

UCMTF event in Dalton

Carpet conference covers wall-to-wall technologies

Posted October 5, 2016

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Representing the UCMTF, the Association of French Textile Machinery Manufacturers, at the Dalton Carpet Conference are (L-R) Michel L'Kherba of Callebaut de Blicquy/Rousselet; Evelyne Cholet, secretary general of the UCMTF; Bruno Ameline, UCMTF president & CEO of NSC Group; Dr. Hubert Tretsch of Superba and president of the UCMTF Promotions Committee; and Amaury de Laforcade of NSC Schulmberger USA.

DALTON, Ga. – UCMTF, the Association of French Textile Machinery Manufacturers, last week hosted the Dalton Carpet Conference, which attracted more than 110 floor covering sector representatives.

The latest technologies related to polymer, natural fibers and end product were explored during the half-day session at the Dalton Convention Center. Executives representing nine European textile equipment makers, mainly from France and Belgium, presented these breakthroughs.

“The state-of-the-art technologies are the end result of extensive technical research and product development over the last 10 years,” Bruno Ameline, UCMTF president and chairman & CEO of NSC Group, told the audience in kicking off the program. “This makes these companies world-class actors in their fields.”

Attendees, of course, turned out from most carpet and rug manufacturers and suppliers in Dalton – “the Carpet Capital of the World” – but also traveled from other U.S. textile regions, Ameline reported.

“I thought it was a great opportunity for the UCMTF to showcase the machinery and technologies of its various member companies in the carpet industry,” said Mike Patrick of American Superba, part of the Van de Wiele Group. “We at the Van de Wiele Group and American Superba were glad to participate and were highly pleased with the number of attendees. It was a good chance to visit with some of our customers in a relaxed setting outside the plant. Also, I do know that several new substantive leads were generated for potential future capital products with new prospects who were previously unfamiliar with some of the Van de Wiele Group’s other product lines.”

The conference was organized with the support and cooperation of the American Floorcovering Alliance and the Greater Dalton Chamber of Commerce.

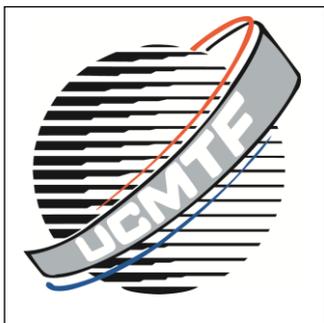
Presenters get on a roll with innovations

Speakers presenting the latest innovations from their companies follow.

Andre Busweiler of Van de Wiele provided information about the company’s extrusion machinery capabilities, including a multi-wrap texturing unit.

Amaury de Laforcade of NSC Schulmberger USA covered technologies related to high-quality carpets made of natural fibers. He reported that long staple fiber production is one of small volume and requires a high-tech process, adding that it is “a very niche market.” Some of the advantages of using long staple natural fiber yarns in carpets and rugs include hand/soft touch, a dull or matte effect and better dyeability, uniformity and resilience.

In a dual presentation, **Joe Defalco** of American Superba and **Dr. Hubert Tretsch** of France-based Superba presented efficient heat setting and a new style of space dyeing for carpet yarn. Defalco reviewed the heat-setting process and its advantages on carpets and covered the company’s heat-setting lines and features. Meanwhile, Tretsch went over the space-dyeing technique, which allows printing in a small area, and disseminated information on Superba’s latest developments in that area.



Michel L’Kherba of Callebaut de Blicquy/Rousselet spoke of an alliance between those two French companies that has brought about advanced technology that allows for an eco-friendly dyeing and bleaching process that offers big savings. The complete textile processing line for cotton bleaching includes presses, bleaching kiers, a cake breaker and centrifugal hydro-extractors.

Ben Mackey of Van de Wiele spoke about woven carpets and rugs, including a brief history that dates back to 500 B.C., before explaining the company’s latest offerings for weaving. These machines and technologies were also developed through “mechatronics,” he said, adding that “we have as many textile engineers on staff as we do mechanical and electrical engineers.”

Bob Harding of Cobble – part of the Van de Wiele Group since 2013 – went through the company’s tufting machine line and tuft patterning attachments. Notably, the Myriad tufting machine, unveiled at ITMA in Milan last year, is the first completely new development using the synergies and strengths of Cobble and Van de Wiele Group, he said.

Michael Wilske of Germany-based Protechna gave an overview of the company’s quality control equipment, specifically its family of TuftCam monitoring systems for fault detection. More than 130 of the systems are installed worldwide, he said.

Mackey returned to the lectern to offer an overview of automation equipment from Titan, also part of Van de Wiele. He mentioned three types of edge finishes (fringe, binding and over-edging) for machine-made carpets/rugs and discussed machines for each type, then showed a fascinating video of robotic over-edging for automotive rugs.

Greg Cybulski of Rousselet-Robatel wrapped up the day by discussing recycling, specifically thin layer centrifugal dewatering of recycled nylon fibers from post-industrial and post-consumer sources. He explained why recycling is important in this sector and the processes and machinery that are making carpet and rug manufacturers more sustainable. “My presentation here is a bit of a call to action,” he said. “The challenge is evident. We have the technology – the decision is to meet the challenge of achieving sustainability.”