Business Week
18 Sept - 24 Sept

BASF increases prices for Neopentylglycol and Trimethylolpropane

18 Sept 2006

German chemical company BASF is raising its prices for its polyalcohols Neopentylglycol (NPG) and Trimethylolpropane (TMPhydro) in Europe by 190 Euro/mt with immediate effect, or as existing contracts permit. The company attributes the increment to sharp increases in raw material costs and high energy and logistics costs.

Polyalcohols are widely used in solvent free or high solid coatings, as well as in polyurethanes, alkyd resins and synthetic lubricants.

More than 320 exibitors at Cinte Techtextil China

18 Sept 2006

Cinte Techtextil China takes place September 19-21 in Shanghai and will host over 320 exhibitors from 22 countries and regions at this year's fair, which is over 20% bigger than the last event held in 2004. The show will focus on technical textile and nonwoven products and the latest related technologies available in the international market. A range of seminars will also take place.

150 Chinese exhibitors will be present at Cinte Techtextil China including China Textile Machinery (Group), Eastex Industrial Science and Technology, Tianjin Teda Filters, Xinlong Holding (Group) and Zhejiang Hailide New Material.

The number of overseas exhibitors attending this year's show is 170, an increase of 14% compared with the last edition. New foreign exhibitors include Ahlstrom, Chemtax, Dow Corning, Gerber and Wacker.

The show will house group pavilions from Belarus, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany and Italy and, for the first time, the regional pavilion from Taiwan China.

Seminars will include a presentation entitled 'Newly Developed Examples of Taiwan Technical Textiles' from the Taiwanese group and a series of talks by the German group named 'Global Textile High-Technology Forum'.

New Monogram Mini Lin collection from Louis Vuitton

18 Sept 2006

Luxury products group LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton has launched a new accessories and small leather goods collection called Monogram Mini Lin comprising bags, wallets and key holders.

Bags include the Bucket PM shoulder bag and the Saumur XL large everyday bag, both made from cotton and linen with a textile lining and grained calf leather trimmings.

The wallets and small leathergoods range features the leather-lined Zippy Wallet and the Snapped Billford and Coin Purse.

Blue Holdings acquires new 'Life and Death' brand

18 Sept 2006

Designer, manufacturer and distributor of high-end fashion jeans and denim apparel Blue Holdings, Inc. has entered into a joint venture to operate the new contemporary knits collection 'Life and Death' designed by Phillipe Naouri and Alexandre Caugant.

Blue Holdings' chairman and CEO Paul Guez said he hoped the new knit collection would broaden and complement the company's existing product range.

Euro area annual inflation down to 2.3%

18 Sept 2006

According to Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities, Euro zone annual inflation was 2.3% in August, down from 2.4% in July and 2.2% in August 2005. Monthly inflation was 0.1% in August. EU25 annual inflation was also 2.3% in August, down from 2.4% in July and from 2.2% the previous year. Monthly inflation was 0.2% in August.

In August, the lowest annual rates were observed in Finland (1.3%), Sweden (1.6%) and Poland (1.7%), and the highest rates in Latvia (6.8%), Estonia and Slovakia (both 5%). Compared with July, annual inflation rose in nine member states, remained stable in three and fell in thirteen.

The main components with the highest annual rates in August were housing (4.8%), transport (3.5%) and food (2.9%), while the lowest annual rates were observed for communications (-3.9%), clothing (-0.1%) and recreation and culture (0.0%). Concerning the detailed sub-indices, fuels for transport had the largest upward impact on the headline rate (+0.21 percentage points), followed by gas

(+0.18), while telecommunications (-0.19) and garments (-0.14) had the biggest downward impacts.

DuPont raises prices on Elvanol PVA/PVOH

18 Sept 2006

DuPont Packaging & Industrial Polymers (P&IP) has introduced a price increase of $0.07/lb for all grades of DuPont Elvanol polyvinyl alcohol (PVA/PVOH), effective October 16, or as contracts permit.

DuPont(TM) Elvanol® polyvinyl alcohol is used in a variety of industries including textiles, paper and adhesives.

Copeland Sports closes eleven stores

19 Sept 2006

American specialty sports retailer Copeland Sports has commenced the liquidation of eleven stores located in California, Utah, Nevada and Oregon.

CEO of Copeland Sports Barry Soosman said, "Closing these stores was a difficult decision, but one that was necessary for the long term economic benefit of the company."

The company's 20 other stores remain open for business selling branded athletic footwear and apparel and include seven specialty shops including Golf, Fitness, Boardshop, Women's, Outdoors, Cycle and Athletics.

