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VISION News Consumer Products e-Report

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Welcome to Volume 3, No. 7 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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UNILEVER'S DOVE PILLOWS WIN IDEA04 ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Six companies from around the world – including Unilever for its new Doves Cleansing Pillows – were recently presented with prestigious IDEA04 Achievement Awards recognizing outstanding contributions to the global engineered fabrics industry.

The winners of the IDEA04 Achievement Awards were announced during the keynote session of the IDEA04 International Engineered Fabrics Exposition and Conference, April 27-29, in Miami Beach, Fla. The Awards are sponsored by Nonwovens Industry magazine and INDA, Association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Industry, the organizer of the triennial IDEA trade show.

The Achievement Awards recognize new product introductions in nonwovens and engineered fabrics since IDEA01 in 2001. Companies and products were nominated by the industry late last year and three finalists in each category were voted on through Internet balloting during the month of March.

Unilever beat out two other consumer products – Procter & Gambles Swiffer line and the Huggies Convertibles Diaper-Pants – in the Short-Life End Product category. The three finalists had been selected by an industry committee and the winner was chosen by Internet voting through the month of March.

The other recipients were:

- ☪ Raw Materials/Fibers – H.B. Fuller: Hydrolock
- ☪ Machinery/Equipment – Sonobond Ultrasonics: Ringmaster
- ☪ Roll Goods – DelStar Technologies: DelPore Filter Media
- ☪ End Use-Long Life – BBA Fiberweb: Typar House Wrap
- ☪ Entrepreneur – Saudi Arabian Advanced Fabrics

"These companies represent the best of the best in the engineered fabrics industry and it is appropriate that their accomplishments are recognized during IDEA04, the largest and most important industry event of the year," says Rory Holmes, President of INDA.

K-C INTRODUCES SECOND HUGGIES CONVERTIBLES SIZE

In the first line extension of its already successful new line, Kimberly-Clark is rolling out its Huggies Convertibles diaper-pants in a second size in the U.S. Available in only one size last year, Huggies Convertibles diaper-pants -- a first-of-a-kind product that can be put on like a pant or used like a traditional diaper -- have already captured nearly one share point of the \$4 billion U.S. diaper market.

Initially available in a single size for babies over 27 pounds, Huggies Convertibles diaper-pants will now be offered in a second size for babies over 22 pounds. The new size will arrive in stores nationally in the U.S. by late summer. Additionally, Huggies Convertibles diaper-pants will be available in both sizes for the first time in Canada this May.

Huggies Convertibles diaper-pants were a finalist for the prestigious IDEA 2004 Achievement Awards, which recognize outstanding innovations in the nonwovens and engineered fabrics industry. Huggies Convertibles diaper-pants recently earned the Parenting Media 2003 Holiday Products Award as one of the best new products in the baby care industry.

PGI INTRODUCES HOST OF NEW PRODUCTS AT IDEA04

Polymer Group Inc. (PGI) introduced a lineup of new engineered materials in its industrial segment, highlighted its strategic commitment to the value-added wipes market and announced new developments in the hygiene market during IDEA04 in Miami Beach last month. The company showcased several new engineered materials at the show that use its proprietary Apex technology. These include:

- ☞ Flame retardant fabrics. A line of new flame resistant fabrics for industrial and the home furnishings markets that are highly protective and cost effective.
- ☞ Compound Constructs. New multi-layer constructs, scrim reinforcements and previously unexplored fiber blends, all of which provide enhanced physical characteristics and improved aesthetics for multi-performance cleaning wipes; liquid channeling and control; metal, wood, automotive protection and preservation; and thermal/acoustic management;
- ☞ Filtration fabrics. New high-tech, innovative media with superior performance and higher filtration efficiency, including the company's entrée into the pool/spa filtration market and a new strategic business relationship with Donaldson Co. Inc. to produce industrial baghouse filters.
- ☞ PGI also took advantage of the crowd at IDEA04 to announce that it is committing 40,000 metric tons of capacity from its spunlace and Apex technologies to produce advanced wiping products that will be used by consumer product manufacturers. These new wiping offerings will enter the market this year with additional product introductions in 2005. PGI is the largest spunlace provider and established leader in wiping applications.
- ☞ Finally, in the hygiene market, PGI has announced a breakthrough in its film manufacturing capabilities with the creation of ComfortLace films created using its new LACE technology. This new product offers greater softness, more breathability and enhanced liquid distribution for overall improved comfort and performance.

FIBERTEX EXPANDING IN MALAYSIA

At the end of 2003, Fibertex opened a production line in Malaysia for nonwovens used primarily by the personal care sector to manufacture baby diapers and feminine hygiene products. However, the output capacity on the first production line in Malaysia will be fully utilized sooner than originally anticipated, due partly to a sharp increase in demand for nonwovens by the personal care sector and partly to a very successful launch of the products from Malaysia in both the regional and global markets.

As a result, Fibertex is increasing capacity in Malaysia by adding another production line. The new production line will have 25% higher capacity than the existing line and will be the first of its kind in Southeast Asia. The line will be located next to the existing line at Nilai, near Kuala Lumpur and is expected to become operational in mid-2005.

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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