



Press Release

July 09, 2026

Henkel: From laundry detergent manufacturer to global player

150 Years of Henkel's History Presented in New Book

Düsseldorf – Henkel was founded in 1876 and celebrates its 150th anniversary this year – a special milestone that draws attention to the company's long and multifaceted history. In the run-up to this anniversary, Prof. Dr. Joachim Scholtyseck, Professor of Modern and Contemporary History at the University of Bonn, has conducted a comprehensive academic study of Henkel's development over several years. In his independent research, he traces the company's evolution from a local laundry detergent manufacturer to a publicly listed global company.

"Our history shows what Henkel continues to build on to this day: innovative strength, pioneering spirit, responsibility, and a strong sense of togetherness. As one of the few family-owned companies in the DAX, it is particularly important to us to preserve and pass on our history. In his book, Prof. Dr. Scholtyseck not only provides the first comprehensive account of the life and work of our company founder Fritz Henkel, but also traces the development from a laundry detergent manufacturer to the global company we are today. In doing so, he also highlights the decisive role of the Henkel family in the company's development – now spanning five generations," said Simone Bagel-Trah, Chairwoman of the Supervisory Board and the Shareholders' Committee of Henkel.

"150 years of Henkel means 150 years of innovation, entrepreneurship, and responsibility. We are very proud of that. This comprehensive study of Henkel's development through changing times underscores the company's commitment to communicating its own history openly and transparently – even during difficult periods. For us, this is more than a look back; it is also the foundation for our future development – with a clear focus on long-term, holistic growth," said Carsten Knobel, CEO of Henkel.

LOCTITE

TECHNOMELT

BONDERITE



Persil



Henkel Through Time

Henkel's history begins with its founding in 1876, continues with the launch of Persil in 1907 – the world's first self-acting detergent – and the establishment of the company headquarters in Düsseldorf, through to early internationalization with the founding of its first foreign subsidiary in 1913. Today, with more than 20 billion euros in sales and around 50,000 employees, Henkel is a global market leader in Adhesive Technologies and holds leading market positions in Consumer Brands in many countries.

Spanning around 860 pages and featuring more than 150 historical and contemporary illustrations, the book published by C.H.Beck brings the company's development to life and offers a unique insight into a century and a half of Henkel's history.

In his study, Prof. Dr. Joachim Scholtyseck examines, from a historian's perspective, the key success factors that transformed Fritz Henkel's "start-up" into today's globally operating corporation. The study also addresses more difficult chapters: it sheds light on the period of National Socialism, economic entanglements, involvement in "Aryanization," and the use of foreign forced labor. Prof. Dr. Scholtyseck describes this period in a critical and nuanced way, while also showing how Henkel assumed responsibility after 1945, confronted its past, and developed an open culture of remembrance.

"I am fascinated by how Henkel has repeatedly reinvented itself over 150 years – always in the context of the major economic and social upheavals of its time. The company's history reflects the strategic decisions that continue to shape Henkel today," said Professor Dr. Joachim Scholtyseck, Professor of Modern and Contemporary History at the University of Bonn.

Publication

The publication *"Henkel: From Laundry Detergent Manufacturer to Global Player"* is released on July 09, 2026, [by C.H.Beck](#) (hardcover, 860 pages, 155 illustrations, ISBN 978-3-406-83062-4).

Key milestones in Henkel's history can be found here: [Henkel History](#)

About Henkel

With its brands, innovations and technologies, Henkel holds leading market positions worldwide in the industrial and consumer businesses. The business unit Adhesive Technologies is the global leader in the market for adhesives, sealants and coatings. With Consumer Brands, the company holds leading positions especially in laundry & home care and hair in many markets and categories around the world. The company's three strongest brands are Loctite, Persil and Schwarzkopf. In fiscal 2025, Henkel reported sales of about 20.5 billion euros and adjusted operating profit of around 3.0 billion euros. Henkel's preferred shares are listed in the German stock index DAX. Sustainability has a long tradition at Henkel, and the company has a clear sustainability strategy with specific targets. Henkel was founded in 1876 and today employs a diverse team of about 50,000 people worldwide – united by a strong corporate culture, shared values and a common purpose: "Pioneers at heart for the good of generations." More information at www.henkel.com

Photo material is available at www.henkel.com/press

Contact	Kathrin Brokmeier	Hanna Philipps
Phone	+49 211 797 8605	+49-211-797-3626
Email	kathrin.brokmeier@henkel.com	hanna.philipps@henkel.com

Henkel AG & Co. KGaA