Everlast licenses footwear to ES Originals

19 Sept 2006

Manufacturer and licensor of sporting goods, apparel and footwear Everlast Worldwide has signed a new license with footwear marketer E.S. Originals Inc. to manufacture and distribute athletic and casual footwear for men, women and children. The company will distribute the Everlast-branded products beginning in 2007 to sporting goods, athletic footwear and department stores in the US and Canada. A fully coordinated line of EVST apparel and shoes will be available, in conjunction with the company's apparel licensees.

This new license replaces Everlast's former footwear license with the Meldisco division of Footstar. This change allows EVST to elevate its footwear distribution to match its apparel channels of trade.

Footwear sales boost Forzani's financial results

19 Sept 2006

Canada's largest retailer of sporting goods The Forzani Group Ltd. has reported strong sales and margins for the six-week period ended September 10. Sales for the period increased 7% compared with the same period last year. Exclusive of the impact of the current year addition of The Fitness Source, retail system sales were up 5.8%.

Same store sales for the six-week period increased 4.3% compared with a 5% increase the previous year. Corporate same store sales were up 2.3% compared with a 4.7% increase in the prior year period, with footwear sales outpacing hardgoods and apparel.

Welspun India given Texprocil Award

19 Sept 2006

Textile company Welspun India Ltd. has been awarded the Texprocil Award in the Manufacturer Exporter category 2005-6 for the highest number of readymade garment exports.

Minister for Textiles Mr Shankersinh Waghela presented the award to Welspun Group chairman Mr Goenka.

Weak chemicals sales at Omnova Solutions

19 Sept 2006

US-based producer of emulsion polymers, specialty chemicals, and decorative and functional surfaces Omnova Solutions Inc. has reported net income of $3.3 million for the third quarter ended August 31, compared with $1.4 million for the third quarter of 2005.

Net sales increased $1.8 million to $208.8 million for the third quarter compared with $207 million during the same period last year. Gross profit was $43.4 million, or 20.8% of net sales compared with $42.1 million, or 20.3% of net sales, in the prior year period.

Net sales for the Performance Chemicals segment during the third quarter decreased 7.8% to $109.6 million versus $118.9 million in 2005, driven by a 10.5% reduction in volume due to weaker demand across most product lines. The reduction in volume was partially offset by a 2.7% higher average unit selling price. Segment operating profit was $8.2 million for the third quarter of 2006 compared with $9.3 million for the third quarter of 2005. Results were affected by lower volumes of $4 million, higher raw material costs of $1.8 million primarily for butadiene and acrylic raw materials and higher utilities and transportation costs of $1.2 million.

The specialty chemical product lines experienced

significant volume declines. New product introductions, trialling activity and toll manufacturing opportunities are underway to improve specialty volumes.

New golf shoes from Ecco

19 Sept 2006

Danish shoemaker Ecco has launched its spring/summer 2007 US collection of classic and causal men's golf shoes featuring four new styles.

Features incorporated in the range include: ultra-soft, high-grade leathers with hydrophobic treatments to provide water-resistance; a direct-injection process that offers durability, comfort and shock-absorption; an internal stabiliser that reduces torque and provides a stable swing platform; a double-layer insole that provides extra cushioning and absorbs heel force to reduce stress on the knees, hip and back; an internal air-circulation system that ensures a dry and cool foot environment; a Dynamic Energy Return system that provides a trampoline effect during foot-strike and follow-through to reduce fatigue during the course of a round; and advanced grip systems including the Eclipse cleat with Fast Twist insert system, the Stinger cleat with Q-Lok insert system and moulded traction bars.

Etnies unveils spring 2007 sandal collection

20 Sept 2006

Global action sports footwear and apparel company etnies has introduced its new sandals collection for spring 2007 at the ASR trade fair, September 8-10. The line offers a selection of traditional three-point sandals and slides. These include the three-point Chalotas sandal with a natural cork footbed, a non-toxic EVA mid-sole and a sponge rubber outsole embossed with three environmentally friendly messages – "preserve the ocean, respect the beach and don't litter".

The Runaway sandal is the company's first water-friendly sandal which features a perforated waffle footbed and small channels in the mid-sole. This allows water to flow from the footbed out the sidewall leaving the wearer with a drier foot and more traction.

The Ranger's pigskin footbed, strap and lining provide extra comfort and the whipstitch detailing on the midsole give it a stylised look. This sandal features unique strap construction which allows for a relaxed fit and crepe style texturing on the rubber outsole.

