



KANSAI PLASCON

GREEN IS NOT JUST A COLOUR



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Kansai Plascon (Pty) Ltd. produces paints for every imaginable application - a long term player and already the market leader in South Africa it faces a bright future in alliance with its Japanese parent company

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Plascon is a company with serious clout in South Africa, where it had its origins 125 years ago in 1889. Under his own name Herbert Evans, a new arrival to South Africa from Wales, set up a business in Johannesburg to produce polishes, varnish – and ready mixed tinted paints, a first for South Africa. During his lifetime, Evans, as well as the paint product introduced an excellent floor polish and a revolutionary Best Elastic carriage varnish that could accommodate the expansion and contraction of wood.

Innovation, quality and customer service became the hallmark of the company and the reason for the success of Herbert Evans & Co. Meanwhile, during the 1940s another young businessman named Solly Rudner was helping build a company called Chrome Chemicals, a manufacturer of Plascon paint. This brand became so popular that in 1945 a new company, Plascon Paint & Chemical Industries was created. By 1969, under Rudner’s management, Plascon had become a wholly owned subsidiary of Barsab. A merger between these two leaders was inevitable and in 1970, the premier paint company in the country, Plascon Evans was formed, a 100 million litre a year corporation, ranked amongst the top 20 paint producers in the world.

Today Plascon is the undisputed leader in both the decorative and industrial coatings market in southern Africa. Following its 2012 merger with the Japanese paint giant Kansai it

continues to drive innovation and excellence in the retail, trade, industrial and furniture coatings markets in South and Southern Africa from three strategically placed manufacturing sites in Mobeni, KwaZulu-Natal; Luiperdsvlei in Krugersdorp; and Epping in Cape Town. Kansai is itself something of an institution, having been founded in 1918, and grown to become the world’s sixth largest coatings company. However its ethos fits well the principles of Plascon and of modern South Africa. The defining character of Kansai Paint takes it well beyond the realm of products and technology. Rather, it is something invisible

to the naked eye, something that stimulates employees, enhances products, and improves skills – namely the Zen philosophy on which Kansai Paint’s founder Katsujiro Iwai based his life.

Kansai Plascon continues to champion the Plascon

brand as it expands into Africa as the continent’s number one coatings company. The company already has factories and brand presence in Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Malawi – and towards the end of 2013 it took an important step to consolidate its regional presence by acquiring a controlling interest in the Zimbabwean group Astra Industries including Astra Paints, Astra Industries’ major subsidiary, which is Zimbabwe’s leading paint company. The deal, worth about \$5.5 million, places Kansai Plascon Africa at the top of Zimbabwe’s coatings market. Hiroshi Ishino, president of Kansai Paint in Japan, has said that it’s the group’s intention to

1889
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Start of Plascon’s heritage

EXPERIENCE
INNOVATION
EXPERTISE



invest in the rest of Africa through its holding in Kansai Plascon Africa.

Astra Industries will be re-branding its products following the acquisition: it operates two divisions, Astra Paints, which is the largest paint company in Zimbabwe, with two factories, one in Harare and the other in Bulawayo, and Astra Chemicals, which markets and distributes a diversified

range of chemical products to industry. Zimbabwe is an important market with considerable potential for growth, however the latest acquisition is merely the first in a chain that Kansai Plascon Africa intends to make across the continent as it expands to consolidate its leadership position as the premier coatings company in Africa.

The automotive industry, increasingly established in the country, is an important industrial market for paints and coatings, and Platoon's leading brand products, service and technical innovations have been the benchmark for automotive paint technology in Southern Africa since the 1950s. The headquarters and manufacturing facility of

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\$5.5 MILLION

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Cost of the Astra acquisition

Kansai Platoon's automotive coatings division are based in Port Elizabeth, with marketing and sales offices throughout South Africa's major financial centres of Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban.

The company's manufacturing facility and systems have been certified by the South African Bureau of Standards as being environmentally sustainable through accreditation to ISO 14001 Certification for Environmental Management Systems. On top of that the company has been awarded numerous Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) approvals by South Africa's top motor manufacturers including BMW, DaimlerChrysler, Toyota and Volkswagen.

Plascon has a slogan: 'green is not just a colour – it is a solution'. The company has successfully implemented Environmental Management Systems in each of its South African manufacturing plants, and attained ISO 14001 certification at all of them and is actively committed to implementing environmentally considerate practices in every aspect of its business. The environmental management programme it has developed would serve as a benchmark for many chemical companies – they are based on three key pillars of compliance, sustainability, and products. Compliance means commitment to



green processes such as the ISO certification. Sustainability means commitment to green practices to ensure these manufacturing standards through business systems and processes. Products means continuously reviewing and innovating product lines with international legislation and with industry leading, environmentally aware products.

As a company with a proudly South African heritage and a strong sense of social

responsibility, Kansai Plascon is actively committed to investing in local communities and upliftment programmes across the country, as well as providing ongoing employee education on environmental and health issues. In addition to brightening the lives of thousands of children by supplying paint and in some cases, funding, to various schools, Children's Homes, orphanages and crèches, Plascon's involvement with the free CID University in Johannesburg has helped to train and employ many students to carry out building and maintenance work on the campus.

The company is also a member of Business and Arts South Africa, an organisation dedicated to ensuring the sustainability of arts across the region, and one of its employees

assists with its mentoring programme. Furthermore Kansai Plascon's support for the National Council of the Blind has helped to restore the eyesight of more than 600 people by providing much-needed annual funding for cataract operations. The Wilderness Leadership Foundation, Endangered Wildlife Trust, and the SPCA have also received assistance from Plascon – and there's a grateful penguin in East London called Molly, who, thanks to Plascon's sponsorship after she was rescued from an oil spill, enjoys a happy, healthy life at the local aquarium. **BE**

“THE COMPANY HAS SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTED ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN EACH OF ITS SOUTH AFRICAN MANUFACTURING PLANTS”

For more information about Kansai Plascon visit:
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