



March 11, 2002

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 Issue No. 7 of the Vision News Consumer Products e-Report. Vision is sent monthly to 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.

In This Issue:

**What Stocks To Buy? How About Diapers?
3M Phasing Out Production at St. Paul Plant**

Association News

**INDA Announces Industry Slogan To Upgrade Industry Image
Vision 2003 Conference Planning Begins**

Global News

**P&G Launches Two Versions of Panpase In Japan
Lion Roars Out Of Tampon Business
SCA and Italian Tissue Maker in \$262 Million Deal
Drypers Asia Taking Over Its Distribution In Thailand**

Supplier News

**Jentex To Distribute Atex Melt Blows
Green Bay Packing In new Spunlace line**

New Products

Purific Water Cooler

Patent Review

WHAT STOCKS TO BUY? HOW ABOUT DIAPERS?

As investors sort out the fallout from the Enron scandal, among other challenges in investing these days, it seems

like good old disposable diapers – along with other simple consumer products – are becoming more attractive. Or so says one analyst, who said recently that investors are gravitating toward companies that seem easier to understand, such as Kellogg and Procter & Gamble, both of which reached 52-week highs in late February.

"There's a general critical feeling about complexity right now, a thought that if you don't understand what a company does you had better bash it," said Tim Leach, chief investment officer for Wells Fargo's Private Client Services. "So people buy Procter & Gamble because they understand diapers, but when you get into hyperswitches and next-phase servers, it's something else and right now people are staying away."

3M PHASING OUR PRODUCTION AT ST. PAUL PLANT

3M has announced plans to phase out most production operations at its plant on the east side of St. Paul, MN, eliminating about 500 jobs there over the next year. The cuts will be in manufacturing-related positions. About 1,000 engineers and designers will remain at the site, which the company said it will develop into a technology resource center.

Longer term, the company said it expects employment at the site to climb as the technology center is developed and employees now in leased space are transferred there. 3M said work at the center will focus on product development, engineering and environmental technologies.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

INDA ANNOUNCES NEW SLOGAN TO UPGRADE INDUSTRY IMAGE

INDA, Association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Association, has revealed a new industry slogan to combine the heritage of the nonwovens industry with its highly technical present and future. The new logo is "Nonwovens * Engineered Fabric Solutions," and INDA is asking its 260 member companies worldwide to include it on all of their promotional and product literature whenever appropriate. The association will be including the slogan on all of its printed materials. The slogan is the result of a year of extensive research, which included polling all of its INDA members on their preferences from six final suggestions.

VISION 2003 CONFERENCE PLANNING BEGINS

The Vision 2003 Committee met this week at the INDA offices in Cary, NC to begin planning the follow-up to January's extremely successful Vision 2002 Consumer Products Conference. With planning now in the preliminary stages, what has been decided is that the event will once again be

held in the late January timeframe in New Orleans. Among other developments: The Visionary Awards will be offered once again to recognize innovative new consumer products that utilize nonwoven fabrics. Stay tuned for more updates on what promises to be the premier consumer products event of 2003.

GLOBAL NEWS

P&G LAUNCHES TWO VERSIONS OF PANPASE IN JAPAN

Procter & Gamble Japan late last year launched Panpase Cotton Care for newborn and small babies. The softness of the surface sheet was modified to achieve a cotton-like soft texture, and the flexibility around legs was improved. At the same time, according to a report in Japan Nonwovens Report, Panpase Sukusuku Pants are improved with the application of Sukkiri Soft Mesh (fresh and soft mesh), and its national launch was late 2001: the product is the first pants-type paper diaper for large size babies (8kg body weight).

LION ROARS OUT OF TAMPON BUSINESS

Japanese personal products giant Lion Corporation will sell its sanitary products business as well as its related processing equipment this month to Uni Charm. The move leaves Uni Charm and Esai as the only producers of tampons in Japan, although there remain a number of foreign brands as well.

