

New strategies and alliances: key to global arena for the Polymers, Laminations and Coatings Division

PATRICIA M. PAUKSTA

Tappi Journal News Coordinator

Chicago, IL. Behind the scenes of the 51st Polymers, Laminations and Coatings Conference, Division leaders, chaired by Richard W. Halle of Exxon Chemical Co., Baytown, TX, finalized plans to revitalize and strengthen the Division. Two new alliances are central to the plot. Ending the connection with the Converting Machinery/Materials Conference and Exposition (CMM) this year, the Division will provide the technical program for the rising international competitor of CMM—Converflex.

Converflex, established in 1981, is the international exhibition for the paper, paper converting, package printing machines and materials industries. It is headquartered in Milan, Italy. The next show is scheduled for May 7–11, 1996, on the Milan Fairgrounds. Growing by leaps and bounds, the event is expected to exceed the 42,147 visitors it attracted in 1992, which was a 30% increase over the 1989 show. In 1992 there were 320 exhibitors (up 43% compared with 1989), of which 150 were from 17 foreign countries, especially Germany, the United States, Great Britain, Switzerland, France, Japan, and Holland—an increase of 75% compared with 1989. In 1989, approximately 33,000 trade visitors attended the exhibition (up 45% compared with 1985). Of the visitors, 60% were owners, managing directors, or directors. The 1992 exhibition covered 33,000 ft². Centrexpo, owner of the Converflex trademark, has signed a cooperation agreement with Reed Exhibition Companies to promote the show around the world.

In response to international interests expressed by various PLC committees, the International Planning Subcommittee, chaired by David Markgraf, came into being. Destined for committee status in the near future, this subcommittee has been instrumental in developing the game plan with Converflex; the technical program for the second European Plastic Laminates Forum, which was held in Heidelberg, Germany, Nov. 15–16; and publishing *PLC Highlights*, a supplemental issue of *Tappi Journal*, edited by David J. Bentley. It is aimed at the international PLC member.

William L. Cullison, executive director of TAPPI, and John Harrison, administrative manager of TAPPI's International Division, were in attendance during the subcommittee meeting to show support for the subcommittee's activities

A winning team: David Markgraf of Enercon (R), the 1994 PLC Division Leadership and Service Award and Andreas G. Ahlbrandt Prize winner, congratulates the 1995 winner, Russell H. Cramm, PLC division chairman emeritus.

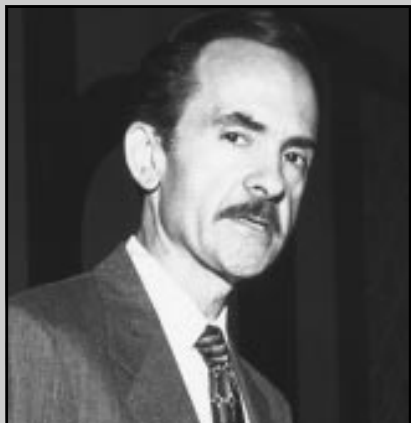


1995 PLC Division Award Winners' lineup: (sitting L to R)—Fred Singer and Russ Cramm; (standing L to R)—John Perdikoulis, Al Davis, Phil Delhoney, Thomas Butler, Thomas Dunn, and Bruce Foster



Conference Report

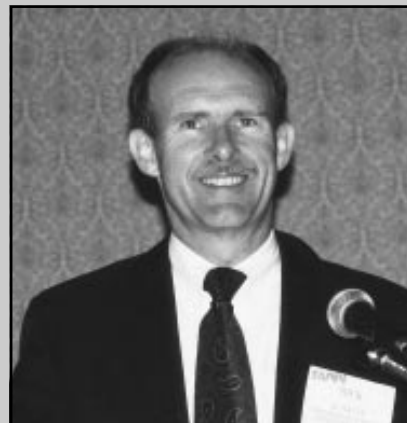
Keynote speaker I. Frank Gavitt of Frito-Lay



Representing TAPPI's Executive Board, Jere Crouse of Beloit Corp. presented both the Division's Technical Award and the Service and Leadership Award.



