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**HOW DOES ONTEX ENSURE THAT EVERY CRUCIAL PARAMETER IN PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT USES THE MOST INNOVATIVE SOLUTION?**

**DARE TO SET HIGHER STANDARDS.**

The process involves consumer research, our own technical innovation capabilities and, of course, close cooperation with suppliers to make sure that the very best and latest is available to us. For example, when looking to further develop absorbent cores for baby diapers, it was clear that one of the key parameters was that the diapers should keep their shape even when they are fully saturated. We wanted to make the liquid flow along the diaper core using ‘channels’ –

essentially material-free zones between two layers of nonwoven. The bonding between the layers was seen as critical. It had to help the channels maintain their shape under all conditions.

Our R&D team worked closely together with a specialist supplier of hot-melt adhesives to develop the adhesive we wanted. The close collaboration between our R&D people and their experts in both development and testing phases resulted in a novel

adhesive to meet the challenging needs.

We launched our unique ‘Flow Channel’ more than one year ago now to positive consumer feedback. Our unique channel cores have turned out to be a winning concept also thanks to the close working relationship between both companies.

**THE INGENUITY OF OUR PEOPLE AND OUR ABILITY TO WORK WITH A BROAD BASE OF EXPERTS IS CRUCIAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS YEAR AFTER YEAR**



AT ONTEX, WE BELIEVE THAT THOSE WHO INITIATE CHANGE HAVE A BETTER OPPORTUNITY TO MANAGE AND BENEFIT FROM THE CHANGE THAT IS INEVITABLE. THAT IS WHY INNOVATION IS A KEY PRIORITY AND WHY WE CONTINUALLY INVEST IN PROCESSES, TECHNOLOGY AND PEOPLE TO KEEP US AT THE FOREFRONT OF OUR FIELD.

In 2018, we successfully introduced a range of new products and product platforms across all our categories, once again demonstrating our ability to delight our customers and consumers. One of the main focus points was the work to boldly transform and optimize the Ontex innovation model, examining areas such as process and change management, to ensure that we can always deliver. Innovation is much more than design, so we called on a multifunctional work group representing manufacturing, marketing, pricing, R&D and more to identify the distinct components of the innovation process. Discussions involved not only our approach but also topics such as where decisions are made, who needs to be involved and how to enhance productivity. We ran a number of pilot workshops to test the model and plan to deploy the improvements in 2019.

### COOPERATING ACROSS BOUNDARIES

We have nine specialized R&D centers around the world, which focus on innovation for our end-users. In 2018, we took steps to increase the interactions between our R&D centers in Mexico and Europe to focus on sustainable innovations and ensure that each was able to take advantage of each other's work. We also officially opened our center of excellence for tampons at our plant in Großpostwitz in Germany.



**CONTINUED PRODUCT INNOVATION**

In terms of innovation itself, we adopted a new approach looking at general (rather than category specific) topics that had come to light in our customer research. The three key areas were long lasting absorption, softness and in, feminine care, femininity. The various case stories on these pages take a look at what we did in each of these areas.



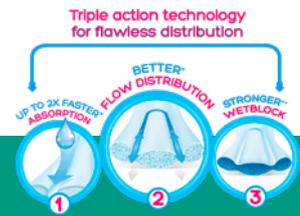
**DESIGNED FOR DISCRETION**

Adult pants underwent a full redesign to further improve comfort, feel and anti-leakage properties. The new discreet low-waist profile makes them more attractive and in line with the latest consumer preferences.



**SOFT AND EASY**

We introduced new core technology for our baby diapers in Mexico focusing on the use of sustainable alternatives, softness, and absorption time as well as change in closure systems.



