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Significant changes in nonwoven industry seen at Techtextil 2011

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Source:ATA Editorial Team

by Kelvin Yau from Frankfurt

The nonwovens sector has been undergoing significant changes in the past few years. At the recent Techtextil 2011 held in Frankfurt, Germany, key industry players spoke to ATA and shared their observations on the industry's development.

Wider applications

"The nonwoven market is expanding with wider applications. Also there sees an increasing demand for leno weaving machinery and the leno technology has become very successful," said Erwin Devloo, Marketing Communications Manager of Picanol.

He added that "smart textiles, or functional textiles will become increasingly important with more applications, such as water-repellent and self-cleaning textiles with applications in the automotive sector."



Advanced machines on display at Techtextil 2011



Erwin Devloo of Picanol

Mr Devloo's views are echoed by Axel Wintermeyer, Vice President Sales and Marketing in Business Unit Technical Textiles of Karl Mayer, who noted that the technical textile market is diversified and dynamic. "It is growing with more specialty requirements on products; as certain levels have been reached, the market is exploring more new end-use applications," he said.

Far East market coming up



Andreas Lukas of Andritz Küsters

In the meanwhile, it is obvious that the market in the Far East, such as China, Indonesia, Thailand and Korea, is coming up, stated Andreas Lukas, Vice President in Nonwoven of Andritz Küsters GmbH.

"More and more, the industry is asking for less raw materials on products and reduced energy costs, and looking for more biodegradable and eco-efficient aspect. In terms of technical requirement, nonwoven manufacturers tend to look at higher throughput and higher speed in production."

Wider width

Another key change is the higher demand for wider width of fabrics in certain applications, according to Klaus A. Heinrichs, Vice President Marketing, Product Manager Service Components of A. Monforts Textilmaschinen GmbH & Co KG. He explained the trend that in geotextile, for instance, there is higher demand for increasing width in fabrics. "Before it was only 3m, now it is 6-7.5m. We need to adapt our machines to enable them to produce fabrics with wider width."

Mr Heinrichs also sees a higher demand for treating fabrics with high temperature. "Before we only had occasional orders for high temperature dryers, but at present, the high temperature dryers are ordered on a regular basis," he added.

In the nonwovens sector, the overwhelming trend is that technology has become a market differentiator. Jean-Philippe Dumon, Sales & Marketing Director of NSC Nonwoven, explained: "In general, people are more conscious about the importance of technology, since they prefer to differentiate from other counterparts and to improve their production efficiency through technology." He stressed that "the high-tech equipment costs more, but it will pay back."

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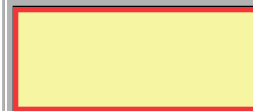
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