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Welcome to Volume 6, No. 5 of the VISION News Consumer Products e-Report.

The VISION News Consumer Products e-Report is written and distributed every other month 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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INDA NEWS

VISION 2008 CONFERENCE SET FOR FORT WORTH

A new location and time slot, but the same world-class program and attendees, highlight the VISION 2008 Consumer Products Conference. Now scheduled for February 11-14 at the Renaissance Worthington Hotel in Fort Worth, Texas, VISION 2008 will once again bring together the leading suppliers, converters and marketers of consumer products that utilize nonwovens technologies in their manufacturing process.

Once again, a highlight of VISION 2008 will be the awarding of the prestigious 2008 Visionary Award, which recognizes consumer end products that utilize nonwoven fabrics or employ nonwoven technology during their manufacturing process. The six finalists for the 2008 Visionary Award will be announced within the next few weeks.

Among the agenda highlights:

- ✓ A two-part seminar on “Creating Value — Swimming in a Profit Pool,” led by popular VISION speaker and financial analyst John Brandt, of the MPI Group. This year, John brings his expert focus and tremendous business insight to Value Chain Analysis.
- ✓ A session on “Coolhunting – How to Find the Next Big Trend,” presented by Peter Gloor, MIT Sloan School of Management, Helsinki University of Technology & the University of Cologne. Gloor will answer one of today’s most pressing questions: What is cool?
- ✓ The future will be the subject of a pair of seminars led by Steven S. Little, Senior Consultant, Inc. The first, “The 7 Irrefutable Rules of Business Growth,” will identify the best practices of organizations that achieve sustained and profitable growth. The second will take a look at “Future of Global Opportunities – A 20/20 Vision.”
- ✓ Finally, sustainability and how it impacts business and corporate cultures will be the subject of two sessions focusing on Global Business Topics. Among them will be a report on “Sustainability at Kimberly-Clark – As We Live & Breathe,” by K-C’s Ken Strassner.

Early registration discounts are available through December 1. For more information or to register for VISION 2008: <http://www.inda.org/events/Vision08/index.html>.

INDUSTRY NEWS

PGI PLANS CAPACITY EXPANSION IN NORTH AMERICA

Polymer Group, Inc. recently announced plans to install a spunbond line in North America to serve hygiene and other customers in the U.S. and Mexico. The new line will increase capacity by approximately 15,000 metric tons for this segment to meet ongoing strong demand for the company's nonwoven materials used in diapers and other personal hygiene products. The company expects that commercial production will begin in late 2008.

"This planned expansion in North America, along with our expansion underway in South America, shows our commitment to expanding our production capabilities in our core growth market segments. As demand for our products increases in each of our markets, PGI is expanding to serve our customers' needs," said Polymer Group's chief executive officer, Veronica Hagen.

PGI also is currently installing a new spunbond line near Buenos Aires, Argentina, that will more than double the capacity of its joint venture facility to meet growing demand for its products in the Mercosur trading region. This line is on schedule to be fully installed by year-end.

K-C TRENDS HIGHLIGHTED IN MARKET REPORT

As part of an exhaustive look at product and financial developments at Kimberly-Clark during the recently completed second fiscal quarter, in a publication called Science Letter, are these items:

Kimberly-Clark announced a major extension of its market-leading Huggies Little Swimmers brand with the launch of a new line of innovative sun care products. The new products are the first extension of the Huggies Little Swimmers brand, which created the disposable swimpants category in 1998.

The Huggies Little Swimmers sun care product line includes three sunscreen lotions and the market's only patented, self-adhesive UVB sun sensors geared to help detect and monitor children's exposure to Ultraviolet B rays that cause sunburn and are most commonly linked to skin cancer.

"With the rollout of these new sun care products, Huggies Little Swimmers becomes the only brand to offer moms a total health and hygiene solution to ensure a fun and enjoyable water play experience for their kids," said Bob Thibault, president of Kimberly-Clark's North American Personal Care products. "The new sunscreen lotions and UVB sun sensors provide an unparalleled approach to helping mom manage one of her chief health concerns during water play -- her child's skin exposure to the sun."

Huggies Little Swimmers sunscreen lotions come in a fragrance-free and a mango & coconut formula. Also available is a blue melon splash spray lotion. All three products provide moisturizing SPF 50 protection and are available in 7.5-ounce bottles.

In addition to sunscreen lotions, the Huggies Little Swimmers brand is offering a 24-count carton of self-adhesive, water-resistant UVB sun sensors. These patented UVB sun sensors are placed on a child's skin or clothing and change color when it is time to take protective action, such as apply more sunscreen, put on protective clothing or seek shade.

