

Techmer PM exhibited at NPE 2009 last week in Chicago

CHICAGO (June 23, 8:56 p.m. ET) -- News of a recession apparently hasn't reached Techmer PM LLC (Booth W135030), which is adding 10-15 new jobs at its color and additive masterbatch plant in Clinton, Tenn.

At NPE2009, Techmer President John Manuck said the new positions are needed to handle increased production volume at the site, which also serves as Techmer's headquarters. Manuck added that sales bottomed out in January but now are on the rise throughout his firm, which employs about 600 at six U.S. plants.

"We're seeing a steady increase in sales," Manuck said. "We're still not at normal levels, but it's heading in the right direction and we're hearing good things from our customers."

Manuck also is proud that his firm hasn't laid off a single employee in the current market downturn. When business slowed, Techmer applied for and received government funding to allow its employees to receive additional language, math, or technical training.

Techmer also is installing four small extrusion lines at various plants to replace older ones. The new lines will be able to handle specialty orders of less than 500 pounds.

At NPE, Techmer is focusing on:

- * an infrared-reflecting additive for polyethylene films and polypropylene nonwovens to protect farm crops, cars, and buildings from sun
- * the Tech-Splatter line of colorants for high-end marble and swirl effects in injection molding.
- * a brominated flame retardant for PE industrial bags, foam packaging, and other products that need good heat sealability and printability
- * a softener masterbatch for nonwovens for the softest touch in hygiene applications
- * non-halogen flame retardants for nylon resins in injection molding and profile extrusion
- * a nanoclay additive in nylon 6 for major boost in physical properties of nylon films

Techmer, with annual sales of about \$200 million, has had an eventful 18 months. The firm bought color house Accel Color last year, retaining Accel plants in Avon, Ohio, and Naperville, Ill., but closing plants operated by Accel in Ontario, Calif. and Knoxville, Tenn.

Techmer's other plants are in Clinton; Wichita, Kan.; Dalton, Ga.; and Rancho Dominguez, Calif. The Dalton plant opened last year, allowing Techmer to close a smaller plant in Gainesville, Ga.

A portion of this interview, a video entitled "Techmer's Steady Growth," appears on the home page of *Plastics News*: <http://www.plasticsnews.com/npe/>