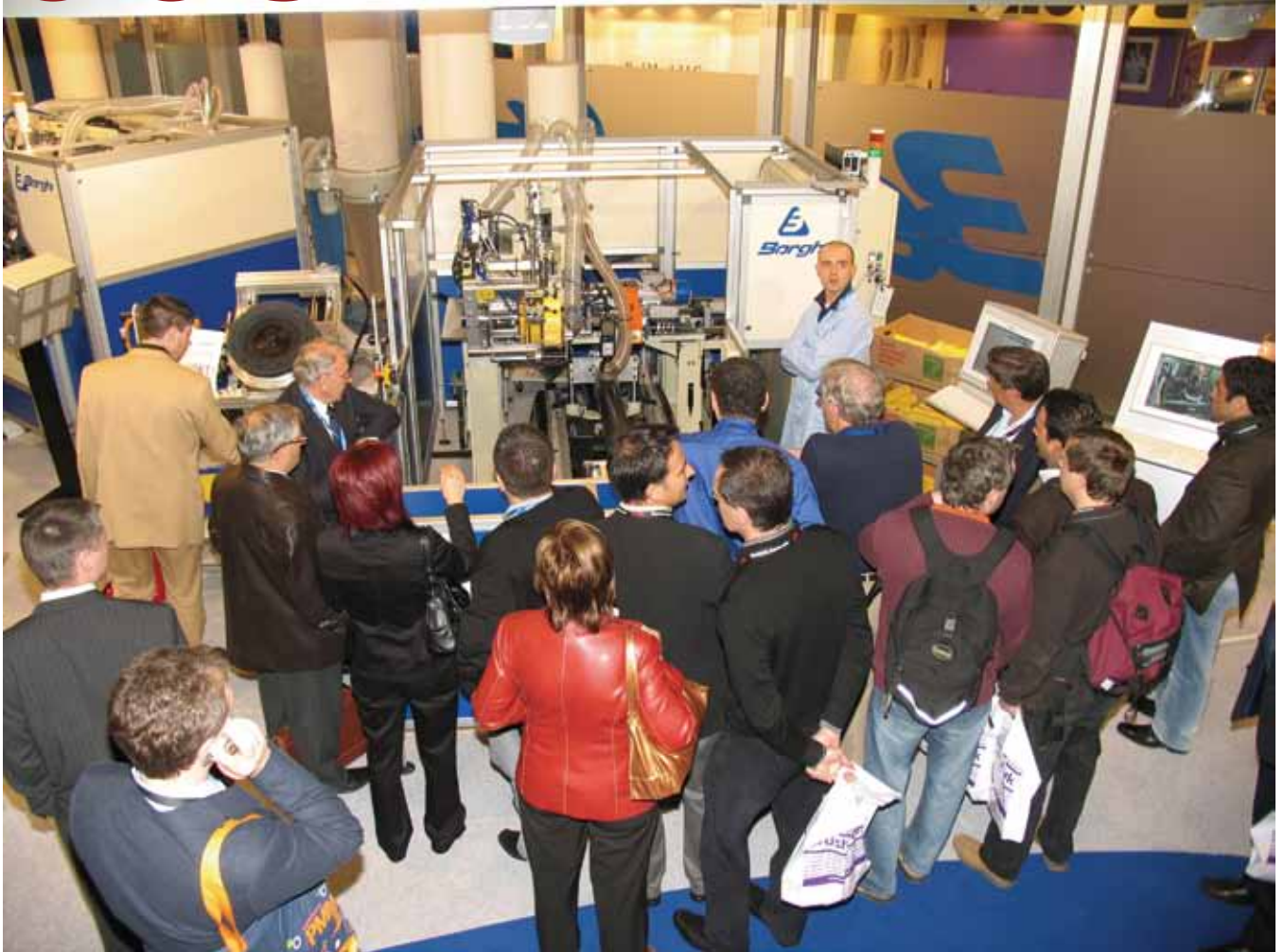




# 2008

# INTERBRUSH



## A COLLOSAL EXPO WITH NEW MACHINES AND MATERIAL & RAVE REVIEWS AMID A BACKDROP OF CONCERNS

by Bob Lawrence

InterBrush is being hailed a resounding success by exhibitors and ABMA, FEIBP and Messe Freiburg officials. Their praise is based on the number of business contacts made during the three day event and these figures: 183 exhibitors from 28 countries and 7,000 visitors from 90 countries. The number of exhibitors was up by 30 from the 2004 expo. Among them were 38 ABMA members, up from 20 exhibiting at the last InterBrush. Held April 16-18 at the Freiburg Exhibition and Conference Centre in Freiburg, Germany, InterBrush is the leading international trade fair for the brush, paintbrush, paint roller and mop industries. Being exhibited in four halls covering over 19,000 sq. meters were new

brush machines featuring the latest technological advancements and the newest raw materials and accessories.

