

A letter from our President on the eve of Afera's flagship event

From volatility to vision: Thessaloniki as the adhesive tape industry's call to action

In a time of volatility, regulation and shifting costs, the adhesive tape industry must act together. Thessaloniki is our call to action—a week to turn shared challenges into shared direction.

The adhesive tape industry enters Thessaloniki in an unusual state: tense... yet creative. Inflation, shifting regulation, supply-chain disruption, energy cost volatility and raw material shortages have all converged. For an industry built on reliability, this is unsettling. It creates anxiety and shakes confidence. But it also underlines why now—more than ever—we must quite literally stick together. This is our industry's call to action.

No single company can navigate today's turbulence alone. Our value chain is deeply interconnected, from raw materials to converters to end users. When one link pulls on its own, the whole chain feels the strain. That is why Afera's **European Tape Week (22–26 September 2025 at the Hyatt Regency Thessaloniki)** matters: it gives us the space to step out of daily noise, confront volatility together and turn uncertainty into shared direction.



If we fail to act collectively, the risks are clear: regulatory missteps, lost competitiveness, margin pressure and innovation pipelines stalled. But if we face these challenges together, we strengthen our ability to adapt and thrive. We must also realise that in such turbulent times, solutions for our customers may come from unexpected directions, and meetings like these help us broaden our view.

The programme in Thessaloniki reflects both urgency and creativity. The **Technical Seminar** showcases advances such as biodegradable polymers, LED UV-curable acrylics and bio-inspired adhesion. Sessions on AI-powered development tools show how speed and insight can accelerate progress. In the **Annual Conference**, we move from science to strategy: the keynote on why “doing the right thing” in chemicals is so difficult, new perspectives on the **E.U. Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR)**, and economic outlooks spanning Europe to the U.S. equip us to anticipate shocks and build resilience.

We deal with humans as well as technology: B2B is also H2H! We must enable ourselves and our workforce to navigate the VUCA world and gain a broader perspective on the market in which we operate. This is far more complex than most of us recognise on a day-to-day basis. Later in the week, we explore how to thrive in a VUCA world—through scenario planning, digital product passports and raw

material innovation. We also take stock of our industry's long game: from **battery technology and EVs to packaging's green transition**, to fresh global data from AWA and Freedonia that ground our strategies in fact.

For every participant, the value is tangible: regulatory clarity, fresh business intelligence, tools for faster innovation and stronger connections with peers across the value chain. If there was ever a moment for every player in the adhesive tape industry to be in Thessaloniki—sharing, probing and committing—it is now.

This week is about leaving with fewer assumptions and more alignment: one partnership deepened, one metric shared, one experiment to shorten a critical loop. Small steps that, multiplied across our community, keep the whole industry moving forward.



Yes, the moment is tense. But it is also energising. Together we can transform pressure into progress and uncertainty into the tape that binds our next chapter. **Thessaloniki is where that work begins—and where our industry answers its call to action.**

Finally, none of this would be possible without the backing of our valued partners. We are proud to recognise our **Gold Sponsors**—[BASF](#), [Elite Cameron](#), [Henkel](#), [ICHEMCO](#), [Indafor](#), [Mondi](#), [Sekisui Alveo](#) and [Synthomer](#)—and our **Branded Materials Sponsors**, [Bostik](#) and [UPM](#). Their commitment makes a direct impact on the quality and ambition of European Tape Week, ensuring that the programme content reaches the highest level for the benefit of our entire industry. At the same time, their investment is more than support: It gives them stronger visibility, meaningful industry engagement and a prominent role in shaping the conversations that matter most to our sector.

I look forward to seeing you next week!

Warm wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Evert Smit'.

Evert Smit
President, Afera – The European Adhesive Tape Association

P.S. You can still register at www.aferaeuropeantapeweek.com.