Business Week
30 Apr - 06 May

PGI launches new protective fabric

30 Apr 2007

As a result of new capabilities at the company's recently opened plant in Suzhou, China, and advances in its spunmelt manufacturing process, American nonwovens producer Polymer Group, Inc. (PGI) has launched MediSoft Ultra, an advanced fabric for medical and protective garments and other single-use apparel.

Senior director of the company's global medical business Fernando Marin said, "We enhanced our MediSoft offering to make it even more soft and comfortable so that healthcare and other workers can wear these single-use garments for longer periods of time, with a higher level of protection against the spread of fluids and risks of contamination."

It is also suitable for protective apparel, including that used by homeland security, law enforcement and specialised industrial applications where single-use garments are worn for extended periods of time.

The UK, South Korea and Chile boost Everlast's results

30 Apr 2007

Manufacturer and licensor of sporting goods, apparel and footwear Everlast Worldwide Inc. has posted improved financial results for its first quarter ended March 31. Net revenues increased 24% to $12.4 million compared with $10 million in the 2006 quarter, driven by a 30% increase in sporting goods sales to a record $9 million. Net licensing revenues increased 11% to approximately $3.3 million compared with $3 million in the first quarter of 2006, largely driven by organic increases in licensing income, particularly in the UK, South Korea and Chile.

Jarden to acquire K2

30 Apr 2007

Consumer products company Jarden Corporation has signed a definitive merger agreement to acquire US footwear and apparel company K2. Under the terms of the agreement, Jarden will pay $10.85 per share of K2 common stock in cash and will issue 0.1086 of a share of Jarden common stock (subject to adjustment) for each share of K2 common stock outstanding as of the closing.

Headquartered in Carlsbad, California, K2 is present in North America, Europe and Asia. Its brand portfolio includes Adio, Ex Officio, JT, K2, Marker, Marmot, Penn, Rawlings, Ride, Sevylor, Shakespeare, Stearns, Volkl, and Worth.

Hohenstein's Indian office celebrates a successful first year

30 Apr 2007

The contact office of the German textile research and service centre Hohenstein Institutes in Mumbai, India, has reported an extremely positive performance in its first year of business. Hohenstein India Pvt. Ltd., which was founded at the beginning of April 2006 with the support of the Indo-German Chamber of Commerce, currently employs four staff under the leadership of the institute's country manager, Jacob Kutty.

As an official representative office of the International Oeko-Tex Association, the office is primarily involved with product certification according to Oeko-Tex Standard 100 for textiles tested for harmful substances at all stages of the production chain, as well as numerous other independent quality tests.

Clients include Indian textile and clothing manufacturers as well as European companies who have production facilities and suppliers in India.

Huntsman and Cabana launch new cotton UV protection line

30 Apr 2007

A new collection of cotton clothing with 50+UV protection, using Huntsman's High IQ Sun Protection, Cabana Life, has been launched at retail.

Offering a variety of beach wear and accessories the collection includes hats, cover-ups, tunics, shirts, and pants for boys, girls, women and pregnant women.

Commenting on the new collection, Lee Howarth, global brand manager at Huntsman Textile Effects, said, "High IQ is helping Cabana Life fulfil a promise to its customers who expect superior performance in all the company's products," adding, "At Huntsman we recognise the growing awareness and demand from consumers for sun protection. This High IQ range helps to ensure that Cabana Life's garments will not only be fashionable but will provide the wearer with the highest level of protection against the sun's harmful UV-A and UV-B rays, making it

essentially skin care you can wear.“

Wellman posts loss

30 Apr 2007

In spite of record sales of PET resin, US-based producer of polyester products Wellman, Inc. has reported a net loss from continuing operations of $26 million for the first quarter of 2007, ended March 31, compared with a net loss of $18.9 million for the same period in 2006.

