



## Interview

# “There Is a Huge Market Waiting for Us!”



We talked to Luc Van Eldere, Head of Performance Flooring Europe at BASF, about his business segment and innovative flooring solutions—those already made and of the future.

**Mr. Van Eldere, you are Head of Performance Flooring Europe at BASF—please give us a short introduction to your business segment.**

We offer solutions to many challenges in decorative and design flooring as well as in rough industrial environments. Performance Flooring focuses on several key technologies: Ucrete PU concrete for the food and beverage industry, polyurethane flooring for comfortable environments in which design, aesthetics, and colors are of key importance, and epoxy systems that are widely used for industrial applications, which offer price elasticity as a key to success. Our flooring solutions are applied layer by layer, enabling us to tailor the systems to the individual requirements of each project. We attach great importance to close collaboration with our

customers and the steady improvement of our systems according to their needs—whether in terms of design, sustainability, functionality, application, or maintenance.

**Can you give us some examples of international projects in which your flooring solutions play an essential role?**

Of course. Let us look at three major Master Builders Solutions projects completed in the recent past.

A large project took place last year in Carhaix-Plouguer, France: In order to respond to Chinese market requirements for powdered baby milk, the company Synutra constructed a facility with a production capacity of 120,000 tons per year, which is equivalent to 1 million liters of milk per day. It is the company's largest production plant in Europe. For all floors—we are talking about a surface area of 22,000 square meters—they decided to rely on Master Builders Solutions Ucrete floors.



All images: Het Havenhuis, Belgium



This year we were involved in Het Havenhuis, which was built in Antwerp, Belgium. The building designed by Zaha Hadid Architects (London) is a landmark in the city. It reflects the importance of the Port of Antwerp and the diamond industry, combining heritage with new-build architectural masterpieces. Sustainability was of key importance in this fantastic project, making our BREEAM certifications essential, as they reflect the durability and sustainability of the Master Builders Solutions products. In the interior, several MasterTop flooring solutions were used, such as MasterTop 1324 in the canteen and coffee corner, auditorium, corridors, stairways, and technical rooms.

For the second time, Lantegi Batuak in Getxo, Biscay (Spain), challenged us to install a conductive resin floor that meets all the safety and performance requirements of an industrial facility. The activities carried out on the premises are related

to electronic equipment and wiring. Given the sensitivity of such to electrostatic charges—which could damage the devices being handled—a flooring solution capable of diverting charges to the ground was required. These antistatic capabilities had to be combined in addition to the workers' safety requirements, which called for an anti-slip floor. MasterTop 1273 AS-R was an optimal fit for this project as it meets all the requirements of this industrial atmosphere and contributes to the safety of the employees.

**These projects look like big achievements.  
What challenges are you currently facing?**

We have to further develop technology and systems, meaning that we must continuously adjust and develop our portfolio. Currently, we are launching new products and systems in Europe. The MasterTop 1900 series is the next generation polyurethane technology—a unique Master Builders Solutions technology that offers extraordinarily high scratch resistance and significantly lower dirt retention. This innovative polyurethane technology is one of a kind on the flooring market and

will establish us in the future as a pacesetter in many fields of application. We are further expanding the Ucrete family with new antistatic solutions and fast-setting systems, confirming that we are the market leader in PU cement technology and have been since 1969. Moreover, our new MasterTop 1327 offers the highest standard in comfort and sound-deadening and crack-bridging performance—it will be the first and only fully liquid-applied flooring system on the market that reduces impact noise by up to 20 decibels. Last but not least, we are introducing new high-quality clear epoxy and polyurethane binders into our MasterTop 1200 and 1300 families—all of them certified to the highest European standards.

**You are launching many new solutions in Performance Flooring—what will be your main goal 2017?**

Of course our aim is to offer our customers state-of-the-art flooring. Our newly launched systems play a key role in our successful approach to our strategic market segments, be it Ucrete, our pacesetting solution for the food and beverage industry; industrial MasterTop flooring, which serves the

needs of the industrial segments; or decorative MasterTop systems that focus on immensely challenging aesthetic floors. These three focus segments will have their own strategy, by means of which we will respond with clearly defined, innovative solutions to the needs of our five most important customers and influencers: applicators, contractors, investors, architects, and designers. We will share and foster our solutions with the huge market that is there waiting for us!

**What do you appreciate most about your job?**

Performance Flooring is a people's business. We master all challenges that we face as a team and in close collaboration with our Master Builders solutions colleagues in Europe and on other continents. We put our joint efforts into the highly interesting flooring market and get to know our customers' needs and expectations to successfully and profitably develop the business further.



Lantegi Batuak, Spain