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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. 9 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.

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VISIONARY AWARDS NOMINATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED

The call has gone out to the nonwovens and consumer products industries for nominations for the 2003 Visionary Awards. The

awards, presented annually by INDA, Association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Industry, recognize consumer end products that utilize nonwoven fabrics or employ nonwoven technology.

INDA will be accepting nominations until September 1. The nominees will then be reviewed by an INDA selection committee and five finalists will be chosen to make presentations at the Vision 2003 Consumer Products Conference in January 2003 in New Orleans. Conference attendees will then vote on the recipient of the 2003 Visionary Award. Last January Procter & Gamble's Swiffer cleaning system was selected out of more than two dozen nominees as the recipient of the 2002 Visionary Award.

The criteria for the 2003 Visionary Award are simple:

- The finished product has to incorporate a nonwoven fabric or utilize a nonwoven technology during manufacturing.
- The consumer product has to have been introduced to the trade or to consumers in 2001-2002.

Products will be judged on their novel use of nonwoven technology, as well as on their consumer and trade acceptance. Eligible consumer product categories include, but are not limited to, disposable diapers, feminine hygiene products, adult incontinence products, household wipes/cleaners and home filters.

To nominate a product, just email an explanation of the product and the name of a contact person to Michael Jacobsen, Visionary Awards Coordinator, at mjacobsen@inda.org. Call 201-612-6601 with any questions.

K-C's NEAT SHEET KICKS OFF THE SUMMER

In one of the first major new nonwoven consumer product introductions of the year, Kimberly-Clark's Neat Sheet ground cover hit store shelves this month. Neat Sheet is a water-repellent, machine-washable alternative to beach blankets or tarps and it became available nationwide May 1. Most retailers are stocking it in a seasonal department, near paper napkins, or in the baby section.

Neat Sheet is made of a K-C patented nonwoven fabric that repels water, sand and dirt. It is described as "big enough to comfortably seat a family of four, yet small and light enough to fit in a beach bag, backpack or picnic basket." The Neat Sheet ground cover's portability, versatility and weighted corners make it appropriate for picnics, days at the beach and nights under the stars.

The idea for The Neat Sheet first surfaced during a focus group for Huggies Little Swimmers disposable swim pants. When asked what else they would like to have from K-C, parents told researchers they would appreciate a convenient ground cover for outdoor family excursions.

K-C is also touting the indoor uses for Neat Sheet, including as a baby play blanket, hobby tarp, exercise mat, or under a craft table. The Neat Sheet ground cover can be washed as many as eight times for repeated use.

The introduction of The Neat Sheet is being supported by a full advertising and promotion campaign. Television commercials featuring The Neat Sheet ground cover began airing on April 18 and magazine advertising begins in May parenting and lifestyle publications.

INDA RELEASES CONSUMER PRODUCT NUMBERS

At its 2002 Annual Meeting in Orlando, FL late last month, INDA provided a glimpse at the latest research figures from its groundbreaking "North American and Worldwide Industry Analysis" and the numbers point to healthy growth for nonwoven fabrics in many consumer segments. Among the findings:

-- Market Size of Short-Life Segments (metric tons)

- Filtration, 108,000
- Wipes 122,000
- Hygiene 244,000
- Medical 80,000

-- Growth of Short-Life Segments

- Filtration 5% from 1996-2001; 5% through 2006
- Hygiene 3% from 1996-2001; 3% through 2006
- Wipes 6.2% from 1996-2001; 6.5% through 2006

-- The Hygiene Products segment accounts for 11.3 billion sq. meters of nonwoven fabric (244,000 tons) with a value of \$712 million. Baby diapers account for 65% of the square meter consumption, adult incontinence 13% and fem care 5%. Spunbond fabrics account for 78% of the market.

-- Wipes are a 2.1 billion sq. meter segment (400 million metric tons), with 6.5% growth projected. Consumer wipes account for about 70% of the total wipes market. Baby wipes (58% of the market) are a slowing market, while household wipes (30%) are rapidly growing and personal wipes (12%) are experiencing explosive 20% growth.

DISPOSABLE WIPES A PROM NIGHT MUST-HAVE

Disposable wipes have finally become an accepted mainstream teen accessory, as none other than Seventeen Magazine has put stain remover wipes on its "must-have" list for prom night this season.

