



Microcellular Foaming Changes Molding Paradigm

YORK, Pa. – May 5, 2008 – Advancements in microcellular foam molding are changing the actual design of plastic products, according to participants in a recent technical symposium, “New Directions in Microcellular Technology: Moving Beyond Cycle Time and Weight Reduction.” The symposium was hosted by ENGEL North America and Trexel, Inc.

Microcellular foam technology produces lighter weight plastic products that are easier and less expensive to produce, according to a recent symposium on the subject. ENGEL North America, a world leader in the design and manufacture of injection molding machines and part-handling automation systems, along with Trexel, Inc., creator of the patented MuCell® microcellular foaming process, presented the symposium “New Directions In Microcellular Technology: Moving Beyond Cycle Time and Weight Reduction” to more than 100 participants.

“This symposium offered molders new concepts for changing their basic molding paradigms through microcellular foaming,” said David P. Bernstein, president and CEO of Trexel. “The MuCell technology can change the way plastic parts are designed, making them lighter and less expensive to produce.”

The symposium featured technical sessions covering all aspects of microcellular foaming technology, including precision mold design, compression injection molding and low pressure molding. Also discussed were methods for maximizing the benefits of microcellular foaming through increased productivity and quality, and optimizing product design to best utilize microcellular molding. The technology was demonstrated on an ENGEL duo 1000 ton injection molding machine during the event.

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The symposium “provided good insights into different molding techniques, like the Dolphin process and other technologies, as well as interesting in-depth information regarding the processing of long glass fiber-filled materials,” said Wendelin Schmidt of Erwin Quarder, Inc. “The live molding demonstration featuring the MuCell process and the tour of the manufacturing facility were additional highlights.”

According to Jonathan Soucy, vice president operations of the Polymer Plainfield Companies, “MuCell is one of the few technologies over the past 40 years that truly addresses the primary technology problem faced by engineers and processors – unpredictable differential shrinkage. This results in warpage, sink, distortion and dimensional problems with molded parts.”

“MuCell frees the parts design from 25 years of restrictions relating directly to the need to design for the packing out of parts within a mold,” said Bernstein. “The MuCell process doesn’t use a packing phase to fill a mold, eliminating all sink in molded parts and opening up new gating approaches and dimensional configurations. This often leads to 30 percent reduction in part weight.”

“The symposium presented a wide variety of applications for microcellular technology,” explained Steve Braig, president and CEO of ENGEL North America. “We are pleased to offer technical symposiums such as this for the injection molding community. ENGEL is also available to provide technical assistance in developing new applications.”

“ENGEL was the first injection molding equipment supplier to understand the broad potential of the MuCell process, and has supported the development of equipment and expertise that has advanced the technology globally,” said Bernstein.

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Soucy said the symposium “provided valuable information on this under-utilized technology, with presentations ranging from the latest developments, materials and machinery to end user experiences.”

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ENGEL North America

From facilities in the United States, Canada and Mexico, ENGEL North America provides its customers a single source for design and manufacture of injection molding machines for thermoplastics and elastomers, a full range of plastics processing technology modules and a full scope of automation solutions. With eight production plants in Europe, North America and Asia (China, Korea), subsidiaries in 17 countries and representatives in over 70 countries, ENGEL North America provides its customers the global support they need to compete and succeed with new technologies and leading-edge production systems. For more information, visit www.engelglobal.com/na.

Trexel, Inc.

Trexel is the exclusive developer of the MuCell® microcellular foam technology and has an extensive portfolio of patents in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Japan, Korea and Asia. Trexel's primary business is the supply of MuCell Systems for the production of foamed injection molded and extruded articles. It also provides world-class engineering support, training and other services, and the equipment and components integral to the MuCell process. In support of these activities, Trexel operates a foamed plastics development laboratory in its Woburn, Mass., facility, including injection molding and extrusion equipment. For more information, visit www.trexel.com.

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