



Absolent cleans up in the US – changes the market completely

Meet one of more than 500 companies in the Swedish Environmental Technology Network

Scientific methods, quality products and clean air free from oil smoke and oil mist – Swedish Absolent has assumed an entirely fresh approach in the US, where the company is now undergoing substantial expansion.

"We are implementing a structural transformation in the American market for industrial process control equipment that clean contaminated air. And we keep our promises. This is why we are successful," says Tony Landh, President of Absolent.



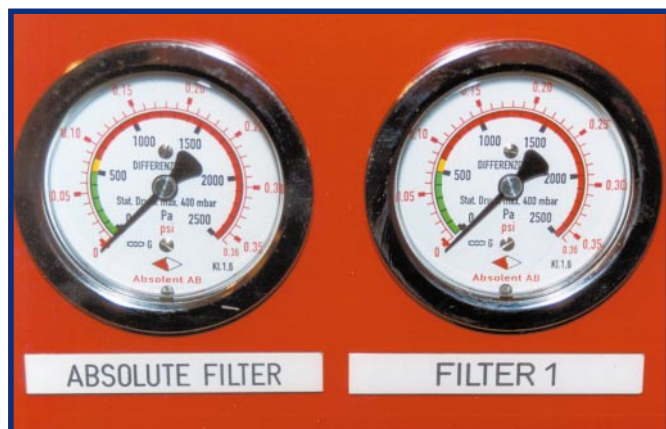
Tony Landh, President of Absolent, with the Absolent ODF 800 oil mist separator.

Cleaning of contaminated air

Absolent is a highly focused company, specializing in oil mists and smoke separation by filtering industrial air. The filtering process is typically conducted at machining centers in workshops and is often performed directly at the source. With Absolent's filter system and expertise, 99.99 percent of all contamination particles down to a size of 0.3 μm will be removed – a separation capability

that fulfills the requirements for inlet air in a hospital operating room.

"Absolent traces its roots to a tradition around Lidköping by Lake Vänern, where several companies are involved in air treatment technology. Absolent was formed in 1993. At the time, industrial washers formed the basis of sales and filter systems existed merely as a complement. The filter concept was later developed into today's products," relates Tony Landh.



All Absolent products are equipped with pressure gauges.

Applied for global patent

The company has applied for a global patent of its proprietary filter cassette, which is a metal and textile design, as well as the complete Absolent concept for filtering industrial air. Interest in the product is increasing very rapidly, particularly after the company's major success in the US.

Until Absolent's breakthrough in 1999, the American market had been dominated by a number of players in air cleaning, who were all doing the same thing. They sold simple products to industry – low-quality air cleaners



Tony Landh, President of Absolent, and Per-Ola Frisk, Sales Engineer, inspecting a customer installation of an Absolent system.

that barely fulfilled the work environment requirements set by the authorities.

"In Sweden, we only permit one milligram of oil per cubic meter of air. In the US, the corresponding figure is five milligrams. This means it is misty in the premises, with all of the consequences this can have for people and machines," says Tony Landh.

Scientific methods used in sales process

The American competitors earned more money on spare parts and constant filter changes than on quality and a long-term approach. It is in the area of customer sales that Absolent is now mobilizing to secure market shares.

"In our sales process, for example, we make more use of scientific methods than normal sales arguments. One of them is to demonstrate the difference in air quality between our product and existing filter systems. When the customer sees how we substantially improve the air,

there is not much more we need to do. It is important, however, that we explain the low life-cycle costs. Our products keep going without maintenance, year after year," says Tony Landh.

He refers to an example – an oil smoke filter at Scania in Södertälje – which has been in place for five years with no need for a filter change or wash. There are several similar examples. And there is no deterioration of the separation degree of particles of the filtered air over the years.

What are the keys to continued success in the US?

"Offering clean air to our customers. And keeping our promises. The sales arguments are our environmental expertise, quality in the form of better health care for people and less wear on machines, as well as our superior technology."

What are your hopes in participating in the Network?

"Joining the network was more of an instinctive feeling that it could be beneficial. We maintain contacts throughout the traditional engineering industry and in the environmental field. We have also made some contacts through the network," says Tony Landh.

Number of employees: 18

Head office: Lidköping

Sales in 2001: SEK 40 M

Export markets: Norway, Denmark, Finland, UK, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Austria, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Spain, Canada, the US

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