SCA AND ITALIAN TISSUE MAKER IN \$262 MILLION DEAL

Swedish paper maker Svenska Cellulosa has agreed to buy CartoInvest, an Italian tissue manufacturer, in a \$262 million deal. The acquisition increases SCA's European tissue manufacturing capacity by 30-35% and makes it the biggest regional supplier for absorbent hygiene products. CartoInvest has plants in Italy, Spain, France and the U.K.

DRYPERS ASIA TAKING OVER ITS DISTRIBUTION IN THAILAND

Drypers Asia has decided to handle its own marketing in Thailand after ending a distribution contract with Berli Jucker Plc. The move is part of its strategy to challenge three major brands in a key market: Pampers by Procter & Gamble, Mami Poko by Unicharm, and Kimberly-Clark's Huggies.

According to a local newspaper report, in 2000 the company started marketing Malaysian-made Wee Wee Dry disposable diapers for babies through Berli Jucker, but the business did not grow as rapidly as the manufacturer had hoped. As part of the renewed effort, sales channels will be widened to hypermarkets and supermarkets.

The cornerstone of the new marketing effort is a unique commercial that features an infant handing a diaper to his mother who is crying over a soap-opera scene, while other firms continue to use a stereotype format of pouring water on diapers. Soon after the commercial went to air in December, sales of Drypers doubled and the brand was among the leaders in Malaysia and Singapore. This year, the brand aimed for an 8% share of the Thai market.

SUPPLIER NEWS

JENTEX TO DISTRIBUTE ATEX MELT BLOWS

Jentex has entered into a U.S., Mexico and Canada distribution agreement with Atex, Milan, Italy, for products produced on its new melt blown production line. Atex is the parent of Atex, Gainesville, GA.

GREEN BAY PACKING IN NEW SPUNLACE LINE

Green Bay Nonwovens is adding a 4.5 meter spunlace line with wood pulp capability. The new line will be housed in a 65,000 square foot addition to the company's Green Bay plant and is expected to be complete by June 2003. With a current spunlace capacity of 12,000 tons, Green Bay sells to a range of end use markets including baby and feminine hygiene, consumer cleaning and disinfectant wipes, food service and industrial wipes, medical, filtration and home furnishings.

NEW PRODUCTS

PURIFIC RETAIL COOLER

AquaCell has introduced a Purific Water Cooler model specifically designed for the retail consumer market. The Purific 50 is equipped with a filtration system designed to meet the needs and pricing requirements of the retail consumer market. The patented self-filling Purific line of water coolers automatically refills a permanently attached five-gallon bottle with freshly filtered water.

"Bottled water is the fastest growing segment of the beverage industry, with an expected annual growth rate of 30%, as reported in the March 4, 2002 edition of FORTUNE magazine. We believe that this new Purific 50 will fill a niche that is not being addressed for the home market's drinking water needs," said James C. Witham, CEO. AquaCell believes that this new model Purific cooler will provide the consumer home market with a product that directly meets their desire for better drinking water while providing an alternative to expensive and inconvenient bottled water.

PATENT REVIEW

Glass-Like Polysaccharide Useful As Absorbent For Liquids

Abstract: A particulate absorbent, for the absorption of liquids, comprising particles selected from the group consisting of particles of glass-like polysaccharides and of particles of glass-like polysaccharides occluding, in their internal structure, at least one surfactant, said particles: having a size of up to 620 mgr; being at least 70 % of a glass-like type structure; and being: 30 to 45 % of a size comprised between 620 and 420 mgr; 35 to 55 % of a size comprised between 420 and 210 mgr; and 5 to 25 % of a size up to 210 mgr. These particulate absorbent is non-hygroscopic, hypoallergenic and biodegradable and useful particularly in biodegradable diapers.