Division Chairman Rick Halle



and the Converflex venture, which complies with TAPPI's Strategic Plan to increase international participation. In applauding the aggressive move, Cullison sees the Division taking on a greater responsibility for advancing PLC technology worldwide.

In another partnership, the Division hopes to enlarge its packaging segment by aligning with the Institute of Packaging Professionals (IoPP). The Institute will provide several packaging tracks within the context of the 1996 PLC Conference, which will be held at the Marriott Copley Place in Boston, MA, Sept. 8–12. The Division hopes that IoPP's collaboration will bring in more end-users so that the program will have greater industry-wide appeal.

Conference overview

The conference, held Aug. 27–31 at the Downtown Chicago Marriott, attracted 324 U.S. attendees (43% hailed from Texas, Illinois, Delaware, and Ohio) and another 51 from 15 other countries. Of the non-U.S. attendees, 45% were Canadians. Another 47% included representation from South America, Scandinavia, Europe, and Asia, in that order.

In CMM off years, suppliers represent two-thirds and converters one-third of the attendees. However, CMM's tidal force reverses this trend and, this year, suppliers represented one-third and converters two-thirds with some end-users present.

Kendall F. Foley, sales director-international for Hercules Inc., served as Conference chairman. Alan M. Davis, research manager of Quantum Performance Films, chaired the technical program in which 70 papers were presented.

Tracts were clearly identified for the attendee. The first three sessions were dedicated to newcomers to the industry and appealed to a few seasoned professionals wanting a refresher course. In line with more women entering technical fields, there was a notable increase in women attendees at the primer sessions: Extrusion Coating, Film Extrusion, and Flexographic Printing. The tutorials combined theory with

practical applications.

The TAPPI/Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE) Paper Exchange held on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings appealed to process engineers and the R&D crowd. Thomas I. Butler of Dow Plastics chaired both sessions. Topics ranged from the highly technical and specialized to the practical such as "Designing packages for fresh cut produce," presented by Gina Young of Dow Chemical and vying in popularity with a similar paper presented by Dirk J. Michiels of Exxon. Any presentation with a practical bent inspired interaction with the audience.

Other sessions included presentations on the competitive environment, packaging design, process improvements, new barrier-film technologies, multilayered coextrusion, process controls, quality measurement and analysis, and properties and uses of new resins. Overall, the technical program was broad based and equally represented the interests of the four committees that make up the Division: Extrusion Coating, Hot Melt, Film Extrusion, and Packaging. A new polymer, syndiotactic polypropylene, was presented during the TAPPI/SPE paper exchange, and new barrier film technology and a new resin were presented during the general sessions. However, practical application and troubleshooting were the main focuses of the program. At the moment, new technologies are still in the evolutionary stage and are expected to be the main draw for the 1996 PLC Conference, according to Rick Halle, Division chairman.

The Best Session and Best Paper Awards from the 1995 Conference will be announced at the PLC Mid-year Meeting. All the papers have been printed in the 1995 TAPPI Polymers, Laminations and Coatings Conference *Proceedings*, which is published by TAPPI PRESS.

Packaging material recycling, the Frito-Lay experience

The Honors and Awards Luncheon, which was held Wednesday, featured I. Frank Gavitt, vice president of Technology Packaging Development/Agro Research for Frito-Lay, Inc.,



as the keynote speaker. He relayed Frito-Lay's experience with the recycling of flexible packaging and provided insight into its film development and selection process; recited the history of their recycling program; and presented factors to be considered when contemplating the initiation of such a program. An edited version of Gavitt's speech will be published as an article in *Tappi Journal's* March 1996 issue in which recycling is a topic issue.

