

# Structures for the future

GROWTH, INTERNATIONALISATION AND EXPANSION OF THE FIELDS OF COMPETENCE ACROSS THE WHOLE PROCESS CHAIN OF BAKED GOODS MANUFACTURE HAVE ALLOWED THE KAAK GROUP TO BECOME ONE OF THE WORLD'S BIGGEST SUPPLIERS OF BAKERY TECHNOLOGY. THE GROUP IS NOW PREPARING ITSELF FOR THE FUTURE WITH NEW ORGANISATION STRUCTURES



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**++ First row, from left to right:** Erik van Opstal, Günther Fliszar, Pascal Attané, Maurizio Tabarelli, Lodewijk van der Borg

**Second row, from left to right:** Aart-Jan Hartman, Roel Jansen, Jan Vermeulen, Willem Huijink, David Marsh, Hans van Beek, Hein Jansen

**+** Bernard Kaak started manufacturing baking pans and trays in the small town of Terborg in the Netherlands in the late nineteenth century. This developed into a prosperous business. When increasing numbers of bakeries in Europe began automating their production units in the nineteen sixties, Kaak built the necessary conveyor plants, pan storage systems and depanners.

The big period of growth began in the nineties after Jan Kaak, the founder's great-grandson, became the company's head. The product range of the Kaak Nederland b.v. (formed from Kaak Food Production Systems and Kaak Bakeware) was enlarged and today comprises more than 20 different machines and plant types, and an IT subsidiary that develops its own controllers was founded. Kaak systematically bought companies that fitted into its portfolio and helped it become a full-service supplier of bakery lines: in 1991 Benier, a Dutch manufacturer of dough dividers and dough make-up plants, in 1997 the German thermal oil oven manufacturer

Daub, in 2005 the Italian oven and plant constructor MCS, which dominated the pizza business, and in 2007 Lhotellier R2A in France, a company that coats pans and trays, among other things, with Teflon (Kaak Bakeware already made silicone coatings) as well as Multiparts for the area of mechanical engineering, conveyor technology. Finally in 2009 Kaak founded DrieM, a business that complements Benier and manufactures dough make-up systems, focusing on dough sheeting plants.

Group sales more than doubled in the growth years, and last year they reached EUR 125m. Sales are generated on every continent. In Europe, Brest to Vladivostok is the home market, and the USA is traditionally an important market. Asia and especially China together with Latin America are among the growth markets, and only last year Kaak supplied an entire bread line to Africa. Here again, as in the Middle East, the baked goods market is in a phase of restructuring from small artisans to industrial suppliers who consider it important not to be compelled to grapple with a dozen

suppliers but to find a partner who supplies them not only with the plant but also training and support up to the point where the personnel and the plant are producing together without any problems.

The rapid growth has now led to a considerable change in the organisation structure. Jan Kaak says: "On the one hand we have reached a size that needs new management and organisation structures. On the other hand, the markets have changed and have also expanded. To name just one example, whereas in the past we dealt with bakers, we now meet investors and financial people. The requirements of an investor in Africa are different to those of one in China or in Europe. We must adjust to that, both with our sales organisation and with our production and service organisation. That's why in the past few months we have developed a new organisation structure that enables more flexibility and uses all the competences that exist in the Group. We want to be able to offer the optimum solution to every client, no matter how big he is or where he is or what he wants, and to be in a position to implement it as quickly as possible."

In concrete terms, a company group structure was set up with the Kaak Group as its umbrella. The Group's operational business is in the hands of its directors Lodewijk van der Borg, Aart-Jan Hartman and Willem Huijink, with van der Borg acting as the spokesman for the Board of Directors (Managing Director), Hartman being responsible for Sales and Marketing, and Huijink looking after the finances. Jan Kaak takes on the function of President Commissaris (Chairman), a controlling position similar to the supervisory board of a limited company.

The umbrella organisation, whose registered office remains in Terborg, is responsible for the Group's strategic alignment, both with regard to the markets that are served and also with regard to the product portfolio. At the same time, one focus will probably be the enlargement of the Group, regardless of whether this is by cooperations, as recently with ECS, by the purchase of further businesses or by founding its own subsidiaries. Organising the project business is a part of its area of responsibility, which also includes the legal design

of international contracts, which nowadays often run to several hundred pages. It controls the central marketing, research & development, distribution and finance departments.

The following eight business divisions are now affiliated under the group umbrella:

**+ Kaak Food Production Systems**

Terborg, The Netherlands

*Mechanical engineering, conveyor technology*

**+ Benier Nederland B.V.**

's-Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands

*Dough dividers, bread and bread roll plants*

**+ Daub Backtechnik GmbH**

Hamburg, Germany

*Thermal oil ovens*

**+ Driem Dough Sheeting Technology B.V.**

's-Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands

*Dough sheeting plant*

**+ Kaak Bakeware**

Terborg, The Netherlands

*Baking pans and trays*

**+ Lhotellier R2A**

Contres, France

*Pan and tray coatings*

**+ MCS Srl**

Ala, Italy

*Air circulation ovens and pizza lines*

**+ Kaak Multiparts**

Terborg, The Netherlands

*Mechanical engineering, conveyor technology*

The subsidiaries each bear individual profit/loss responsibility and can define their market strategies themselves beyond the extent to which they participate in project business within the group or cooperate with other individual Kaak subsidiaries. An example of this was revealed recently by the thermal oil oven constructor Daub in Hamburg, who in addition to the project business, plans to focus more in the future on the artisan markets in Western and Eastern Europe (see p. 28, bbi 5-2011). +++

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