



January 2021

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS - THE ORWAK STORY

Orwak's 50th anniversary this year is a significant milestone and an inspiration on the road ahead! It is the time to reminisce, to reflect upon the highlights in the history that brought us to where we are today, but most importantly to look ahead to future experiences and trends, the challenges and opportunities they bring about, and envisioning our next innovations, designs and solutions the coming decades.

50 years are a long time and a constant development through different phases in life. It is not just about being a company, a legal entity, a place where things are constructed, produced and marketed - it is about the essence of being and the human side. The heart and soul of Orwak are - and have always been - the dedicated people contributing in different ways with their expertise and engagement! One was the founder **Olof Robert Wilhelm Åkerberg**, who came up with the original idea and gave Orwak its name based on his initials (**K** = Komprimatorer "compactors").



Tune into the video ["Proud To Build Orwak"](#) and hear what makes our team proud to work for Orwak!

Others are employees within the organization, partners in external sales and service companies and they are all devoted to representing Orwak, to make a difference in the world of recycling and in the everyday life of our customers, to work on continuous development and improvement. Time goes by. It is a long chain forged of valuable links stretching over half a century. Some built Orwak from the start and left long ago, some are working for us for decades and some have just begun their journey with us. Together we are strong and make Orwak the best it can be!

Follow us on a trip around the world and through five decades:

BORN OUT OF THE GENUINE DESIRE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

It all began in 1971 in small town Sävsjö in Sweden. The place is in the countryside surrounded by deep forests, in a region with long industrial tradition and defined by entrepreneurial spirit. It is an environment that fosters good values and encourages innovations. Waste management is a classic challenge and in the 70s, it was all about efficiency, cleanliness and volume reduction. That is where the idea to design the first waste compactor was born out of the genuine desire to make things better, to contribute in a valuable way in many businesses.

Compacting waste in a drum inside a plastic bag! It was a simple idea really, but a great invention! It made us the pioneer in the industry and many actors in the waste management sector looked upon us a rebellion at the time! Our first in-bag waste compactor, Orwak 5030, was patented and with a strong belief in the virtues of this solution we introduced it to restaurants, hotels, schools, hospitals, stores; to every place that handled a certain waste volume!



The sales team was out on the road, on tours in station wagons with the waste compactor on the trailer displaying and demonstrating the machine and the audience got convinced by putting the machine to the test in their own business. Eager and grateful for the warm reception and encouraged by the success in Sweden, we soon traveled far and wide presenting the unique solution at world exhibitions, introducing it in new markets, gradually building a strong network of dedicated distributors in many countries.

At the late 70s growing environmental concerns and care awoke in society. We were riding on the first recycling wave, constructed and launched the first multi-chamber baler in 1978. It enabled and encouraged sorting and compaction of different recyclables at source. The concept was developed into several new models that are still popular decades later!



The very first Orwak machine served 45 years at a local bakery and then returned home to spend its golden years in the Orwak reception area.

TO GO WEST AT THE SPEED OF TIME

The happy 80s were good times with escalating new establishments, especially in the retail business, and they all needed reliable and profitable waste management solutions. It was a decade of major expansion! We entered new geographic markets and conquered the supermarket business, as we began supplying supermarket chains with thousands of machines. The wind from the west was strong and many new trends and influences came from the US. In 1985, we took an adventurous step into the North American market, when setting up our own sales division there. The pace was speeding up. Every second counted and at this time, Orwak 8010, the fastest down-stroke baler in the world with a cycle time of just 10 seconds, was born!



The multi-chamber baler Orwak 8020



Orwak 8010 – the world's fastest baler at the time

ENTERING THE GLOBAL ERA IN THE 90S

The 90s was an era of globalization! The connection between the countries in Europe grew stronger with the expansion of EU and other continents were no longer distant and foreign corners of the world. It meant new business opportunities and this was another exciting wave we

were eager to surf! We started up a sales company in the promising new market in Poland and we entered the Asian market through establishing a partnership in Japan.



Space is of the essence in Japan, which makes it a good market for volume reduction solutions.



Sune Johansson: entrepreneur, innovator and the CEO of Orwak for many years.