The Huggies Little Swimmers UVB sun sensors are offered by K-C through an exclusive partnership with SunHealth Solutions, a privately held consumer sun care products company based in Naples, FL. In 2006, K-C partnered with the company to exclusively provide free samples of the UVB sun sensors in packages of Huggies Little Swimmers disposable swimpants. By the end of the swim season, K-C had provided nearly 20 million samples of the sun sensors. Based on the favorable response, K-C this year will again provide free samples in specially marked Huggies Little Swimmers packages.

Also in the news, K-C's strategic cost reduction plan is part of a comprehensive, multi-year effort announced in July 2005 to further improve Kimberly-Clark's competitive position. The plan calls for streamlining manufacturing and administrative operations primarily in North America and Europe, with expected annual savings of at least \$350 million by 2009. These cost savings will allow for investment in targeted growth opportunities and in key capabilities, including innovation, marketing and customer development.

During the second quarter, the company continued to successfully execute planned cost reduction activities, incurring pretax charges totaling \$29 million for the plan and related incremental implementation costs. The most significant charges were for consolidating infant and child care operations in North America and streamlining of administrative operations in North America and Europe, partially offset by the reversal of previously accrued severance for employees at a facility which the company has recently contracted to sell. With year-to-date savings totaling \$49 million, the company is on track to meet its target to save \$75 to \$100 million for the full year.

At the same time, the shutdown of Kimberly-Clark's Lakeview Diaper plant was just about complete. According to a report in *Nonwovens Industry*, 56 fewer workers are left at the company's Menasha plant. The trimming marks the second phase of a three-phase shutdown announced in 2006 as part of a corporate-wide streamlining. It will leave about 200 at work at the plant, most of them affiliated with Local 2-482 of the United Steelworkers. At its peak, the Lakeview plant employed 510 people.

AHLSTROM EXPANDING SPUNLACE IN BRAZIL

A spunlace production line will be the first addition to Ahlstrom's new plant in Paulinia, Brazil. The new line will focus on products for the wipes market and the company is expected to participate in the baby, personal care, industrial and household wipes segments, as well as having production capabilities to manufacture medical and industrial spunlace products. This move follows Ahlstrom's October 2006 investment in a new wiping fabric production line in Louveira, Brazil.

IN THE NEWS: NEWSPAPER EXPLORES REUSABLES VS. DISPOSABLES

[From *The Blade*, Toledo, OH, September 23, 2007]

Cloth diapers. Yuck.

Shelly De Meo is used to reactions like that when she tells people she diapers her 18-month-old daughter, Sage, in cloth. "The biggest thing I hear from people is 'eeoow,'" admitted the Toledo mom, one of an estimated 5 to 10 percent of parents who use cloth diapers for their infants and toddlers, either exclusively or in combination with disposables.

But what the cloth camp lacks in numbers, they make up for in fervor, pointing out that today's cloth diapers are much improved from the plain, ill-fitting wads that our mothers and grandmothers -- and their mothers and grandmothers -- pinned around their babies. They say cloth diapers are cute, economical, and easy to use, and they contend cloth is healthier for their children and more environmentally friendly than the disposables that have come to dominate the diaper market since they were introduced in 1961.

(The other side begs to differ, of course. And an Ohio State University Extension study done in 1990 by Joyce A. Smith and Norma Pitts, both now retired, concluded: "No evidence exists that one method is clearly superior in terms of impact on health, environment, and economic issues.")

If kids could vote on the choice, 27-month-old Sage Colon apparently would cast hers for cloth. "She's very vocal about what diaper she wants to use," said her mother, Julie Colon of Perrysburg. It seems that one day when Sage was at the babysitter's house, the sitter accidentally used a disposable diaper when she changed the toddler. "Sage was hollering at her and yelling 'no, no,' ripped the diaper off and threw it at her, and went over and got one of her cloth diapers," Mrs. Colon said. "Nothing speaks better than an angry toddler."

But in speaking with some other parents about cloth diapers, Mrs. Colon encounters the same "eeoow" that Mrs. De Meo does.

"Usually they're like, 'that's disgusting,' or 'why would you do that?' The quickest way to stop those questions is to show them whatever she has on at the time. They're cute, they're different colors, some are embroidered. Or I tell them, 'feel how nice and soft this is.' They're expecting to see the pins and the rubber pants."

Today's cloth diaper choices include styles that are contoured, fitted with elastic around the legs, and "All-in-One's" that don't require a cover. The old rubber pants have been replaced with water-resistant covers made of nylon, wool, or polyurethane laminate (referred to as PUL), a polyester fabric that's laminated on one side. Covers can be a pull-on pant or a wrap that is secured with snaps or Velcro.

