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VISION News Consumer Products e-Report

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Welcome to Volume 6, No. 3 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 MOVING TO TEXAS

Readers of the VISION News Consumer Products e-Report are the first to receive this breaking news: The VISION 2008 Consumer Products Conference is moving to Texas and will be held February 5-7, 2008 at the Renaissance Worthington Hotel in Fort Worth. Stay tuned for registration and program information.

NOMINATIONS OPEN THIS WEEK FOR 2008 VISIONARY AWARD

Nonwovens and consumer products companies from around the world will once again be competing for the industry's most prestigious award as the nomination process for the 2008 Visionary Award opens this week.

INDA, which sponsors the annual award, will be accepting nominations through September 1. Now in its seventh year, the award recognizes consumer end products that utilize nonwoven fabrics or employ nonwoven technology during their manufacturing process.

The 2008 Visionary Award will be presented at the VISION 2008 Consumer Products Conference, scheduled for February 5-7, 2008 in Fort Worth, Texas.

The process and criteria for the 2008 Visionary Award are simple:

1. The finished consumer end product must contain a nonwoven fabric or utilize a nonwoven technology during its manufacturing process.
2. The consumer product has to have been introduced to the trade or to consumers in 2006-07.
3. The product cannot have been selected as a finalist in any previous Visionary Award competition.
4. Companies can nominate their own products. While any number of products can be nominated, only one product per company will be selected as a finalist.

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 disposable diapers, feminine hygiene products, adult incontinence products, household wipes and home filters, among others.

The nominees will then be reviewed by an INDA selection committee and five finalists will be selected to make presentations at the VISION 2008 Consumer Products

Conference. Conference attendees will then vote on the recipient of the award and the recipient is announced on the final day of the Conference.

Last January at the VISION 2007 Conference in Denver, Tyco Healthcare Retail Group's Swim Pants were named as the recipient of the 2007 Visionary Award. VISION 2007 attendees heard presentations from all of the finalists and selected the Swim Pants over five other nominated products — Cotton Feminine Hygiene Products, Corman Italy; Cool2Go Insulating Wrap, DuPont; Johnson's Baby Extracare Wipes, Johnson & Johnson Europe; Petsleeves Petwear, Petsleeves; and Pampers Cruisers, Procter & Gamble.

Other previous winners include Chicopee's Disaster Relief Blanket (2006); Fiberweb's Resolution Print Media (2005); Church & Dwight's Brillo Scrub 'n' Toss (2004); FMJ ChemBio's Civilian Quick Escape Mask (2003) and Procter & Gamble's Swiffer (2002).

To nominate a product, email an explanation of the product to Michael Jacobsen, Visionary Awards coordinator, at mjacobsen@inda.org. Samples of the product should also be sent to Michael Jacobsen, INDA, 22 Paterson Avenue, Midland Park, NJ 07432 USA.

Call 201-612-6601 with any questions. For more information on the VISION 2008 Consumer Products Conference, log on to www.inda.org.

INDUSTRY NEWS

K-C ANNOUNCES PLANS TO CLOSE ANOTHER DIAPER PLANT

As expected, Kimberly-Clark recently announced plans to phase out half the remaining production at its Lakeview diaper plant in Menasha, Wisconsin by August 31. "We'll close half of the remaining operations there by the end of August, with the final closure by the middle of December," said company spokesman David Dickson, in a report on www.nonwovens-industry.com. About 280 people still work at the Lakeview plant, which once employed as many as 500. Mr. Dickson did not know how many of those people will still be working at the plant at the end of August.

K-C announced in March 2006 that it would close the plant, which manufactures Huggies diapers, by the end of 2007 as part of a consolidation of its American baby and childcare operations into three facilities in Beach Island, SC; Paris, TX; and Ogden, UT.

PGI CLOSING EUROPEAN PLANT

Polymer Group, Inc. has announced that it will consolidate the operations of one of its European plants to lower its fixed costs and improve overall profitability. The company will close its Neunkirchen, Germany plant and transfer portions of the business to the company's plant in Cuijk, The Netherlands. Operations at the plant are expected to be phased out by the end of 2007.

“PGI is focused on ensuring we have the right cost structure to effectively compete in each of our markets. Our operation in Germany is not of sufficient size to support a stand-alone site, but the business will remain viable when combined with our existing operation in The Netherlands, “ said Veronica (Ronee) M. Hagen, PGI’s chief executive officer. “While difficult, these actions are necessary to ensure our long-term competitiveness and ability to position our company for further growth and investment in the region.”

After the consolidation is complete, PGI will operate two nonwovens plants in Europe: Bailleul, France and Cuijk, The Netherlands.

