

Tape College 2010 in Brussels

An Event to Remember

Afera hosted its 4th Tape College 14-16 April 2010 at the Brussels Marriott Hotel. The event, which had been postponed in 2009 due to the economic crisis, was deemed a great success by organisers and attendees alike. The organisation and content of the Working Programme, along with the centrally-located venue and dynamic group in attendance, were praised for offering a perfect mix of content, atmosphere and networking.

The 4th Tape College

The TC is a 3-day educational seminar designed by Afera to provide industry newcomers, as well as those interested in keeping abreast of the technical essentials of self adhesive tape, with an understanding of the fundamentals of the tape business. This event, which was expanded in 2007 to include 14 lectures, was intended to build upon the success of the first three events held in 2004, 2005 and 2007. The 4th TC was originally planned to be held in Spring 2009, but because of reduced registration numbers resulting from the economic crisis, Afera's then Technical Committee Chairman Lutz Jacob took the decision with Afera Secretary-General Astrid Lejeune to reschedule the event a year later.

The Working Programme

The Concept

In order to provide its members with the opportunity to brush up on basic industry knowledge by 'going to school' with the experts, Afera created this biennial opportunity for all those affiliated with the tape business to explore the basics of design, manufacture, application and testing with tape industry authorities. Class topics included the fundamentals of tape products, coating technology for water-based, hot melt and acrylic PSAs, tape backings, release papers and liners, physical testing, utilising EB- and UV-irradiation, surface treatment methods and rheology of PSAs.

75% of customer complaints had to do not with the tape itself but with improper application. Tim Jensen, Jensen & Associates (USA)

Out of the Technical Box

The TC 2010's Working Programme featured three additional out-of-the-technical-box lectures. The first and most highly-rated lecture of the event was "Political Molecules in Practice", given by Leon Rodenburg of Eastman Chemical B.V. (NL), which covered registration, classification and labelling according to European legislation and international public policy. "Increasing the Pie for the European Self Adhesive Tape Industry: An Insight into the Opportunities to Replace Alternative Bonding and Fastening Systems" by Isabelle Meijer and Frank Voermans of Meijer + Voermans Consulting (CH) covered Afera's Marketing Committee's latest specialty-segment market study. Lastly, "Increasing the Pie for the European Self Adhesive Tape Industry: Engineered Adhesive

Solutions” was delivered by Steve Barwick of Parafix Tapes & Conversions Ltd., a Member Company of Afera’s new SDC MKC Subgroup.

Format

The 4th TC had the same format at the 2007 event: starting Wednesday at noon and finishing after lunch on Friday. What makes the Afera Tape College popular and unique in Europe is that the curriculum and setting are styled after a university seminar. Participants attend ‘classes’ in an informal, classroom-style atmosphere. The venue floor plan is arranged in a manner conducive to class participation and active learning. Various Afera Members were recruited to participate as ‘professors’, lecturing for approximately 45 minutes on their area of expertise within the tape industry.

Presenters and Hosts

*This is my first Tape College and my second technical event with Afera. I have given several presentations on the advancements of new adhesives. My interest here today is to learn more about technological advancements and the latest art of designing modern adhesives. **Christoph Küsters, Senior Technical Manager, 3M Deutschland GmbH, Industrial Adhesives & Tapes Laboratory Europe (D)***

Many of this year’s lecturers are veteran presenters at the Tape College and are highly sought after, such as Chrétien Donker of Eastman Chemical Middelburg B.V. (NL), Tim Jensen of Jensen & Associates and formerly of 3M (USA), Johannes Türk of BASF AG (D), Frederic Bodino of Dow Chemical Company (CH), Steve Prestidge of Adhesive Technical Services representing Chemsultants International (UK), Sandra Bellendorf of Evonik Goldschmidt GmbH (D) and Prof. Dr. Andreas Groß of the IFAM Fraunhofer Institut (D).

Tape College Chairman Chrétien Donker, who also heads Afera’s Technical Committee, kicked off the event with an instructive introduction: “Enjoy this event and learn something over these three days of seminars, because the exercise of the Tape College is *learning*.”