Among the items on Seventeen's "perfect prom survival kit" to meet all emergency needs on the night of the big bash:

-- Stain/spot remover wipe: Just in case your ravioli spills on your fabulous strapless prom dress, bring along Shout wipes to help make stains disappear. This essential in-case-of-emergency item can even be left in your date's car.

K-C REPORTS FIRST QUARTER RESULTS

Kimberly-Clark last month reported that sales for the first quarter of 2002 were approximately \$3.3 billion, slightly higher than 2001. Sales rose more than 2%, driven mainly by higher sales volumes of consumer tissue and personal care products in North America and the consolidation of K-C Australia. Overall sales volumes were 4.5% higher while competitive pricing, including promotional activity, reduced sales by about 2%. Among the highlights:

-- Sales of personal care products decreased slightly from the first quarter of 2001, but were up more than 3% before currency effects.

-- In North America, sales volumes rose about 6%, highlighted by a double-digit increase in shipments of Depend and Poise adult incontinence care products and solid gains for Huggies diapers and Pull-Ups training pants.

-- Selling prices declined nearly 4% in response to competitive pricing and promotional moves and due to selected package count increases to improve consumer value.

-- Sales of personal care products in Europe were down approximately 3%. Sales volumes were off slightly and net-selling prices declined more than 2% amid intense competition in diapers and training pants.

-- Sales of health care products were essentially even with last year as 5% growth in sales volumes was offset by reduced selling prices.

BRITTON JOINS BBA HYGIENE/MEDICAL DIVISION

Robert Britton has joined BBA Nonwovens as president, North American Hygiene/Medical. Britton, who has a strong background in finance, manufacturing and the global hygiene market, will be located in the Simpsonville, SC office.

Britton had a 26-year career at Kimberly-Clark before joining BBA Nonwovens. He joined K-C as a cost analyst after receiving a B.S. in Labor/Industrial Relations and an MBA in Finance from Michigan State University. He spent 13 years in K-C's financial organization and 13 years in general management; his most recent assignment was as President, Central and Eastern Europe, Middle East and Africa.

BBA MAKES \$36 MILLION SPUNLACE INVESTMENT

BBA Nonwovens has won a multi-year contract beginning next year in the specialty wipes area with a major global customer. To support this contract, BBA is investing \$36 million for a new spunlace line to be built at its facility in Bethune, SC. With new lines currently under construction in the U.S., Europe and Asia-Pacific.

BBA LAUNCHES WEB SITE

BBA Nonwovens has an updated web site that gives a global overview of its Materials Technology Group. The web site consolidates several previous web sites and can be found at www.bbanonwovens.com. Because of the company's global reach, the theme for the web site is "We Speak Your Language."

FREUDENBERG BUYS DURO INTERLININGS BUSINESS

Freudenberg Nonwovens has purchased the Handler Interlinings Division interlinings and embroidery backings business of Duro Industries, Fall River, MA. Duro sold the business because it is realigning to focus on its core capabilities in the apparel, industrial and military markets.

FREUDENBERG NAMES JOSEFIK MD

With former managing director Hermann Eidel having left "by mutual agreement," Freudenberg Vliesstoffe has named Christoph Josefiak its managing director, technique. He will also act as spokesman for the company. Dr. Josefiak joined the company in 1988 and most recently was responsible for technical management and the professional sector of the Freudenberg Household Products group.

NEW PRODUCTS

BASOFIL FIBER

BASF is pushing its Basofil fiber, a flame resistant melamine fiber, into the mattress industry. Basofil fiber provides resistance to open flames and its fine denier creates a high loft for sleeping comfort. BASF says the new fiber is part of the ongoing national effort to reduce deaths and injuries resulting from commercial and residential fires. Basofil Fiber, first introduced in the mid-1990s for use in fireblockers for commercial aircraft seating, has become known for its application in firefighters' protective apparel.

WESTINGHOUSE VACUUMS

Salton has launched a line of Westinghouse branded vacuum cleaners – a wireless, bagless upright vacuum cleaner. Salton will introduce the Westinghouse wireless vacuum through a television infomercial beginning in early 2003 and it plans to introduce two corded upright vacuum cleaners that feature bagless technology and HEPA filtration. This line of corded vacuum cleaners is expected to ship in the fourth quarter of the current calendar year.