As a result of the decision to consolidate the operations, the company expects the profitability of the associated business to improve approximately \$3 million to \$4 million on an annualized basis.

NORDSON WINS INNOVATION AWARD

Nordson Corporation was recently presented with the 2007 ICE Innovation Award for Coating and Laminating products at the fifth International Converting Exhibition (ICE) in Munich, Germany, for its FS200 Rotating Drum Melter. The FS200 Drum Melter minimizes adhesive loss and reduces disposal costs by up to 10 percent compared to conventional drum melters.

The FS200 inverts 55-gallon (200 liter) drums 180 degrees to melt and pump adhesive, virtually eliminating the "cookie" of adhesive commonly left at the bottom of the drum. In addition to processing over 99 percent of the entire adhesive in the bulk containers the FS200 has a melt rate up to 20 percent faster than conventional bulk melters. A PROFIBUS interface allows easy integration into existing manufacturing operations.

The FS200 Drum Melter used in a wide variety of industries including converting, coating and laminating, diaper, adult incontinence and feminine care product manufacturing and general assembly operations.

"We are pleased to receive such a prestigious award for the FS200 Drum Melter," states Georg Gillesen, sales manager, European Coating and Converting who received the award for Nordson Corporation. This product is unmatched in its efficiency to process hot melts and reduce operational costs. This is an excellent example of Nordson innovation and is evidence of our corporate commitment to provide our customers with Innovation, Service and Choice."

DIATEC CELEBRATES 15TH YEAR IN BUSINESS

[From *Nonwovens Industry*] Diatec srl, Collecchio (Italy), has completed 15 years in operation. Diatec, established in June, 1992, joined the International Körber Group in

July 1998 and became independent again this year. Diatec designs and builds a range of converting machinery for the manufacture of baby diapers, adult incontinence products, sanitary napkins, panty shields and underpads. To date, more than 90 Diatec lines and 250 retrofit kits have been installed around the world.

Diatec's present offering consists of a range of lines it calls its MACH series machines, which includes the Baby Diaper Machine Mach 500, Light Inco Machine Mach 600 for male and female light inco products, Underpad machine Mach 350 and the new Adult Diaper machine Mach 300. It also offers a new line of retrofit kits.

NEW REPORT SUMMARIZES BUSY TIME FOR NONWOVENS IN EUROPE

A new regular report from Research and Markets (www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/c55658) now covers the Global Technical Textiles Business Update. Among the highlights of the first quarter:

- ✓ Ahlstrom signed agreements to acquire Orlandi's spunlace nonwovens business in Italy and Fabriano Filter Media - a maker of microglass filter media.
- ✓ DSM Dyneema acquired Switzerland-based Pamako. Also, it won a legal battle after alleging that China's Hangzhou Pivot International had infringed patents covering its ultra-high molecular weight polyethylene (UHMWPE) Dyneema fibre.
- ✓ Danish investment company LD Equity took complete ownership of Jacob Holm & Sons STA. The latter owns Norafin, which manufactures technical and specialty nonwovens. It also owns Tytex, which produces medical textiles for global healthcare companies.
- ✓ Meanwhile, Whitestone took over Humanicare and created a U.S. leader in adult incontinence care products.
- ✓ Fibertex is exploring the potential of nanocoatings and Smith & Nephew plans to be the exclusive distributor of UDL Laboratories' Biobrane Biosynthetic Wound Dressing outside the USA. Nanopeutics and HemCon Medical Technologies have agreed to develop nano-scale nonwovens with chitosan for the US Military.
- ✓ Tyco Healthcare will be renamed Covidien before separating from its parent company.
- ✓ In investment news, Ahlstrom will spend \$7 million on a new dry-laid nonwovens line at its facility in Groesbeck, Texas. PGI will invest in a new technology to make "an entirely new category of high-performance, cost-effective engineered materials" for wipes and other uses. d3o lab, which makes the smart

material d3o, has completed a multi-million pound round of fund raising initiatives to fuel international growth and commercial expansion. Meanwhile, Milliken has invested in a new microbiology laboratory at its Technical Centre in Gent in Belgium.

GROUP LOOKING TO AID GIRLS IN AFRICA

Source: *Appeal-Democrat* (Marysville, CA) It would be easy to make jokes about a "panty drive" — an effort to gather as many pairs of white cotton panties as possible for girls in Kenya. But members of Soroptimist International know their cause is no laughing matter.

"It's a very serious issue these young girls in Africa have," said Jackie Sillman, secretary of the group's Sierra-Nevada region. "We've gotten a huge response from people, and I know we have already sent about 12,000 pairs of underwear to be distributed over there."

