



April 12, 2004

VISION News Consumer Products e-Report

Published by INDA, Association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Industry and organizer of the annual Vision Consumer Products Conference.

Welcome to Volume 3, No. 6 of the VISION News Consumer Products e-Report.

The VISION News Consumer Products e-Report is written and distributed monthly for executives within the consumer products and nonwovens industries. VISION reviews the news and events of each month in the disposable diaper, adult incontinence, feminine hygiene, household wipes/cleaning products and filtration markets, among other end uses that utilize nonwoven fabrics.

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BREAKING NEWS

IDEA04 IN TWO WEEKS; CONSUMER PRODUCTS UP FOR ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

The largest event on the engineered fabrics industry is calendar is right around the corner -- IDEA04 International Engineered Fabrics Conference and Exposition, April 27-29 in Miami Beach, FL. For more information on the event, go to www.idea04.com.

One of the highlights of IDEA04 is the presentation of the IDEA04 Achievement Awards, part of the keynote session on Wednesday, April 28. Voting took place throughout the month of March and winners will be announced in five categories, including End Use-Short Life, a category that includes disposable hygiene products, household products and wipes. The finalists in all five categories are:

End Use-Short Life

Kimberly-Clark: Huggies Convertibles Diaper-Pants
Procter & Gamble/Unicharm: Swiffer Dusters
Unilever: Dove Essential Nutrients Cleansing Pillows

End Use-Long Life

3M: Filtrete Ultra Home Furnace Filter
BBA Fiberweb: Typar House Wrap
Cuno: DuoFlo Filter Element

Raw Materials

FiberVisions: Fine Fibers
H.B. Fuller: HydroLock
Xtreme Fibers: Short cut Hyflon MFA

Roll Goods

Ahlstrom: Cytosep PS 2
DelStar: DelPore Filter Media
Dupont: Suprel

Machinery/Equipment

Amotek: Amotek FB Flow Bagger
Fleissner: Aqua-Jet with Oscillating Jets
Sonobond Ultrasonics: RingMaster

In addition to these five categories, two other IDEA04 Achievement Awards will be presented.

- ✓ The IDEA04 Entrepreneur Achievement Award, for the company founded since IDEA01 that has made a significant impact on the engineered fabrics industry, will be given to Advanced Fabrics (SAAF) – Saudi Arabia.

- ✓ The IDEA04 Lifetime Achievement Award will be presented to former INDA president and long-time industry executive Ted Wirtz, who retired late last year.

INDUSTRY NEWS

SCA TO BUY MEXICAN DIAPER COMPANY, MAKES OTHER ACQUISITIONS

In one of a number of acquisition moves in the past few weeks, SCA, based in Sweden, is set to buy 50% of the stock in a subsidiary of Copamex, which is the second biggest producer of disposable paper diapers in Mexico. This will mean a slight increase in the competition for Kimber de Mexico, which controls the market.

The half of Copamex to be acquired by SCA will cost the Swedish firm \$100 million in cash. SCA will also pay with the 50% stake it holds in Sancella, a joint owned company with CPG, which makes feminine hygiene products and adult diapers.

The Mexican firm said in a statement to the press that the deal "represents an important part of the plan to reduce debt and refinance Copamex." It added that this plan provides it with sufficient funds to pay off part of its debt in bonds and refinance the rest, which expires in a period of eight years.

In a similar move, as part of SCA's plan to globalize its hygiene products operations, last month it acquired the leading tissue company on the Australian and New Zealand markets. SCA has acquired the tissue and fluff operations of the New Zealand company Carter Holt Harvey, including acquisition of the seller's 50% interest in Sancella, a company owned jointly with SCA. After the acquisition, SCA's sales outside Europe in the hygiene products area will amount to about 30%, of which SCA Hygiene Growth Markets accounts for about 15%.

The tissue production capacity of the acquired units is 130,000 tons, of which 30,000 tons is TAD (Through Air Dried) grade. A substantial portion of fiber raw material is secured from the acquired unit's own production unit for CTMP pulp with a capacity of 50,000 tons. All production is converted in the businesses' own facilities and sales are made under its own brands. The company is the market leader in tissue in Australia (35%) and New Zealand (63%). The company's Sorbent and Purex brands have built up a strong market position over the 50 years they have operated in Australia and New Zealand. With regard to baby diapers, production and sales are carried out in New Zealand, where the market share is 56%.

