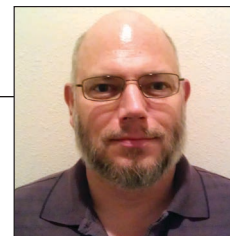




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2017 PEERS Conference: Maximizing success through innovation

Norfolk, Virginia, hosted close to 350 participants at the 2017 Pulping, Engineering, Environmental, Recycling and Sustainability (PEERS) Conference this past November. Industry professionals met and discussed the newest technologies and best practices related to pulp manufacture, chemical recovery, power & steam, corrosion mitigation, environmental issues, regulatory compliance, sustainability, and biorefining.

The 2017 PEERS Conference showcased ten technical tracks that contained more than thirty-eight sessions covering a variety of topics. Some of the sessions were:

- Chip quality management tutorial
- Kraft pulping & brownstock washing
- Bleaching optimization
- Digester corrosion
- Recovery boiler operations & control
- Chemical byproducts recovery

Keynote focused on innovation

Robert C. Tiede, Executive Vice President and Chief Operations Officer of Sonoco Products Company, gave the conference keynote address, titled “Disrupter or Disrupted? How Innovation Defines your Destiny.” In his speech, Tiede noted that we are in the midst of a new business revolution—e-Commerce—that is redefining how goods are bought, sold, and distributed. Buying items at brick-and-mortar stores will decline in the future and will shift towards online purchases with deliveries made directly to the end user. This will affect our industry by increasing the need for paper and paperboard packaging, which has the desirable attributes of biodegradability, recyclability, and sustainability over other forms of packaging.

Tiede also noted that innovation is a key component in making disruptive discoveries and technologies in our industry. The innovation process is based on the building blocks of “curiosity, associating, questioning and insights.”



Robert C. Tiede, Executive Vice President and Chief Operations Officer at Sonoco Products Company, gave the PEERS 2017 keynote address about the importance of innovation.

Curiosity is the key to making new discoveries, and is the foundation to innovating. Another factor is being able to associate and connect unrelated items or ideas from different fields. The next item is questioning, which is determining which ideas to support and scale while balancing risks and rewards. The final block of innovation is insights; it relates to how innovations can excite your customers and create new markets.

Awards recognized industry leaders

The Conference’s opening session recognized National TAPPI and Division award winners, including:

- Adriaan van Heiningen for Research and Development Technical Award and William Aiken Prize
- John A. Neun for Engineering Division Technical Award with Beloit Prize
- Scott B. Pantaleo for Engineering Division Leadership & Service Award with AMEC Foster Wheeler Prize
- Paul S. Wiegand for Environmental Technical Award with Roy F. Weston Prize

- Garnet L. Bremner for Pulp Manufacturing Division Leadership & Service Award with Joseph K. Perkins Prize
- Brian N. Brogdon for Outgoing Pulp Manufacturing Division Chair

The High Impact Paper Award from the 2016 PEERS Conference was “Recovery Boiler Inspection Strategy,” which was written and presented by W.B.A. “Sandy” Sharp.

Special PEERS content in *TAPPI Journal*

As members of the *TAPPI Journal* Editorial Board, we solicited papers from the 2017 TAPPI PEERS Conference for peer review. Some of these papers are brought to you in this month’s special PEERS issue of *TAPPI Journal*. Additionally, we will bring to you several other papers accepted from these conferences in future issues later this year. We would like to thank all the authors who offered their work for publication in this issue and returned their revised

papers in a timely manner, as well as all the peer reviewers who critiqued and provided their valued comments and improvements to the authors’ work.

Mark your calendars for the 2018 TAPPI PEERS Conference, which will be held in Portland, Oregon, on October 28-31, and will be co-located with the 2018 TAPPI International Bioenergy & Bioproducts Conference (IBBC). This year’s PEERS theme will be “Technical Solutions for Today and Beyond.” The conference will host four training workshops on Sunday, such as Brownstock Washing, Bleach Plant Operations, Lime Kiln & Recaust: Process & Mechanical Overview, and Process Simulations. **TJ**

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- Corrosion & Materials Engineering
- Engineering, Power & Recovery
- Environmental
- Nonwood
- Pulping & Bleaching
- Recycling
- Sustainability

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