

LANXESS hosted leather seminar

Better understanding of leather material in the industry

Cologne – Specialty chemicals company LANXESS hosted a seminar devoted to the industry using leather as component substrate. According to the company's commitment to better engage brands and other stakeholders in the industry to support leather as a valued material, the overall objective was to provide a better understanding of the leather material to brands, and to raise awareness of the fundamental differences to other textile or synthetic substrates.

The event was conducted from January 12 to 13, 2017 at the LANXESS headquarters in Cologne. Around 85 industry representatives, mainly from leading consumer brands, were present during the conference. As a follow-up seminar to an initial symposium one year ago this year's event has been tailored to brands and others in commercial roles in the leather supply chain. In January 2016 LANXESS worked with footwear industry body CADS to organize a seminar that discussed in depth important topics regarding leather preservation and gave an overview of activities connected to the Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals (ZDHC) initiative.

"Leather is a very special substrate because it adds value. Articles made from leather fetch a higher price," said Luis López Remón, head of LANXESS's Leather business unit, at the beginning of the seminar. "Cars offer the best example. Most people already know that car manufacturers achieve only a small margin from selling a car. It's when they add extras such as leather in the interior that they make more money."

"The main topic of the seminar is the tanning process – the aim is to explain different tanning technologies and provide a scientific risk assessment and benchmark for the various alternatives," said Dietrich Tegtmeyer, head of Global Development Crusting and Leather Industry Relations at LANXESS's Leather business unit.

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“Another objective was to give a brief update of the preservation topics and NGO initiatives, because ‘interesting things’ have happened in the meantime,” Tegtmeier added.

Themes included reasons why a majority of tanners around the world use chrome-tanning methods. In a broader perspective presentations and discussions dealt with questions concerning the image of leather in the eyes of brands and consumers. The participants agreed that the whole leather industry must improve in providing the necessary resources to educate brands, consumers and the general public about the qualities and benefits of leather.

LANXESS is a leading specialty chemicals company with sales of EUR 7.9 billion in 2015 and about 16,700 employees in 29 countries. The company is currently represented at 54 production sites worldwide. The core business of LANXESS is the development, manufacturing and marketing of chemical intermediates, specialty chemicals and plastics. Through ARLANXEO, the joint venture with Saudi Aramco, LANXESS is also a leading supplier of synthetic rubber. LANXESS is listed in the leading sustainability indices Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI World) and FTSE4Good.

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