THE FIRST LOW THICKNESS, WATER RESISTANT CORKTECH FLOATING FLOOR
Editorial

2014 is another milestone in the history of Corticeira Amorim. Over the past five years, the Company has generated record sales turnover and results and 2014 is no exception.

I would first like to express my sincere thanks to all our employees. Their humility, dedication, passion, pragmatism, market focus, and remarkable ability to question their comfort zone, have helped ensure Corticeira Amorim’s competitiveness and, as a result, our success.

The last 12 months have been marked by the launch of new products, the creation of new companies, the start of important partnerships and participation in prestigious events, thereby continuing to ensure that cork enjoys major international projection. Given the high level of receptivity obtained from our stakeholders I would like to highlight the following achievements: the launch of Helix – the most important wine packaging innovation for many years, which is already being marketed in major international trade chains —; the creation of a cork surfboard for the world-record holder, Garrett McNamara — in partnership with Mercedes Benz and Polen Surfboards —; our presence in Istanbul Design Biennial — in an environment associated with world-class architecture and design, where cork was in the spotlight, in an emerging market to which we’re currently paying great attention. Finally, I’d like to mention the establishment of Amorim Cork Ventures. With an initial investment of EUR 1 million, it already has an interesting project portfolio and is positioned as an important tool for capturing new cork-related business.

This is undoubtedly a good environment to start 2015 — where we once again hope to present important developments in all of Corticeira Amorim’s business units.

In terms of new products, special emphasis should be placed on the launch of the Hydrocork collection, from Amorim Flooring, that will enhance the portfolio in this area. By combining three distinctive factors — low thickness, water resistance and incorporation of cork — Hydrocork is the first Corktech product that will reach the market with a proposal for differentiating flooring, offering superior performance in terms of thermal and acoustic insulation, comfort, physical well-being and impact resistance. We are certain that this innovation will mark a key step forward and will foster renewed awareness about cork flooring and its potential.

Clearly aware of the risks and opportunities that 2015 will bring, we will remain alert, engaged and focused on further leveraging the potential of cork and the leadership of Corticeira Amorim in different sectors.

Kind regards,

António Rios de Amorim
Amorim Flooring has just released the Wicanders’ Hydrocork collection – the first flooring that combines reduced thickness and water resistance with all the advantages of Corktech. The novelty was first presented at BAU 2015, one of the main annual exhibitions of wall and floor coverings, which runs between January 19 and 24 in Germany, and marks an important step forward in the flooring industry.

Distinctive advantages
Cork is a sustainable material, composed of 40 million cells per cm³. When used in flooring, it guarantees resilience and excellent thermal and acoustic insulation. In turn, Corktech is a technology developed by Amorim Flooring which maximizes the characteristics of this material through the use of cutting-edge production methods. The result is flooring solutions that stand out from market competitors due to additional advantages in terms of thermal and acoustic insulation, associated with greater walking comfort, body wellness and high impact resistance.

Taking advantage of Amorim Flooring’ positioning and expertise, Hydrocork is the latest innovation to use Corktech technology. Comprising a reduced thickness core of agglomerated cork composite, this new solution maintains all the characteristics of natural cork, with the added advantage of being water resistant, i.e. without the risk of possible swelling of the flooring.

Measuring only 6 mm thick, Hydrocork can easily be cut and installed on almost all kinds of surfaces. It is an ideal solution for refurbishment projects.

Press Fit
Simultaneously, the new Press Fit compression system enables quick and efficient installation. Benefiting from the properties of cork - elasticity, flexibility and compressibility – Press Fit works using the same logic as a wine cork. In other words, the floor panels are installed using simple pressure. The male and female latch sections are placed under internal pressure, thus creating a tight seal. The result is a fast, easy and stable installation.