Commenting on the results, chairman and CEO Thomas Duff stated, “Although we experienced disappointing overall results in the first quarter, we achieved record quarterly PET resin sales and volume due to strong demand. Our sales volume benefited from delays in the start-up of some of the new capacity announced by our competitors and an improved trade balance which was helped by the differential between US and Asian polyester raw material costs returning closer to historical levels. We expect the supply/demand balance to remain favourable in the second quarter and for PET resin margins to improve over first quarter levels based on our announced selling price increases.”

Wellman manufactures polyester products including PermaClear brand PET (polyethylene terephthalate) packaging resin and Fortrel brand polyester fibre.

Swarovski pinpoints key trends for spring/summer 2008

30 Apr 2007

Trend experts at cut crystal manufacturer Swarovski have identified five emerging trends for the spring/summer 2008 season, which should attract attention from both footwear and sportswear designers.

Classic, described as ‘the art of being relaxed’, is sporty and functional with colours including white, grey and black accented with light pink, mint and green. Crystal is added for a high gloss effect and can be used on magnetic fasteners, poppers and zips.

Romance, ‘the art of being intimate’, uses crystal to add shine to contrasting plain, raw-look fabrics. Harmony, ‘the art of being quiet’, features discreet crystals for subtle shine and jewellery is functional in the form of buckles and closures. Progressive, or ‘the art of being physical’, reflects disaffection with society and vulnerability. Colours are greyish nude, blood and vein-like tones and crystal is used for a cold, high-tech effect. Glamour, described as ‘the art of being excessive’, draws parallels between the 1920s and 1930s with the present. Bright and earthy crystal colours will be combined with grey, black, white and metallic shades with crystal as a connecting element between rustic and fine textiles.

Further sales increases at LaCrosse

1 May 2007

Work and outdoor footwear developer LaCrosse Footwear, Inc. has reported higher revenues for the first quarter of 2007.

Net sales totalled $23.7 million, up 11% from $21.4 million in the first quarter of 2006, whilst net income was $0.6 million, up 54% from $0.4 million.

Sales to the work market were $15.4 million, up 13% from $13.6 million, boosted by the early success of its new line of high-performance safety apparel.

Sales to the outdoor market were $8.3 million for the first quarter, up 7% from $7.8 million, reflecting continued growth in the hunting and rugged outdoor boot markets.

Asics loses case against Skechers

1 May 2007

The US District Court for the Central District of California has found in favour of footwear company Skechers USA, Inc. in a lawsuit filed by Asics Corporation and Asics America Corporation. The court denied Asics' motion for a preliminary injunction against Skechers, finding that there are ”substantial” differences between the two companies’ designs.

Asics sued the company for trademark infringement, unfair competition, trademark dilution and false advertising, claiming that the stripe design on four Skechers’ shoe styles infringed Asics' stripe trademark.

The court report stated, "The designs are quite different and in the marketplace the shoes appear highly dissimilar." The court also found that Asics’ trademark and Skechers’ stripes were not similar enough to infer that Skechers copied its designs from Asics. It also declined to grant Asics injunctive relief on its trade dress infringement claim, which was limited to one of the four Skechers styles in issue, the Skechers Showdowns. The court found that there was no evidence of actual confusion or that Skechers had intentionally copied Asics' design.

Resistex yarns receive Oeko-Tex certification

1 May 2007

Following a number of pH, odour and toxicity tests, conductive Resistex yarns, produced by Italian company Tecnofilati, have been granted Oeko-Tex Standard 100 (Class 1) certification.

The certificate guarantees that the yarns contain no health-endangering substances and Class 1 covers clothing for babies and young children up to two years old. It also ensures that substances used during the manufacturing process are not harmful to the environment and contain no CFC gases.

The yarns are based on silver, carbon, stainless steel and copper to provide conductive, anti-static and anti-bacterial properties.

Financial results and new developments at CY Oriental

1 May 2007

Canadian incorporated and China-based apparel and fashion products company CY Oriental Holdings Ltd. has posted improved financial results for its fourth quarter and fiscal year ended December 31.