While the essence of the show was about seeing the latest equipment and drumming up business, concerns were expressed about the global economy, the spiraling dollar and the absence of many Asians at the expo. All of that and more are covered in this article which begins with reviews from key players involved in the event.

### INTERBRUSH REVIEWS

“More visitors than ever from numerous countries visited

Schlesinger's exhibition stand. Based in Burgwald, Germany, Schlesinger has exhibited its brush machinery in Freiburg since the very first Interbrush in 1977. It's been a long time since we were so satisfied by the high number of visitors who frequented the exhibition stand. Around 30 % more visitors and 20 % more inquiries had been registered during the 3 days of the fair. At the same time, the number of international visitors had increased tremendously. The enlargement of the fair surface and the increased number of exhibits made an enormous contribution to the run of visitors compared with the last Interbrush. Franz Bender, Schlesinger Maschinenbau, Burgwald, Germany

"It was Bizzotto's sixth experience exhibiting at the InterBrush show and 2008 was a great success. Successful, also because it was occasion to celebrate with our customers and friends, the 50th anniversary of the Company. Numerous were the contacts obtained on the occasion of the show from all over the world and distributed in many different sectors of production: wooden paintbrush handle machines, broom handle machines and general automation, which are the basic sectors where Bizzotto Giovanni Automation operates. The exhibition center has been extended compared to four years ago, and our booth was located in the fourth exhibition hall, recently added to the facility. The increased number of visitors and contacts we had is proving that Interbrush is an important meeting point for the operators of the sector." Marco Bizzotto, Bizzotto Giovanni Automation SRL, Bosco, Italy

"The show exceeded our expectations, and the interest level from American brushmakers was much stronger than anticipated." Ray Wilson, Boucherie USA, Knoxville, Tennessee

"Excellent show! Borghi's stand received many complements from visitors as the most beautiful stand in its design as well as much praise for the incredible machinery Borghi had on display. This IB was very good and there was a lot of traffic. It is difficult to say how it compared to four years ago due the fact that Borghi and Osmas had two separate stands. This year, with the unveiling of Borghi's new logo, and having one stand only under the Borghi s.p.a. name, the booth was constantly busy with strong interest in the technology and machinery displayed." Carlos Petzold, Borghi USA, Inc. / Bodam International LTD, Aberdeen, Maryland

"The traffic was good at our booth and was better than expected. It seemed like a lot of quality traffic but how much business you generate from a show like that sometimes takes many months, even years to come to some type of fruition. I came away with a positive feeling. The people who had the most interest in our product were the Indians and Eastern Europeans more so than the Chinese and Europeans. That's because they are growth areas with expanding labor markets." John Green, Charles E. Green & Son, Inc., Newark, New Jersey

"We were quite happy with the show." Gian Pogliani, Pogliani, Costamasnaga, Italy

"I look at InterBrush as an opportunity for us to meet our larger customers as well as some smaller and mid-size customers we don't get to see all of the time. You get to meet new customers. The show actually exceeded my expectations. I was a little fearful because of the economic situation in the U.S. but it didn't see any affect on the turnout." Tom Vichich, DuPont Filaments, Wilmington, Delaware

"It was a great experience. Techno Plastic's stand was always crowded and held the interest and attention of a large audience. Moreover, our booth was nearby the big Borghi stand and we have also taken advantage of this strategic position. I don't know the exact numbers but I had the impression that the number of exhibitors has grown a lot. Furthermore, the truly visible increased number of visitors was very impressive to me." Aldo Mingozzi, Techno Plastic, Emilia, Italy

"It was a very successful show for our company. We are happy about the organization and also about the feedback we got on the fair. I don't know the exact numbers but I had the impression that the number of exhibitors has grown a lot. Compared to 2004 we had about 70% more contact notes. These were a lot of unexpected, new contacts as well as inquiries from known clients." Matthias Peveling, Wohler Brush Tech, Wunnenberg, Germany

"The show was great for us, the same as in 2004. Silena Fattori, Marcegaglia Oskar, Bologna, Italy

"Our booth was packed, allowing us to see everyone we wanted to see and more." Andrew McIlroy, Hahl Filaments, Munderkigen, Germany

"InterBrush was great! We exhibited useful innovative developments from Zahoransky that will help our customers really improve their businesses. From the production of in-molded toothbrushes to scanning and tufting customer logos in our souvenir plate brushes, it was all very exciting and a true display of advanced brush making technology. As for Zahoransky USA, we were extremely busy all three days, and we now have a lot of post show projects to work on...but please don't let that stop anyone out there from calling us to discuss your new business opportunities. InterBrush is always exciting and we always feel a boost from the show, however, this year in particular was extremely successful for Zahoransky. I think this can really be attributed to our development of significant improvements on all areas of our product line. Frank Kigyos, Zahoransky USA, Sugar Grove, Illinois

