



Ajedium adds high-end film capacity

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NEWARK, DEL. (Dec. 28, 9:45 a.m. EST) -- Adding a second extrusion line at Ajedium Film Group LLC will boost annual capacity at the company's operations in Newark, Del., from 1.2-1.4 million pounds to 1.8-2 million pounds, providing capability to make greater inroads into the automotive and medical markets.

In addition, the company has purchased a rewinder and a slitter that are both expected to be in operation by the end of February. The slitter will be able to cut film into widths as narrow as one-half-inch—a task that is currently done by an outside contractor. The improved web handling will allow greater roll conformity.

Ajedium co-founder and marketing director Kathie Cerchio said the new 2½-inch extrusion line that began operating Dec. 18 will make engineered films up to 30 inches wide, compared to the 60-inch width films the existing line can manufacture. Both extruders have in-line continuous beta scanning to control film thickness and gather statistical data.

The new line will also be able to operate at lower temperatures than the existing line, which will enable the company to process resins such as urethanes, elastomers and TPOs. Adejium currently focuses largely on thermoplastic polyimides, sulfonated resins, ketones and polyetherimides.

"We will be able to develop more films for industrial applications, particularly in automotive in areas such as interior decorative parts in consoles and in medical packing for items that need to be sterilized," Cerchio said in a phone interview on Dec. 27.

The new extrusion line will have multiple dies and multiple coverings on the cooling stack that will permit films to be made in a variety of finishes from smooth to textured and velvet, she said. It also will have an optical scanner that will check for voids, cracks, porosity and other defects in the high-performance, engineered specialty films that often sell for between \$30-\$40/pound.

Cerchio said the company expects to hire four to six production workers, which would increase the workforce from 13 to between 17-19. The plant operates 24 hours, five days a week.

The 4-year-old company has doubled its sales each of the last three years. It was founded with the financial help of Axess Corp., a Wilmington, Del., investment firm headed by Alexander Giacco, who ran chemical giant Hercules Corp. for many years.

Ajedium makes films as thin as five microns and as thick as 1.5 mm for the automotive, aerospace, medical, electronic, telecommunications and semiconductor industries. It also works with resin suppliers to develop films from new resins. "We are a first-stop toller for resin suppliers who don't have their own equipment," Cerchio said.

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