

Committed to innovation and sustainability

A new member of the Maroon Group, U.S. Chemicals continues to go well beyond the basics for its customers and the community

CYNTHIA CHALLENGER VERMONT

U.S. Chemicals, the Connecticut-based chemical distributor, has been sponsoring the ICIS Innovation Awards category for Best Benefit for Environment and Sustainability for eight consecutive years now. The company supports this specific award as a reflection of its commitment to innovation and sustainability.

These are core values that drive U.S. Chemicals' day-to-day activities, according to sales manager Jenny Anderson. "Today, if you are not adapting and evolving, ie innovating, you are not going to continue to be a viable business partner. We are proud of our association with many of the companies taking part in the ICIS Innovation Awards.

"This sponsorship is an opportunity to applaud and recognise the people and organisations in the chemical industry that are driving and developing the future in a manner that helps ensure a safer and healthier world now and for the next generation."

In May 2016, U.S. Chemicals became a member of the Maroon Group, one of the fastest growing specialty



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Sales manager, U.S. Chemicals

chemical distributors in North America. Based in Avon, Ohio, Maroon has thrived on creating success for customers by forming partnerships with world-class manufacturers and supplying consistent products on time, according to Carol Piccaro, president of U.S. Chemicals.

"Maroon Group's culture, values and business model are a great fit with U.S. Chemicals. This move is an important step for U.S. Chemicals and we look forward to carrying on the legacy of our company," she comments.

As a member of Maroon, U.S. Chemicals will continue to focus on partner needs, adapting and developing value-added services such as blending, grinding/micronising, special packaging and toll manufacturing to create value and growth for all parties, according to Anderson.

"Innovation in the industry is critical to address customer needs. By continually improving products, technologies and processes, chemical companies can create competitive advantage and growth," she adds.

Distributors not too long ago focused principally on storage and delivery, serving as a pipeline to the marketplace for manufacturers and a source of materials for customers. Working between manufacturers and customers, distributors have a unique vantage point from which to identify opportunities and add value, according to Anderson. "The most successful distributors today are pursuing those opportunities and doing and driving a great deal more," she notes.

U.S. Chemicals recognises that its partners are looking for more and that in order to set itself apart the company must deliver beyond the basics. For Anderson that means forming strategic partnerships, growing the customer base for suppliers and serving as a reliable, easy-to-work with source of high-quality products.

"We have to continually improve and enhance our offering to the marketplace in order to maintain our position as the obvious 'go-to' distribution partner," she says.

As a small business, U.S. Chemicals also has

the flexibility and nimbleness to trial many new concepts and services. Says Piccaro: "Whether looking at our internal processes and organisation or at unique opportunities in how and what we do for suppliers and customers, we've got a well-lubricated reverse gear. We try many ideas; if something's not going right or working to create value, it won't take us long to change track."

U.S. Chemicals has over 50 years of history and culture that places innovation and sustainability at the forefront, according to Anderson. "Our relentless customer focus feeds a culture of innovation – a 'think outside of the box' mentality and a passion for safe-guarding the environment," she states.

That focus plays out in many ways, including actively seeking out and supporting environmentally responsible manufacturers and extensive involvement in the



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National Association of Chemical Distributors (NACD). Both U.S. Chemicals and Maroon participate in the NACD's Responsible Distribution Program that enables companies to demonstrate their commitment to continuous performance improvement in every phase of chemical storage, handling, transportation and disposal.

U.S. Chemicals anticipates working toward ISO (International Organization for Standardization) certification leveraging Maroon's experience in demonstrating conformity to international standards that reassure customers that products are safe, efficient and good for the environment.

Currently, there is great enthusiasm at U.S. Chemicals for the development of a bag recycling initiative, the latest programme that supports the company's focus on sustainability. Piccaro is particularly enthusiastic about a Maroon project that is looking at technology tools to create paper-less offices for all Group companies – an initiative she has supported for years in the Darien office.

"It is a terrific complement to the recycling, environmental and re-forestation initiatives U.S. Chemicals supports," she observes. ■

For more information on U.S. Chemicals, go to: www.uschemicals.com