"What a great show. Four years ago, 8400 sq meters were rented out and this year it was increased to 9000. The additional hall was built for a reason and in the first year, they almost filled it up. Dave Parr, Executive Director ABMA

"We had to be there because it is politically correct. We have yet to find a new customer as a result, however. At the fair we meet very small customers who usually buy from our European dealers as well as those in Russia and Turkey. Freight rates out of Mexico are very high while containers coming into Europe are easily separated for other customers which we do with our agents. We then ship them to our smaller customers in Poland, Slovak Republic, etc. Our big customers are in Italy, Germany, Netherlands, and Belgium." Miguel Schwarz, International Fiber Distributors, IFD, Monterey, Mexico

"InterBrush is a great show for us." Rodrigo Ripstein, Perfect Fiber, Naucalpan, Mexico

"The 2008 InterBrush, the first for Monahan Filaments, was a resounding success. Interest in products from Handles USA was also strong due to the exchange rate." Jon Monahan, Monahan Filaments, also speaking on behalf of Handles USA and Brush Fibers

"I was very pleased. I did not expect to have such interest. It was much better than the last one and it may be because we



introduced new equipment.” Stefano Paggin, Paggin, Mirano, Italy

“We were quite satisfied with the show. The first day didn’t have as many attendees but the second one brought in a lot of good contacts.” Annamaria Zini, Plasticfibre, Bologna, Italy

“It was terrific for us. We were busier than ever with more visitors than four years ago. We knew we were not going to be taking a lot of orders but it’s part of our marketing strategy to be there so that we are seen by our customers and potential customers.” Enrique Meja, PMM, Mexico City, Mexico

“It’s was a good show and we had a lot of good contacts. If we can turn 10% of those into customers, it will have been a really good show. I do think was slower than four years, but the number of contacts we had was surprisingly good.” Ray LeBlanc, AMEX International, distributor for Italian handle maker Manici Metallici

“We export to the U.S. but with the lower price of products there, it’s hard competition against the dollar at the moment. However, when we are talking about our high telescopes, the weak dollar is not that big of an issue because there are not many players in the market for those.” said Riina Seppanen, Exel OYJ, Finland.

## THE EURO VERSUS THE DOLLARS

How has the weakness of the dollar, affected European sales in the U.S.? That question, posed to those exporting to the states, elicited some interesting answers.

“Like anybody else this situation is affecting our business in the USA. Fortunately we are also working on projects which are still feasible in costs although the return on investment will take a little longer,” said Peveling.

“I must say, I was very scared about this problem because for a company like Paggin which exports 90% of its product, it is an issue. Fortunately, companies interested in machines of our quality are normally large enough to afford them,” Paggin stated.

For a company like Manici Metallici, exchange rates are always a problem in international trade,” LeBlanc responded.

“I cannot say that the U.S. dollar’s weakness has particularly influenced Techno Plastic’s sales in the US market,”

Mingozzi said. “Despite this difficult moment, our company keeps generating a growing interest in the states. Nevertheless, I believe that there are large areas in the world, i.e., Central and South America, where the economy is linked to U.S. dollar and where I can see some difficulties.”

“In some instances, the weak dollar is hurting potential sales but in other instances it is actually helping sales. We are seeing some of our customers picking up significant business due to the weak dollar,” Kigyos stated

“Because the dollar is so weak while the Euro is so strong, our exports are suffering a lot,” said Pogliani.

“It’s tough and very difficult. Fifty percent of the product we sell in the states is manufactured in Germany for technical reasons, but our goal by the end of the year, is to be manufacturing everything in our Lexington, South Carolina plant. This means we will be avoiding all exchange rate variances,” McIlroy responded.

“At this time, exporting to the U.S. is difficult because of the strong Euro,” Zini said.

“In my company’s case, it’s not hurting as much because we are so diversified. Also, we can pass our cost on to the Europeans or to the Chinese. Because of their own revaluation against the dollar, to them we are still inexpensive.” Schwarz stated.

## SELLING INTO EUROPE

On the other side of the coin, for some American companies exhibiting at the show, the weakness of the dollar has had a positive impact.

“While Monahan Filaments is perceived as a “new supplier” to the trade, much of the interest generated has been due to the currency exchange rates. We see our sales in Europe increasing significantly,” Monahan said.

“Initially, we couldn’t foresee what impact the exchange rate would have, but it has had a tremendous impact on our European sales,” said Meja, who noted that the Mexican peso is tied to the dollar and quotes to Europe are in dollars rather than Euros. “We have been calling on customers in Europe for years, but we have some fine competitors there that make good products and they now have the advantage. Basically, they have the same quality level products at 20% less, Meja stated. “For us, in the past, this was the show where we would deal with our customers from Europe and all over the world, but this year it has been completely different.”

