

EPDA NEWSLETTER

Spring 2000

A Publication of the European Plastics Distributors Association

Membership News

Please welcome the following new manufacturer member of EPDA:

Ensinger GmbH & Co.

Rudolf-Diesel-Str 8
71154 Nufringen, Germany
Tel: +49 7032 819 102
Fax: +49 7032 819 220
<http://www.ensinger-online.com>
E-mail: m.baras@de.ensinger-online.com
Contact: Martin Baras

Member Address Change:

Röhm Benelux B.V.

Gildenstraat 4 B (Industrieterrein Arkervaart)
NL-3861 RG Nijkerk, Netherlands
P.O. Box 1110
NL-3860 BC Nijkerk, Netherlands
Tel: +31 (0) 33 247 20 00 Fax: +31 (0) 33 247 20 09
E-mail: Klaus_Roth@roehm.com
Contact: Klaus Roth

Corrections to the EPDA Membership Roster:

International Plastic Systems Ltd.

Postal Code: SR7 OPT
E-mail: sales@ips-plastics.com

GBM Plastics Limited

Fax: + 353 1 4566889

Wachendorf AG

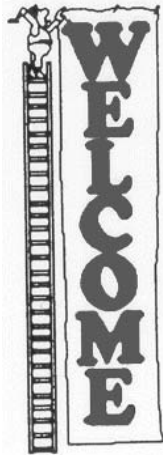
No e-mail address at this time

50th Anniversary and Grand Opening:

Zell-Metall GmbH of Kaprun, Austria, held a celebration on 20 February 2000, in the castle of Kaprun in honors of its 50th anniversary and the grand opening of its new location of Senova and Seletec in Uttendorf.

Equity Investment Announcement:

Georg Fischer Ltd., based in Schaffhausen, Switzerland, has acquired a minority stake in Xsilylog Inc., an internet technology company headquartered in San Diego, CA USA. This new development reinforces the existing strategic partnership between Xsilylog and Signet Scientific Company, a Georg Fischer subsidiary located in El Monte, CA USA.



EPDA Annual Conference

9-12 June, 2000 • Budapest, Hungary

Registration and housing information has been sent to all members promoting the upcoming EPDA Annual Conference at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. The cut-off date for registration is 1 May 2000, so please register today.

The agenda includes a manufacturers' table top showcase; a Membership Committee Meeting; a Sheet, Rod, Tube Meeting; a Pipe, Valves and Fittings Meeting; and a variety of networking and social events.

Don't miss this ideal opportunity to meet with your peers and learn more about what is going on in the industry. For registration and programme details, contact Lorraine Cookham at EPDA headquarters.

Bayer and Röhm to Merge European Polycarbonate Sheet Operations

Bayer AG, Leverkusen, Germany, and Röhm GmbH Chemische Fabrik, Darmstadt, Germany, plan to merge their European polycarbonate and PET sheet operations under the umbrella of the already-existing joint venture Makroform GmbH. Headquartered in Darmstadt, Makroform will be responsible for the development, manufacture, marketing, and sales of extruded plastic sheet made from the polycarbonate (PC) Makrolon, from PC blends and PET (thermoplastic polyesters) in Europe.

The Bayer Group will transfer its affiliates Axxis NV of Tielt, Belgium, and Carbolux S.p.A. of Nera Montoro, Italy, which will remain independent companies to the Makroform group of companies. Röhm will contribute all its PC operations. Bayer will hold a majority stake in Makroform.

Subject to the approval of anti-trust and corporate authorities, the merger is scheduled to close on 1 July 2000. The new group of companies will have sales well in excess of 100 million euros per year and a payroll of some 300.

U.K. Anti-Trust Laws

For assistance understanding the new anti-trust laws in the U.K., log on to <http://www.oft.gov.uk>

Reminder for Questionnaires

Members are urged to complete their annual "State of the Industry" questionnaire and return it to Lorraine Cookham as soon as possible.

Distributors and manufacturers are also encouraged to fill out and return the "partner value" questionnaires so that the results may be reported at the upcoming annual conference on 9-12 June 2000, in Budapest, Hungary.

Proudly Display Your EPDA Logo

EPDA members may purchase polo shirts (in blue or white) and neck ties that have the EPDA logo embroidered on them. The polo shirts and ties are both available for < 15 each. Contact Lorraine Cookham if you're interested in buying these items.

Upcoming IAPD Events

49th Parallel Summit: IAPD Canadian Conference
Sheraton Guildford Hotel
Surrey, B.C., Canada
2-4 June, 2000

44th IAPD Annual Convention
The Pointe Hilton Resort at South Mountain
Phoenix, AZ USA
4-8 October, 2000

Polyolefin Market Slowly Rebounding From the Asian Crisis

The Asian economic crisis that began in mid-1997 has apparently bottomed out and polyolefins consumption in Asian regions is poised to begin a slow recovery. Asian consumption of polyolefins is expected to grow at 6.8 percent annually, from 18.3 million tonnes in 1998 to 25.4 million tonnes by 2003, according to a new management brief by TownsendTarnell Inc., a global consultant to the chemical and plastics industries.

Before the crisis, total polyolefin demand in Asia was forecast to be more than 31 million tonnes by 2003. The revised demand forecast for 2003 indicates a projected "loss" of almost 6 million tonnes, or 19 percent less than it would have been without the crisis.

Asian demand for polypropylene is expected to reach a level of 11 million tonnes in 2003, up from 7.8 million tonnes in 1998. Among the polyethylenes, HDPE will grow to 5.7 million tonnes from 4.3 million tonnes over the same period. LLDPE will grow faster

compared to LDPE due to increased availability and lower prices. The demand for LLDPE and LDPE will reach a level of 4.3 million tonnes each in 2003, up from the 1998 levels of 2.8 million tonnes for LLDPE and 3.5 million tonnes for LDPE.

For more information on the plastics study, visit www.townsendtarnell.com.

An Overview of the U.S. Plastics Processing Business

The U.S. economy registered record high and consistent growth in the decade of the 1990s, according to a report from the Plastics Custom Research Services. One of the industries both driving this growth and benefiting from it is the U.S. plastic processing business. Across virtually every sector of U.S. manufacturing and services, the processing of plastics into intermediate and finished products has become critical to achieving the cost-effectiveness required in increasingly competitive domestic and global markets.

The production of plastic products has become the fourth largest component of U.S. manufacturing, and its 4 percent average annual growth rate in the 1990s completely outstripped the 1 percent average annual growth registered by overall U.S. manufacturing.

From 1989 through 1999, the total U.S. plastics processing business increased at an average annual rate of 6 percent. There were several processing businesses that achieved growth rates in excess of this industry average. Profile extrusion recorded the highest growth rate, followed by blow molding and the extrusion of pipe. Other processes such as dispersion molding and the injection molding of thermosets lagged behind the industry average as the evolving paradigm in U.S. manufacturing favors those plastics processing methods that can utilize inexpensive virgin or recycled resins, alloys and blends and deliver outstanding physical performance in high-speed, high-volume, tightly-controlled production modes.

New Web Site:

www.epda.com

Through joint efforts with the IAPD, a new EPDA web site will be unveiled at the 2000 EPDA Annual Conference in Budapest. If you wish to have your company's site linked to this web site, please inform IAPD by e-mail to iapd@iapd.org.