Christoph Küsters, Senior Technical Manager for 3M Deutschland GmbH, Industrial Adhesives & Tapes Laboratory Europe (D), in his introduction to Session 1, revealed one of the great strengths of the Tape College’s

first team of presenters: “We have a very strong panel of the most experienced tape industry representatives in the world here with us today: Tim Jensen, Johannes Türk and Chrétien Donker, together with more than 100 years of experience in tapes and adhesives. I invite your active participation. Take advantage of the opportunity to ask questions to bring lively action to our workshop.”

Mr. Jensen then delivered the first lecture, an introduction and basis for the audience’s understanding of the fundamentals of PSA tape products, explaining what tape is, how it works and why it is important. TC Session Chairmen included Mr. Küsters, Ronald Pfaff of tesa AG (D), Bart de

Dier of Avery Dennison (B) and Ralf Rönisch of Henkel KGaA (D). Some presenters had this say about the TC:

This is my second time as a presenter at an Afera event. The TC offers a great chance, especially for newcomers, to learn about the basics of the tape industry—about the various compositions and components of tape—and to make contact with others in the industry. The latter is perhaps a much more important aspect of the event. **Sandra Bellendorf, Technical Manager of RC Silicones, Goldschmidt Industrial Specialties, Evonik Goldschmidt GmbH (D)**

This is my fourth time attending the Tape College, and I think it has improved with each time it has been organised. The presentations are edited and updated, and I will have to do this for mine if I want to give it again in two years' time. This is because there are many returning attendees as well as first-timers here.... I would say that the level of presentations is very interesting and we have had the opportunity to learn a lot about every area of the tape industry. **Dr. Frederic Bodino, Business Development Manager Specialty PSAs, Adhesives and Functional Polymers, Dow Europe GmbH (CH)**

As a presenter, I enjoyed attending this seminar for the first time. Having been involved in release liners for years, I hoped to make paper a bit better known in the tape profession and also to meet industry players—customers' customers—whom we do not have the opportunity to meet as papermakers. **Pascale Gouttenoire, Development & Technical Customer Service, Ahlstrom LabelPack (F)**

Content

One of the Tape College's main strengths is the depth and detail of subject matter of its lectures. Subjects range from efficient overviews to deep, technical narratives. The content of the Working Programme has been routinely fine-tuned according to participant feedback and updated to jibe with trends and developments in the industry.

The two presentations which stood out for me were the introduction to acrylic PSAs and the overview of backing materials. **Jens-Peter Schumann, Market Manager Converting Industry, ISRA Surface Vision GmbH (D)**

The TC is very well-organised, and an event like this is always good to attend. I like catching up on the latest technological advances. The Working Programme is very interesting and covers a wide range of relevant subjects. **Uri Dat, R&D, Davik Self-Adhesive Tapes (Israel)**

I have found the presentations to be really relevant, providing a good overview of tapes, and I have picked up a few contacts. The presentations offer a good dose of reality for me, since I

What you often find at international conferences is that the subject matter of presentations tends to be rather superficial in order to suit a wider audience. This is not the case with Afera's presentations, which delve into deep detail. In this respect, Afera offers a substantial, high-level programme." **Marco Martinez, Marketing Communications Director, Release & Label Papers, Advanced Nonwovens, Home & Personal Nonwovens, Ahlstrom Turin S.p.A. (I)**

have not studied these specifics since I was at university fifteen years ago. **John Bettink, R&D and Production Manager, Carlisle Hardcast Europe B.V. (NL)**

There were many interesting topics on the agenda.... Some highlights for me were the presentations on EB- and UV curing, modern surface treatment methods, and coating technologies. **Stefano Orticoni, R&D, Sicad SpA (I)**

Survey Results

I get the impression that at this event, you have more technical professionals and not so many of those who are involved in classification, labelling and registration. Most technical people,