The range will be available to consumers in January 2007.

Visitor attendance up 6% at Eurobike

20 Sept 2006

31,810 trade visitors attended this year's Eurobike in Friedrichshafen, August 31-September 3, an increase of 6% in total and 44% for visitors from outside Germany. 826 exhibitors were present, 68% of which were international exhibitors. Sport bikes, racing and touring bikes, city bikes, recumbent, collapsible and electric bikes, as well as clothing and accessories were on display.

Parts and accessories appeared to be the most sought-after items at the fair.

Lanxess expands production for basic chemicals

20 Sept 2006

German chemical company Lanxess is expanding production at its Leverkusen site of the basic chemical m-cresol for the world-wide market. The first-stage expansion of the unit will create around 15% extra capacity and construction is scheduled for completion by the end of the first quarter of 2007. The aim is to 'debottleneck' the unit to deal with rising demand.
There are also plans to expand the capacities of other base chemicals within the Basic Chemicals business unit.

Cresols are used in the manufacture of resins and flame retardants, among other things.

New Programmable Cutter/Stacker Processes

20 Sept 2006

US-based information management, brand identification and solution-enabling products company Avery Dennison has launched a new high-speed, programmable cutter/stacker that is said to process printed hang tags and tickets twice as fast as conventional systems. The A64CS Cutter/Stacker features multiple detection sensors, allowing users to accommodate a variety of tag and ticket sizes and formats.

The A64CS Cutter/Stacker is designed for integration with and attachment to an Avery Dennison 6400 Series tag and label printing system. Tags or tickets are fed automatically to the A64CS from the attached printer. Utilising a rotary knife, the A64CS automatically cuts the printed tags or tickets and neatly stacks them in a tray with a 2,400-ticket capacity. Maximum speed is twelve inches per second.

The company's brand identification products include fashion-inspired woven and printed fabric labels, heat transfers and embellishments for tag-free labelling,

graphic tags, integrated bar code tags, leather and leather-like patches and sock bands.

DyStar presents new label for water and oil-repellent textile finishes

20 Sept 2006

German products and services provider for the textile industry DyStar has introduced a new label for textiles with water, oil and soil-repellency. The new Evo Gard label can be used on fibres of all types finished with DyStar's high-quality Evo Gard auxiliaries. These fluorocarbon-based products give the textiles a special surface structure that repels water, oil and dirt. The new label is exclusively available for textiles tested for conformance with international standards in the company's laboratories to ensure that the finish withstands repeated washing. The label is part of a series of labels for functional modern textile finishes including special labels for Evo Care Wellness finishes with aloe vera, jojoba oil and vitamin E, and odour-absorbent Breeeze finishes with Evo Fresh.

Study raises concerns about Canada-Korea free trade

20 Sept 2006

An economic study of the federal government's proposed Canada-Korea Free Trade Agreement raises major concerns over the impact of the deal, including the potential loss of more than 33,000 Canadian manufacturing jobs.

President of the Canadian Auto Workers Union (CAW) Buzz Hargrove released the study after meeting with international trade minister David Emerson to highlight the alleged negative impact of Canada-Korea free trade.

The study, entitled 'Employment Implications of Trade Liberalisation with East Asia', was prepared by CAW economist Jim Stanford and Daniel Poon, from Carleton University's School of Public Administration.

It looks at the employment impacts of Canada's existing bilateral trade relationships with East Asia, including Japan, China and Korea and the likely employment effects of the proposed Canada-Korea Free Trade Agreement.

"In total, our current trade with East Asia results in the net loss of over 180,000 Canadian jobs," the study indicates. "Most of this job loss is due to our trade with China, but significant jobs losses also result from our current trade with Korea and Japan."

It also warns that job losses in high-technology sectors such as computers and machinery will occur in addition to the anticipated losses in the clothing and footwear sectors.

New consulting group at Atlas Material Testing Technology

20 Sept 2006

Quality control and quality assurance testing company Atlas Material Testing Technology has established a new entity, Atlas Consulting Group. The new group will provide consulting for the design, implementation and evaluation of weathering test programmes. It will offer training and education to improve testing practices as well as offering development of customised test methods and analysis of product failure and service life prediction. Other services will include optimisation of weathering processes within organisations and helping clients plan their own test labs and outdoor weathering testing facilities.

Atlas consultants will present solutions tailored to each company's needs. They will work with companies to optimise resources and allow them to shorten products' time to market, enhance competitive edge and reduce risk of product failure and related product warranty costs.

