



# EXPO DETERGO - A GREAT NEW VENUE FOR AN EXCELLENT SHOW

IRVING SCOTT WAS THERE

**This year's Expo Detergo laundry and drycleaning exhibition was in a new venue at the Fiera-Milano Exhibition Centre on the outskirts of Milan in the heart of the Northern Italy economic powerhouse. For those new to Milan, transportation was very easy, with excellent road, rail and subway connections to and from downtown Milan and from the new Milan-Malpensa Airport.**

The 2010 exhibition was ground breaking in the widest possible sense, in that the quality of the presentation of the booths was exceptionally good and the 'great and the good' of the heavy-duty industrial laundry manufacturing businesses turned up in force with booths commensurate to their ranking in the world of high-efficiency textile care processing. In short, this was a show not to be missed and it will have given the former 'championship exhibition' title holder, Messe Frankfurt, plenty to think about in terms of venue image, as well as style and size.

Record attendances were racked up and we understand that the total for visitors to the previous Expo Detergo had been exceeded well before the close of the show on 18 October. There were hundreds of drycleaners taking in the dozens of very well-presented booths but – and surely this is surprising – there were very few UK representatives from the British drycleaning businesses.

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The fair was absolutely buzzing. There really was a great atmosphere. I've been to a good few exhibitions over recent years and this one really did stand out in terms of atmosphere and there was good business to be done.

“The highlight for us was the new Pony Angel shirt finishing machine. It really does 'finish' the shirts – there is literally nothing that needs doing when the garment comes off the machine and I was very impressed with the speed and simplicity of use.

“I was visiting the show with a client who has a great deal of experience in shirt processing and he genuinely couldn't believe the quality of the Pony machine and its results.

“So, yes, we're very excited about introducing it into the market.”

Jason Alexander  
Managing director  
Renzacci UK plc

No doubt too many were too concerned with survival, but surely Detergo was a great opportunity to learn more about advanced options for improving your business?

One of the major events in heavy-duty laundry was the re-emergence of **Lavatec Laundry Technologies Inc.**, as a significant new source of competitive machinery for the industrial laundry. Lavatec GmbH, is now owned by Wolf-Peter Graeser and has recommenced production in the original Heilbron manufacturing facility in south-central Germany.

Graeser assured us during an hour long discussion that: “I had the choice of three different banks for new capital and the business, having been bought from the administrator, is running in profit from sales generated from a very frustrated order book, which was in-house, when the former company ceased trading nearly a year ago.

“We have delivered \$2.5 millions worth of business so far since the official commencement date of 1 June 2010 and our 'pipeline' of quotations is looking very positive across the world. The former company comprising various Lavatec subsidiaries was never in administration for lack of business, that sad circumstance was due to the very expensive staffing situation in America and elsewhere and the poor management of this by the former directors.”

From information which we discovered from new and former Lavatec staff around the show, there is wide acceptance of the ability of Wolf-Peter Graeser and of his experience and capabilities as an experienced engineering manager in his previous careers. Our impressions were favourable too, but in discussions with Graeser, he acknowledged that his new company had a difficult series of challenges to overcome in a competitive market, under very difficult worldwide financial strains. The new Lavatec needs lots of luck as well as goodwill from a market not usually prone to making serious investment decisions based purely on sentiment.

**Milnor** was possibly the most upbeat of exhibitors as, at the time of our visit, they were proudly receiving a prestigious award for technical excellence from Andreas Janning, senior master of Textile Washing Technology with the RAL division of the world renowned Hohenstein Laboratories, GmbH & Co, based at Schloss Hohenstein in Boennigheim Germany. This award was given

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The vibe was definitely positive and I got a feeling of optimism from both the visitor and the supplier side. I was very pleasantly surprised by the numbers of exhibitors and the obvious effort which they had put into their stands. It was as if everyone was flying a flag in support of our industry.

“From the point of view of a company just beginning to establish itself in new machinery sales, Expo Detergo was a good chance to meet up with people and thank them for their support and to give us an opportunity to start developing new relationships.

“Unisec and Rontondi are our main suppliers on the drycleaning and garment finishing sides and we were able to reaffirm our links with them. We also spotted a number of interesting products that have potential for the UK market and will be hopefully launching them in the near future.

