



## Where in the World is Paul Nugent?

PAUL NUGENT | COMPANY NAME

### Things often heard from rotomolders around the world...

- Where can I get a set of drawings for a machine?
- Is there anything cheaper than polyethylene that I can mold?
- What bubbles in the cross-section? I can't see any - they're too small.
- Recycled material works - no problem - my customers don't seem to mind.
- Five layer tanks are stronger than single layer tanks - it's like plywood.
- Who in China makes good, cheap molds?
- We can't afford that!

### And things not so often heard...

- FEA always helps us when we design a large tank.
- We like to monitor our cure level and cooling rates for optimum part strength.
- I know what optimum cure means.
- Our process is under tight control and streamlined.
- All our operators know what they are doing.
- We believe paying a little more for better molds and equipment is a good idea.

### A New Classification System

Rotomolding is a broad industry making anything from mannequins to fuel tanks and from breast implants to furniture. Average Joe Public has never heard of rotomolding so to avoid confusing anyone by claiming that all rotomolders are made equal, I propose the following classification system for easy identification of molder ability:

#### *Basic Level – can make parts that can be sold*

- **Gold Level** - can make parts that can be sold for more
- **Platinum Level** - understands that proper cure can help avoid lawsuits
- **Executive Platinum Level** - has priority seating at rotomolding conferences

### Material Wealth

Material pricing continues to confound molders. With the recent round of \$100+ per ton increases, US pricing for polyethylene is currently the lowest worldwide, while Europe is the highest. Middle Eastern and Far Eastern suppliers are able to undercut Europe, but there always seems to be concerns about quality and consistency of supply. Relief in the form of new capacity is scheduled in the Middle East later this year...we shall see.

### Process Control – Who Cares?

A lot of molders listen, but how many really hear that well? After almost 20 years of showing people the fundamentals of a Rotolog temperature trace from inside a part during molding, it is still amazing to see how for many people it doesn't register as that important. After all, they say that they have made plenty of good parts without it. There are new 'continuous' control systems out there, but unless you are running a rock & roll machine which can be hardwired, some of them don't seem to meet the grade. Problems arise when highly paid and highly motivated operators have to handle delicate wires, slip-rings or ice-packs. Hands-free process control should be passed as a law in all rotomolding plants for the safety of your business.

### Where are the Cheap German Molders?

We have them everywhere else - in fact, in some regions, that's all that exist. There are fewer molders per capita in Germany, but those that have evolved tend to be at the highest end of the industry (globally). Somehow the low-cost, low-quality mentality doesn't fit with the German psyche. Is it cultural or driven by their local market demand? Where is the one-man-in-his-garage-entrepreneur so reminiscent of the UK? Anyone looking for a down and dirty, no frills part is going to have to look East for the time being.

### Market in the Tank?

The surging tank market in Australia has slowed (died?) significantly as rebates have been removed and oversupply sets in. Who would have guessed that when the government stopped paying for tanks, that Joe Public would stop buying? The surge in molding equipment reported last year has created a whole new group of molders looking for alternatives. The second-hand market in machines may be the next area to see a surge in the market.

### Travel Stinks

No, I mean literally stinks. This is a call for some consideration of your fellow travelers. How many times have you been on a plane when the seat that you are sitting in smells of body odor, when the lady in front of you takes her shoes off and you nearly pass out, when the guy across from you won't stop snoring or passing wind, when whiskey hangs on the breath of the person beside you, when the kid in front cries non-stop for the entire flight? Come on folks, have some sympathy for your temporary companions!