G3 hires new head of European Sales & Marketing

20 Sept 2006

Ski industry specialist Sepp Stenger will join Canadian manufacturer of skis, telemark and backcountry equipment G3 Genuine Guide Gear to head the company's European sales and marketing efforts on November 1.

Mr Stenger brings over twelve years of marketing and product promotion experience to his new position, as well as a thorough knowledge of the European snow sports marketplace.

He has held several positions in the European snow sports arena, including head of Exports at Mammut Sports Group in Switzerland, sales manager and customer relations expert with Völkl International in Switzerland and Marketing and Business manager with Adidas-Salomon in Germany.

Adidas Group buys Reebok distribution rights in the Czech Republic and Slovakia

20 Sept 2006

The adidas Group has bought the distribution rights for the Reebok brand in the Czech Republic and Slovakia from RBK Sport CZ and RBK ŠSport SR respectively, Reebok's distributors in the two countries. Effective January 1, 2007, adidas CR s.r.o. will become the

exclusive distributor of Reebok products in the Czech Republic and adidas Slovakia s.r.o. will become the exclusive distributor of Reebok products in Slovakia. Financial details of the transaction will be kept confidential.

The adidas Group announced the distributor buyout in Russia and China earlier this year. Buying out Reebok distributors and joint ventures around the globe is a key component of the integration strategy and is expected to provide the Group with annual revenue synergies totalling at least €200 million by 2009.

Lanxess relaunches Vulkanox DPPD

21 Sept 2006

German chemicals group Lanxess has relaunched production of its rubber antioxidant Vulkanox DPPD (N,N´-diphenyl-p-phenylenediamine). Commercial volumes will become available again during the fourth quarter 2006. The product is manufactured at the company's Isithebe site, South Africa, and distributed world-wide from there.

Vulkanox DPPD is used in the rubber sector as an antioxidant and is a more effective antiozonant than its chemical counterpart Vulkanox 3100. It is used as a stabiliser in elastomer manufacture and as an inhibitor in monomers for avoiding undesirable polymerisation reactions.

New Jockey 3D Innovations for athletes

21 Sept 2006

US-based underwear company Jockey International has launched the 3D Innovations underwear range designed for sports use which has eight-way stretch for greater comfort and fit.

Thousands of male bodies from the US and UK were scanned and measured in order to find a suitable fit for different builds.

The range also features an innovative leg binding and stitching technique. Cutting on the bias—a 1930's couture pattern technology to give two-way stretch—is followed through with the cotton/spandex fabric, cut across the grain to give four-way stretch. The two halves are then twisted and joined with a seam to give the eight-way stretch, mimicking the way skin itself stretches during movement.

New VP Outdoor at Cascade Designs

21 Sept 2006

US-based manufacturer of backpacking, recreation and medical rehabilitation products Cascade Designs has promoted Ken Meidell to vice president of Outdoor, effective immediately.

He has served as the company's chief information officer for the last five years. He is a founding member of the Outdoor Industry Association's Business to Business Standards Group and is an active member in numerous environmental access and conservation organisations.

China Direct to acquire Shanghai Long Chemicals

21 Sept 2006

Management and consulting firm for China-based companies China Direct, Inc. has signed a definitive agreement to acquire 51% of Shanghai Long Chemicals Company Limited.

Under the agreement, CDI China, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of China Direct, will inject $701,250 to recapitalise Shanghai Long. After the recapitalisation, it will own 51% of Shanghai Long. Current management of Long, will work with management of CDI Shanghai Company, a wholly-owned subsidiary of CDI China, Inc., in managing the daily operations of Long.

Long generated approximately $23.4 million in annual revenues in 2004 and $31 million in 2005. It is engaged in the distribution and manufacturing of fine chemical products, specialising in those used in paint and glue, medicine intermediate, textile and leather auxiliaries.

Positive Q2 results at Golf Galaxy

21 Sept 2006

US-based golf specialty retailer Golf Galaxy, Inc. has posted improved financial results for its second quarter ended August 26.

Net sales for the quarter increased 37.4% to $95.6 million compared with $69.6 million for the same period of the prior year. Comparable store sales increased 0.8% compared with an increase of 7.4% for the second quarter of fiscal 2006. The current quarter marked the company's fourteenth consecutive quarter of comparable store sales increases.

Net income for the quarter was $7 million compared with net income of $5.4 million for the second quarter of fiscal 2006.