Sillman heard from a retired nurse in Auburn that girls in Kenya were sitting in the sand during their monthly menstrual cycle. Vickie Winkler travels monthly to a village with physicians and volunteers who provide free medical and prenatal care and other services.

Winkler apparently saw the girls — typically ages 12 to 16 — missing school during the few days of their cycle, or using their one pair of underwear as a hygiene product.

"They are so poor, those girls who have one pair of underwear are lucky, because cotton and feminine hygiene products are very, very expensive," Sillman said. "So they miss school, and then they end up just going to work and living in poverty — and the cycle continues."

After Winkler made the presentation to the Auburn club, the group put the word out to other groups in the Sierra-Nevada region, which encompasses areas from Truckee to Yuba-Sutter.

"Vickie just wanted 500 pairs to start, so she could give the girls maybe a couple of pairs each time she goes over there," Sillman said.

Soroptimist's regional governor, Poco Davis, sent a plea to all 60 clubs in her area. Sillman said she didn't realize the effect the request would have until she got to the group's five-day convention in Reno, Nev., at the end of April.

"The entire time I was there, underwear kept coming and coming," Sillman said with an excited laugh. "Women were coming in with duffle bags completely stuffed with exactly what we had asked for — white, cotton briefs."

That was another factor in the drive, Sillman said. Females in Africa are discouraged from wearing anything considered provocative or enticing to men, including underwear that is any color other than white and prefer only brief-style garments.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE PROMOTES REUSABLE DIAPERS OVER DISPOSABLES

The following item is excerpted from a six-week "green series" in the *Allentown Morning-Call* (PA) newspaper that has been exploring ways readers can improve their environment when it comes to child care.

Cotton vs. disposable diapers. By far, the one area of parenting that has the biggest effect is what you put on baby's bottom. According to the national Real Diaper Association, an estimated 27.4 billion disposable diapers are thrown away each year in the United States, and disposable diapers are the third largest single item in landfills. It is estimated it could take 500 years for one disposable diaper to decompose.

Switching to reusable cloth or flushable diapers for one child will prevent a whopping one ton of discarded diapers from ending up in landfills, says Pana Columbus of Emmaus, the mother of 10-month-old Gaia and one of a growing number of "green" parents determined to raise their children in a more earth-friendly way.

The biggest criticism of cloth diapering is the mess and work involved, but Columbus says cloth diapering isn't difficult and saves a lot of money.

"I can't believe they're not more prevalent," she says. "They're a little more work and you have to do more loads of laundry but using disposable diapers is disgusting to us."

Columbus says she simply rinses the dirty diapers and washes them in the washing machine. "If you rinse them they don't smell," she says.

Disposable diapers are also expensive, costing between \$11.99 and \$16.99 for a package that may last only a few days.

A cloth-diapered baby will use about 6 dozen diapers, costing around \$300. However, it will cost \$1,600 for the average child to spend two years in disposable diapers, and many children are still using diapers well past age 2. Even with laundering cloth diapers, which costs 3 cents per diaper, it only adds \$120 for the entire time a baby is in diapers.

According to The Real Diaper Association, Americans spend about \$7 billion on disposable diapers every year. If all those families switched to cotton diapers, they would save more than \$6 billion.

One of the biggest arguments against cloth diapers is that the laundering required uses more energy and water and creates detergent-laden wastewater. However, a study cited by The Canadian Cloth Diaper Association found the manufacture of a single disposable diaper uses 37 percent more water and 70 percent more energy and creates more wastewater than the laundering of a cloth diaper.

Cotton diapers are available in traditional cotton as well as organic cotton and other organic materials, with or without Velcro closures. Organic cotton, which is grown without pesticides or fertilizer, is a more earth-friendly option, as are diapers made from bamboo fiber and hemp, both of which are chemical-free.

Flushable diapers are sort of a hybrid between disposable diapers and cloth diapers, but are environmentally friendly, says Michelle Schnoor of gDiapers, a recently introduced flushable diaper. With flushables, a biodegradable liner is worn in washable pants and can be flushed along with the human waste in the toilet, where it will be treated in the sewage system.

Although the gDiapers are better for the environment, since they don't go into landfills, the cost is about the same as disposable diapers.

Invented in the late 1970s, disposable baby wipes have become another perceived essential item for parents. Some diaper bags come with special compartments to store a plastic box to keep wipes moist. However, wipes use perfumes, detergents and preservatives, and add waste to landfills.

Columbus says she uses washable cloths moistened with water to wipe Gaia. "There's not much that's disposable in our house," she says.

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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