PORTABLE WATER BOTTLE FILTERS

Sawyer Products has introduced two personal water bottles featuring Innova water filtration technology. The Innova single stage system (Model SP2101) is available in a 16-ounce bottle with a 23 micron, activated composite filter that removes lead, chlorine, bad taste and odors from pretreated water. It can treat up to 20 gallons of water and generally needs to be replaced every 30-60 days. For campers or travelers concerned about biological contaminants, the Innova 2/10 micron, Stage 2 system includes an Innova primary carbon composite filter and an Innova secondary sub-micron filter to remove biological contaminants from most flowing fresh water.

MEETINGS UPDATE

INTC SET FOR SEPTEMBER IN ATLANTA

The International Nonwovens Technical Conference (INTC) 2002 will be held September 24 - 26, 2002 at the Renaissance Waverly Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia. This year's INTC continues the tradition that was begun in 2000 by TAPPI, The Technical Association of the Pulp and Paper Industry), and INDA (Co-Sponsors of INTC).

The sessions for the conference include: Binders & Additives; Polymers & Fibers; Properties & Performance; Process Technologies; Filtration; Finishes & Surfaces; Mats & Insulation; Absorbents; Porometry; Automotive Interiors; Protective Barriers; Process Modeling; and Sustainability. Also featured will be a Nonwoven Products Tutorial, Student Poster Presentations as well as a Table-top Event and Reception. For more information and to register: www.inda.org.

TANDEC CALLS FOR PAPERS

The 12th Annual International TANDEC Nonwovens Conference will be held at the UT Conference Center, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee, USA, November 19-21, 2002. Papers including poster presentations are solicited in the following areas: New Development and Trends in Nonwovens; Innovations in Spunbond and Meltblown Technology; Nonwoven Composites and Protective Clothing; Filtration and New Applications in Nonwovens; Fundamental Research in Nonwovens.

Abstracts must be received by May 1, 2002 at the following address: Dr. Dong Zhang, TANDEC, 1321 White Avenue, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996-1950; (865)974-6298; tancon@utk.edu.

PATENT REVIEW

Method for the selection of a feminine hygiene product system

Assignee: Procter & Gamble

Abstract: A method for the selection and use of a system of feminine hygiene products is described. The method includes an information collection step, a system selection step, and a product provision step. In the information collection step, information is collected from a consumer regarding her menstrual cycle protection needs. In the system selection step, the information collected is used to select a system of feminine hygiene products from at least two of such available systems. Each of such available systems is comprised of at least two different feminine hygiene products. In the product provision step, a kit is provided to the consumer. The kit contains in a common package the feminine hygiene products that make up the selected system.

Patent Number: 6368113; Issue Date: 2002 04 09; Inventors: Unger, Matthew Eric; Osborn, III Thomas Ward; Maingot, Alan Lawrence; Zuziak, Holly Marie; Miller, Carolyn Jeanne

Infant's disposable fluoride tooth wipes

Abstract: A disposable dental wipe made of a material substrate of predetermined size and dimensions for use in wiping the teeth, gums, and oral mucosa of an infant is provided. The dental wipes are impregnated with fluoride to strengthen erupted and growing teeth. Use of the dental wipes depends upon sensory pressure nerve endings in the user's fingers to quantitate the pressure at the time of cleaning. Fluoride may be impregnated onto the wipe for introduction into the oral cavity through any suitable composition, including gels, pastes, and powders, but is preferably introduced through an aqueous solution. Also included is a dental wipe dispenser for storing the wipes for ready usage. Patent Number: 6378698; Issue Date: 2002 04 30; Inventors: Scoggins, Katrina M.

Implements comprising highly durable foam materials derived from high internal phase emulsions

Assignee: Procter & Gamble

Abstract: Described are implements made from a durable HIPE foam material. The HIPE foam has a Toughness Index of at least 75 where the Toughness Index relates properties related to durability (e.g., density, tan[.delta.] height, glass transition temperature, and abrasion resistance) into a single composite descriptor thereof. Exemplary implements include: wipes, toys, stamps, art media, targets, food preparation implements, plant care implements, and medical wraps.

Patent Number: 6376565; Issue Date: 2002 04 23; Inventors: Dyer, John Collins; Hortel, Thomas Charles; McChain, Robert Joseph; DesMarais, Thomas Allen; Young, Gerald Alfred

THAT'S ALL FOR THIS MONTH

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

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