Sancella was established 25 years ago as a joint venture for the markets in Australia and New Zealand, at that time with Bowater-Scott as partner. Today, the company produces feminine hygiene and incontinence products. In the feminine hygiene market Sancella has a 37% market share in Australia and a 30% market share in New Zealand. In the incontinence area, the company is the market leader in Australia, with a market share of 45%, while in New Zealand it is ranked second. All Sancella's sales go through a combined organization together with the tissue operations.

P&G GETS GOVERNMENT APPROVAL TO BUY PLANT IN UKRAINE

Continuing its effort to localize production in growing markets around the world, Procter & Gamble last week announced plans to buy a plant in Ukraine. P&G will spend \$15 million during the next five years to upgrade the plant, according to a statement from the Ukrainian

government's anti-monopoly unit reported by Reuters. The plant now is owned by Olvia Beta, a private consumer-goods company.

P&G confirmed it had received government approval to proceed with the purchase but did not predict when it would close. The plant makes a variety of products, including those in P&G core categories such as laundry, beauty care and feminine care. P&G bought assets from Olvia Beta that include the plant.

P&G has been selling products in Ukraine since the early 1990s. The region is poised for expansion since it abuts several countries set to join an expanded European Union.

Procter, which markets consumer goods there including Fairy dishwashing liquid and Ariel detergent, already has a healthy and growing business in Russia with sales of about \$500 million a year and growing about 50 percent a year.

Also at Procter & Gamble, the company late last month announced plans to invest \$14 million to expand operations in Argentina. The investment will be earmarked for plant modernization and the launch of new products on the Argentine market. Procter & Gamble hopes to increase its market share in products such as toothpaste, paper towels and deodorant. The company calculates that the investment will yield a 40% sales increase to an estimated \$181 million.

P&G AND KANEKA IN POLYMERS PRODUCTION DEAL

Procter & Gamble Chemicals and Japan's Kaneka have finalized a joint agreement to complete the research and development of poly(3-hydroxybutyrate-co-3-hydroxyhexanoate), a biobased plastic commercially known as Nodax H. The two have been collaborating on Nodax since 2001, but they expect the new agreement to lead to a demonstration of Nodax fermentation followed by the construction of a joint manufacturing unit. Nodax' properties include high-temperature hydrolytic stability as well as good odor and moisture barrier properties for use in films, fibers, and molded articles.

CONCERT RECEIVES CREDITOR'S EXTENSION TO END OF MONTH

Concert Industries has been granted an extension to April 30 of the initial order from the Quebec Superior Court under the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act ("CCAA"). The company also announced that its Canadian bank line of credit has been extended accordingly.

The extension has been granted to give it additional time to receive and consider letters of intent from investors who have expressed a serious interest in pursuing opportunities with the company and to complete negotiations with its senior secured lenders with a view to filing a Plan of Arrangement by April 30, 2004.

NEW PRODUCT: CLOROX TOILETWAND DISPOSABLE CLEANING SYSTEM

Clorox has introduced Clorox ToiletWand, a disposable toilet cleaning system it says "will make standard dirty toilet brushes -- and their germ-ridden caddies -- a thing of the past."

Clorox ToiletWand is a sturdy, ergonomic wand that clicks onto a disposable, scrubby sponge head. Each head has been pre-loaded with foaming Clorox cleaner and is designed to scrub better than a standard toilet brush, even in hard-to-reach places like under the rim. After a swish around the bowl, users can simply toss the head in the trash with the push of a button.

The Clorox ToiletWand starter kit, which includes a ToiletWand and six single-use sponges, has a suggested retail price of \$9.99. Single-use sponge refills -- sold in packages of six -- have a suggested retail price of \$2.99. Clorox ToiletWand is available in stores this month.

TREDEGAR AND SHALAG TEAM IN TOPSHEET PRODUCTION

Tredegar Film Products is now offering a line of apertured nonwoven feminine hygiene and diaper topsheets under a joint collaboration with Shalag Industries Ltd. of Israel, trading as Shalag Nonwovens. The new product line, called ComfortQuilt, features a cotton-like texture designed specifically to maximize softness and cleanliness.

