

# “WORK PROCESSES WILL CHANGE FUNDAMENTALLY”

Modular production and digitisation are among the trends in production technology.

The majority of coating manufacturers still produce using dissolvers, but one growing trend of the recent years in coatings production technology has been modular fabrication (MoFa).

Ralf Hohmann of Hemmelrath Technologies describes the latest developments in the modular fabrication. He also emphasizes the effects of digitization on the paints and coatings sector. 



**Ralf Hohmann**  
Director  
Hemmelrath Technologies

“Industry 4.0 will bring widespread changes in the coatings industry in the next 5-10 years.”

**What are the advantages of modular fabrication?** Modular fabrication technology is evolving into an growing production technology worldwide because of the advantages conferred by the combination of production technology and recipe modularization and the use of raw materials modules. The potential savings over standard dissolver-and-silo production technology are particularly large. In addition, there are further cost advantages as simplified raw materials management brings forth new supply chain concepts.

**What are the latest developments in modular fabrication?** In the field of plant engineering, a new “Mini-MoFa 5” vacuum system is now available which obviates the need for defoamers in the recipe. The second generation of “Micro-MoFa 10” will be unveiled in the fourth quarter of 2017. In addition, a concept has been devised for a MoFa building, which, by virtue of the building materials used, generate the first-ever negative carbon footprint for an industrial building. The concept is also based on modules which can be flexibly adapted to production expansion and can be set up worldwide – on the lines of prefabricated housing. A new MoFa hygiene concept for emulsion paints and water-borne coatings manufacturers can determine the degree of bacterial contamination in less than 60 minutes and thus represents an enormous time saving and significantly lowers the risks. On the question of raw materials modules, a nanoparticle barium sulphate has been developed which can be used without the need for binders in all pigment pastes and leads to unique stabilisation. The cost advantages are also extremely interesting. The resulting nano-pigment pastes set a new benchmark in terms of flexibility, quality and functionality.

**How relevant is “Industry 4.0” for the coatings industry in your view and how should industry respond?** Industry 4.0 will bring widespread changes in the coatings industry in the next 5-10 years and boost productivity. The industry should be aware that work processes will change fundamentally and also have an impact on jobs. 



Worldwide, ca. 42.2 billion litres of coatings are produced.