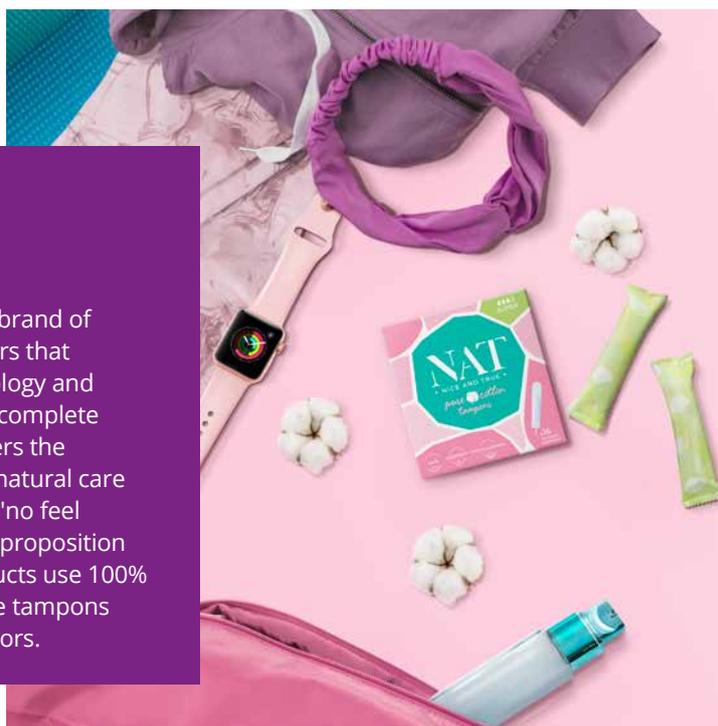
**LONG LASTING ABSORPTION**

Our new channel core technology for diapers improves baby comfort. It provides high, long lasting absorption and liquid acquisition to minimize skin contact and to prevent sagging even when saturated. We introduced it across all of our European and Growth Markets regions.



**COTTON SOUL... TECHNOLOGICAL BRAIN**

NAT – Nice and True – is a new brand of tampons, towels and panty liners that combine natural, cotton technology and high performance to provide a complete intimate care solution. NAT offers the desirable combination of pure natural care and advanced technology for a 'no feel period' and as such is a unique proposition within feminine care. The products use 100% certified organic cotton, and the tampons have sugar cane based applicators.



hello it's

**NAT**  
• NICE AND TRUE •

pure cotton  
tampons

NICE TO YOUR BODY,  
TRUE TO YOUR STYLE!

A natural and true intimate protection that keeps you always active and balanced.

Made in Germany



## A FEMININE SOLUTION

Consumer research shows that women (45 years and older) have a number of essential needs when it comes to incontinence products: confidence and security; comfort; discretion and femininity. They also want a product that fits and feels like traditional underwear. We launched a new adult pants range in 2018 with just these qualities to help restore dignity and self-esteem to women. The light-fit technology used in the core construction delivers high absorbency in a very thin pant. Thinness also means flexibility, comfort and discretion. Fully colored textures or different printed designs and even a textile tag all help to bring the pants a step closer to underwear.



## ATTRACTING NEW CONSUMERS

Women suffering light incontinence want thin and discreet products. During 2018, we developed new light incontinence products with enhanced absorption. It helps fill a gap for women needing enhanced performance but who are reluctant to use bulky incontinence pads. The products are thinner than the leading brands and still absorb ten times their own weight. With security, comfort, discretion and femininity uniquely together all in one product, women should not make compromises. This makes it easier for them to make the step to using the product.

## EXTENDING OUR SERVICE

Innovation was not confined to hygiene products. Our research into waste disposal in nursing homes found that the main concern for visitors and personnel was the issue of odors and the negative effect that they had on the perception of quality in a home. In 2018, we started testing Odobin, a unique closed odorless disposal system for adult incontinence products. In addition to the actual bin to keep used diapers hermetically sealed, it includes specific auxiliary materials and training to reduce odor-to-air exposure time. Initial results are very favorable in helping to create a better environment for the nursing staff, visitors and the patients themselves. We will roll out the system commercially in 2019.