Year-on-year, revenue increased 31.1% to C$11.9 million ($10.7 million) for the fourth quarter and 1.9% to C$43.2 million for the year. Growth in the fourth quarter was attributable to the company's progress in transitioning its product offering towards higher-end fashion items.

Net income for the quarter was $0.2 million compared with $1.6 million for the prior-year period while income for the year was $4.5 million compared with $8.9 million.

The company also announced that the construction of its new manufacturing facility in Tengzhou has been completed, with test-runs now being conducted, and that it has launched a new corporate website.

Furthermore, chairman and chief executive officer Mr Ping Chen will assume the role of company president effective June 4, at which time current president, Chris Chen, will assume the title of vice president, Business Development.

The company's ready-made products include woven casual wear, woven formal wear, denims and knit junior sportswear.

High turnout at Edana’s Nonwovens Research Academy

1 May 2007

The third edition of Edana’s Nonwovens Research Academy (NRA), which took place at the Centre for Technical Textiles at the University of Leeds, UK, on March 29-30, brought together 114 students and industry R&D experts from 17 countries, representing 36 companies and 22 research centres.

Papers presented at the event included nonwovens processes; spunbonded nonwovens made from splittable bi-component filaments; cellulose meltblown nonwovens based on the Lyocell-process; cellulosic nonwovens according to the Nanoval-process; mechanical characterisation of through-air bonded nonwoven structures; a new method for measuring friction between nonwoven materials and the skin; measurement of nonwoven web uniformity using image analysis; biomaterials, beyond buzzwords and marketing tools; ecological method of manufacture of multifilament cellulose; study of polylactide properties – applications to nonwovens; PVD-coating – a new solution for anti-static finishing of temperature resistant nonwovens; three generations of the lyocell type fibres.

Another highlight was Edana’s first ever nonwovens fashion show, organised by students from the University of Leeds. This included dresses, ball gowns, blouses and suits.

Activewear lifts sales at Delta Apparel

1 May 2007

American active wear marketer, manufacturer and distributor Delta Apparel, Inc. has reported financial results in line with its previously disclosed estimates, for the third fiscal quarter ended March 31.

Net sales increased 22.6% to a third quarter record of $85 million compared with $69.4 million in the prior year period. Net income was $2.8 million compared with $2.7 million.

The retail-ready apparel segment, which includes the Soffe and Junkfood businesses, reported a slight sales decline of $0.1 million, or 0.4%, to $32.7 million, however, the activewear segment, which includes the Delta Apparel business and the newly acquired FunTees business, reported sales of $52.3 million compared with $36.6 million in the prior year period.

For its fourth fiscal quarter ending June 30, the company expects sales to be in the range of $100 to $106 million compared with $82.5 million.

Income falls at Hanesbrands

1 May 2007

US-based innerwear, outerwear and hosiery apparel company Hanesbrands Inc. has reported a decline in net income for the first quarter of 2007.

Total net sales increased $7 million, or 0.7%, to $1.04 billion, up from $1.03 billion for the corresponding quarter in 2006. Growth in the outerwear segment resulted from double-digit gains for Champion activewear and increases for Hanes casual wear, which more than offset generally flat sales in the innerwear segment and declines in other segments.

Net income was $12 million, down from $74.6 million a year ago, which reflected increased interest expense, reduced operating profit and a higher effective income tax rate.

NGC to highlight supply chain visibility at Material World

02 May 2007

Designer and producer of PLM, global sourcing and ERP software for the fashion, apparel and footwear industries New Generation Computing (NGC) will address some critical supply chain issues facing today's retailers and brands during a seminar at Material World Miami Beach 2007 on May 8-10.

Alan Brooks, president, and Fred Isenberg, vice president of sales, will speak on ‘Speed, Visibility and Execution with Integrated PLM, Global Sourcing and ERP Systems’ and will discuss the challenges of the global apparel business, as well as new opportunities to leverage information technology to streamline business processes and improve speed to market. The seminar will also focus on an integration strategy to connect suppliers, factories, agents, third parties, logistics and customers.