You have been talking about chemical molecules. I will talk about political molecules.... Registration under REACH is not just a technical issue. It's a business issue. Leon Rodenburg, Eastman Chemical B.V. (NL)

however, will have to get involved in the latter REACH activities because labels will have to be changed on the chemicals they are using. Furthermore, we are convinced that many chemicals (between 2 and 20%) are going to disappear from the market, because the chemicals are either too expensive to test, or the chemicals have heretofore unknown nasty properties in terms of toxicology, eco-toxicology. They will have to reformulate due to this de-selection caused by REACH. So reformulating chemicals will very much involve the people sitting in this audience. **Leon Rodenburg, Manager Product Issue Management EMEA, Eastman Chemical B.V. (NL), following his 16 April presentation**

According to the results of the TC participants' survey, Leon Rodenburg's (Eastman Chemical B.V., NL) presentation entitled "Political Molecules in Practice" was the most popular in terms of presentation and content. Mr. Rodenburg reviewed REACH as it affects the tape industry, covering the important topics of registration; deselection; the Classification, Labelling and Packaging (CLP) Regulation; the Globally Harmonised System (GHS) for Classification and Labelling of Dangerous Substances and Mixtures; and the consequences of noncompliance.

The addition of a presentation covering the European Chemicals Policy and its consequences for tape making was first made to the TC's 2007 Working Programme, and this topic has been confirmed repeatedly by Afera's Membership as an important one. Mr. Rodenburg is known to be an expert on the subject, as well as a straightforward, charismatic speaker. As he is much in demand to guide companies and professionals on this subject, Afera's Programming Committee were very fortunate to engage his services both for the Tape College and for the upcoming Europe-India Self Adhesive Tape College in Mumbai in November 2010 (see page 12).

When working in the European market, the impact of REACH is clearly visible. Mr. Rodenburg's talk gave a structured overview. Staggering is the fact that the pages of documentation tremendously outnumber the REACH regulation itself. Also, the information given about GHS for the Classification and Labelling of Hazardous Substances was well-presented. **Dr. David Vanraes, TS&D Specialist, Pressure Sensitive Adhesives, Cytec (B)**

The two other most highly rated seminars were “Modern Surface Treatment Methods” by Prof. Dr. Prof. Dr. Andreas Groß, Head of Centre for Adhesive Bonding Technology, IFAM Fraunhofer Institut (D), and “Introduction to the Rheology of Pressure Sensitive Adhesives” by Pr. Christophe Derail of IPREM-EPCP, Université de Pau et des Pays de l’Adour (F).

This is the third time I have attended the Tape College as a lecturer, and in my opinion it has only gotten better. I think it is a very interesting and important conference due to the fact that adhesive tapes are the most under-recognised adhesive in the world. Recently I wrote a proposal for a project involving gathering information on adhesive tapes. What I learned is that in Europe, more than 6 billion square metres of tape were produced in 2009. This was new to me, and therefore I think we need to recognise adhesive tapes increasingly, because the properties available through adhesive tapes are so interesting. Most people are only aware of products such as Post-It notes and everyday tape, but we have PSAs with completely different properties which can be utilised in many industries. **Prof. Dr. Andreas Groß, Head of Centre for Adhesive Bonding Technology, IFAM Fraunhofer Institut (D)**

I worked for a large company, 3M, and we had our own in-house training staff, but some of the SMEs may not have that. Moreover, a lot of the vendors—the people who supply the industry—will know their individual aspect of the business but may not know the whole business, and in this respect the Tape College is of special benefit to them. I think Afera does a very good job on the Programme, and I think it serves a very worthwhile function within the industry.

Tim Jensen, Jensen & Associates (USA)

A salesperson for an adhesives producer, I am new to my company and the industry. As a first-time attendee of the Tape College, I found the entire Programme of interest.

Aude Bajicot, Account Manager, Label Tape Packaging Protective Systems, Collano Adhesives AG (CH)

History

The Afera Tape College is modelled on Tape University 101, organised by Afera’s American counterpart association, the Pressure Sensitive Tape Council (PSTC), which has offered educational seminars for more than 30 years. In its continuing effort to add value to its membership, Afera has pinpointed the need to provide such an event for its diverse membership base. The Association is confident that both newcomers to the industry, as well as those who want to expand their knowledge and increase their effectiveness, benefit from this biennial educational conference.

