

Press Release

Etex celebrates 30 years in Japan at the opening of its new Microtherm factory

Brussels, 13 March 2014 - **With the official opening of its new Nippon Microtherm factory and headquarters in Tsu City (Japan), Etex is also celebrating a 30-year presence in Japan. The site will support business development in Japan, South East Asia and Australia. By 2016, the company will have invested approximately 1 billion yen or 10 million euro in the new facility, which is already operational. The investment is part of Etex's growth strategy for the high-performance insulation (HPI) products of its Promat division.**

After investing 12 million euro into its subsidiary Microtherm in Sint-Niklaas (Belgium) and 2.8 million euro in a new Microtherm factory in Maryville, Tennessee (US), Etex is now pursuing its growth strategy further in Japan. Marking a 30-year presence in the country, Etex celebrates the opening of a new facility and headquarters in Tsu City.

The hub driving Promat in Asia

"We're not only celebrating our 30th anniversary in Japan, but also the completion of our strategic plan in Tsu City," explains Paul Van Oyen, Head of Division Fire Protection and Insulation at Etex. "The goal is to turn the new facility into the Asian hub for Promat."

The industrial area of Tsu City proved to be the perfect location for the new site. "At Tsu City, we not only have a skilled labour force, we will also benefit from the availability of raw materials, excellent supply chain prerequisites and a forward-looking administration which supported the investment with incentives and subsidies," says Steven Heytens, Director of Etex's HPI business unit.

Headquarters will move from Tokyo to Tsu City, while a small satellite office remains located in the Japanese capital. "This move allows us to streamline all transactional processes, maximise synergies and optimise customer service," Steven Heytens adds.

Optimising infrastructure and machinery

The construction of the 6,626 m² factory started in July 2013. Running over three years, the 10 million euro investment also involves an upgrade of machinery and infrastructure. "By the end of the first quarter, a new state-of-the-art multi-needle machine will be fully operational," says Steven Heytens. "In the course of this year, we will also install a 400 tonne granulator and take delivery of an automated board machine."

All of these investments enable Etex to increase Promat's capacity and integrate warehousing services at Tsu City. What's more, increased standardisation will allow the group to respond more swiftly to local demand. The factory will have an estimated workforce of 35 employees.

About Microtherm

Microtherm is the leading provider of advanced thermal insulation solutions for applications at all temperatures. Through a wide product range it offers the thinnest possible lightweight insulation systems and highly qualified technical expertise.

The headquarters in Sint-Niklaas, Belgium, house the centre of expertise and the main production facility. Microtherm also has manufacturing facilities in Japan and in the United States.

Microtherm is a wholly owned subsidiary of Promat International which, in turn, is a major subsidiary of Etex. For more information: www.microthermgroup.com

About Etex

Etex is a Belgian industrial group that is specialised in manufacturing and marketing building materials. Its four core businesses are: cladding and building boards in fibre cement and plaster, roofing materials, passive fire protection and high performance insulation, and ceramic floor and wall tiles. In Belgium, apart from its headquarters, Etex has three production sites and two R&D centres.

With over 18,000 employees operating on 123 production sites in 45 countries and with an annual turnover of more than 3 billion euro, Etex is an international player in sustainable building materials and solutions. For more information: www.etexgroup.com.

More information

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