“The constant search for customized and advanced technologies seems to be a risk in an uncertain economy slacken by the unfavourable Euro to the dollar condition, but Bizzotto considers this search the starting point for a deep change and for an increase of the future market. Only providing customers with the best equipment, new competitive ideas can be realized with a significant reduction of costs and optimizing productivity,” Bizzotto said.

“The exchange rate problem should have given us a good advantage, but I think Europeans in the paint brush and roller business are so accustomed to paying Chinese prices that I’m not sure how much interest there is in manufacturing in Europe itself. It’s like what happened to manufacturing in the states,” Green responded.

## CONFLICTING TRADE SHOW

Amid the trade show, some key issues were discussed at a meeting of the InterBrush Advisory Board. The board, consisting of representatives of Messe Freiburg, ABMA, FEIBP and other organizations, meets annually at FEIBP except during InterBrush years when it gathers in Freiburg. It gives the parties an opportunity to give feedback and make comments about the show, and at the 2008 event, there was much to discuss, chief among them being what to do about the huge Canton Trade Fair going on during the same week as InterBrush and thus, drawing attendees away. There was also the issue of the ABMA Convention losing attendees during InterBrush years.

“We talked about possibly changing the date, having it later in the spring because it competes with the Canton Fair -the largest show in China - because this year, there was a smaller contingent of visitors from Asia,” Parr, explained. As for the ABMA spring convention, moving InterBrush to May “would give us greater separation between the two shows, but if that doesn’t happen, ABMA will have to grapple with what to do with our convention being a smaller show.”

Given that, here’s what some exhibitors had to say about the issue:

“I don’t know who chose the dates for InterBrush, but they could not have chosen a worse date because it competes with the dates of the Canton Fair. The first phase has been held from April 15 to April 30 for 30 years. They should do InterBrush in May when they used to hold it,” said Schwarz. “I didn’t see most of my customers in Freiburg. I didn’t see much traffic accept around the machines. Four years ago, people were waiting in line to register - you had to wait 45 minutes to get in. This year, the only places I saw traffic is around the machines. In this hall (Hall 4) there are no big machines running and traffic was flat.”

“Canton has taken some of the Asian visitors that we expected to see, but in general, I think people have really made an effort to come here. We’ve had an awful lot of visitors from the states,” McIlroy said.

“Most of our customers came on the first day because they had to have time to fly to Canton. It is a pity that these two important shows are so close in dates. Customers have to decide which to go to or try to go to both,” Fattori stated.

“Being that the Canton Fair is an immense import-export exhibition, and being that InterBrush is a more focussed and niche event, I don’t see the need for moving InterBrush dates,” said Mingozi. “That being said, I did notice that Chinese visitors were not as numerous, but I’ve always seen InterBrush as a “western” event. This doesn’t represent a problem for me.”

“It would be nice not to have this splintering. It would be better if the shows did not compete so people would have the opportunity to attend both, if they wish,” Fattori stated.

“It could be a good idea to move it to May because of other shows going on about the same time,” Paggin responded

“Moving this show would be a good idea because the Canton Fair is not going to move and it’s getting bigger and bigger every year, said LeBlanc. “I know of several people who would have been here but they went to Canton instead. Finding a date that doesn’t conflict with other trade shows will be tricky because there’s Houseware, Hardware, ABMA and ISSA.”

“For Bizzotto’s own business, the concomitance of InterBrush with the Canton China exhibition did not have a big influence. Bizzotto considers themselves satisfied with the outcome of the Inter-Brush 2008 that is proving to be an important meeting point for the operators of the sector and an occasion to renew competition and spur improvement,” said Bizzotto.

## WHAT ABOUT ABMA?

“It is up to the IB Advisory Board to help out Messe Freiburg in scheduling the event so that it does not conflict with other, major Industry events. Certainly it is logical that the more time there is in-between Industry events, the less conflict there is for the people travelling to the various events,” Petzold responded.

Green believes an option would be to hold the ABMA and InterBrush in tandem. “This year, I didn’t go to the ABMA convention for the first time in more than 30 years because of InterBrush. With only so many dollars to spend on trade shows, we saw more value in exhibiting at InterBrush. If you are going to Europe anyway, why not have ABMA in Brussels, Geneva, Strasbourg or Munich where you are just one day of travel from Freiburg. You might lose some Americans in doing that, but they lost a lot of American attendees at ABMA this year. It doesn’t have to always be on American soil. Another option is to move it to the fall during InterBrush years.”

“Moving it to May where it used to be would be a good thing to explore,” said Vichich.

