the RV sector and can add additional knowledge and experience to H.B. Fuller's already vast knowledge.

Aboutcamp BtoB: Apollo was a family-owned company that stresses the personal relationship with its customers. What is the background?

Ian Cornelius: Yes, we are not simply selling our premium products and highly advanced production skills to clients. We are visiting our customers regularly in order to ensure their processes align with our professional instruction and to find out whether they are satisfied with our products. Our philosophy is to sit with clients,



hear what they need, discuss their targets, and find mutually beneficial solutions. We are very strong in the field of consultancy from the first meeting and throughout our partnership. In this way, we also offer education and trainings for the proper use of our products.

Aboutcamp BtoB: Mr. Fuhrmann, does this match to the H.B. Fuller philosophy?

Ralf Fuhrmann: Of course, 100 percent! You see, although we are a global player, we need the local know-how in order to meet the requirements of our customers in individual markets. And, moreover, we might be able to use the local know-how in quite different markets because these skills might be advantageous for clients based elsewhere. Similar as Ian is describing our way of working in H.B. Fuller is exactly the same when reaching out to customers. Our goal is not only to deliver our products, but also to work out the best possible solution for a special task under the given circumstances together with the customer. The Apollo and H.B. Fuller mindsets are a perfect fit as we are both following the same philosophy.

Aboutcamp BtoB: Beside the commercial background, what additional benefit arises from this merger?

Ian Cornelius: Our owner has a high responsibility for his (company) family. Thus, the base for the merger was to find a suitable partner, who shares the same philosophy. Throughout the process it was important that the Apollo jobs were safe after the change in ownership and that we would work together to build new job opportunities in the future.

Learn more about our adhesives and sealants for the RV industry