“There were a good number of visitors from the UK. We actually unexpectedly sold a new SESERV machine from the Unisec stand, which is always a bonus.”

Jonathan Gray  
Sales director  
S & E Services Ltd

to Milnor for the technical advances made in the design of the PulseFlow batch washers, now being delivered to the world market at the rate of one per month from their Kenner La. base.

PulseFlow Technology combines 'True Top Transfer' with a standing bath and counterflow occurring in every module of the washer except the last. For the greater part of each cycle, utilising the 'PulseFlow' concept without counterflow creates standing baths, so that chemicals are allowed to perform their function better without being diluted. Then for the final quarter of the cycle high velocity counterflow water is injected into each chamber, thus providing the required dilution very quickly, with less water when compared to full-time counterflow. In addition, rinse modules are not required meaning more production from fewer modules in each PulseFlow system installed.

In our opinion this is a real feather in Milnor's cap, especially so in the European marketplace, where Hohenstein certification is usually taken as a symbol of technical

excellence and a 'badge' of performance efficiency well worth wearing. As if to prove the point a contract was signed on the Milnor Booth for one, eight stage, 68 pound, batch washer to be shipped to a US-owned laundry; of which we will no doubt hear more in due course.

**Jensen Group** is well established worldwide, with increased manufactured product now being shipped from its enlarged Panama City, Florida, facility.

Jesper Jensen, CEO and son of the Jensen Group founder, Jörn Jensen, was very positive when we asked him for his view of the North American market: “Next year we have budgeted to deliver \$70 million into the American user base and we are finding that this market is expanding. There is still a huge potential market for Jensen here and the market seems more ready to install processing machinery which gives both energy and operating efficiencies in general.”

The push to move laundries world-wide, to steam-free operation, is part of Jensen's market positioning and the

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It's been a difficult couple of years but I think we're starting to see green shoots. That was reflected in the fair. The 'big boys' were all exhibiting and it was good to see the machines on display but it was clear that companies were not wasting money on putting together fancy stands.

“I spent two days at the show and overall I would put the mood as cautiously optimistic. As ever, it was good to meet people and to have the chance to talk over the latest developments in the industry. As far as the drycleaning machine market goes the question is still open as to the solvent of the future – the answer you get depends on who you talk to!”

“There was a noticeable development from various manufacturers for shirt pressing machines following on from the blow finish. It appears that major investment has been made to produce pressed shirts. For many years this type of machinery has come from the USA i.e. Hoffman New Yorker Inc.

“In the UK the will to invest in big money equipment is there but finance remains a problem for a lot people.”

Len Woollard  
Unit Steam Engineering

Clean-Tech concept addresses both environmental as well as cost, savings.

Clean-Tech is a steam-free laundry initiative which is gaining increased acceptance in the US and elsewhere in Jensen's world-wide reach, with more than twenty steam free laundries now installed. Jensen believes that only when the boiler house is eliminated will true energy efficiency and cost savings on a grand scale be achieved. By adopting a totally steam-free operation, means that up to 65 per cent energy savings can be expected from the laundry operating costs.

And so to **Kannegiesser GmbH**, in this case showing on a large booth showcasing the vast range of products from Vlotho, Germany, via its wholly-owned subsidiary: Kannegiesser Italia Srl. The main emphasis for the world market was flatwork processing with interest focussed on the new Kannegiesser EMX feeders, suitable for high capacity feeding of sheets. This machine was well received and the regular demonstration always brought in the crowds. The fact that it is able to feed up to 900 sheets in one lane without the operator needing to find the sheet corner was, we thought, impressive

“Basically the American market for us, for example, is founded on output and processing speed,” said Michael Harre, managing director, sales and marketing, of Kannegiesser Flatwork Division.

“Here we tend to deliver 1.3 metre wide PowerPresses and the large 75kg to 100kg continuous tunnel washers. We also provide high velocity feeders and folders running at 50/60 metres per minute. Our target is to produce and combine high quality with high productivity with equally high consistency in workflow, so that operators and machines work in harmony with efficient output resulting. For example, over 35 HPM three-roll ironers per month are now leaving the factory and these are all in stainless steel construction utilising heating band technology.”

Martin Kannegiesser, owner and chairman of Kannegiesser GmbH, commented to us that the market in the US as well as in Australasia and the Far East was improving fast, from a low period in 2009 and that an increasing number of projects for significant laundry investment were now being received by the US company.