Range
In total, this collection consists of eight wooden premium visuals, with genuine natural appearances, that are available in the dimensions 1225 x 145 mm. All Hydrocork products feature a 0.55 mm wear layer and have a market guarantee of 15-25 years for the commercial and residential segments, respectively.

Corktech Technology
Thanks to Corktech technology, Wicanders’ flooring guarantees the following:
• Noise reduction inside a room of about 53%, due to cork’s characteristics – which offers extremely efficient sound insulation;
• Greater thermal efficiency: cork’s natural thermal insulation properties mean that cork floors are extremely thermally efficient, and constitute the best solution for heat retention;
• Greater comfort when walking: resulting from cork’s natural flexibility;
• Physical wellbeing: cork is softer than laminates and harder than carpets – its composition absorbs impact from heels and related corporal tensions, thus reducing body fatigue;
• Better impact resistance: given the resilience of cork, it has the ability to recover from severe impacts. When an object falls, these floors are better at absorbing impacts, while maintaining their strength.
HELIX SOLUTION PRESENTED IN THE GERMAN MARKET

The new Helix solution, developed by Corticeira Amorim and the North-American company Owens-Illinois, was introduced into the German market through a partnership with the supermarket chain, Edeka. The presentation took place in a gastronomic event in Dusseldorf, recorded for a cooking show that follows the “Masterchef” television format.

This was an unprecedented and unique way of presenting Helix to German consumers, made possible by the involvement of Italian wine producer, Castellani, which thereby introduced one of its latest ranges, Zio Baffa, a wine that is packaged with this innovative easy-to-open solution. This is the second wine that Castellani has bottled with Helix and confirms the success previously obtained with the organic wine, “Toscano Santa Lucia”.

According to Gert Reis, General Manager of Amorim Cork Deutschland GmbH, “The innovative character of Helix was extremely well-received by the guests. They particularly appreciated the premium appearance of the cork stopper, allied with the convenience of easy opening, dispensing with the need for a cork screw. We had wonderful feedback from the guests who revealed their eagerness to find more Helix-packaged wines on supermarket shelves”.

ETICO PROGRAMME RECycles 100 TONS OF WINE CORKS

Organised in late November, the Helix Awards ceremony is an initiative of Amorim Cork Italia that aims to distinguish Italian winemakers who have started to test this new solution. The event was held at the prestigious Palazzo Parisi and was attended by 90 guests, who tasted great wines and excellent gastronomy by Chief Luigi Tagliente, who has been distinguished with a Michelin star.

21 entities received awards, including 19 wine cellars, two companies that have adopted a mobile bottling system for Helix and an orientator, Officine Neri, that is responsible for adjusting winemakers’ bottling lines to enable Helix to be used. The famous Italian TV presenter, Moreno Morello, hosted the event, accompanied by the charming and beautiful, Sara Nervo, runner-up in the Miss Italy 2014 competition.

The feedback from the event was extremely positive, confirming the existence of various producers interested in this innovative wine packaging, including Terre Gaie, which will begin bottling its first wine with Helix in 2015.

MOSAIC WITH 300,000 WINE CORKS ENTERS THE GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS

Samir Stati, the renowned Albanian artist who holds eight world records, was responsible for the construction of the world’s largest mosaic with cork stoppers, thus ensuring direct entry into the Guinness World Records.

The mosaic panel is on display at the Ponte de Sor Arts and Culture Centre and includes more than 300,000 wine corks, forming the face of José Saramago, with an image of Ponte de Sor and the symbolisms of the Festival 750x7Luas (750x7Moons). It was produced over 30 days, and measures 24m long by 4.5 m high, with a total of 157m².

This is a project of the Municipality of Ponte de Sor, with support from the Entidade Regional de Turismo do Alentejo (Alentejo Tourism Board), several cork companies, in particular Corticeira Amorim, and the Festival 750x7Luas.

