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Richard Marchant, CEO

How did a brand with strong values like Novacel approach and experience the crisis? Richard Marchant, CEO, talks about the importance of collaboration, resilience, service and solidarity.

As a medium- sized company with an international presence, how did Novacel experience the COVID19 crisis in 2020?

It is precisely because we have an international presence, and specifically in China, that we were in a position to see early on that the outbreak would spread worldwide.

It is in situations like this that we can take the full measure of the high quality of our assets and specifically of our team: organized in a crisis cell, they were able to anticipate and, together with myself, manage the worst moments of the crisis. As:

- We took a decision to produce face masks and hand sanitizer to equip both our workforce and hospitals.
- We had strong & efficient business continuity plans ready in place.
- Our products were employed massively to protect the plastic sheeting used for personal protective equipment.
- Our clients trusted us.

We have been able to continue full-time, safe production throughout the crisis to serve all our clients – in this way, we showed ourselves to be fully capable of stepping up to the mark.

Of course, the health crisis is still not behind us and we remain vigilant and focused on our fundamentals.

What about your subsidiaries around the world?

All our subsidiaries worked full time, giving very high priority to the health and safety of our employees. They all rolled out a very comprehensive protocol to guarantee the protection of our people, together with business continuity to maintain service for our customers.

What has been the biggest challenge in the period?

The major challenges were to ensure that everybody remained focused, to anticipate the worst so that it could be prevented from happening, and to secure our supply chains. Fortunately, our business continuity plans ensured that we were well prepared.

In the short term, what immediate actions did you take to participate in the health measures?

Our first priority was to protect our employees and to help nursing staff cope with the crisis: we decided to produce masks and hand sanitizer. We were quick to go beyond our legal obligations: we checked body temperatures, we carried out regular disinfection of equipment and buildings and we have made very extensive use of home working arrangements.



Has the health situation created new needs for your customers?

Over and above their need for the personal protection products we were able to deliver to our clients (hand sanitizer, antimicrobial films), we also saw increased need for more digital services along with greener solutions.

What influence did the crisis have on your core business? Did this lead to new product/service development?

In terms of services, an example would be that we opened our online Novacel Store during the covid19 pandemic with the aim of allowing our customers to obtain our products even more rapidly, and where greener solutions are concerned, our "Oxygen" range met with success. Digital & CSR will continue to be two key levers for new solutions to be launched by us in the future.

Did this result in organizational changes?

Yes, we are reinforcing our marketing, innovation and digital teams for faster time-to-market for the solutions we will be offering our customers in the near future to meet their needs.

What are Novacel strengths in this crisis?

We can certainly point to the facts that have experienced people and a worldwide presence - allowing us to secure our supply chain – and we can protect all types of surfaces: for example, we have been able to make a positive contribution during to the crisis by providing protection for the plastic sheeting used for PPE.

How is Novacel doing today? How do you see the next few months?

Novacel is stronger than before the crisis. We have a robust order portfolio, we are more digital, greener and we have innovated a great deal during this period. If the world has changed due to the crisis, I can tell you that Novacel will be changing the game in its markets over the coming months and years. Even if the next few months are uncertain and very dependent on when vaccination actually begins, . In short, I am totally optimistic for Novacel!