

Techtextil: Leading international trade fair for technical textile and nonwovens

The complete global market of technical textiles will be showcased at the most important forum for the industry to discover new materials and innovative concepts. From research and development, via the multitude of materials, production, finishing and recycling, to multipliers, such as associations and trade publishers, Techtextil presents the complete spectrum and expertise of the sector, as well as potential areas of application for technical textiles and nonwovens.

In the past, Techtextil has focused primarily on technical areas of application. From 2009, however, the range covered will be expanded to include innovative apparel textiles through the integration of Avantex as 'Avantex integrated'. Thanks to this even closer connection, the joint body of knowledge will be used more efficiently and technology transfer optimized. Previously, Avantex, International Forum for Innovative Apparel Textiles, was held parallel to Techtextil as an independent event.



From 16 to 18 June, Techtextil will be the foremost platform for users and developers of technical textiles in the fields of research, industry, architecture and other technical areas of application throughout the world. Over recent months, the indications have been pointing to further growth at Techtextil with the number of exhibitors at the last event (1,119) having already been matched. Thus, the trade fair for technical textiles and nonwovens confirms once again its position as the world's leading event for the sector.

"We are particularly pleased that, despite the world economic crisis, many exhibitors who did not exhibit in 2007 have decided to return for Techtextil 2009. Additionally, twelve percent of the exhibitors are taking part in Techtextil for the first time", says Olaf Schmidt, Vice President Textile Fairs of Messe Frankfurt. "With Techtextil, we offer not only an overview of the latest products but also a platform for orientation and information", adds Olaf Schmidt.

With eleven product groups and twelve areas of application, Techtextil covers the world market for technical textiles and nonwovens in its entirety. With over 500 exhibitors, 'Indutech' is the biggest area of application at this year's Techtextil in Frankfurt am Main.

'Indutech' stands for the use of technical textiles in industrial and technical fields, e.g., for materials, testing systems and research, for new developments, progress and cooperation.

Two examples of innovations of this kind have been announced during the run-up to the International Trade Fair for Technical Textiles and Nonwovens from 16 to 18 June 2009.

They are a new type of coating system, which will be presented by a young company, and new and improved inspection systems for quality assurance. Additionally, the initial results of a European nano-research project will be presented exclusively at Techtextil 2009.

European Union sponsored project for material and management research

At this year's Techtextil, the Centre for Management Research of the German Institute for Textile and Fibre Research will present Avalon, a joint research project focusing on 'Nanotechnologies and knowledge-based materials (NMP)'.

The project brings together 31 partners, 20 of them small to medium-sized companies. The aim of the project was to develop new hybrid textile structures for integration into shape-memory materials.

"Although shape-memory alloys (SMAs) were known to the textile sector as materials for high-tech applications, no suitable industrial processes were used in textile manufacturing", explains Prof. Sven-Volker Rehm, the project's technical-scientific coordinator.

Avalon is an integrative project with numerous partners for material and product development. In addition to materials research, however, collaborative innovation processes also need management research. "Therefore, another emphasis was on investigating concepts, methods and technologies that permit companies to form smart networks with the aim of collaborating on innovations", says Armin Lau, scientific employee at the Centre for Management Research.

Several new ways of using SMAs in supra-sector production processes were discovered during the project. "The result is networks of companies that have developed innovative product ideas with SMAs. At present, they are working on prototypes. Additionally, new ways are now open for the management of these networks.



Thus, we have developed IT-aided collaboration tools that, on the basis of various specific methods, systematically support innovation processes in interdisciplinary networks, most of which are to be found in the industrial sector. These tools and services have received numerous awards", says Rehm.

The EU-sponsored project began in March 2005 and is scheduled to run for four years and three months. Thus, Avalon will end in May 2009 and initial results be presented at Techtexsil.

With yet another increase in the number of exhibitors to over 1,140, Techtexsil 2009 is expected to provide an unparalleled global and topical overview of innovative materials for markets where further growth is expected in the future.