In addition, NGC customer Casual Male Retail Group will present a case study on the company's implementation of PLM and global sourcing software.

Revenues surge at Under Armour

02 May 2007

US developer and distributor of branded performance apparel, footwear and accessories Under Armour, Inc. has reported a significant improvement in the first quarter, ended March 31. Net revenues increased 41.8% to reach $124.3 million from the $87.7 million reported in the same quarter of 2006, whilst net income increased 13.8% to $9.9 million from $8.7 million.

Apparel revenues grew 26.9% and accounted for $22 million of the year-on-year increase in net revenues. The company’s Compression category continued to drive growth across the apparel business as did expanded ranges in key categories such as baseball and golf. Revenues also benefited from an increase in average selling price as a result of the expansion of the company’s product offerings.

Footwear, which was not offered in the first quarter of the prior year, contributed $11.8 million in net revenues for the quarter.

The company's products are sold worldwide and worn by professional football, baseball, and soccer players, as well as athletes in major collegiate and Olympic sports.

Brazil to boost volumes for Queensland Cotton

02 May 2007

Australian cotton company Queensland Cotton has reported a pre-tax operating profit of $9.74 million ($8.1 million) for the year ended February 28, down from $18.97 million in 2006. Post-tax profit was $6.75 million compared with $13.05 million.

Its global marketing operations traded 883,000 bales in the year compared with 1.1 million in the previous year and global ginning operations processed 874,000 bales compared with 986,000. The reduced volumes were primarily due to smaller crops sizes in the geographic regions in which the company operates.

CEO Richard Haire said that marketing volumes are expected to exceed a million bales in the current year, with a significant increase in volume from Brazil.

“Brazil could contribute 250,000 bales which is likely to exceed 20% of total marketing volumes. This compares with 100,000 Brazilian bales which contributed to around 10% of our global volumes from only three years ago,” he said.

Bug repellent sleeping bags from Lifeventure

02 May 2007

UK-based travel gear company Lifeventure has launched a new range of Sleeplight and Downlight sleeping bags which have all been treated with the company’s EX3 formula that repels mosquitoes, protects against bed bugs and prevents the build up of bacteria.

EX3 has been fully tested by the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, which performs numerous tests in hot and humid climates. The treatment is said to remain effective for two years, or 35 washes, at which time it can be retreated.

Nilit holds conferences in China

02 May 2007

Israeli fibre producer Nilit recently held two conferences in Yiwu and Guangzhou, China, in order to raise awareness of its products and to keep local manufacturers abreast of its global activities.

The event in Yiwu was attended by more than 100 members of the sector, whilst the conference in Gaungzhou attracted more than 50 participants including manufacturers of hosiery and seamless bodywear and producers of covered yarn.

During the events, Oded Breier, marketing and sales

manager of the Fibers Division, presented Nilit's global activities, describing the effect of recent strategic initiatives undertaken by the company, including the acquisition of the Invista apparel production operation in Germany, which has increased Nilit's market share in Europe and allows Nilit to market the Invista brands Tactel, Cordura and Supplex under licence. Meanwhile, Yu Hailong, vice general manager of Nilit (Suzhou) Ltd., presented Nilit's portfolio of specialty yarns and highlighted the specific performance attributions of each yarn.

Wellman raises polyester staple fibre prices

02 May 2007

US manufacturer of polyester products Wellman, Inc. will increase the price of all of its Fortrel polyester staple fibre products by $0.04/lb (pound), effective June 1.

According to the company's vice president Sales, Steve Ates, the price increase is necessary "due to continued increases in the cost of our petrochemical-based raw materials and their feedstocks."

BASF increases prices for nylon 6 polymer

02 May 2007

German chemicals company BASF has increased prices for its nylon 6 polymer by $0.08 per pound, or as contracts allow, effective May 1. The rise covers nylon polymer for spinning, film, wire/cable and compounding applications.