Under the collaboration, Shalag Nonwovens will supply customized carded thermobonded fabric for a variety of Tredegar Film Products' apertured, three-dimensional topsheet structures. Tredegar Film Products will offer ComfortQuilt apertured nonwovens and laminates for hygienic topsheets, with plans to expand into other applications.

"Our research tells us that many women need softer, cleaner feminine hygiene products. In addition, we know that newborn babies have sensitive skin and can benefit from softer, drier topsheets. We're excited about the initial response from our topsheet customers to these new products," said Rebecca Hoberland, manager of absorbent products at Tredegar Film Products.

"This is a very promising business relationship that combines our strength in innovative topsheet solutions with Shalag Nonwovens' expertise in manufacturing hygienic, soft-textured nonwovens," added Hoberland.

Shalag Nonwovens is a manufacturer of carded thermobonded nonwovens (calendar and airtight technology) and recently launched three products. These products are SABtex industrial and household cleaning wipes, Supersoft topsheets and backsheets and TABtex airtight bonded acquisition distribution layers for the hygienic market.

PATENT REVIEW

Absorbent cores for absorbent diapers having reduced thickness and improved liquid handling and retention performance and comprising a super absorbent polymer

European Patents Number EP 1393757

Appl. Data EP 02078518 2002 08 26

Applicant: Procter & Gamble

Inventors: Ehrnsperger, Bruno; Friedel Schoenborn, Udo

Abstract The present invention relates to absorbent cores for absorbent articles, which are intended to receive and retain bodily discharges such as urine. Such articles are disposable hygiene articles like baby diapers, training pants, adult incontinence articles, feminine care articles and the like. The improvement essentially is based on the recognition that replacing most or all of the cushioning fibrous absorbent material in an absorbent core by a liquid storage material capable of retaining liquid while maintaining or improving acquisition behavior is desirable

as the reduction in cushioning is more than compensated by the gain in comfort. The comfort however can only be achieved if the more fundamental requirements of a diaper in respect to liquid handling are satisfied or improved. Especially if this liquid handling performance is improved beyond the performance of conventional absorbent structures in order to allow creation of thinner and drier absorbent articles, the users of such articles would experience them

as providing a more than expected comfort improvement relative to the thinness gain. To provide such absorbent cores and articles made therewith only became possible with the development of new highly absorbent gel materials capable to acquire, conduct, and store liquids in here-to-forth unexpected perfection at super absorbent polymer concentrations, which are unknown today. The second aspect allowing this breakthrough development is the ability to maintain the comfort and performance of such high super absorbent polymer concentration articles during the full usage cycle of the article, from dry to fully loaded, especially by improving the ability of the cores to withstand the forces experienced by such articles during use. This ability to remain intact is also often referred to as wet integrity of the core and its improvement is an important objective of the present invention.

Hard Surface cleaning compositions, premoistened wipes

U.S. Patent Patent Number 6716805

Issue Date 2004 04 06

Assignee: Procter & Gamble

Inventors: Sherry, Alan Edward; Policicchio, Nicola John; Cella, Cynthia Elaine; Flora, Jeffrey Lawrence; Trinh, Toan; Morelli, Joseph Paul

Abstract The present invention provides preferred, preferably liquid, hard surface cleaning compositions, compositions with cleaning liquid composition on a substrate, compositions used with absorbent pads and implements and devices for making the process of cleaning hard surfaces and/or maintaining their appearance and hygiene easier and more effective. These compositions, along with specific instructions for use are advantageous for removal of and/or prevention of buildup of soils commonly encountered on floors, glass surfaces, counters, walls, showers and/or tubs, said compositions comprising hydrophilic polymers to render the cleaned surface hydrophilic and to improve the appearance when the surface is either not rinsed, or when the composition is incompletely removed, specific surfactant, preferably surfactant selected to minimize spotting/filming, optionally specific organic cleaning solvents to provide cleaning and wetting particularly in applications where levels of non-volatiles need to be minimized, and, optionally, anti-bacterial agents for preserving or surface activity and optionally perfumes for aesthetics.

THAT'S ALL FOR THIS MONTH

The next issue of the Vision Consumer Products e-Report from INDA will be sent May 10, and will contain a recap of IDEA04. In the meantime, feel free to contact editor Michael Jacobsen at 201-612-6601 or email at mjacobsen@inda.org .

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