

Double birthday for Bond-Laminates

- **Company has been operating for 20 years**
- **Subsidiary of the LANXESS group for five years**
- **Experts in continuous-fiber-reinforced composites**
- **Leading supplier of lightweight technology for the automotive industry**

Cologne/Brilon – Bond-Laminates GmbH is celebrating two birthdays at once: the company was founded 20 years ago and acquired by the specialty chemicals group LANXESS five years ago. The company has grown steadily since its founding. Its business idea was based on technology that was new at the time, but is mature and now state-of-the-art: developing and manufacturing customized fiber composites.

These ultra-light materials, which are sold under the brand name Tepex, are plastics that have been reinforced with materials such as glass fibers. Key markets include the automotive and electronics industries. Sports and leisure is another sector in which the lightweight technology from Bond-Laminates is used, for example in shoes, snowboard helmets, brake levers in bicycles and loudspeaker membranes. Production, testing and laboratory facilities are located in Brilon. The company currently employs around 90 people.

Christian Obermann, Managing Director of Bond-Laminates, says: “In LANXESS we have found a strong partner, and together we have set the course for further growth. Our products complement each other well. Through hybrid technology – that is, a combination of short- and continuous-fiber-reinforced plastics – we can now provide customized and cost-effective solutions for mass production, especially in lightweight construction. With our HiAnt service package, we can meet even complex customer demands related to component design and process development.”

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An eventful history

The company can trace its beginnings to the former composites division at DuPont. When the chemical company decided to exit this field in 1997, two former DuPont employees acquired the distribution and technology rights for the Tepex brand through a management buyout and went on to establish Bond-Laminates. That same year, the newly founded company set up a production site at Held Technologie GmbH in Trossingen, near Villingen-Schwenningen in southwestern Germany. DuPont had already used these production facilities for its testing purposes. Bond-Laminates entered into a cooperation with Centrotec Sustainable AG at the turn of the millennium, and the company moved to Brilon the next year .

The outlook has been bright ever since. By 2006, Bond-Laminates had outgrown the space it shared with Centrotec, and it moved to its current building at Am Patbergschen Dorn 11. That same year, the number of employees grew to more than 30. The company's multi-pronged business model, including automotive, sports, consumer electronics and other branches, had paid off.

Bond-Laminates becomes part of LANXESS

In September 2012, the specialty chemicals group LANXESS, based in Cologne, acquired Bond-Laminates GmbH, which was integrated within the LANXESS High Performance Materials (HPM) business unit, led by Michael Zobel. "Two partners, each with their own success story, are now joining forces," Zobel said at the time of the takeover. "Our vision is differentiation through growth and technology – and that unites us." The head of the LANXESS business unit affirms to this day: "With Tepex products, we are a technology and market leader in thermoplastic high-performance fiber composites. And we haven't come close to exhausting our potential."

LANXESS had already collaborated with Bond-Laminates on several successful projects for the automotive industry since 2006. The

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acquisition expanded the internationally active company's innovative product portfolio of materials for lightweight automotive design. Christian Obermann has led the wholly owned LANXESS subsidiary since 2017.

Composite materials with great potential for lightweight construction

In contrast to metal processing, thermoplastic composite materials allow a significantly higher potential of functional integration to be realized, leading to lower production costs and greater freedom of design. In addition, hybrid technology enables lightweight construction in both material and design, reducing weight by as much as 50 percent. What's more, this makes it possible to cut fuel consumption and vehicle emissions as well. Obermann confirms the potential of this class of materials: "Tepex technology is currently being used for a wide range of applications in automotive design, and this trend is growing. The technology is used, for example, in the manufacture of underbody cladding, seat backs, module supports, battery consoles, front-end components, brake pedals and bumper crossbars. Many other lightweight construction applications will be possible in the future, not only for traditional automobiles with combustion engines, but also in the e-mobility field."

Bond-Laminates and the High Performance Materials business unit are part of the Engineering Materials segment, which generated EUR 1.1 billion in total sales in the 2016 fiscal year. HPM employs approximately 1,600 people worldwide.

LANXESS is a leading specialty chemicals company with sales of EUR 7.7 billion in 2016 and about 19,200 employees in 25 countries. The company is currently represented at 75 production sites worldwide. The core business of LANXESS is the development, manufacturing and marketing of chemical intermediates, additives, specialty chemicals and plastics. Through ARLANXEO, the joint venture with Saudi Aramco, LANXESS is also a leading supplier of synthetic rubber. LANXESS is listed in the leading sustainability indices Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI World) and FTSE4Good.

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You can find further information concerning LANXESS chemistry in our WebMagazine at <http://webmagazine.lanxess.com>.

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Pictures



The Bond-Laminates GmbH in Brilon is a wholly owned subsidiary of the specialty chemicals group LANXESS. The company specializes in developing and producing fiber composites. Photo: LANXESS AG



Tepex-brand continuous-fiber-reinforced composites are ideal for lightweight construction. Key markets include the automotive and electronics industries. They are also used in the sports and leisure sector. Photo: LANXESS AG

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Demonstration cell for processing Tepex continuous-fiber-reinforced thermoplastic composites at Bond-Laminates. Tepex can be shaped in a fully automated process that resembles actual production conditions, and also shaped and oversprayed simultaneously in a hybrid molding process. Photo: LANXESS AG

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