Net sales for the six months ended August 26 increased 39% to $178.2 million, compared with $128.2 million in the 2006 fiscal period. Net income for the six month period was $9.6 million compared with $7.1 million for the 2005 period. Comparable store sales increased 0.9% compared with an increase of 8.8% in the same period of fiscal 2006.

Henri Lloyd sponsors Velux 5 Oceans Race

22 Sept 2006

UK-based sailing apparel manufacturer Henri Lloyd, has been named as the Official Technical Clothing Sponsor to Sir Robin Knox-Johnston when he competes in the Velux 5 Oceans round the world race, which commences on October 22, in Bilbao, Spain.

Sir Knox-Johnston will wear Henri Lloyd's lightest, stripped lean Gore-Tex Ocean Racing Range, as well as the latest developments in its soft shell, thermal, Fast-Dri and leather boots from its marine footwear range. The company will also supply his support team with all their technical and shore wear team kit.

New CBUK golf collection from Cutter & Buck

22 Sept 2006

American sportswear designer Cutter & Buck has introduced its spring 2007 CBUK golf collection. The range has been designed to combine practical properties and functional fabrics combineed with a more stylish fit for on and off the golf course.

"CBUK is about today's golfer who challenges traditional apparel, but still requires all the benefits of technical golf apparel and quality sportswear," said vice president of design and merchandising Julie Snow.

Income declines at Nike

22 Sept 2006

Nike, Inc. has reported increased revenue for the first quarter ended August 31. Revenue grew 9% to $4.2 billion compared with $3.9 billion for the same period last year. However, net income declined 13% to $377.2 million compared with $432.3 million in the prior year. Results for the first quarter included a $40.8 million expense, net of taxes, related to the expensing of stock options. Excluding this, first quarter net income declined 3%.

During the quarter, US revenues increased 6% to $1.6 billion versus $1.5 billion for the prior year quarter. US athletic footwear revenues increased 6% to $1.1 billion. Apparel revenues increased 9% to $431.5 million. Equipment revenues declined 1% to $91.3 million. US pre-tax income declined 2% to $338.9 million.

First quarter revenues for the European region grew 4% to $1.3 billion from $1.2 billion for the same period last year. Changes in currency exchange rates increased revenue growth by three percentage points. Footwear revenues were $679.5 million, down 1% from $685.1 million last year. Apparel revenues increased 12% to $487 million and equipment revenues increased 7% to $104.4 million. Pre-tax income declined 8% to $302.5 million.

Revenues in the Asia Pacific region grew 13% to $518.4 million compared with $459.6 million a year ago. Footwear revenues were up 12% to $266 million, apparel revenues increased 14% to $200.9 million and equipment revenues grew 13% to $51.5 million. Pre-tax income increased 8% to $98.9 million.

Revenues in the Americas region increased 13% to $242.5 million from $213.7 million in the first quarter of fiscal 2006. Currency exchange rates contributed three percentage points to this growth rate. Footwear revenues were up 10% to $172.3 million, apparel revenues increased 26% to $51.2 million and equipment revenues grew 18% to $19 million. Pre-tax income was up 9% to $48.4 million.

Lenzing focuses on environmental issues

22 Sept 2006

Austria-based man-made cellulose fibre producer Lenzing hosted a joint presentation with representatives of the European Eco-label at the latest textile fairs in Paris, at Texworld and Expofil, held on September 19-21. Lenzing has now received the European Union 'Flower' award, a certification system that enables consumers to identify environmentally sound products.

The award requires the scientific analysis of the ecological impact of process and product and proof of compliance with the standards specially defined by the European Union . In pulp and fibre production, the limit values for emissions into air and water must be observed and the chemicals—in particular their biodegradability—are thoroughly assessed.

The company's Tencel fibre is made from eucalyptus wood, a renewable resource and its production process has received several awards, including the EU 'European Award for the Environment'.

The natural raw material wood ensures that the properties of Tencel are natural and skin-friendly. The fibre's nanofibrillar structure provides moisture management and thermal regulation. It supports natural bacteriostatic properties without the need for chemical additives and is fully biodegradable.

Lenzing Modal is produced at the world's largest integrated pulp and fibre production site in Lenzing, Austria, and is made of natural and renewable raw material beech wood originating from sustainably managed forests in Austria and neighbouring countries. Integrated production means high utilisation of the raw material from beech wood through to fibre and it is fully biodegradable.

Lenzing Modal and Tencel are carbon neutral and part of a natural cycle.

The company's environmental protection efforts also include the development of total chlorine free (TCF) bleaching.