Attendance

Open to all tape industry professionals, “the Tape College is formulated for the novice and for the salesperson, marketer, customer service representative and any other manager who needs to hone his or her technical knowledge,” explained former Tape College Chairman Lutz Jacob, currently of RJ Consulting (D) and formerly of ExxonMobil Chemical Europe (B). As with previous Tape Colleges, the 4th event attracted a wide

range of participants from around the globe for three days of introductory technical lectures and networking.

Event capacity was quickly filled with a majority of those from R&D and technical divisions, eager to learn from and mingle with their tape industry compatriots. Participants included Afera Members and non-Members alike: tape manufacturers, suppliers, national industry associations, converters, distributors, end-users and consultants. R&D, technical service, product development, quality control, sales, marketing, business development, manufacturing and engineering personnel in particular greatly benefitted from the TC.

This is the third time attending the Tape College. I've come back for three reasons: First, I think this is a key event for newcomers to the industry to learn about tapes and related topics. Second, I am not a newcomer to the business—I have thirty years' experience—but I can always learn something new. Third, I am here to meet customers and potential customers and to engage with Afera. **Wolfgang Roessing, ExxonMobil Chemical (D)**

Compared to the 1st Tape College, at the current event I have seen more young people—new to the industry I think—and that is a good thing. If I look around, most of the faces are not familiar to me, and that's a good sign. I am satisfied that the presenters have received many good, well-thought-out questions following their lectures. **Chrétien Donker, TC Chairman and Product Application Specialist, Eastman Chemical Middelburg B.V. (NL)**

We build machines for the coating industry—especially for the adhesive tape industry—and the Working Programme was very interesting to me. Chemistry is not my strong suit, so I have learned a few things in this area and about what is going on in the adhesives industry in general. In the lectures, I have learned about what's new in adhesives for hot melt and UV, for example.

Martin Jöhren, Project Manager, Herbert Olbrich GmbH & Co. KG (D)

I work in marketing of thermoplastic rubbers. I am definitely not new to this area of business; I follow customers in this sector. I have attended these lectures in order to refresh my knowledge of this sector and applications. Nowadays it is very difficult

to be technically competent in a specific field, so the knowledge I have gained here adds value to my job performance. **Cristina Gobbi, Technical Service & Application Development, Thermosplastic Rubber, Polimeri Europa (I)**

As a product manager, I am looking for new product developments and the requirements of the market, and to understand and analyse the needs and to co-ordinate the sales and R&D teams. As a first-time attendee of the Tape College, I am here to see people, to see technically where the industry is heading and what the new trends are. I think what I learn here will be very useful. The BASF presentation was very good—very informative, especially interesting in terms of the new coating heads that they have introduced. The last one [on Wednesday] given by Mr. Donker was interesting—I am just a water-based emulsion producer, but it is good to learn about hot melt technology. I am sure the rest of the Programme will be very good. **Şebnem Kaplan Acar, Product Manager of Adhesives & Textile, Organik Kimya (Turkey)**

I just started working at my company last week. As an organic chemist, I have experience in polymers, but not in this field. This area of the chemical industry is very new for me. This is my first experience with Afera, not having known about the organisation before last week. I feel that I have gained a lot of information from the presentations; I am focussed more on the technology than the chemistry. **Nisa Mazor, R&D Chemist, Davik Self-Adhesive Tapes (Israel)**

My company is not an Afera Member, but many of our customers attend the TC so we are here to learn more about their business and their business backgrounds. The Working Programme offers a very nice variety of technical aspects covering industry insights—I like it. So I'm here to pick up general knowledge about the business and for networking purposes. **Jens-Peter Schumann, Market Manager Converting Industry, ISRA Surface Vision GmbH (D)**

I come here to update myself on leading issues and developments in tape. I see customers I know and make new industry contacts too. **Hélène Ferdinand, Account Manager, Eastman Chemical B.V. (NL)**

I work in process control and field improvements, and my job involves a broad range of areas in the company. This is my first time attending the TC, and I hope to gain a bit more knowledge of the product we make. Obviously these are the experts, and anything we can gain from the course we can take back with us and hopefully bring about some improvements back home. **Gary Preston, Advanced Tapes International Ltd. (UK)**