“Because we are located in Germany, it would not make any difference to us. May in Germany is quite a big month for holidays, at least three or four in the month so they would have to work around that,” McIlroy responded.

## BIG MACHINES IN ALL HALLS

Another issue raised at the advisory board meeting was what to do about the lack of brisk traffic in Hall 4, the newest addition to the Messe Freiburg facility. Among the four halls, it alone did not have the big machine exhibitions that attracted the masses, presumably because the machines are the main attraction. Having at least one large machine exhibit in each hall is the matter to be decided. Here are some thoughts from the exhibitors:

“If it helps attract more quality exhibitors, and in turn more quality visitors, then I guess I’d be in favor,” Kigyos responded.

“This could be a good idea. Machines attract visitors and, especially now that the Messe Freiburg facility has been enlarged, this could be the way to assure the presence of visitors in all the exhibition halls,” Bizzotto said.

“It sounds good,” said Vichich.

“That would certainly spread out the traffic. We were in a machine intensive hall and we liked that location, but if I would not have been happy to be in Hall 4 where there were no machines because there weren’t as many attendees there,” Green stated.

“Spreading the machines out would be a good idea,” stated Fattori.

“I personally would like to see this as it would get more traffic in front of those less busy areas and halls. Perhaps visitors would benefit as well by seeing more of what is available to them in services and products which may not be as widely known,” Monahan responded.

Said Paggin, "It could be a good idea."

"Because the machines attracted a lot of visitors to the halls they were in, those with no machines had fewer visitors. I do think that a machines' display in all of the halls would render more homogeneous the visitors' flow in all the fair's spaces," said Mingozi.

## RESOLVING THE ISSUES

As for resolving the issue, the advisory board is on top of it. "We had a good meeting and all of us have homework to do in the next couple of months and when we finalize everything we will inform you on how it will be done. We should have details by the FEIBP convention in October. We have to improve ourselves as the organizer," replied Messe Freiburg's Daniel Strowitzki.

## OTHER TALK

Is technology swirling at such a fast pace that InterBrush should be held more frequently than every four years? What country is the next tiger, the cheap labor market that will see manufacturing shift and replace China? Following are representative of what some had to say about the topics:

"I think that a four year gap between one fair and the next is really too much. We live in a world where everything changes very fast. Markets and technologies keep transforming and modifying one day after the other," said Mingozi. "Organizing InterBrush every four years risks not giving continuity to the sector's information and therefore not reaching the aim for which the fair is organized. Furthermore I also believe that other fairs and events of this sector could take advantage by this slow cadence. A tighter cadence, i.e., a two-year recurrence, could certainly augment the importance of InterBrush."

Most exhibitors and visitors Brushware talked with agree that the brush business worldwide is still very strong but the main focus for manufacturing has shifted and will continue to shift to the lower cost country. The new tiger in Asia appears to be Vietnam because its labor is much cheaper than China. As Green sees it, "a lot of manufacturing always goes to where the labor market is the cheapest. That's why you're seeing a lot of activity in Vietnam, Sri Lanka and India. I don't think China wants to be a cheap labor market forever. They have an emerging middle class and are not as hungry for new business."

## NEW FOR THE SHOW

Now for the crux of the expo - the latest in machinery and products for the brush broom and mop industries:

"The largest innovation this year is the introduction of the AFT/HH *Boucherie* anchorless and stapleless technology, originally developed for the oral care industry but now available to the household brush and industrial brush industry. With no anchors or staples holding the tufts in, we have for the first time a truly recyclable brush," said Wilson about Boucherie. He added that material cost savings amount to about 45%. In addition to the savings, product features allow for unlimited and innovative brush designs, improved brush functionality, brush hygiene and no more drilling and trimming. Also, the lack of anchors or staples allows the block thickness to be significantly reduced. Among the machine's features: all in-line manufacturing for reduced labor and inventory; up to 1500 tuft picks per minute continuously; no indexing time between the products; simple and

quick changeover and automatic fibre loading system. The AFT/HH is also ecologically sound, meaning there is less waste and less energy consumption in addition to the fact that the brushes can be recyclable because there is no metal involved, according to Wilson.

Also new from Boucherie: is the TCU-SL/CNC machine capable of making angle brooms with 16 inch long filaments and with a 95 mm stroke. For the first time ever, this allows for the manufacture of angle brooms at speeds up to 500 RPM (1000 tufts per minute). This is a "strong innovation" in the broom making industry, according to Wilson. New also is the CU/CNC, a machine for producing round disk brushes used in floor cleaning at speeds up to 500 RPM (1000 tufts per minute).

