

12th Branch Day kunststoffland NRW – an exciting programme in an innovative environment

kunststoffland NRW and Hennecke GmbH & Co. KG opened their doors for the 12th Branch Day in Sankt Augustin on November 30, 2015. Around 130 participants used the opportunity to gather information, discuss and network between politics, science and economics at the most important industry event in the state. In the TECHCENTER of the PU specialist Hennecke, top speakers presented the newest innovation trends and news about light-weight construction and securing skilled personnel.



Rolf Trippler, Managing director of the Hennecke GmbH & Co.KG, at the opening of the lectures

The new Hennecke TECHCENTER provided the ideal setting for the industry event. The PU specialist bundles together its research and development capacities on a total area of over 1000 square metres. The company has built up a range of machines from the different PU disciplines in the application technology centre in order to create new processes and products. In addition to product development and product optimisation, the comprehensive service portfolio of the Hennecke TECHCENTER also

includes process development and raw materials testing under close-to-production conditions.

The spectrum ranges from processing rigid, flexible and integral skin foams, elastomers, epoxy resin systems and reactive thermoplastics, all the way to RIM, RRIM, SRIM, PUR-CSM fibre composite, clearmelt®, Skinmelt, Sprayskin and HP-RTM applications. Hand or robotically operated filling of reaction mixture into open and closed moulds is possible here.

In this innovative environment, Rolf Trippler, the Managing Director of Sales at Hennecke, opened the series of presentations. He covered the historical story arc from the founding of the company to today and showed how much pioneering work Hennecke has accomplished in PU processing. During his welcoming speech, Hartwig Meier from LANXESS Deutschland GmbH and chairman of the kunststoffland NRW association, made clear that North-Rhine Westphalia is one of the most important locations for the German plastic and rubber industry. Its strength is the result of a strong network and close collaboration across the entire value chain, Meier said.

State Secretary Dr. Wilhelm Schäffer of the Ministry for Labour, Integration and Social Affairs NRW gave insights on the perspective of politics. In his speech "Shaping labour fairly, securing specialists – Opportunities for the plastics industry in NRW", Dr. Schäffer repeatedly called on the plastics industry to participate more actively in the political design of the framework conditions.

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Christian Hopmann from the Institute for Plastics Processing at the RWTH Aachen, focused on classic plastic processing within the topic of light-weight construction. It is not just fibre composite, or the particularly hyped-up carbon fibre composite materials that contribute to light-weight construction; other plastics also play a significantly greater role in this topic than has often been perceived.

Jens Winiarz, Head of Sales for CSM and new Hennecke technologies, presented the innovations and milestones of the PU specialist. His presentation showed the multifaceted nature and innovative power of

"Fascination PUR" in an impressive way. Winiarz used the example of an automobile door in steel-plastic-hybrid construction to explain how the novel door concept has been realised in close collaboration with Thyssen Krupp.

As a representative of the raw material producers, Dr. Hubert Ehbing from Covestro Deutschland AG, took a look at the future. The company is currently intensively researching the usage of CO₂ as a replacement for crude oil in the production of plastic materials. Dr. Ehbing stated that he is convinced that it will gradually become possible to process ever larger amounts of CO₂ in the coming years.

The concluding podium discussion with Hartwig Meier, Prof. Dr.-Ing. Christian Hopmann, Rolf Trippler and Reinhard Hoffmann, Managing Director of Gerhardt Kunststofftechnik GmbH, was moderated by Dr. Bärbel Naderer, Managing Director of kunststoffland NRW. The topic of securing specialists was top priority yet again this year. The increasing number of refugees offers chances to increase the innovative force in NRW to an even higher level. However, the general tenor was that this is also linked to great challenges for politics and companies.

During the breaks, numerous participants used the chance to go on factory tours and gather information about the machine technology involved in PU processing in the TECHCENTER. The mixhead production procedure was received with particular interest during the factory tours. Many participants were surprised to learn that 100 per cent of the know-how, the manufacture of the mixheads and their components, as well as the quality assurance is found in the Hennecke factory and that this is largely unique within the PU industry.

In the TECHCENTER, the guests were able to operate the mixhead on the HIGHLINE compact high-pressure metering machine themselves, filling a cup with a two-component PU foam and experiencing the expansion of the reactive mix close up. The visitors were also able to watch the TOPLINE HK 650 modular high-pressure metering machine, which is able to process up to six individual temperature-controlled, evacuated or gas-loaded

components, together with a robot and a mould carrier in a live demonstration.

Furthermore, a STREAMLINE with a press and a robot for producing fibre-reinforced structural components and a three-component ELASTOLINE F for processing casting systems and raw materials were available in the TECHCENTER for viewing and for sharing specialist knowledge.

Further information and public relations

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