

NEWS RELEASE

APRIL 2009

Advanced Textiles 09:

Second edition of the European-US Entrepreneur Networking Event took place April 2-3, 2009 in Brussels, Belgium

- **100 attendees came together to envisage new technologies from an interdisciplinary angle and to cross link their know-how**
 - **Immediate business liaisons on site led on to exalted comments**
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Building on the success of the first edition of Advanced Textiles in June 2008, and the endorsement of the international audience, Industrial Fabrics Association International (IFAI) and IHOFMANN had decided to continue with the concept of an annual meeting point for the technical textiles community in Europe and the US. A community of 100 industry representatives from the various application areas of technical textiles from protective clothing to medical, transportation via architecture. Advanced Textiles is conceived as a US-European entrepreneur networking event to foster bilateral and cross-sectoral cooperation, strategic partnerships and innovation projects and was now a second time successful to create new business opportunities.

As the headquarters of the European Union, NATO, various stakeholder institutions and international large-scale enterprises, Brussels was an ideal platform to invite European and US entrepreneurs to discuss challenges and bottlenecks of technical textiles' innovation in the next five to ten years. The venue of the conference was the contemporary Hotel Bloom in central Brussels.

Co-organizer with IFAI is the Germany based agency IHOFMANN, specialized in technical textiles and building up strategic alliances. **Dr. Isa Hofmann**, CEO IHOFMANN: "Specialized in strategic partnerships and business empowerment we wanted to create a unique event concept: a well balanced blend of exciting lectures from various application areas combined with immediate face-to-face talks and networking opportunities in a pleasant ambiance. Industry experts



strive for fresh inspiration and new impulses to optimize their business strategies and diversify their product range. A contemporary business forum should achieve to open up the personal horizon of the attending community and initiate the authentic "human touch" during the event. This is the hallmark we are heading for."

Stephen M. Warner, president of Industrial Fabrics Association International: "We are very pleased that our concept finds approval and that Advanced Textiles is on its way to become a brand. Our goal is to back up our industry by offering this innovative meeting platform to foster bilateral business cooperation and valuable knowledge exchange. We are committed to continue and are currently evaluating date and location for the upcoming AT 10. "

The conference started April 2 with a future oriented innovation session that zoomed in on the challenges and bottlenecks of launching smart textiles on the market. Successful and experienced industry and research experts introduced the audience to new and currently approved technologies for various applications in that field ready for an interdisciplinary transfer to other areas. The smart textiles session on the first day chaired by Dr. Andreas Lymberis, scientific officer micro-nano systems at the European Commission Information Society Directorate-General was closed with a panel discussion that tried to evaluate the most important impediments and bottlenecks to create higher commercial values in the field of smart textiles. Six experts from the industry and research shared their know how and ideas with the audience. **David Lussey**, CTO **Peratech Ltd.**, UK, one of the panelists, anticipated a big potential in the area of human interaction and the fact that textiles can become a second skin which will respond to human inputs such as touch, pressure and movements: "The smart textiles we will interact with may be worn on the body in the form of clothing or may form part of a seat or bed or some other textile structure such as those in a car or aircraft interior." Peratech owns the leading technical textile brands of

SoftSwitch and Eleksen. The company was started 1996 to commercialize the so called Quantum Tunnelling composite, a nano-tech, electro-active composite that can be put into textiles to make them sensitive to touch and other stimuli.

On Friday, April 3 the conference covered the following 5 theme sessions with all together 17 lectures:

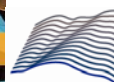
1. Medical and biomedical applications
2. Textile membranes and architecture
3. Safety and protective textiles
4. Transportation and logistics
5. Technology solutions and textile surfaces

Immediate business liaisons on site and promising bilateral talks led on to exalted comments from the participating audience.

Alexander Firmian, Sales Manager **Transfertex GmbH & Co Thermodruck KG**, Germany, one of the sponsors of AT 09 representing the company with a tabletop exhibit: "The personal enrichment I received through the conference was immense, an extremely interesting program and fascinating people from Europe and the US. This conference really broadens your intellectual horizon and that's what we all need to achieve a competitive edge in our business. We at Transfertex are ready for new applications of our rotogravure printing technique. We are constantly diversifying into new technical areas and we will now evaluate the technical feasibility for the new application areas that we have discovered."

Werner Zirnzak, Deputy Managing Director of the German association **IVGT** and Secretary of the **ETT CLUB** (European technical textiles club): "The first conference in Berlin was already excellent, but this second edition of AT 09 in Brussels was hard to top. The lectures were extremely interesting, unveiling most recent technologies. I was impressed that the organizers were able to continue with the same number of attendees in these difficult economic circumstances. The number of US entrepreneurs had noticeably increased. Kudos!"

Brussels-based Fedustria, the Belgian association for the textile, wood and furniture industries was the local partner for AT 09. Several other associations



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and government institutions actively supported the second edition of this conference. Among them were:

- ◆ IVGT, the German association for technical textiles,
- ◆ ITMF, the International Textile Manufacturers Federation,
- ◆ US Department of Commerce
- ◆ Clubtex, the French Association for the Promotion of Technical Textiles
- ◆ UIT, Union des Industries Textiles, the French Association of Textile Industries
- ◆ ACIMIT, the Italian Association for Textile Machinery
- ◆ r2ith, the French Network of Innovation for Textiles and Apparel

The premiere of IFAI's Advanced Textiles '08 took place in Berlin, Germany, 12-13 June 2008, and gathered an equally strong US-European business community of 100 attendees from 14 countries.

To learn more about the Advanced Textiles '09, visit

<http://www.ifai.com/Home/AdvancedTextiles09.cfm>

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About IHOFMANN

IHOFMANN is a privately owned communication, pr and consultancy agency with an international team of experts in the areas fashion, high technology textiles, lifestyle and healthcare. The company features a blend of expertise in the field of new materials and technologies, international networks in research, industry and media combined with a deep and long term experience in global public relations and marketing.

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About IFAI

Industrial Fabrics Association International (IFAI) is a business trade association promoting the products and innovations of the specialty fabrics industry, and is comprised of 2,040 member companies in 54 countries.

IFAI supports a global membership with world-class trade shows and conferences.

For more information about IFAI activities, visit

www.ifai.com.

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