According to Mark Dobson, business director of the company's Polyamide and Intermediates business in North America, the increase is the result of "continued volatility of raw material and energy costs, and the increasing challenges of transportation availability and costs."

Continued growth in US apparel sector

03 May 2007

According to the Institute for Supply Management's (ISM) Report On Business, apparel, leather and allied products was the second-fastest growing industry in the USA during April. Other categories that posted increases included chemical products, plastics and rubber products as well as furniture and related products.

Manufacturing growth accelerated as the PMI registered 54.7%, an increase of 3.8 percentage points compared with March's reading of 50.9%.

The ISM Prices Index registered 51.6%, 6.9% higher than in March.

Improved orders at Lectra but revenue dips

03 May 2007

In spite of posting an 11% increase in total orders for new software licences and CAD/CAM equipment in the first quarter, France-based provider of CAD/CAM equipment and services for the textile, leather and industrial fabrics industry Lectra witnessed a 5% dip in revenues from new systems sales. This was said to be due, at least in part, to late orders.

Revenues fell to €24.1 million ($32.7 million), although recurring revenues increased 7% to €25.5 million. Total revenues were €49.5 million, down 3% at current exchange rates.

Patagonia joins the bluesign standard

03 May 2007

Well-known as an environmentally conscious company, US-based outdoor gear and apparel business Patagonia Inc. has joined the bluesign standard—the first brand company to benefit from a bluesign membership.

As a member, Patagonia can now benefit from practical solutions regarding environment, health and safety (EHS) issues including assistance in the implementation of manageable EHS guidelines as well as general supply chain management.

Ever-Glory secures significant order

03 May 2007

Chinese apparel manufacturer Ever-Glory International Group, Inc. has secured a new $2.8 million production order from Dallas-based branded workwear, hunting and outdoor apparel company Walls Industries, Inc.

The deal follows a recent visit by Walls Industries' employees to Ever-Glory's new headquarters and Fabric Inspection and Testing Center and marks the third year of partnership between the companies.

Keri golf extends sponsorship of Christina Kim

03 May 2007

Golf bag and accessories company keri golf has extended its endorsement agreement with LPGA Tour star Christina Kim.

Two-time winner on the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) Tour, Ms Kim will collaborate with the company to create a signature bag for use during all on-course activities.

BASF names new board member

03 May 2007

German chemicals manufacturer BASF has named Dr Friedrich Wirsing to the company's supervisory board, effective May 1. He was elected as a substitute member of the board by employees and will succeed Dr Karlheinz Messmer, who retired on April 30.

Dr Wirsing is a plant manager and the deputy chairman of the committee of executive representatives at BASF.

DuPont Sorona wins innovation award

03 May 2007

DuPont's bio-based polymer Sorona has been presented with an IDEA Achievement Award, at the International Engineered Fabrics Conference and Expo, IDEA07, in Miami Beach, Florida.

The first bio-based, renewably sourced polymer from DuPont, Sorona contains 37% renewable materials derived from corn.

DuPont discovered Sorona in the 1940s but did not commercialise it at the time due to the high cost of the key ingredient propanediol (PDO). A seven-year research programme that began in 1993 concluded with the development of a process to make Bio-PDO from corn sugar. In 2004, a joint venture between DuPont and Tate & Lyle was formed to build, manufacture and sell the new renewably sourced monomer, and the first Bio-PDO plant began commercial production in November 2006.

The company was also presented with an award for its Hybrid Membrane Technology, produced using a proprietary new spinning process.

The awards, which were co-sponsored by the Association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Industry (INDA) and Nonwovens Industry magazine, recognise new product and technical developments since in five categories: Roll Goods, Short-Life End Product, Long-Life End Product, Raw Materials and Machinery/Equipment. The winners were selected by industry members.

