

PRESS RELEASE

The German specialty chemicals company Evonik acquires Spanish biotech firm Infinitec Activos

- The acquisition involves the integration of Infinitec and Naturethic (its producer of sustainable raw materials) into Evonik's Care Solutions business line, and comprises 47 employees working at the company's R&D centre in the Barcelona Science Park and in its manufacturing facility in Montornès del Vallès (Barcelona, Spain).
- Evonik is one of the world leaders in specialty chemicals. The company is active in more than 100 countries around the world and generated sales of €12.2 billion in 2020. Care Solutions is part of its Nutrition & Care division, which has generated sales of around €3 billion in 2020 with about 5,300 employees.
- Infinitec Activos, created in 2006 by entrepreneurs Alfons Hidalgo and Josep Maria Borràs, is a technology-driven biotech company focused on research, development, production and marketing of new generation active ingredients and efficient delivery systems for the cosmetic and personal care industry.
- The company, incubated in the Barcelona Science Park, is a new success story in the Spanish biotechnology sector. In 2020 it had a turnover of €6.67 million, an 18% increase compared to 2019. Its clients include firms such as La Prairie, Elizabeth Arden, Clarins, Unilever, Intercos and RNB Cosméticos, which manufactures for the Mercadona group.

Barcelona, 21 September 2021. The German company [Evonik](#) -one of the world leaders in specialty chemicals- has acquired the biotechnology company [Infinitec Activos](#), based in the [Barcelona Science Park](#) and focusing on the development, production and marketing of active ingredients and state-of-the-art delivery systems for the cosmetic and personal care industry.

The operation -formalised this July and for which the amount has not been disclosed- involves the integration of both Infinitec and [Naturethic](#) (its natural-based raw material producer) into the [Care Solutions](#) business line of Evonik's [Nutrition & Care](#) division, which will allow the multinational company to strengthen its business of natural-based active ingredients and systems solutions, and increase its volume from the current 25% to 50% in 2030.

"Proven active delivery systems offer great opportunities to innovate new cosmetic ingredients with scientifically proven claims. This allows our personal care customers to differentiate," said Yann d'Hervé, head of Evonik's Care Solutions business line.

The acquisition comprises 47 employees working at the R&D laboratories of Infinitec and Naturethic in the Barcelona Science Park and in its manufacturing facility in Montornès del Vallès (Barcelona, Spain). The co-founders, Alfonso Hidalgo and Josep Maria Borràs, will retain their executive positions at the head of the company.

"We are convinced that the synergies created will not only bring benefits to our clients and both companies but will also create new opportunities throughout the value chain of the personal care and cosmetics market," says **Alfons Hidalgo**, co-founder and director of Infinitec Innovation.

After the operation, Infinitec will expand its facilities in the Barcelona Science Park with an additional 200 m², meaning it will have a total of 300 m² of laboratory and office space. The project will involve an investment of €500,000 and an increase in the workforce of 50%.

"With the expansion of our surface area in the Barcelona Science Park, we hope to increase our R&D capacity and to be able to offer more tailored products for our clients," says **Josep Maria Borràs**, co-founder and CEO of Infinitec.

From the market to R&D: A singular success story in Spanish biotechnology

Infinitec Activos is part of the second generation of companies incubated in the Barcelona Science Park. It began its activity in 2006 due to the work of two entrepreneurs, Alfons Hidalgo and Josep Maria Borràs, with the aim of developing, producing, and marketing innovative active ingredients and next-generation delivery systems for the cosmetics industry.

Scientists by training, Hidalgo and Borràs began their entrepreneurial project after a solid professional career in the commercial management of different companies of natural active ingredients and peptides for the cosmetics sector. Two partners opted from the beginning to collaborate with park researchers, academic groups, and private laboratories to create innovative, exclusive, and tailor-made products.

"I am a chemist by training, but what I have always liked is to sell, to interact with people. After working in the commercial area of different companies, including Lipotec, in 2003, during a stay in London, I came up with the Infinitec project and called my friend Josep Maria Borràs, who at that time was the commercial director of Provital. We became partners immediately. We started from scratch, using a loan of €120,000. The beginnings were very difficult... But we put a lot of desire and determination into it! To obtain the financing, we asked for a loan on the mortgage on my apartment and the guarantee of Josep Maria's salary," **Hidalgo** recalls.

"We are an atypical biotech company; we set up the company based on our commercial contacts, outsourcing 100% of the research and production. We wanted to work with peptides; we knew how to sell them, but we lacked the talent and capabilities, which we found in the research group led by Dr Fernando Albericio, professor of Organic Chemistry at the University of Barcelona, and former director of the Barcelona Science Park. The support of the Bosch i Gimpera Foundation was also essential to start the company. We started selling almost exclusively in the overseas market and considering our success, in 2011 we decided to open a subsidiary in the United States, which allowed us to see that market for ourselves, which now is bearing a lot of fruit for us", says **Borràs**.

In 2010, Infinitec started its own R&D in the laboratory of the Barcelona Science Park and, in 2018, it opened its 1,500 m² production plant in Montornès del Vallès (Barcelona). Today it has a staff of 47 professionals of seven nationalities, and 35 distributors around the world.

Since its creation, the company has raised more than €2 million from public and private funds. In 2020 it had a turnover of €6.67 million, 18% more than the previous year, and 80% of its sales come from the international market. Its clients include prestigious firms such as La Prairie, Elizabeth Arden, Clarins, Unilever, Intercos and RNB Cosméticos, which manufactures for the Mercadona group.

With ten patents and 15% of turnover committed to R&D, 90% of which it already carries out in its own facilities, its research has transferred scientific knowledge from the pharmaceutical sector to the cosmetics industry, developing active ingredients and next-generation delivery systems through nanotechnological applications and peptide synthesis. Examples include its **Cosmetic Drone®** technology and its **Trojan®** active ingredient delivery system, based on PLGA— poly (lactic-co-glycolic acid).

■ About Infinitec Activos

Infinitec Activos, created in 2006 by Alfons Hidalgo and Josep Maria Borràs, is a biotechnology company, focusing on the design and production of active ingredients for the cosmetics industry, especially on the development of delivery systems to enhance the activity of ingredients and expand the range of options to its customers so that they can generate highly effective products. To develop its entrepreneurial project, Infinitec Activos has had the support of the Ministry of Science and Innovation, through the Torres Quevedo Grant programme, and of the Regional Government of Catalonia, through the Centre d'Innovació i Desenvolupament Empresarial (CIDEM).

■ About Evonik

Evonik is one of the world leaders in speciality chemicals. The company is active in more than 100 countries around the world and generated sales of €12.2 billion and an operating profit (adjusted EBITDA) of €1.91 billion in 2020. Evonik goes far beyond chemistry to create innovative, profitable, and sustainable solutions for customers. More than 33,000 employees work together for a common purpose: to improve life today and tomorrow.

More information:

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