From *DuPont Filaments*: a cosmetic brush with Tynex Natrafil which has the look and feel of natural bristle. A round texturized filament with a light wave, it's made from a polymer composite using a unique tipping technology; Tynex A Diamond brand abrasive filaments containing either silicon carbide or aluminum oxide abrasive grit mixed into each filament. These durable, aggressive filaments are excellent choices for industrial brushes, according to Vichich. Also being promoted was Tynex, Chinex and Orel brand filaments offering a variety of options for all paintbrush applications. DuPont Solid Round Tapered (SRT) nylon and polyester filaments provide "superior product pick-up and absorb less water for smooth, even paint release over time. Premium-quality DuPont Tynex, Chinex and Orel brand filaments offer a variety of synthetic filament options for all paintbrush applications. Paintbrushes made with DuPont Solid Round Tapered (SRT) nylon and polyester filaments provide superior painting performance," Vichich stated.

*Borgh* showcased the following equipment: STAR V2, "the most versatile and state-of-the-art, double head drill/fill machine ever made! With it's large range of bridges, it can produce most household brushes such as small dish brushes all the way up through larger industrial or janitorial type products such as 36" push brooms and even 48" concrete smoothing brushes," said Petzold; SMART V2, a more economical choice with less features than it's STAR cousin, has 4 axes of movement and is able to produce a large variety of brooms and brushes including radial and vertical tufting along the length of the brush without changing bridges (up to 24" overall length in one cycle), "thus giving a good solution to the price versus features balance;"

ECO TECH, a machine running Silicone Carbide fibers in a staple-set machine, was "proof to the world that Borghi is a leader in technology for manufacturing products using very abrasive filaments." ECO TECH ran with DuPont Tynex® abrasive filament Diameter 60 mils = 1.52 mm; 80 grit, level, wax-coated producing a large Cylinder Brush with 2500 tufts in each brush; The STAR R32 is a 5 axes machine that is "very versatile, easy to change, and very productive three station turret drill/fill machine that is the future of manually loaded brush machinery! With 180° by 180° of filling capability, this is the "do all" machine that everyone wants." The loading and unloading station for the operator is completely away from the drilling and filling stations, rendering it completely safe for the operator during continuous work cycle; STAR R2 debuted at InterBrush 2008, is the new generation, four station turret machine that is fully automatic and can produce brushes with 180° by 180° of filling capability on radial items and 360° all around for cylindrical or semi-spherical items. Running over 1000

tufts per minute and having a 2 second index time, this machine makes a lot of brushes per hour; STAR R32-400-CRP running 400 mm long fiber (15.75”), was born to make all kinds of brooms, but especially large angle brooms with a 7.5” trim length. Running at an “unbelievable speed of 380 RPM, this is the fastest speed that Borghi has ever seen any machine run that has the capability to fill 400 mm long fiber. With the fully automatic automation on this machine, index times are short, productivity is maximized and the machine practically runs itself. Labor cost as a percentage of the product cost is practically non-existent running this production work cell.”

**Zahoransky** has standardized its machine control system across all machines types and now includes 3D brush designer on each and every machine, according to Kigyos. “3D Brush Designer is an amazing new product for programming brushes. Brushes can now be designed off-line in minutes and even better, you can see them in 3D before ever setting up the machine to make a brush. We were also demonstrating our new CAD/CAM software and SCADA (Systems Control And Data Acquisition) network system. Zahoransky is developing the future for brush making every day. I truly believe that if you are serious about manufacturing brushes you owe it to yourself and your company to understand our new developments and offerings.” New machines from Zahoransky include: ET125F / ET125MT - Stapling machine for making industrial brushes including plates, cylinders, discs, strips, domes, etc. Machine is equipped with newly designed upper main shaft that provides significant improvement in machine speed. The show machine was running at 750rpm and was producing company logo brushes...logos were scanned in from business cards using our 3D Brush Designer and programs transferred to the machine via the SCADA machine network. ET125MT for high volume production provides auto block loading, filament loading and transfer to trimmer. ET125 Abrasive for the serious manufacturer of abrasive or grit brushes includes our heavy duty interchangeable abrasive picking and tufting system...please call Zahoransky USA for further information; S235 and S235MT - Double head 5-axis machines for making most household and Jan/San brushes and brooms. 3 carriages available, 1 of 3 tool strokes available, quick change tooling, 3D Brush Designer...truly a universal machine for the serious brush and broom maker; C235 - 3 station double header carousel machine including 5-axis, independent brush block loading / unloading station for maximum output and safety; DM10F - Auto twisted in wire brush machines for production of cosmetic, interdental or technical brushes, up to 50 brushes per minute. Both DM machines at the show were linked to assembly machines and one of the two was also linked to a B4 Blister Packaging machine; IAP System - Fully automatic production of Anchorless Toothbrushes including Filament Endrounding Machine, Tufting Machine, Brush Tuft Tooling Carousel, 6-Axis Robot and Injection Mold w/ Molding Machine for maximum toothbrush production flexibility; US3 Stock Cutter, a low cost, high quality stock cutter.

