

Extract from Dossier Performance based on Sustainability /Original Recordings and Interviews



Interview with Dr. Friedrich Stara, Executive Vice President Laundry & Home Care

We act. Worldwide.

With its “Quality & Responsibility” logo, Henkel documents a new dimension of quality, unmistakably and absolutely, in more than 20 languages and on more than 4,000 different packagings of brand products from the Laundry & Home Care (U-W) business sector all over the world. Henkel Corporate Communications spoke to detergents head Friedrich Stara about the new brand philosophy, “Performance based on sustainability” (PboS for short).

? “Quality and Responsibility” – Is this just a fashionable phrase or is there a systematic strategy behind it?

Stara: There is much more behind it. We are setting a new standard of quality in the market, namely a combination of uncompromising product performance and the greatest possible environmental and resource conservation. We thus combine core consumer needs, such as product performance and product quality, with emotional brand values like trust and responsibility.

? What is the effect?

Stara: We lead the field in sustainability in the markets that are important for us and thus take a definite role as a trailblazer. This is typical for Henkel. Quality, sustainability, and constant efforts to develop innovations that shape the market are firmly anchored in the tradition and in the history of our Company. Just think of the many significant results of our research and development work on detergents and cleaners that have transformed the market and brought about real ecological progress. These include the invention of phosphate-free detergents, the development of high-performance surfactants, and the invention of Megaperls – to mention just a few shining examples of Henkel’s track record.

? So this is not a short-term marketing trend?

Stara: Absolutely not. The “Quality & Responsibility” strategy is a clear innovation driver and thus offers an opportunity to create long-term economic added value, that is, definite competitive advantages. Henkel has always been committed to both the quality of its brands and to sustainability. Our new claim stems from this very tradition: exceptional product performance combined with the best possible environmental compatibility and resource conservation. This is the potential we see in spurring on the development of innovative products.

? What exactly does this mean?

Stara: Our modern detergents and household cleaners, for example, already perform perfectly even at low temperatures, thus reducing energy and water consumption in the household. This demonstrates the fact that for us high product performance and environmental compatibility belong together. We must convey this message clearly and unmistakably to consumers. The new "Quality & Responsibility" product logo plays a key role in doing so. Its purpose is to make it easier for the consumer to opt for our products. After all, along with the better product performance they provide, he or she will also be buying the more sustainable solution.

? Are consumers actually willing to pay more money for more sustainable products?

Stara: We are finding that an increasing number of consumers very consciously decide on a lifestyle based on health and sustainability. These consumers combine a propensity to consume, a nature-oriented lifestyle, health and wellness with a pronounced ecological consciousness. One third of all Germans, for example, are already part of this group. Market researchers refer to this group as "LOHAS" (Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability). With their conscious and quality-oriented purchasing behavior, they are somewhat less sensitive to price and are a perfect fit for our concept of "Quality & Responsibility."

? Do you believe that sustainability will still be considered important in difficult economic times?

Stara: In the long term, certainly. Our declared strategy is to make a positive contribution toward meeting the global challenges at hand. Sustainability is by no means a short-term marketing trend, but a powerful driving force for innovation. And it will strengthen our business in the long run.

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