Now that they know more, they want to help other parents who might be using disposables because they aren't aware of today's cloth diaper options or don't know enough about using them. They've established an e-mail address that people can use to send them questions about cloth diapering (notyourgrannysdiapers@yahoo.com), and in July they offered the first of what they plan to be periodic classes called Cloth Diapering Uncovered. The fee is \$12 per couple, and registration is through Kneading Time (www.ktholistictherapy.com), Mrs. DeMeo's holistic therapy center at 5702 West Alexis Rd.

NEW REPORT EXAMINES SAP MARKET

Reportlinker.com recently announced that a new market research report related to the worldwide personal care industry is available to its catalogue. Called simply "Super-Absorbent Polymers," this report analyzes the worldwide markets for Super-Absorbent Polymers in Thousand Metric Tons. The major end-use segments discussed are Disposable Diapers, Adult Incontinence Pads, Feminine Hygiene Products, and Miscellaneous.

The report provides separate comprehensive analytics for the U.S., Canada, Japan, Europe, Asia-Pacific, Middle East, and Latin America. Annual forecasts are provided for each region for the period of 2000 through 2010.

The report profiles 21 companies including many key and niche players worldwide such as Arkema Group, BASF AG, BASF Corporation, Degussa GmbH, Degussa Superabsorber, Stockhausen GmbH, Stockhausen, Inc., Kolon Chemical Co. Ltd, Nippon Shokubai Co., Ltd., Sanyo Chemical Industries, Ltd, San-Dia Polymers, Ltd., San-Dia Polymers (Nantong) Co., Ltd., and Sumitomo Seika Chemicals Company Limited.

Market data and analytics are derived from primary and secondary research. Company profiles are mostly extracted from URL research and reported select online sources.

LOCAL HEALTH PLAN COMPLETES DIAPER AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

BlueCare Family Plan, the Medicaid health plan from Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Connecticut, recently completed its two-month public awareness campaign for the New Haven (CT) Diaper Bank with a total contribution of more than \$70,000 in funds and diapers.

The results were achieved by Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield's 1,500 employees. The health insurer partnered with the New Haven County Cutters baseball team, WTNH News Channel 8 and WYBC Radio to educate the public about the New Haven Diapers Bank's key role in providing diapers to area children whose families receive services from Hill Health Center, Wilbur Cross Day Care, Lifehaven Shelter for Women and Children, Community Action Agency, Elm City Residents Food Pantry and other community-based organizations.

"The New Haven Diaper Bank, its board and clients are overwhelmed by the support Anthem and its employees have shown to us," said Joanne Samuel Goldblum, president of the New Haven Diaper Bank. "We will be able to provide over 400,000 diapers to children in New Haven with Anthem's generous contribution," she explained. Goldblum estimates that the New Haven Diaper Bank distributes about 50,000 disposable diapers a month.

More than 15 teams of Anthem employees participated in the two-month fundraiser, which was led by Scott Markovich, regional vice president of the health insurer's State Sponsored Business unit. Markovich, will be honored in October by the New Haven Business Times as one of the region's "40 Under 40" community business leaders. Markovich and fellow employees presented Goldblum with the first installment of monies and diapers - \$63,215.36 - at an Aug. 4 New Haven County Cutters game at Yale Field. There, they were given "keys to the ballpark" to continue to stimulate public education and giving. Cutters fans donating a sleeve of diapers received a free general admission ticket that night.

"At monthly costs of more than \$100 per bottom, keeping a baby in dry, clean diapers is costly," said David R. Fusco, president of Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Connecticut. "For the state's poor, it can be downright impossible. Infrequent diaper changing increases the risk of many health problems and infants crying non-stop from being in soiled diapers are at greater risk for abuse," according to Fusco "For these reasons, Anthem and its employees continue to look for creative ways to work in the community to support the New Haven Diaper Bank and the state's Medicaid population."

This is not the first time the company has "stepped up to the plate" for the New Haven Diaper Bank. Last March, Anthem's BlueCare Family Plan donated more than \$30,000 to the New Haven Diaper Bank, enabling the organization to buy a six-month supply of

disposable diapers - approximately 250,000 to 300,000 diapers - for children from newborn through about age three. In addition, Anthem's employees also contributed a sizeable supply of disposable diapers that they collected during a December holiday drive held at the company's North Haven campus.



That's all for this month. Feel free to contact editor Michael Jacobsen at 201-612-6601 or email at [mjacobson@inda.org](mailto:mjacobsen@inda.org).

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