AVONDALE PRESENTS SPECIAL EDITION OF NAVITAS, WITH CORk

The renowned South African wine producer, Avondale, has just launched the latest edition of its flagship wine – Navitas – which, in addition to its traditional and elegant bottle with a cork stopper, is now presented in a sophisticated cork box, also supplied by Amorim Cork South Africa.

Navitas – the Latin word for energy – is a wine that combines Syrah and Mourvèdre grape varieties, with a small amount of Grenache, from an organic vineyard originally planted 18 years ago.

Released in a limited edition, this wine is a key product that complements a portfolio of seven remarkable wines from Avondale. Its distinctive packaging aids extra prestige to the special edition. The packaging has been designed by the South African studio, Wild Design, which recently developed a line of cork furniture.

For Avondale Navitas, each bottle is carefully placed in cork packaging, which reflects the producer’s ecological approach, offering the consumer a unique sensory experience even before he opens the bottle. The use of cork not only endows a second life to the product, it also values the contents.

…CONTINUES TO CONQUER ITALIAN PRODUCERS

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Cork Stopper Marks New Trend in Beer Packaging

Natural stopper offers a more intense flavour and adds sophistication

Throughout the world, producers of premium beers, or so-called “special beers”, are increasingly sealing their bottles with a cork stopper, attached with a muselet, reminiscent of sparkling wines. This natural, technical seal preserves the identity of the beer’s flavour and enhances the prestige of each brand. By adopting this type of packaging, brewers can benefit from the glamourous “popping sound” that only a cork can offer when removed – a sound that inevitably conjures up moments of celebration and festivity.

Corticeira Amorim is the industry’s global leader, producing more than four thousand million stoppers worldwide. It has unrivalled expertise in this field, and is recognized as the partner of excellence by brewers.

Guinness® A 1759 Commemorative Edition Ireland

Guinness® A 1759 is an ultra-premium beer, recently launched via a carefully prepared limited edition, that aims to introduce a new level of sophistication to drinking beer. The new Guinness® A 1759 is inspired by a 200 year-old recipe, with aromas rich in caramel with subtle notes of hops, producing a smooth and fruity texture. This special edition is presented in new packaging, including a Neutrocork Beer stopper, from Corticeira Amorim. With this choice, Guinness® has not only enhanced the bottle’s distinctive design – black glass with a golden label and velvety box – it has also ensured a higher intensity of flavour for the beer. Guinness® is world renowned for the quality of its unique and authentic beer – the world’s best-selling stout.

Unicer Super Bock Selection 1927 Christmas Brew Portugal

Unicer has just released the freshest edition of Super Bock Selection 1927 – Christmas Brew, a craft beer to honour Christmas, made from spices such as cinnamon, ginger and star anise. It’s a limited selection of 25,000 numbered bottles, sold in selected retail outlets. Corticeira Amorim has been a partner of Unicer’s craft beer project since it was launched six years ago. The intervening period has been marked by many learning opportunities and experiences which, according to Unicer’s Beatriz Carvalho, “has reinforced our belief that excellence is not a random occurrence. We’ve always used cork, we’ve imprinted the Super Bock brand in it, because we identify with its naturalness and proximity to nature.”

The master brewer also identifies many similarities between the art of brewing and the art of extracting cork from cork oak trees: “We also pick grain from the fields, we take its weight in our arms in the craft brewery. We also have cells, and yeast. And we mature and stabilise the beer and then seal it with a cork. We also only use natural processes: water, barley malt, hops, pure yeast... We extract it into a liquid state via temperature, time, humidity and enzymes from the malted grain.”
CORK SKATEBOARD WINS AN INNOVATION AWARD IN ASIA

The innovative cork skateboard developed by Australian producer Lavender | Archer Cork Skateboards, with support from Corticeira Amorim, was awarded the prestigious JEC Innovation Award in the “Sustainability” category.

The award was delivered to Alberto Baptista, Amorim Cork Composites’ Sales Director in November, at JEC Asia – an international trade show dedicated to composite materials in Singapore.