Awards

Fred M. Singer, marketing manager for Mica Corp. in Stratford, CT, accepted the 1995 TAPPI PLC Division Technical Award, which was accompanied by the Samuel Zweig Prize of US\$ 1000. A member since 1968, Singer merited the award for his contributions to the Extrusion Coating Committee and the Health Care Packaging Committee. He updated test methods and organized various panel discussions, short courses, symposia, and publications. Singer is the author of two articles that were published in *Paper, Film & Foil Converter* and presented papers at numerous TAPPI conferences, symposia, and short courses.

Russell H. Cramm, retired development associate for Dow Chemical USA in Freeport, TX, accepted the 1995 PLC Division Leadership and Service Award and Andreas Ahlbrandt Prize of US\$ 1000. A TAPPI member since 1979, Cramm advanced through the Division chairs and has also been an active member of the Extrusion Coating Committee. Along with serving as the Committee's technical program chairman, secretary, vice chairman, and chairman, he is responsible for organizing a TAPPI short course on extrusion coating in 1981 and has presented papers at several TAPPI conferences. He is coeditor of *Coextrusion Coating and Film Fabrication*, a TAPPI PRESS book.

In a heartwarming speech that summed up his years of experience, Cramm said, "Simply, know your territory. Find out what people want to know and give them the informa-

tion—that's what makes a successful conference."

Since a qualified candidate was not identified, the PLC Division Ralph A. Klucken Scholarship Award was not presented this year.

Certificates of Appreciation were awarded to the following outgoing PLC committee chairmen: Thomas J. Dunn of Printpak, Inc., Flexible Packaging (1993–1995); David A. Markgraf of Enercon Industries Corp., Extrusion Coating (1994–1995); John Perdikoulis of Brampton Engineering Inc., Film Extrusion (1993–1995); and Alan M. Davis, Midwestern Packaging and Converting (1992–1995).

The Best Session during the 1994 PLC Conference was awarded to Bruce W. Foster of Eastman Chemical for "Fundamentals of extrusion coating."

The award for Best Paper presented during the 1994 PLC Conference went to Thomas I. Butler, Shih Yaw Lai, and Rajen Patel of Dow Chemical Co. for "Scale-up factors affecting crystallization in polyolefin blown films."

Two papers presented during the 1994 conference earned the Honorable Mention Award. Donna S. Davis and Lisa M. Usher of Exxon Chemical coauthored "High frequency sealing of polyolefin structures" and Eric Finson and John Felts of Airco Coating Technology coauthored "Transparent SiO₂ barrier coating: conversion and production status."

Two Special Certificates of Recognition from the PLC Steering Committee were awarded to Philip W. Delhoney of Black Clawson Co. for chairing the Latin American Film Extrusion and Extrusion Coating Symposium in Mexico City, Mexico, March 9–10, and to Dragan Djordjevic of Klöckner ER-WE-PA, Düsseldorf, Germany, for chairing the European Film Extrusion and Extrusion Coating Symposium in Düsseldorf, Germany, May 23–24.

Upcoming events

The PLC Mid-year Division Meeting will be held March 11–13, 1996, in Atlanta, GA. The location will be published in the Calendar section of *Tappi Journal's* January 1996 issue.

Alan M. Davis is the technical program chairman for the 1996 PLC Conference. In placing an even greater emphasis on practical applications, the Division is planning to add roundtables and a technology showcase. The conference will be held Sept. 8–12, 1996 at the Marriott Copley Place, Boston, MA. Anyone interested in presenting a paper at this meeting should contact Alan M. Davis, telephone: (708) 213–6559 or fax: (708) 830–5610 or David J. Bentley, telephone: (505) 299–6871 or fax: (505) 299–6872. 

The 1995 TAPPI Polymers, Laminations and Coatings Conference Proceedings are available through TAPPI's Service Line. The two-volume set, 8-1/2 in. by 11 in., is perfect bound and is priced at US\$ 166 (list) and discounted to US\$ 111 for members. Order code 0105 0795.