

division (Wella brand) and the group's research and development teams are based in the city.

Whereas the chemical industry is emblematic of Switzerland, cosmetics companies deriving from this industry such as Givaudan and Firmenich are turning to greater naturalness. In order to cater to ever-increasing demand for products with a strong natural or organic dimension (even though they currently only represent 5% of the local market), the Swiss cosmetics industry as a whole is following the trend. In particular, the local industry enjoys an excellent reputation in view of the top quality ingredients it uses for its products and has also invested in its R&D activities. Business France has noted a considerable increase in the organic compositions and ingredients of products marketed in Switzerland. Both the country's geographical location and the local pharmacopoeia are advantages. *"Arval is in an exceptional location, at the heart of the Swiss Alps, away from the*

pollution of the large urban centres. Our company has the immense privilege of benefiting from a unique gift of nature, i.e. water from glaciers in the Swiss Alps. Quite famous for its softness and its well-known purity, the water from these glaciers is used in the production of our cosmetics. Using it with plant extracts of Swiss origin creates a unique combination enabling the development of innovative and effective products," the Alval Swiss Cosmetics internet site informs. The company is located in the Valais region.

When independent young brands wish to assert themselves on the Swiss market, they too launch with a committed approach and natural or organic products. Specialty chemicals manufacturers such as Clariant, established in the Basel region emblematic of the Swiss chemicals industry are speeding up their sustainable transformation process. Synonymous with quality, Swiss cosmetics now also abide by a strong thematic of respect for the consumer and the environment ●

People

Talents for the cosmetics industry

For more than twenty years, the independent Alliance Consulting firm has developed a set of tailored and lasting solutions to identify the best profiles matching the needs of its clients. Specialised in three activity fields among which the cosmetics industry, the firm is located in Lausanne since 2015. An interview with its founder and owner Philippe Sibour.

What reasons led you to open an office in Switzerland?

Philippe Sibour: We are originally from Lyons (France), but our headquarters have been based in Lausanne for six years, attracted by the quality of life and the favourable context for daily business. From the start, Alliance Consulting has positioned itself on the Swiss market with a radically different service offering and approach, including strong expertise in three areas ("nutrition & health foods", "health, OTC & nutraceuticals", and "cosmetics, beauty and spa products"), whereas the local players are generally generalists. Further, we are developing a tailor-made approach consisting of thinking with the client and defining their needs by offering personalised support throughout the process, which is quite unusual. We also accompany our candidates during and afterwards to assist them in their final choice. We are very committed to the companies that use our services. On the strength of our technical expertise, we advise and contribute solutions to fulfill their requirements.



▲ Philippe Sibour, founder and owner Alliance Consulting.

How do you see the Swiss market for cosmetics?

Philippe Sibour: Estimated at €2.15 billion in 2018 it is a considerable market. In terms of cosmetic product consumption the annual average basket in Switzerland is currently around €250 compared with €167 in Europe. We mainly notice a rising demand for so-called natural or organic products, Swiss-grown or made. Swiss made is a real seller as it signifies high quality. Another important point is that Switzerland is the country with the highest number of private clinics. Before the current health crisis, billionaires from other countries (USA, China, Russia...) came very regularly for cures or for cosmetic surgery. These clinics frequently sign partnerships/licensing agreements with luxury brands. Overall, the Swiss cosmetic sector groups together various types of activities. In particular, it comprises ingredient suppliers, manufacturers, distributors and numerous brands some of which are very well-known and top of the range, others less so, with SMEs and pure players. Major brands such as L'Oréal and Clarins are installed in the Geneva area.

Other companies are present, such as Pierre Fabre, in the German-speaking section of Switzerland. These are subsidiaries of international groups. The same applies to manufacturers. As an example, the Italian group Intercos owns CRB, an industrialist based in the Vaud canton. Others such as Valmont, highly renowned in the luxury sector, are also emblematic of the sector.

What are the specificities of Switzerland's human resources?

Philippe Sibour: Generally, human resources are particularly fluid in Switzerland and especially so within the cosmetics industry. It is a full employment market where the recruitment offer exceeds demand (few candidates). Although the law provides for national preference, the country is not closed to foreign workers contrary to what people think: a quarter of the workforce comes from European countries. Local sourcing cannot fill the posts available. France benefits from the fact it is the country at the origin of cosmetics. Companies involved in R&D and in formulation are attentive and in the search for the right profiles do not hesitate to recruit people from outside Switzerland

(while this is not the case for functions connected to finance for example). France is an important source of personnel. For instance, technical profiles with good knowledge of the history of raw materials, plant extracts, active and functional ingredients are in short supply in Switzerland.

What is your approach in Switzerland?

Philippe Sibour: Head hunting is our job. Our highly-specialised data base and the social networks allow us to be active and players in detecting suitable profiles to match the expectations of our clients. We approach personnel profiles on a professional basis, by contributing value to candidates for expatriation, and are able to provide information and accompany them, establishing relations such that confidence reigns. We approach these candidates on a confidential basis, without naming our clients. As it is, Switzerland is known for its extreme discretion. Integrity, humility and reliability are the qualities that characterise us, and we place human capital at the heart of our approach. We monitor the candidates we have placed beyond the recruitment period. Our service aims to provide quality and is all-inclusive ●

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