This cork skateboard began to be developed due to the need to reduce the vibration that is normally associated to traditional skateboards currently in the market. The solution combines the cork composite, CORECORK, developed by Amorim Cork Composites, that in addition to lower vibration ensures higher impact resistance.

Simultaneously, Lavender and Archer Cork Skateboards primarily use natural environmentally-friendly materials, which substitute traditional wood or carbon fibre solutions.

The new cork skateboard has been subjected to various market tests, by different customers, while stimulating involvement with potential partners, was attended by the Portuguese Chamber of Commerce of Portugal, Bernardo Ivo Cruz.

IDEE CORK – ID BRACELETS

iDee, that supplies customizable bracelets, has added a new cork model to its three product lines, designed for a more casual look – iDee Cork.

Developed in partnership with Amorim Cork Composites, iDee Cork is a cork bracelet with a lock and stainless steel sheet that can be used to identify the user, e.g. in an emergency situation, offering access to medical data and contacts of close friends/relatives. The bracelet comes in a single size, but can easily be adjusted to fit any wrist. The cork model is lighter, softer to the touch, with a distinctive aesthetic and guarantees durability.

HOME & OFFICE DEVELOPS INITIATIVE WITH SPECIALIST RETAIL

The Portuguese Embassy in London hosted an exclusive event for new customers of the Home & Office area of Amorim Cork Composites in the UK. The meeting, which aimed to foster a closer relationship with customers, while stimulating involvement with potential partners, was attended by the Portuguese Ambassador in London, João de Valleria, and the President of the Chamber of Commerce of Portugal, Bernardo Ivo Cruz.

GARRETT McNAMARA WITH INNOVATIVE CORK SURFBOARD

Mercedes-Benz Portugal, in partnership with Corticeira Amorim, has developed an innovative surfboard made entirely of cork, designed to enable Hawaiian big-wave surfer Garrett McNamara to ride the giant waves of Nazaré. This 100% Portuguese project also involves the collaboration of Polen Surfboards, the company responsible for making this new board.

Developed within the framework of Mercedes-Benz’s project, MBoard, the new surfboard aims to provide a perfect balance between weight, flexibility and speed. This sustainable material appeared an obvious choice for Garrett McNamara, who considers that it is “highly durable and yet sufficiently flexible to withstand the impact from giant waves”.

According to McNamara: “Given that Portugal is the largest cork producer in the world, it makes perfect sense to use this material to produce a high performance board for Nazaré. When you surf big waves you need a board that is flexible but also highly resistant, so that it won’t break. I believe that these boards will become the technological standard for anyone surfing big waves. It’s therefore an honour to be involved in Mercedes-Benz’s innovative project, MBoard, now with the additional support and know-how of Corticeira Amorim and the technology of Polen Surfboards.”

Garrett McNamara is currently the world record holder for the biggest wave ever surfed, with a record certified by the Guinness World Records. With the boards designed by Mercedes-Benz in 2013, he surfed Nazaré’s big waves at 62.4 km / hour.

NEW PEUGEOT 208 LINED WITH CORK

At the São Paulo International Motor Show, between October-November, 2014, Peugeot Brazil presented the new Peugeot 208 Natural. This 100% Brazilian car is distinguished by its use of sustainable raw materials, such as cork, applied in various vehicle components.

For this purpose, solutions using cork composite agglomerates have been developed which ensure better thermal and acoustic insulation once applied to the car roof and dashboard. Instead of a traditional carpet, a Sportsfloor solution is used on the floor, offering excellent shock resistance. The carpets are also made of cork, combined with rubber, leather and bamboo, that offer a unique and highly durable solution.

