



Rotoplas 2011

A Great Success

The weather in Chicago was pleasantly warm for the latest Rotoplas show and the news from the world of rotomolding was equally pleasant - many rotomolders seem to be doing well for the most part. It's not all roses in the garden for everyone but compared to the news in the media, there seemed to be a disconnect. Held every three years, the Rotoplas tradeshow attracted around 900 visitors; the ARM conference was the official

ARMO Global event for this year and attracted 320 attendees (not including spouses and the press). Orla tells me that the spouse's trip was the best ever - you can never go wrong with shopping and high-tea (well done Adam).

The most refreshing aspect of the show was its international breadth. The level of international attendance at North American shows in recent years has been affected by the growth and quality of support that local associations offer their members so it was nice to see a lot of new (and old) faces. A three year cycle for the industry's relatively slow technology growth appears to be enough for people to justify traveling to take a look at the latest from the industry. There were some items of note including the new heat-pin and demolding technologies offered by Maus GmbH and solar powered rotomolding equipment being developed by Light Manufacturing LLC in California. The presence of so many overseas machine makers from China and India shows that the North American market remains attractive; there were even surplus machines from the Australian water tank boom of pre-2008 being offered by a molder and extrusion

technology showing how to make large tanks to compete with rotomolders! Somehow I think we have enough pulverizer suppliers in the market and while there were a few new items on the materials menu, it was largely the same selection on offer. A mini-survey conducted by Terry Gillian of Paladin Sales, Inc. showed that those who responded viewed business as above average over the last year and likely to be stronger



Flying high - my 1st time on a microlight

next year, particularly in the US; there were a few exceptions, of course, but the trend was clear.

At the end of the day, any ARM meeting is all about contacts and this was no exception with the opportunity for networking just as good as ever - there just never seems to be enough time to see everyone you want to though...

'Reducing Your Exposure' Seminar On the Road

My new Seminar is finally on the road with three US dates

scheduled for December (passed by the time you read this). Next stops include Sweden, South America, Australia and hopefully Poland, India and Italy. China and South East Asia should also be on the way sometime next year. The promotion has been well received so far and I'm looking forward to fine-tuning it as I go. It is not a seminar giving legal advice; in fact, it should hopefully give you enough ideas on how to do things properly so that you actually avoid needing legal advice, at least for problems that you can pre-empt. I'll be touching on why customer specifications are often not enough to ensure that everyone is on the same page; why it's important to make sure that everyone understands who does what, when and where right from the start; the golden rules in rotomolding design and good design steps; validating production processes against design requirements and the 1st part approval process; which material properties are most important and how to match them to part performance; key process control steps in heating and cooling; why good documentation matters; good QC steps to identify problems early at key stages in the process; material and part testing and making sure that problem solving is carried out by the right people.



All the Best for 2012

To all the people I've met and worked with during 2011, many thanks for your help and support. To everyone I'm going to meet in 2012, I look forward to helping where and when I can. And on a final note, life is short and I've heard some great sayings about how you should live it but the best I've heard lately was in a local craft store while browsing with Orla, which went like this, 'Life is not about weathering the storm, it's about learning to dance in the rain...' Merry Christmas to everyone and a Happy New Year!

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