The 'big four' manufacturers reviewed above will find the laundry machinery market determined to extract maximum value for money against each investment commitment.

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Paul, Sheila & Nicholas Higgs of Dane Realstar took the opportunity of the Expo Detergo Exhibition in Milan, to take a look at the latest equipment on offer from the major industry suppliers.

“Our immediate reaction was, all the suppliers had really taken the exhibition seriously and supported it with impressive stands, full of interesting equipment.

“As the Realstar Srl and SidiMondial agents in the UK, we were obviously interested in what was new! On the Realstar stand we saw several innovative machines for use with hydrocarbon and GreenEarth solvents.

“Perhaps the most interesting was the 'Vision Machine'. This machine does not use water and is very energy efficient with low electrical loading.

“These machines are available with capacities ranging from 10kg, 15kg, 18kg to 25kg.

“With regard to the old faithful perc machines, the new 'R' Range is now available with capacities of 18 and 25kg in addition to the useful 10-12-15kg machines. These are available in two-tank slim, two-tank wide and three-tank wide configurations.

Realstar (part of the FMB Group) has also signed up for machines using System K4, the halogen-free solvent by Kreussler, a very exciting progression in the industry of which we are sure we will hear a lot more in the future.

“Sidimondial, were demonstrating their full range of equipment including the new Major Plus blown shirt machine which had an advanced system for finishing the shirt yoke and cuffs.

“We must have walked miles viewing all the goods on show. It was well worth the visit.”

Kannegiesser and Jensen will find the competition sharper than for the past few years as both Milnor and Lavatec give every appearance of bringing strong competitive offerings to the world market. A ringside seat should be reserved for this forthcoming 'Olympic-scale' commercial battle between the competitors for advanced laundry equipment, who will all need to rehearse, with great care, the essential points of their technical presentations to what is - increasingly, a very sophisticated marketplace.

Last but not least in technology terms is **Laundryscan** from **St. El. Industriale**, based in Palazzolo, Italy. This add-on device, which can be retro-fitted, uses infra-red scanning to detect and identify holes, tears and other blemishes in sheets being processed through feeders and folders. Audible signalling informs the operator of any defects and the electronic control interface eliminates false signals. The Laundryscan system will be entering the market via selected distributors in second quarter 2011.

**Issa S.p.A** drycleaning machines, announced their plans to develop sales and service support for the IPURA range of multisolvent drycleaning machines in the UK with the appointment of sales representation and service personnel to be based in the southern part of England covering the south. The IPURA Jet Clean Technology system will be of significant interest to all unit shop owners as it can process using Jet technology using either hydrocarbon solvents as well as cyclosiloxane products which are claimed to be the 'greenest' cleaning solvents available.

As perchloroethylene solvent is subject to increasing environmental pressure, especially in the US, Germany, France and Denmark, machines which can be easily switched between solvents - without engineers attending on site - will be of great interest to those in the market with machines which are coming to the end of their economic and productive lives. The IPURA Jet Clean Technology system has been installed successfully in Germany where more than 150 installations already exist and in the US where IPURA HCS and cyclosiloxane systems are

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The Expo Detergo Exhibition has been a great success for Girbau,” says Jordi Bosch, the company's sales director for EMEA.

“We had more visitors and stronger interest in our latest innovations than we were expecting.

“Our stand had two separate areas for visitors: one for our commercial laundry customers and an industrial section featuring the new EcoTunnel System™ batch washer, a flatwork ironer and a towel folder.

“Aimed specifically at smaller to medium sized industrial laundries, the new Girbau EcoTunnel System™ offers energy savings of 80 per cent and water consumption reduced by 75 per cent compared to the use of around six to eight high capacity washer-extractors. This level of savings can have a hugely beneficial impact on laundry profitability as well as a spectacular reduction in environmental impact.”

numbered in the hundreds.