Amorim Cork Composites was one of the partners in the project which, in addition to Peugeot’s design centre, also involved the Brazilian company, Embraer.
CORKLIFE WINS SUSTAINABILITY AWARD IN GERMANY

The German Sustainability Award (GSA) is one of the most prestigious awards in Europe, that recognises outstanding achievements in the field of sustainability. In this year’s ceremony, which occurred in early December, Amorim Deutschland GmbH’s Corklife collection received the “Hallo Erde” sustainability award, in a category chosen by consumers, and which certifies this flooring range as being one of the most ecological in the market.

The awards ceremony is organised in the framework of the German Sustainability Conference, the largest European event in this field, which attracts over 2000 guests per year.

The launch of new products, such as the Wicanders® Vinylcomfort and Artcomfort ranges, has driven significant growth – reflected in 20% of the company’s turnover – which has strengthened its leadership position.

The company’s broad portfolio, includes the Sagrada Familia cathedral in Barcelona, where the application of cork flooring has ensured thermal insulation and optimised the building’s acoustics.

Looking towards the future, the main challenges that lie ahead are in Asia, especially in countries such as China, Mongolia and Korea, and also in France, the UK, Spain and the USA.

MICHAEL PETRY IN THE ALENTEJO ARCHITECTURE TRIENNIAL WITH A CORK INSTALLATION

The Palácio dos Duques de Cadaval, in Évora, hosted the work by the artist Michael Petry, entitled “Libations”, in the framework of the Alentejo Architecture Triennial, which was held in Évora, between October 1 and November 23. The triennial was inspired by Alentejo’s winemaking tradition, and explored the symbolism of the region’s most typical objects, in close connection with heroes of Greek mythology.

Amorim Isolamentos was involved in this project, via the installation that evokes Eros – the Greek god of love. The installation was an expanded insulation corkboard mural into which 54 arrows were fired – thus symbolizing an act of life and death.

The artist’s intention was to provide visitors with a sensory experience, via an arrow piercing meat (cork), thus enacting Cupid’s role from the perspective of classical mythology. The use of expanded insulation corkboard provides a unique sound and olfactory experience, thereby demonstrating some of the sensory advantages of using the material.

According to Michael Petry: “It was a fantastic experience to witness the arrows piercing the cork and then sensing cork’s characteristic smell as it flooded the space.” Michael Petry is an artist, author and director of the Museum of Contemporary Art, MOCAt, in London.

AMORIM’S CORK IN CASA LISBOA’14

Casa Lisboa is a remarkable interior design exhibition, in which proposals are presented by many designers who decorate the spaces, in partnership with several materials suppliers, as if it were a real hotel. The event took place between November 1-14 in the Palácio Iglesias in Lisbon.

Miguel Cancio, who is currently the best internationally known Portuguese architect, was responsible for the restaurant space. He chose expanded insulation corkboard, from Amorim Isolamentos, to line the walls, which he used to create a high wainscoting, placing a wide mirror strip between the two cork sections.

Miguel Cancio Martins’s track record includes projects such as the Buddha Bar in Paris, the classic suite of the Royal Monceau in Paris, the modern design of the Hotel W in Montreal, the Vermilion & Cinnabar, an Indian restaurant in Manchester, or the new Italian restaurant, Last Supper, in Luxembourg.

AFNA has established a partnership with the American retail firm, NRF Distributing, in order to strengthen its distribution and sales in the state of Maine.

AFNA’s portfolio of customers.

Miguel Petry is an artist, author and director of the Museum of Contemporary Art, MOCAt, in London.

AMORIM FLOORING NORTH AMERICA WITH NEW BUSINESS PARTNER

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AFNA’s portfolio of customers.

...AND EQUIPS LUXURY CONDOMINIUM

Wicanders® collections – Vinylcomfort Trigo Pine and Midnight Oak – will be installed in an area of 180.000m², in a luxury seaside condominium in Boston, USA. An emblematic work added to AFNA’s portfolio of customers.

Michael Petry is an artist, author and director of the Museum of Contemporary Art, MOCAt, in London.