PGI debuts new Spinlace materials

03 May 2007

US producer of nonwovens Polymer Group, Inc. (PGI) has unveiled its new Spinlace materials at IDEA07 in Florida, a new category of fabrics that are said to represent the first in a new generation of nonwoven technologies.

In order to make Spinlace fabrics, PGI developed a manufacturing process that incorporates continuous filament with hydroentanglement and eliminates the carding step, which is said to result in stronger and more absorbent materials at lower weights which are produced in a more cost effective way.

Commenting on the new development, Mike Hale, vice president and general manager, USA and Europe, said, "PGI began working on this completely new category of engineered materials several years ago in response to anticipated needs of our customers," adding, "This new line is the first generation of technology that will serve as a platform for PGI's future growth in the nonwovens market. We are working to combine a series of technologies that result in an extremely robust process that can meet a variety of customer needs for product characteristics. These materials are capable of being used in a wide range of applications."

New footwear line aims to protect the board sports industry

03 May 2007

Consolidated Skateboards has launched a line of shoes, Consolidated Footwear, as part of its 'Don't Do It' campaign, aimed at protecting the board sports industry from being overrun by large sporting goods companies such as Nike, adidas and Reebok, which according to Consolidated "are now coming in with the intentions to take substantial market share away from those that built this industry".

As Steve Guisinger from Consolidated stated, "There is a reason there are no football, basketball, baseball, or soccer player-owned companies… and there should be. Don't let this happen to surf, skate, and snow. Your decisions shape the future and we encourage you to be conscious of what you support."

Technical textiles set for rapid growth

04 May 2007

According to a new report produced by Dublin-based research company Research and Markets, entitled 'Global Market Review of Technical Textiles in Apparel – Forecasts to 2011', the technical textiles sector is one of

the fastest-growing segments of the global textile and apparel industry.

The study indicates that increases will result from increasing market penetration of more technical fabrics, such as Kevlar and Nomex, into mainstream apparel either as a blend or as a stand-alone garment.

It outlines the fundamental techniques and raw materials behind technical apparel, examines the growth areas and current areas of research, reviews some of the prominent companies in the sector and provides market forecasts to 2011.

Akzo invests €250 million in Chinese chemicals plants

04 May 2007

Netherlands-based Akzo Nobel is to spend €250 million building two chemical plants in China.

The company has already reserved a 50 hectare plot within the Ningbo Chemical Industry Zone where it will establish the two new facilities—for the manufacture of ethylene amines and chelating agents—and construction work will begin once the relevant approval has been obtained from the Chinese authorities. The chelating agents plant is expected to go into operation in 2009, followed by the ethylene amines factory in early 2010.

Gerber establishes subsidiary in Vietnam

04 May 2007

US integrated hardware and software systems provider to the sewn-goods and flexible goods industries Gerber Technology has established a wholly-foreign-owned enterprise in Hanoi, Vietnam, and plans to open a branch office in Ho Chi Minh City that will include an Advanced Technology Centre and a service location in Da Nang.

The Advanced Technology Centre will house its automated spreading systems and multi-ply cutting systems and showcase the company's CAD systems with plotters. The facility will serve as a centre for product demonstration, system testing, and hardware and applications training for customers, engineers and industry students. It will also serve the apparel and related industrial companies in the neighbouring countries of Cambodia, Laos and Thailand.

President, Asia-Pacific, Gerber Scientific Inc. James Arthurs said: "With Vietnam's membership in the WTO in December 2006, textile and apparel industry exports are expected to increase from $5.8 billion in 2006 to $10 billion in 2010."

Eastern Europe boosts Lotto turnover

04 May 2007

Italian sports footwear, clothing and accessories firm Lotto Sport Italia S.p.A. has reported turnover of €277 million ($375.9 million) for 2006, an 8% increase year-on-year.