Pub. No.: EP 1178843; Appl. Data: EP 00929165 2000 05 11; Applicants: Huppe, Serge; Maheux, Marie-Elise; Chevigny, Stephane; Quirion, Francois

Synthetic polyester absorbent materials

Assignee: Clemson University Research Foundation

Abstract: The invention provides synthetic polymeric fibers which have utility as temporary acquisition/distribution absorbent structures and permanent storage/distribution absorbent structures in a wide range of absorbent products such as diapers, feminine napkins, and adult incontinent pads. These fibers are short, highly distorted, and bulky characterized by lengths between 2 and 37 mm, short-range distortion factors between 5 and 70, long-range distortion factors between 0.05 and 0.9, and single fiber bulk factors between 0.5 and 10.0. They may or may not have capillary channels on the surface. The advantages of these materials are their increased absorbency, reduced wet collapse at low densities, reduced rewet, reduced loss of liquid under pressure, and their ability to be desorbed by distribution materials such as capillary channeled fibers or by conventional storage materials such as fluff pulp or superabsorbent polymer fiber or powder.

Patent Number: 6344595; Issue Date: 2002 02 05; Inventors: Phillips, Bobby Mal; Bagrodia, Shriram

Super absorbent composition intended for the production of sanitary articles of the underwear, diaper or disposable diaper type which do not develop unpleasant smells

Assignee: Atofina

Abstract: Compositions which greatly diminish, or eliminate, unpleasant smells associated with the use of underwear and diapers are described. These compositions are composed of superabsorbent polymers of the polyacrylic type and of certain boron derivatives, in particular sodium tetraborate pentahydrate. The sanitary articles which incorporate these

compositions do not develop unpleasant smells, ammoniacal or otherwise.

Patent Number: 6342653; Issue Date: 2002 01 29; Inventors: Gancet, Christian; Cuny, Nathalie; Lescure, Monique; Seris, Jean-Louis

Sanitary pad for variable flow management

Assignee: Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc.

Abstract: There is provided a feminine hygiene pad comprising a cover adjacent a capillarity fabric having regions of high and low capillarity, which is adjacent a retention layer. In a preferred embodiment, a creped spunbond layer is used as the cover material and a co-apertured intake/distribution layer and transfer delay layer are the capillarity fabric. Combining these improvements into an integrated absorbent system allows the successful achievement of variable flow management and a successful balance between intake and cover desorption properties. The result is improved multiple intake performance and a clean and dry cover surface during use.

Patent Number: 6348253; Issue Date: 2002 02 19; Inventors: Daley, Michael Allen; Braverman, Jaime; Dilnik, Rebecca Lyn; Edens, Ronald Lee; Hammonds, Yvette Lynn; Mace, Tamara Lee; Matela, David Michael; Schmidt-Foerst; Alexander Manfred; Walker, Laura Jane

Feminine hygiene article with upstanding member

Abstract: A feminine hygiene article for directing menstrual flow into a panel. The feminine hygiene article includes a base panel for absorbing moisture. The base panel has a top surface and a bottom surface. An upstanding member directs flow of the moisture. The upstanding member has a top side, a bottom side and a peripheral wall extending there between. The bottom side is fixedly coupled to the top surface of the base panel. A sealing member has a front side and a back side. The front side is fixedly coupled to the bottom surface of the base panel.

Patent Number: 6348047; Issue Date: 2002 02 19; Inventor: Harper, Vernice J.

Dispensing System and Method For Premoistened Wipes

Abstract: A dispensing system and method for premoistened wipes. The dispensing system includes first and second longitudinally extending dispensing guides. The first guide is positioned substantially parallel and in proximity to the second guide to define a gap. The dispensing guides may each be rotatable about a longitudinally extending axis and comprise cylinders having a plurality of lands and grooves. The wipes are dispensed by passage through the gap and a dispensing opening having an edge which is defined in part by an impingement surface. The impingement surface has a first outer portion, a second outer portion and a central portion positioned between the two outer portions.

Pub. No.: EP 1176899; Appl. Data: EP 00928643 2000 04 28;
Applicant: Kimberly-Clark Worldwide

THAT'S ALL FOR THIS MONTH

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

If you do not wish to continue receiving this email newsletter, please respond to info@inda.org.