New from **Hahl Filaments** are diamond abrasive grit and co-extruded grit product for steel and deburring applications. While diamond abrasive grit has been around for several years, it is getting a lot more attention these days because of the availability of synthetic diamonds which are cheaper than the real thing, according to McIlroy. “We’ve

found a lot of interest in it,” he added. Hahl was also promoting its line of bristles and filaments.

**Exel** was showing its composite handles and telescopic poles for high reach work for the painting and window cleaning industries. The composites, which are composed of fiberglass and carbon fiber, are “lightweight and provide high strength and stiffness,” said Seppanen. When reaching high places this reduces the effort required to hold the telescope and ensures less bending and swaying of the tool under load. “The end result is improved work ergonomics to achieve successful cleaning or maintenance operations. Compared to conventional materials composites are chemically resistant to the most chemicals and cleaning products,” she stated. They keep their appearance and properties in all conditions. The company’s latest product is the Exel Xtel System which is a series of two-to-ten section poles capable of reaching as high as 60 feet. Available in glass, glass/carbon or full carbon fiber, it features an easy action clamp lock for any extended position. It was awarded the “Red Dot: best of the best” design award for 2008 in Germany last March in competition with more than three thousand products from 51 countries. The international jury said the award highlights the company’s creative and innovative force as well as the product’s high quality, according to Seppanen.

**International Fiber** Distributors, IFD, Monterey, Mexico, was promoting its line. The company is a processor of Tampico fiber, animal hair and DuPont nylon. Its raw materials come from Mexico, China, India and South America. By volume, Tampico is its largest line. While 20% of its product is exported to the U.S. and Canada, 80% is exported to the rest of the world, according to Schwarz.

**Wohler Brush Tech**, Wunnenberg, Germany, introduced its new SBM 92 - 1.5 mm (0.06”) profile, calling it the latest development in strip brush production. This is the smallest available profile size, offering the advantages of a miniaturised, more finely filled and more easily formed strip, such as use in smaller holders and winding on cores as small as 3 mm (1/8”) diameter, in virtually all classic applications. Several other new machines were also featured at the show, including: MSB 960, a fully automatic production system for continuous production of flexible strip brushes with extremely high efficiency and no waste. Profile sizes up to 8 mm





and new style profile forms possible; SBM-92, a high performance machine for the production of brushes with profiles from 2 to 6 mm. Production speed of up to 30 m per minute; SBM 840, an all purpose strip brush machine for the production of brushes with profiles from 3.5 to 18 mm; SPI 90, a double band machine for the production of brushes with profiles of over 6 mm.

**Monahan Filaments** exhibited some new abrasive filaments such as nylon 6.12 with diamond grit, and 6.10 nylon with Silica Carbide grit. On the oral care side, it was the first time that inline dyed wear indicator filament was shown due to recently expiring patents. Also highlighted were large diameter nylon products with a high degree of roundness and diameter control.

“The **Paggin** range of machines has been recently enriched with new assembling machines for paint brushes, as the logical completion of the production program,” Paggin said. “The TPB assembling machine for paint brush heads is new for us because in the past, our focus was on mixing and bundling machines for filaments. It produces flat brushes from half an inch to five inches and can use either bristles or synthetics.”

**Pasticfibre** offers its customers “high quality and high performance monofilaments and natural fibers for the brush and broom industries. With a complete and ever-expanding array of polymers, the Plasticfibre Company turns out over 100 kinds of fibers. Our production capacity makes it capable of turning out over 10,000 tons of fibers annually and supplies customers in 50 countries,” Zini explained.

**PMM** promoted its “quality engineered synthetic monofilaments” for the cosmetic, oral care and industrial brush industries. The company offers Nylon 6.12, Nylon 6, Nylon 6.6, Nylon 6 Plus (improved Nylon 6 with a performance similar to Nylon 6.6), Polyester PBT, Polypropylene and Polyethylene filaments in a wide range of calipers and colors. “We are specialized in critical applications, where consistency and quality are a must,” said Meja.

**Pogliani**, promoted its products line. Now in its 108th year, Pogliani provides the brush industry with steel wire, synthetic fibres, broom handles, and other different products to vegetable and animal fibres. Sharing Pogliani’s booth were K.R. Plastic Industries of Thailand for which it serves as a distributor, and Italy’s Fili & Forme in which it owns shares and serves as exporter. K.R. produces synthetic fibers for brush industries ranging from

paint, tooth and hair to industrial. Fili & Forme produces PVC and polypropylene synthetic fibers for the broom and brush industries.

