

Interview with **Olivier Chantraine**
Associate Director of the **Saint Amand Group**
Lille, France – 19 June 2009

NovembaI. Can you please give us an overview of your company's activity and its background?

Olivier Chantraine. When it was founded in 1967, St Amand was an independent family-owned company. This is still the case, although now we refer to the Saint Amand group since we have acquired other springs.

The brand was initially distributed locally, and now we supply store brands all around France and are leaders in some cases.

We sell 500 million bottles per year for a turnover of 100 million euros. We have recorded steady growth over the past 40 years.

NovembaI. What range of products do you sell?

Olivier Chantraine. We cover the markets of still, sparkling, plain and flavoured waters with a mineral scale ranging from 28 mg to 2000 mg. We offer all standard packaging found on the market: from 33 cl to 5 litres, including Bag in Box.

NovembaI. Why did you choose NovembaI?

Olivier Chantraine. NovembaI is synonymous with reliability and quality. In addition, NovembaI is a group that is focused on innovation. These are rare, important criteria.

NovembaI. Let's talk about your choice of the NovembaI sports cap: Novactive™ 30/35

Olivier Chantraine. We decided to use several types of sports caps to distinguish between our "brand" offering and our store brand offering. NovembaI caps convey an innovative image and rhyme with quality. Novactive fulfils the number one selection criterion of consumers: practicality. Plus, when we make choices, we take the entire offering into account, and we greatly appreciate NovembaI's efforts in terms of innovation and competitiveness.

NovembaI. Now let's talk about your choice of the NovembaI one-piece cap: Novaqua™ 30/35

Olivier Chantraine. It's the best cap when it comes to adaptability. It's really easy to open and the grooves allow for a good grip. The opening forces are perfect.

NovembaI. What are your objectives and growth levers?

Olivier Chantraine. We're expanding our group through external growth. Our objective is to offer a range of water that covers the entire mineral scale. We stand apart thanks to our positioning and a physiological sales pitch. Water's various properties are at the heart of our communication. This strategy is unique on the mineral water market and runs contrary to conventional marketing strategies. Our base line "returning to the bare essential" takes on all of its meaning in this context.

NovembaI. What is the profile of your customers? What is your export market share? Is NovembaI's international presence a selection criterion?

Olivier Chantraine. Our export business, particularly in England and Benelux, accounts for approximately 5% of our total business. We have decided to focus on expanding our activity in France. We have a local vision of markets and the majority of our springs supply regions in France. However, NovembaI's international dimension allows us to be in connection with the global market and keep abreast of current trends. That's an added value that makes all the difference.

Novemba. Where do you stand in relation to the environment?

Novemba is committed to protecting the environment. Is that an argument that is important to you?

Olivier Chantraine. We are highly committed to protecting the environment. We always have been. In 2003, we obtained ISO 14001 certification. This standard merely provided official recognition of all the efforts we had been making for so long. However, we made a choice not to devote a specific budget to environmental communication.

The fact that Novemba focuses its efforts to promote the environment is obviously an extra argument that confirms our choice.

Novemba. What trends have you observed in terms of packaging in general?

Olivier Chantraine. Use of PET bottles is on the decline – around 9% fewer bottles were sold in 2008. This is primarily because tap water is becoming more popular. The main reason for this is the drop in purchasing power. However, other reasons such as intensive communication campaigns run by public corporations accentuate this phenomenon.

Novemba. How do consumers currently perceive the environment?

Olivier Chantraine. I don't think consumers are very interested in this matter at all. Before focusing on the environment with products like water, they tend to reduce their consumption of other types of products.