



# Omya to grow distribution revenues with strategic reorganization

Company has altered the structure of the business and added an acquisition as it aimed to bring more sales and marketing into the distribution side of the business

**Tom Brown** London

Omya is seeking to increase transparency, reduce risk and more strongly focus on profit through a reorganization of its business model to more cleanly delineate its minerals and distribution operations.

While the Switzerland-based firm has a long history in minerals and mining, particularly calcium carbonate and downstream materials, chemicals distribution has become an increasingly prominent part of its operations over the last decade.

"And so the business grew, but we were still perceived as a kind of a hybrid organization, and

I have been asked, who are you? Are you a manufacturing company? Are you a chemical distributor, kind of a hybrid?," said Thoralf Gliese, chief commercial officer for the company.

"And this was one of the reasons that we said, okay, we need more transparency in our financial numbers because we have one ERP [enterprise resource planning] template for everything we do from the mining to the distribution," he added.

In the decade since 2016 the share of revenues from Omya's distribution operations grew from 21% to close to 40%.

"And that's why we said we will split OMYA into a mining and production unit focusing on

these kind of activities and everything that is related to sales and distribution goes into distribution," Gliese added.

Over the course of 2025, Omya began a phased reorganization and expansion process, starting with its acquisition of northern Europe-focused player Distrupol.

The UK-based firm specialises in domestic distribution, also maintaining a network in Ireland and the Nordics, complementing Omya's existing European footprint.

Completed in February 2025, Distrupol became the first deal carried out by Omya Performance Polymer Distribution, a newly formed division headquartered in Switzerland. The



“Why do we keep separated? There is very little to no synergies to our classical mineral business [with] this newer polymer distribution. And we want to have a dedicated platform for selling these polymers,” he said.

The move also gives the company a better view over its operations and an organizational structure better placed to make decisions for specific parts of the business.

“OMYA is a privately owned company. And today, basically all those eggs are one basket. And now we have three which we can individually optimize. And this is also limited de-risking, I would say, of our business model,” Gliese said.

“But the clear purpose is profitable growth,” he added.

The reorganization has also resulted in a substantial increase in annual revenues from distribution for 2025 compared to 2024, through the Distrupol acquisition and establishment of a dedicated polymers platform and the incorporation of its mineral business.

While prior-year revenue figures stood at Swiss francs (Swfr) 1.35 billion, 2025 sales revenues for the distribution arms stood at Swfr4.0 billion. The pushes Omya up from number 20 in last year’s ICIS Top 100 Chemical Distributors list to number six in this year’s edition, based on 2025 sales.

Aside from annual growth, the 2025 figure reflects the broader scope of the distribution business, as well as the integration of the minerals business as a core pillar of Omya Specialty Materials.

As consolidation continues to drive the distribution sector, technical and regulatory know-how has become increasingly important to support clients in a volatile market, Gliese said.

“OMYA specialty materials is the bigger unit, and we clearly want to position ourselves as a global distributor with a very strong application expertise,” he said.

“What we see more and more coming as a license to operate for a distributor is to give regulatory and technical guidance,” he added.

“I think we have our systems in place which can onboard additional business from principals more easily instead of creating a green-field situation. Something which is very important for us.”

While specialty materials is the more prominent unit within Omya’s distribution footprint, the company is looking to continue growing its polymers business beyond the Distrupol purchase.

“The idea really is to have a significantly higher growth rate on the polymer side, because we’re starting from a lower level,” he said.

## YEAR OF CHANGE

Throughout the rest of 2026, the company expects to complete the organizational work of the restructuring.

“There will always be adjustments later on,



**Thoralf Gliese**

Chief commercial officer, OMYA

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but I think at the end of the day it’s 2026 which is the year of change, and from there we just optimize, so the good thing is with all these changes, which we have already implemented, we see already some of the benefits giving us more resilience in these very critical market conditions,” Gliese said.

As Omya remains in private hands, there is less pressure to make changes at a pace that players bound by quarterly reports face.

“As a private company we have a significantly different attitude when it comes to rolling out strategies,” he added.

Facing up to the current market volatility, conditions continued strong through much of the second quarter of the year but, with demand flatlining in the face of higher pricing and the prospect that conditions could change at any moment, the future is less clear.

“I’m relatively optimistic regarding to the business situation in Q2, I have more doubts about Q3 Q4, depending on the geopolitical situation, so we are trying to focus on being ready, having, if needed, the right precautionary measures in the drawer,” Gliese said.

“If you talk to a customer, their main concern, of course, is always the price, but another concern is, do I get a product? Can you make sure that I get a product today, also in two or three months from now?,” he added.

Even if the Strait of Hormuz were to reopen in the near future and conditions in the Middle East gradually normalize, the disruption is likely to continue to ripple through supply chains for years.

“I mean, we will see the implications of this in 2027 maybe in 2028 still, so that’s something that we need to prepare for and monitor and manage on a daily basis,” Gliese added. ■

business was formed with the intention of housing Omya’s polymer distribution network and supplement it through acquisition.