One of the crowd-pullers to **Schlesinger**’s booth was the VP-BFA 21/E5 with a swivelling filling head especially for the production of strip brushes with parallel as well as slanting spread of tufts at record time, according to Franz Bender. “It is very impressive how fast and accurate the machine runs,” commented an enthusiastic visitor during a demonstration of the machine, according to Bender. “With the sophisticated construction of the universal machine, Schlesinger renewed its competence regarding the production of technical and special brushes. Another highlight was the electronic-controlled high performance trimming and cleaning machine. A transfer machine and a one-tool carousel machine for the production of household brushes were further indicators of Schlesinger’s achievement-oriented spectrum.” Schlesinger, which will be 90 years old next year, is “one of the most traditionally-minded companies in its industrial sector and strives to bring the latest technological developments to its machinery program,” Bender stated. “As demonstrated at Interbrush 2008, Schlesinger uses the most progressive control and bus systems which work in real-time allowing the machine speed to be raised significantly. Additionally, the highly esteemed control panel, well-known for its ease of operation, has again been modified.”

**Smartfilaments** of Wil, Switzerland premiered a natural filament extracted from cellulose through the lyocell process developed by Germany’s Thuringian Institute of Textile and Plastic Research. “This monofilament is bio-degradable, which makes it the fill material of the future,” said Max Zeintl. “With applications for the brush and paintbrush industry, smartfilaments is a natural substance enhanced with organic and inorganic additives to provide customer solutions. Adding herbal substances such as seaweed, hayflowers, lavender or other plants and substances enable the filaments to full fill functions to suit your needs,” he said. “If you need materials with which to peel, polish or sand, we can accomplish that with smartfilaments by incorporating materials such as clay, diatomite, silicon or diamond. Smartfilaments marks the beginning of a new era of fill materials.”

New from **Perfect Fiber** is Riceroor, a natural Mexican fiber for many brush applications, according to Ripstein. The company also premiered a new DVD showing the processes involved in producing Riceroor and Tampico. “I think the video is very important because it shows how these natural, organic fibers are processed, all by hand,” said Ripstein.

“Since nearly 100% of the machines built by **Bizzotto** are customized, designed and produced based on specific needs, to preserve the confidential nature of the relationship we have with our customers, no machines were displayed at the show,” said Bizzotto. At the company’s booth “Bizzotto’s machinery production range was supported only through documents and videos duly selected. However, as proof of the constant care of Bizzotto’s company to comply with specific needs of its customers, 2008 is the year Bizzotto launched a new model machine, the B122 MONOFILAMENT BUNDLE CUTTER, a new developed bundle cutter for PP/PET/PVC/PBT/PA monofilaments with high technological capacities and versatility in terms of length of the cut and of type of material that can be worked. One operator will be sufficient for our customers to see their work realized quickly and efficiently.”

*Techno Plastic* didn't display machines at the exhibition but did have a live Internet connection by webcam with its factory in Italy. "In this way, interested visitors and future clients could observe our fully working FIL 75 extrusion line in all phases of its standard operating functions," Mingozi explained. "This live show got a very good response with a significant number of visitor interest. This has been very useful and has given us the opportunity to better and more precisely describe the line's functions to interested visitors." Mingozi stated that the show gave the company an opportunity to promote its extrusion lines' full automation featuring its new winding-wrapper-cutter system. "I believe that for the first time we have a system that, starting from 100% recycled bottle flakes raw material, has the ability to produce bundles ready to be packed and shipped – all of this without any operator's involvement. I think this represents an extraordinary result," he added. "This is an opportunity for our clients to save important sums of money on the raw material cost while also saving on labor. With this new full automated line, we give the opportunity to our customers to be highly competitive in a world where eastern countries' aggressiveness often defeats our productive activities."

*Carnevali Dino*, a manufacturer of a variety quality brush trimming tools and equipment for the broom, brush and paintbrush industry, promoted its line at the show. Included were rotary mill trimmers for all types of fibers including silicone carbide, rotary drum trimmers, paint brush clipper units, clippers of all types, hank cutters for synthetic or metal fibers, custom made knives and blades and custom made trimming devices.

*Charles E. Green & Son, Inc.*, a family owned and operated business specializing in paint brush ferrules, inserts and paint rollers, displayed that line at the expo. "Our firm proudly supplies the paint industry around the world. We have an expanded product line in which we can design any size ferrule or roller to fit your specific needs with our in-house engineering and tooling capabilities. Along with ferrules and rollers we can suit many other metal stamping, wire forming, or deep drawing needs. We have experience in general hardware, household, ammunition, and electric parts," Green said.

*Marcegaglia Oskar*, a manufacturer of metal handles for painting and cleaning tools, displayed its steel, aluminium and fiberglass broom handles (fixed, telescopic and multi-piece). Handles are available in plastic or rubber coated and painted, according to Fattori. The company has seven tube mills, five painting lines and 25 metal handle assembly machines and produces 50 million handles annually.



- bw



2008