Only through genuine interest and insight in the challenges the customers are facing, is it possible to offer a good solution tailored to the conditions at hand. To meet the growing demand in the 90s, we expanded the product range and launched vertical single chamber balers for both small and large volumes of waste.

MASTERING THE NEW PLAYING FIELD OF THE 21ST CENTURY

In pace with the growing interest in recycling, the 21st century brought about requirements to be a full range supplier and to meet the demands for large-scale waste handling. This was a new playing field for us and to master it, we added the fully automated briquetting machine, Brickman, and a line of horizontal balers to the product range. To help some customers take control of vast waste streams, we developed the high-capacity heavy-duty Brickman model 2000K designed to work around the clock! Nothing surpasses the satisfaction of supplying a solution that solves the customer's dilemma!



The first Brickman 2000K with silent hydraulics at GeKås, the biggest discount store in Scandinavia. GeKås serves 5 million customers and recycles 3000 tons cardboard per year. A duct system drops the briquettes into 40 m³ outdoor containers. [Listen to the customer interview and watch Brickman in action at GeKås!](#)

For us the 21st century has been characterized by intense work at the R&D department and at the world retail exhibition EuroShop 2014 in Düsseldorf, we had the pleasure to launch ORWAK POWER - a dynamic range of balers based on a completely new hydraulic concept that literally turned the traditional idea of waste compaction upside down and they are balers with brains that come with intelligent features.

At the same time, TOM entered the stage and became the new buddy at work at many restaurants, quick service stores, malls and airports taking care of waste management and keeping the places clean. Australia, USA, UAE, Bahrain and Chile are some of the countries where TOM feel at home. It is a smart and cool waste bin for public spaces with a lot of foot traffic and thanks to effective compaction, it can hold more than seven times as much volume as a conventional waste bin. The shutter opens automatically and especially in COVID times, the touch-free operation has proven to be an important feature.



POWER features a compact machine design that makes the balers easy to transport and install. 3820 comes with an extra wide loading gate.



TOM dressed for the occasion, ready to celebrate the 50th anniversary!

TOM was also our first Orwak machine to communicate and we were the pioneer in the industry when we introduced our optional communication service Orwak Connect on the core range of vertical balers. It enhances the user-experience to be able to see the latest status update as well as valuable bale statistics over time. In the digitized world today with M2M communication and apps in our iPhones facilitating almost every activity during the day, it is only natural for us to provide the same features for the balers. QR codes on the machines are another recent addition. A click with the iPhone takes you to the operating manual in your language or a brief instruction video on YouTube.

The recent years are also an era of acquisitions. To ensure a strong local presence at vital markets and be able to offer the customers there even more, we made the strategic decision in the group

to acquire sales companies in the UK, Sweden and Russia and since 2019 we belong to the French SULO Group. The combined resources make us stronger and open new doors!

MILES COVERED - 100 000 MACHINES WORLDWIDE

In January 2019, we witnessed a proud moment! Machine no. 100 000 left the factory and our hometown Sävsjö! Over the years, the machines have traveled far and wide and work dutifully in all seven continents. Some are installed next door and some at remote corners of the world like a research station in Antarctica, resorts on tiny islands in the Maldives, oil platforms far out at sea, ski stations in roadless territory in the mountains and some constantly cross the oceans aboard ships. Some are at home at famous addresses like Buckingham Palace, the White House and the Statue of Liberty, but just as important are all the installations that improve the working environment and make waste management more profitable in thousands of small and large businesses on the globe.



Watch the video [“From Ice To Fire”](#) and follow us on a journey to 10 exotic installations worldwide.

INSPIRED TO BE AT THE FOREFRONT OF INNOVATION THE NEXT 50 YEARS

After 50 years, it still all comes back to the first genuine desire to make a difference, to contribute to a better environment in the world through reduced waste transportation and increased recycling and a better working-environment at every place where an Orwak baler is installed. We have safety at heart and our motto is to provide advanced systems that are always safe and easy to use. That is what we today call “Advanced Simplicity”.

That remains our guiding star looking forward toward the future with great enthusiasm. Change is the only constant! The e-commerce significantly redraws the map of the retail landscape and offers new exciting business opportunities for automated solutions in large-scale waste handling and we are only in the beginning of the digital and advanced communication era, which gives us visions and inspiration when looking forward to the next 50 years!