AMORIM FLOORING LEADS EXAME’S RANKING

Amorim Flooring was ranked in first position in the wood, cork and furniture sector of the ranking of the 500 Biggest & Best Companies of 2014, recently published by the Portuguese Exame magazine. The award was presented to Rui Fernandes, the company’s CFO, in a ceremony organised by Exame in November.

Operating in more than 50 countries, Corticeira Amorim’s Floor and Wall Coverings Business Unit is internationally recognized for its quality and innovation and unusual combination of traditional production methods with the latest technology.

The launch of new products, such as the Wicanders® Vinylcomfort and Artcomfort ranges, has driven significant growth – reflected in 20% of the company’s turnover – which has strengthened its leadership position.

The company’s broad portfolio, includes the Sagrada Familia cathedral in Barcelona, where the application of cork flooring has ensured thermal insulation and optimised the building’s acoustics.

Looking towards the future, the main challenges that lie ahead are in Asia, especially in countries such as China, Mongolia and Korea, and also in France, the UK, Spain and the USA.

KEY WORKS

Work: Melt Lisboa Arcadian Shop
Location: Lisbon
Product: Soya Pine VinylComfort

Work: Village Underground Lisboa
Location: Lisbon
Product: CorkComfort and VinylComfort

Work: Lagoa das 7 cidades
Location: Açores
Product: CorkComfort Originals

Work: Condominium in Boston, USA.

Work: AFNA’s portfolio of customers.

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AFNA’s portfolio of customers.

Wicanders® marked a presence in the Acetech Mumbai Exhibition 2014, one of the largest trade fairs in the field of architecture, construction, engineering, interiors and design organised in Asia.

The event, held over four days in the Bombay Exhibition Centre, was an opportunity for promotion of cork flooring, in a market with forecast growth of around 9.8% in 2015.

AFNA’s portfolio of customers.
QUINTA NOVA RECEIVES DOURO ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

In the presence of the Portuguese prime minister, Pedro Passos Coelho, the Awards Ceremony of the II Douro Entrepreneur awards were held in Vila Real, in late November, including a debate and the launch of a book by António Barreto about the region. This initiative aims to highlight the entrepreneurial capacity of the residents of the Douro region and it distinguished the Quinta Nova N. S. Carmo estate with the Douro Entrepreneur – International Tourism award, for its wine tourism project.

“Quinta Nova’s entrepreneurial drive is a reality. With great honour, it has now received special recognition from the region. We are certain that the Douro region is striving towards the place of excellence reserved for it for many years”, stated Paula Sousa, Quinta Nova’s director of Marketing and Tourism during the award ceremony.

In this special year for Quinta Nova, in which the estate is celebrating its 250th anniversary, this recognition is of particular importance and reinforces its strategy of sustainable growth, at the national and international level. It should be noted that in addition to this award, Quinta Nova has also recently received three other awards: Best Wine Tourism - Boa Cama Boa Mesa 2014, Expresso; Best Wine Centre 2014 – Highly Commended, Dirkks International; Best Wine Restaurant 2015, Great Wine Capitals.

CONCEITUS: THE BEST WINE RESTAURANT

The Conceitus restaurant, in the Quinta Nova de Nossa Senhora do Carmo estate, won the national “Wine Restaurant” award, for the fifth time, in the Best of Wine Tourism Awards 2015. This is another distinction alongside many other awards and distinctions that the restaurant has won in just nine years of activity.

The Best of Wine Tourism Award is an annual initiative dedicated to national and international recognition of best wine tourism practices in seven distinct categories, spanning the old world and new world of wines.

At the time of attribution of the international awards, sponsored annually by the Great Wine Capitals Global Network, the national winners are also identified, whose prizes are awarded by the municipality of Porto, the entity that represents the network’s regions of Douro, Port and Vinho Verde wines.

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PORTUGUESE CORK IN THE ISTANBUL DESIGN BIENNIAL

See flyer