Interview

Interview with Stefan Kross, Head of the Oerlikon Manmade Fibers Business Unit

Technical textiles have immense potential

Where are manmade fibers being used today?
Stefan Kross: Manmade fibers are now primarily used for functional clothing and home textile products. But the importance of so-called technical textiles is growing. This area includes such products as safety clothing, seatbelts, airbags and filters in the automotive industry, sails and fishnets as well as straps, conveyor belts and hoses. Currently, particular emphasis is being placed on geotextiles and other textiles used in the construction industry, including spunbond, which is especially well suited for use in roof insulation because of its exceptional thermal insulation properties. Fiber-reinforced concrete will also play a crucial role in the future.

Which innovations will Oerlikon present at Techtextil 2013?
Stefan Kross: Our brands Oerlikon Barmag and Oerlikon Neumag will showcase solutions for efficiently manufacturing innovative yarns for special applications at the trade fair. At Techtextil in Frankfurt, Oerlikon Neumag will also be premiering a new nonwoven production process as a total solution for the production of roofing membranes and geotextiles. With this innovation, we now offer a single-source solution for the complete spunbond process – from granulate to finished products.

What trends do you see in technical textiles?
Stefan Kross: Demand for high tenacity special fibers will continue to grow while energy consumption, space requirements and efficiency will gain significance for manufacturers. Winding special fibers such as aramid requires specialty yarn winders tailored to meet specific requirements, like the WinOro produced by Oerlikon Barmag. Another trend can be found in carbon fibers, which are used in applications requiring low weight and extreme tenacity. With WinTrax, Oerlikon Barmag has developed a special winder that can economically manufacture high-quality carbon fibers.

Why is Oerlikon the ideal partner for manufacturers?
Stefan Kross: As global leaders in the industry, Oerlikon Barmag and Oerlikon Neumag have decades of valuable experience in the development and manufacture of highly productive and innovative equipment and solutions for textile manufacturers. Our broad range of products and services extends from spinning systems for manmade fibers and equipment for the manufacture of nonwoven products to production solutions for carpet yarn. Located in Remscheid, Germany, the Oerlikon Barmag R&D center is the largest of its kind in the world. Here, more than 100 engineers and technicians develop technologically leading products for the future.

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