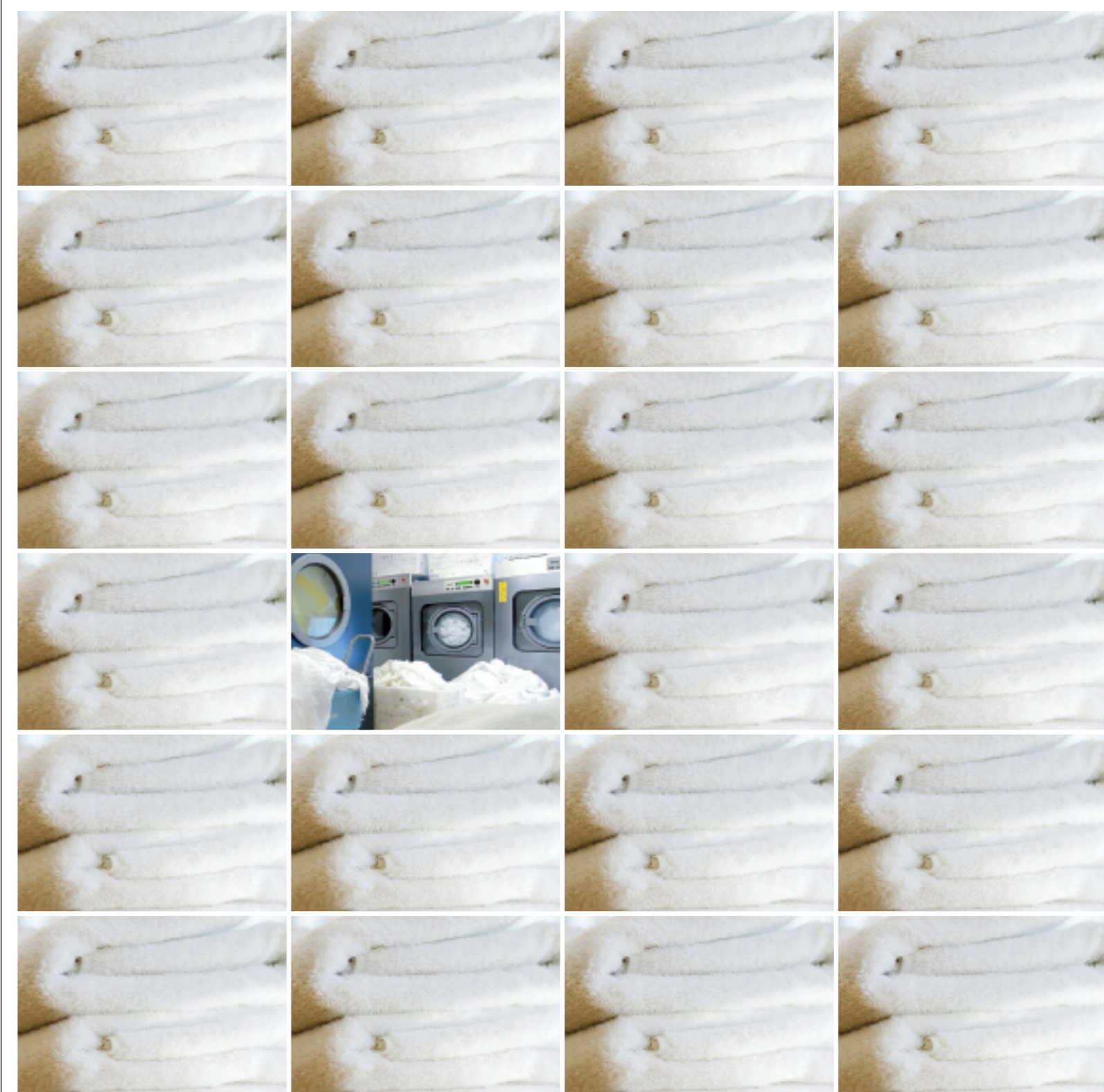
Finally news from **Electrolux** that significant marketing and sales management efforts are being directed at the LAGOON range of Aqueous processing systems.

Entrepreneurial drycleaners will see the immense possibilities of using the LAGOON system in order to capitalise on the market and business development potential of this system. Over 150 systems are now installed

in France and as the percentage of washable garment entering the market is constantly rising, coupled with the technical reduction in the need to dryclean garments, there can be a considerable degree of

confidence in developing a new business model in your approach to the professional garment care market. If that doesn't start your commercial juices flowing then the marketing weight which

Electrolux are putting behind this market-leading Aqueous system surely will. We recommend that you start investigating the value in the potential of this system very soon.



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