Europe accounted for 43% of the company's sales followed by the Americas (11%), Asia Pacific (15%), and Africa (6%). All regions posted positive growth with Eastern Europe reporting particularly strong sales (Romania +35%, Croatia +21%, Ukraine +16%, Slovenia +30%).

Footwear accounted for 43% of overall sales, clothing for 51% and accessories for 6%. Football, five-a-side football, tennis and running constituted 55% of sales (5% growth) with leisure accounting for the remaining 45% (11% growth).

Canadian government supports textile manufacturers

04 May 2007

Two Granby-based textile manufacturers have been awarded $2,879,150 under the Canadian Textiles Program.

A repayable contribution of $1,190,800 has been allocated to Stedfast Inc., a producer of special fabrics for use in areas such as protective wear (such as firefighters' gear), military items (such as heat-sealable tents), hospital supplies and industrial products (such as waterproof aprons for fishery workers). The company will use the funding to purchase new manufacturing equipment, to reconfigure its facilities, to implement a Material Requirements Planning system, to put a new marketing strategy into force, and to develop employee training tools. The payment has secure 90 permanent jobs and will lead to 14 new positions at the company.

Designer and manufacturer of nylon and polyester belts Produits Belt-Tech will receive $1,688,350 for the acquisition of a fabric dyeing machine and the implementation of a lean production cell. The firm will also receive two non-repayable contributions of $100,000 each. The funding will secure 127 jobs and will allow of 13 new positions to be created.

New acquisitions boost revenue at Iconix

04 May 2007

Consumer brands owner and licensor Iconix Brand Group, Inc. has posted significantly higher revenues for

its first quarter ended March 31.

Licensing revenue increased to approximately $30.8 million compared with approximately $13.3 million in the first quarter of 2006. Net income was approximately $12.7 million versus approximately $7.4 million in 2006.

Commenting on the results chairman and CEO Neil Cole said, "It was a good quarter for the growth of our existing portfolio of brands as well as with respect to acquisitions as we acquired two powerful new lifestyle brands—Roca Wear and Danskin—that, on an annualised basis generate approximately $60 million in royalty revenue and significantly diversify our holdings."

Texon launches new recyclable thermoplastic counter materials

04 May 2007

Global footwear component supplier Texon International has launched a new range of recyclable thermoplastic materials, Texon NVIRO XO, designed to provide manufacturers with a sustainable counter solution.

The range, intended for counter pocket insertion, provides hardness to the back part of the footwear and is resistant to moisture breakdown. It is also said to have excellent wear properties, making it suitable for children's, ladies' and men's lightweight sports footwear.

Incorporating post conversion leather waste, Texon NVIRO is a recycled extruded thermoplastic film sandwiched between fusion bonded fabric made from a blend of recycled polyester fibres and impregnated with a styrene co-polymer, coated on both sides with a hot melt adhesive. It is available in thicknesses of 1.85 mm, 1.60 mm, 1.40 mm, and 1.20 mm.

Commenting on the new range, Clint Bailey, product development manager, Texon International, said, "Thanks to our continuous investments in R&D, Texon NVIRO provides shoes manufacturers with eco-friendly and sustainable counter solutions. From the shoe production process, we are able to recycle post conversion leather cuttings and transform them into a key ingredient, which is then integrated into the material to create Texon NVIRO. It allows us to work in close partnership with our customers by utilising unwanted leather and reducing the costs of disposal and benefiting the environment."

Headquartered in the UK, Texon manufactures component solutions for the global footwear, apparel and accessories markets and for specialised products in the automotive, hygiene, medical, construction, agrotextile and geotextile sectors.

Huntsman raises MDI prices in NAFTA region

04 May 2007

The Polyurethanes division of US chemical company Huntsman Corporation will increase prices for all of its MDI products in the NAFTA region by $0.05 per pound as of June 1, or as applicable contracts allow. The company stated that the increases reflected high raw material costs, including record high benzene prices.

Huntsman—North America's largest producer of MDI—manufactures products for a variety of industries including chemicals, plastics, textiles and footwear.