Omya followed the launch of the polymers unit with the launch of Omya Specialty Materials, also headquartered in Switzerland, intended to establish a global sales network for pigments, binders and life science additives.

The distribution footprint is combined with Omya’s own range of mineral-based products.

The Distrupol acquisition and the establishment of a dedicated polymers distribution business also makes for more limited business overlap than between minerals and specialty chemicals, Gliese noted.

**Assets:** global presence with sales into over 120 countries; 30 offices; 1,000+ employees across 40+ countries

### 3 UNIVAR SOLUTIONS

2025 SALES: \$11.48BN  
Downers Grove, Illinois, US

[www.univarsolutions.com](http://www.univarsolutions.com)

**CEO:** David Jukes

**Products:** acids; additives and modifiers; chelants; enzymes and microbes; essential chemicals and ingredients; oleochemicals; oxides; peroxides; polymers and resins; process aids; silicates; surfactants; sodium (salts)

**Services:** blending; bulk breakdown; import/export; private label; technical support; solution centers; corporate accounts; custom blending; ChemPoint online platform; custom packaging; lab and formulation services; Infinite sustainable solutions; ChemCare waste management services; telemetry services

**Assets:** located in 37 countries and delivering to nearly 80,000 customer locations across 125 countries from 2,300 suppliers with around 500 distribution facilities across the world; 3,800 tractors, trailers and tankers providing flexible inventory and delivery alternatives; over 2,500 railcars; 185 rail and barge terminals; 20 deep sea terminals

### 4 SINOCHEM PETROCHEMICAL DISTRIBUTION

2025 SALES: \$8.65BN

Shanghai, China

[www.sinochemhx.com/shxsen/index.html](http://www.sinochemhx.com/shxsen/index.html)

**CEO:** Chun Liu

**Products:** PX; MEG; MTBE; asphalt; sulfur; LPG; PTA; methanol; SM; VAM; acrylonitrile; toluene; benzene; xylene; EVA; PP; PE

**Assets:** overseas business platform in Singapore; logistics and transportation platform; designated delivery factories and warehouses for futures exchanges in Shanghai, Dalian and Zhengzhou

### 5 NAGASE & CO

2025 SALES: \$6.03BN  
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, Japan

[www.nagase.co.jp/english](http://www.nagase.co.jp/english)

**CEO:** Hiroyuki Ueshima

**Products:** chemicals; plastics; electronics materials; cosmetics and health foods

**Services:** import/export and domestic sales

### 6 IMCD

2025 SALES: \$5.61BN  
Rotterdam, Netherlands

[www.imcdgroup.com](http://www.imcdgroup.com)

**CEO:** Marcus Jordan

**Products:** specialty chemicals and ingredients for pharmaceuticals; coatings and construction, adhesives and sealants, elastomers (CASE); beauty and personal care; advanced



materials; food and nutrition; animal nutrition; nutraceuticals; lubricants; synthesis; home care and HI&I; oil and gas

**Services:** leading global partner for the distribution and formulation of specialty chemicals and ingredients; technical & regulatory support; market & trend expertise; local and central stock holding; drumming; repackaging; blending; sampling

**Assets:** 80+ market-focused application laboratories; 5,200+ employees; 120+ offices and third-party warehouses across EMEA, Americas and Asia Pacific

### 7 OMYA\*

2025 SALES: \$5.10BN  
Oftringen, Switzerland

[www.omya.com](http://www.omya.com)

**CEO:** Thoralf Gliese

**Products:** mineral products made from calcium carbonate, dolomite and perlite; specialty materials including binders, additives and ingredients for adhesives and sealants, agriculture, air treatment, building and construction, food, pharma and nutrition, packaging, personal and home care, pulp and paper, water treatment, paints and coatings; standard, high performance and engineering

polymers and rubber polymers and additives for specialist applications

**Services:** worldwide distribution of specialty materials; essential minerals production; technical solutions; local market and technical expertise support; application development and performance optimization; global quality control; specialist regulatory guidance; worldwide logistics

**Assets:** 9,000 employees across 160 plants and 50 countries; over 100 scientists in innovation centers on three continents; collaborative relationships with academia and partnerships with principals and key global customers; 17 dedicated laboratories offering analysis and technical support; 120+ warehouses for global logistics; 325 patent families

**\*follows corporate restructure (see p36)**

### 8 SUNRISE GROUP

2025 SALES: \$5.00BN  
Ningbo, China

[www.sunrisechemical.com](http://www.sunrisechemical.com)

**CEO:** Sun Yang

**Products:** adhesives; active pharmaceutical ingredients and intermediates; paints and coatings chemicals; polymers and resins; polyurethanes; solvents; surfactants; aromatic hy-



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Our extensive portfolio of specialty materials sits alongside our range of mineral products, enabling us to deliver complete solutions driven by a global supply network and local market expertise for customers across various industries.

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-  Agriculture
-  Air treatment
-  Building and construction
-  Food, pharma and nutrition
-  Packaging
-  Paints and coatings
-  Personal care and home care
-  Polymers
-  Pulp and paper
-  Water treatment

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