

**mini-case 1-430-465**  
**December 7, 2015**

## **Ecolab: Is Green the New Black?**

### **Scenario:**

Ecolab is one of those giant companies that hardly anybody really knows. Its products, which include cleaning supplies, commercial laundry detergents, and pest elimination chemicals, are mostly invisible to the average person on a day-to-day basis. But with 2012 revenue of more than 40 billion USD, and a 2011 Fortune 500 ranking of 365, it is a major global company.

Ecolab has its headquarters in St. Paul, Minnesota, but operates in nearly every country of the world and across multiple industries, from food and beverage processing to lodging and healthcare. Through its acquisition of NALCO, Ecolab has also gained significant expertise in water, energy, and air technologies, thereby providing opportunities in new industries and growth with existing customers. As suggested by its slogan, it makes the world cleaner, safer, and healthier.

Ecolab was founded in the early 20th century when traveling salesman M.J. Osborn noted that hotels sent their carpets out for cleaning. It was a time of significant customer downtime. Lodging/hospitality continues to be an important customer. As the industry moves toward more ecological and natural personal care products, it seems obvious that a more consumer-facing product line might do well. Products such as organic cleaning supplies, natural disinfectants, and natural pest control products are gaining traction. To view the full mini-case, please purchase it from [WDI-Publishing.com](http://WDI-Publishing.com)

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