The motto of this year's fair, '**The innovation interchange**', reflects the expectations of the majority of players in the sector who want to see and discover new products, to learn about the latest technology and to make new business contacts.

The exhibitors will present their products and their potential uses in relation to twelve areas of application in Halls 3.0, 3.1 and 4.1 of Frankfurt Fair and Exhibition Centre. The biggest segment of the fair is 'Indutech' with applications for the mechanical engineering, chemical and electrical engineering sectors being shown by over 500 exhibitors. Second and third places in the list of best-represented applications are held by '**Mobiltech**' and '**Clothtech**' with a total of over 450 exhibitors. Also very well represented are suppliers for the '**Sport-tech**', '**Medtech**' and '**Buildtech**' segments.

In the past, Techtexsil has concentrated fully on potential technical applications. From 2009, however, the range on show is being expanded to include the segment covered by Avantex, International Forum for Innovative Garment Textiles, the aim of which is to boost technology transfer under the motto '**Avantex Integrated**'.

Additionally, Material Vision – Materials for Product Development, Design and Architecture, International Trade Fair and Lecture Forum – will be held parallel to Techtexsil for the first time. Together, these two trade fairs represent an optimum platform for modern materials, product innovations and material technologies, and present an assortment that is unique in terms of both depth and breadth. The complementary programme of Techtexsil 2009 is more extensive and informative than ever before.

Thus, the Techtexsil and Avantex symposiums will take place as in previous years. In view of the additional conferences to be held, they have been shortened to two days and, on 16 and 17 June, will offer trade visitors insights into the following subjects: Materials and Technologies, Buildtech: Innovative Building with Textiles, Protech: The Latest Protective Clothing Developments; and Medtech: New Textile Products in the Medical Field.

Moreover, EURATEX - European Apparel and Textile Organisation will hold an information event about research initiated and partially funded by the EU, which aims to encourage innovations in the technical-textiles sector.

Another highlight during Techtexsil will be the **Natural Fibres Conference**, which is being organised by Messe Frankfurt and will take place on 17 and 18 June. The main themes to be covered at the conference are innovative functions, natural fibres in automobiles and natural fibres in architecture and building. The aim of the conference is, inter alia, to link natural fibres more closely with technical applications and thus generate new ideas and impulses for the sector.

In line with the aims of the Natural Fibres Conference, the International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO) will hold a congress on the subject of '**Wool – Smart, Natural, Technical**'. The IWTO Congress begins on the day before the fair opens, 15 June, and ends on the same day as the fair, 18 June 2009.

In addition to the symposiums and congresses, the **Techtextil and Avantex Innovation Awards** will also be presented during the fair. With these awards, Techtexsil honors extraordinary achievements in connection with unconventional and pioneer-



ing applications for materials and technologies.

Moreover, the awards of the 'Textile Structures for New Building' competition for students will also be given during the fair. This is the tenth time that the international TensiNet association and Techtexsil have organised the competition, which aims to help students and newcomers to make their way in the sector.

Rounding off the Techtexsil complementary programme are exclusive special shows with the award-winning products of the Innovation Awards and the student competition. Admission tickets also entitle the holder to visit Material Vision. All admission tickets purchased in advance include free travel to and from the fair using local public-transport services operated by the RMV public-transport authority. Tickets purchased on arrival at the fair only include free travel from the fair.

The aim of the Innovation Awards is to promote unconventional thinking and to intensify the dialogue between research, manufacturers and users.

The Avantex Innovation Award will be presented for, inter alia, new developments in connection with materials, technology, the processing and finishing of, for example, new fibres and yarns, new equipment, nano-technology and electronics in garments. Fashion aspects combined with new technologies and new materials, design concepts and aesthetic considerations play an important part in the competition.

The fields are also implicit: medical applications using textiles and garments, combinations of comfort and functionality in sports-wear and active wear, as well as innovations for safety and protection at work.

It is important that the developments be related to the value-added chain of the garment-manufacturing industry. If appropriate, more than one award will be given per field in the case of both the Techtexsil and Avantex Innovation Awards. The Award winners will be selected by a jury of 13 international experts. ♦

