



IBERSPA

[Together we'll shape closer relationships with our customers]



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01 Relaxing spa experiences, whether at home or in the luxury of a health resort, are enhanced by the craft, care and passion that go into every single one of Iberspa's products.

02 Iberspa's Purchasing Manager, Alberto Hernando, alongside a thermoformed spa awaiting customisation and finishing at the company's facility in Spain. Ergonomic design, beautiful quality,

glossy look and feel of the Lucite® acrylic material ...a luxury spa experience in the making!

Iberspa has been designing and manufacturing spas since 1988. Today, it stands out as one of the top manufacturers in Europe. The company has a clear and simple mission: to help people create spaces where they can be in touch with the senses and relax together in a healthy way while ensuring that its products are environmentally friendly and tread lightly on the planet. Iberspa has been a loyal customer of Lucite International (LI) for more than 15 years. In this issue of Stf, we talk to Purchasing Manager, Alberto Hernando about the successful partnership and discover more about his exciting new 'second career' as a published writer.

Q First, tell us a little about Iberspa?

AH: We operate in over 40 countries and our high quality products are all manufactured in Europe. After starting up in 1988, the spa thermoforming plant opened in 1992. One of our most important milestones came in 2000 when Iberspa was awarded ISO 9001 quality certification then in 2006 a brand new production plant was opened close to Barcelona. These days our main brand, AQUAVIA, has a range of 42 spas in its portfolio. Our other brand is ASTRALPOOL. We like to maintain a high profile in the market place and show our latest products and ideas off regularly at the main pool and spa trade fairs, such as the ones in Barcelona, Lyon, Italy, Germany, and beyond.

Q How would you say you are known in the industry?

AH: We are considered leaders in design and innovation within our sector. Iberspa has developed a business model, now with a proven track record, that provides integrated solutions tailored to each of our customer's businesses. And as manufacturers of in-ground spas, swim spas and spas for both home and commercial use we are able to provide a comprehensive service that cover all the needs of the market. If you combine our industry experience, the Iberspa brand options and the technical support we offer, which responds very rapidly to any queries

from our direct customers or spa users, I believe it's a winning formula.

Q In addition to the usual things associated with being a Purchasing Manager, what do you find particularly satisfying?

AH: Being in charge of the purchasing department, the first thing I'd say that is perhaps a little different, is that I love to understand and work with human behaviors and for that reason I love collaborating closely with people both within our own company and within companies we work with. It is definitely the 'human factor' that I enjoy most.

Q Can you tell us more about the partnership that's developed over the years?

AH: The business relationship between Iberspa and LI dates back more than 15 years. Since I joined in 2012, one of my main tasks has been to establish what the real strengths are of our two companies and to try to overcome the weaknesses, essentially through devising new agreements with one another. We've achieved this by combining the knowledge of both companies in order to solve difficulties and by adopting a calm and relaxed approach. Step-by-step, we've brought our two big companies closer together and business is going well.

Q What's special about the products you make from Lucite® acrylic?

AH: As I mentioned earlier, I am absolutely convinced that innovation and design are key for our dealers and the ultimate spa users. And while

ergonomics and massage options are among the main benefits associated with our brands, we're also proud of our environmental performance and the energy-saving measures that we've developed and built in to our spas.

Q Why do you choose to work with Lucite International (LI)?

AH: The big advantage of working with the Company is it having a European base, which means I can get the acrylic sheet here in less than 15 days. The worst thing is when it runs out of stock but fortunately this is rare. And we really appreciate the way in which LI people always try to provide answers when we are in trouble.

Q Do you believe that innovation focused on the qualities of acrylic can deliver benefit in today's highly competitive marketplace?

AH: I am an extremely imaginative person so I'm always keen to find real possibilities to play with acrylic material. For example, looking at transparent color textures mixed with traditional color pigments, perhaps with some phosphorescent dusts, which could react in the dark or with certain light sources. If we could develop something like this it would help to reach future milestones with regard to lighting facilities inside the spa. As I said earlier, I am super-imaginative; the challenge is turning imagination into something that will 'wow' our customers and consumers alike!

More: www.iberspa.com



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» IBERSPA

Five more minutes with Alberto

Outside of his work at Iberspa, Alberto has developed an exciting new interest as a writer. We persuaded him to answer a few quick questions about this new talent that he is just beginning to discover:

❑ When did you start writing?

AH: I strongly believe that it was a kind of miracle. I started writing two years ago and it was during my first fifteen pages, that I realised that the story might be a trilogy.

❑ How do you find time to write?

AH: If you really want to do something you find time. However, my family and especially my wife do not say the same... I am joking, of course they are very happy for me!

❑ Is it a challenge, or something that comes naturally to you?

AH: Maybe fifty-fifty! Originally it came easy, now it is a challenge - experience and time will be the judge of whether I turn into a great author.

❑ You live quite close to Barcelona?

AH: I go to Barcelona often; it's one of my favorite cities. It has everything you need and the weather is usually good. I set the first book of the holothenovel trilogy there, and think it will be the city for the setting of the second too.

❑ Where were you born, and how did you get in to purchasing (it seems such an opposite discipline to storytelling)?

AH: I consider myself to be a self-made professional. I was born in the Basque country in northern Spain, an industrial area where there were opportunities for me to follow my passion of getting into business. I studied for an Industrial Health and Safety degree then moved

on to a business and administration management courses. Now I love telling stories, but I really don't know where this will lead me. I believe life gives us what we need if we listen closely to both the beat of life and the rhythm of the world around us.

❑ What do you love about your job?

AH: I love the opportunity to travel and to build and maintain business relationships with people from companies here and abroad; all the different customs - it's truly enriching. The job also gives me the opportunity to negotiate. The 'negotiation game' makes me crazy. I love it!

❑ What are you passionate about?

AH: We live in an age where many people use hypocrisy, lies, and brute force... I think you can struggle with these bad things. Others have a kind of infectious goodness; qualities such as a passion for life, excitement about doing things and devotion to the good side of humanity. All of us can offer the best version of ourselves to other people. Do this every day and your life will change so much for the better all around.

❑ Where is home now?

AH: I live in Catalonia, close to Barcelona, but I think of myself as a citizen of the world. I do not mind where I live, nor where I am going to live, don't even mind how... the most important thing from my humble point of view, is with whom. I love some countries such as the US, Australia, and Asia. Maybe one day I will manage to attain another of my dreams, to retired to Zanzibar. Look for me there when we are old! ●

More: www.holothenovel.com



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