I have participated in all four Afera Tape Colleges. This one is very well-attended and the presentations are very good. The Tape Colleges have all been high-quality, and this one is no exception. There are increasingly more of the seasoned tape professionals at this event, so it is becoming less an introductory training course for young newcomers to the industry, although I do see some of those here. Perhaps it's tending to be more of a technical seminar than a tape college/introductory event nowadays? **Johannes Türk, Technical Service Manager, Marketing Polymer Dispersions for Pressure Sensitive Adhesives, Business Management Dispersions for Adhesives and Fibre Bonding, BASF (D)**

I have only been working in the PSA business for three months, having previously worked in the paper business. The subjects are new to me so they're very interesting, and I have learned a lot. Of course you could continue for hours on each topic. **Nathalie Llop-Baïsse, Specialty PSA Technical Service Specialist, Rohm & Haas Europe Services (F)**

We produce industrial tapes for the building industry, air ventilation and so on. We are a Member of Afera, and no one in the company had been planning to attend the event. Since I only joined my company seven months ago and I am new to the tape industry specifically, I said I would go. **John Bettink, R&D and Production Manager, Carlisle Hardcast Europe B.V. (NL)**

I work in a marketing function in crepe paper which is a base material for masking tape. These kinds of events provide you with comprehensive knowledge. You don't have to be extremely technical to be part of this audience

I am happily surprised that we have 95 participants. People would not attend if the topics were not interesting to them.
Prof. Dr. Andreas Groß, Head of Centre for Adhesive Bonding Technology, IFAM Fraunhofer Institut (D)

and gain knowledge that I can pass along to the home team at Ahlstrom. It's also a good professional networking event. In terms of the presentations, I have been most interested in the newest developments and applications in the market and an overview of the state of the industry. **Yichen Wang, Marketing, Crepe Product Line, Ahlstrom Tampere Oy (FIN)**

I've been working for three years in the R&D laboratory of Sicad, which is an adhesive tape producer. I am here to improve my knowledge of adhesive tape. This has been a successful conference for me. Especially important are the technical lectures of the Working Programme, because I need to be able to understand the different problems and challenges I face in my daily work. **Maurizio Roncoroni, R&D Technician, Sicad SpA (I)**

Tape industry players made a particularly strong showing at this year's Tape College, with 95 in attendance. Many commented on this remarkable number of participants in light of today's economic climate:

The number of attendees seems good—in line with expectations—which is great. **Marco Martinez, Marketing Communications Director, Release & Label Papers, Advanced Nonwovens, Home & Personal Nonwovens, Ahlstrom Turin S.p.A. (I)**

I am happily surprised with the number of attendees we have at the Tape College this year in the current economy. This reveals the value of this event to the tape industry. **Lutz Jacob, RJ Consulting (D) (formerly of ExxonMobil, B)**

It looks to be a very successful event. When I look around and see how many people are in attendance, I am impressed. Perhaps we have had more attendees in the past, but if you follow the current economic climate, having over 90 participants... Afera has done very well with this event. **Wolfgang Roessing, ExxonMobil Chemical (D)**

Attendees Intend to Return

Many first-time attendees, as well as those who were returning, indicated that they planned to return for the next Tape College in 2012:

I have only been in the tape business for a short time, so I found the Tape College useful in providing a brief overview of this sector. I appreciated the mixture of general and more specialised presentations.... I am very convinced of the high quality of the TC event and plan to attend the next one. **Dr. Marco Abendroth, Product Development, ORAFOL Europe GmbH (D)**

I will definitely recommend the Tape College to others in my company for the content and also for facilitating contact with suppliers such as machine builders. **John Bettink, R&D and Production Manager, Carlisle Hardcast Europe B.V. (NL)**

*I have only been in the tape business for a short time, so I found the Tape College useful in providing a brief overview of this sector. I appreciated the mixture of general and more specialised presentations.... I am very convinced of the quality of the TC event and plan to attend the next one. **Dr. Marco Abendroth, Product Development, ORAFOL Europe GmbH (D)***

Networking

Afera ensured that the 4th Tape College would provide ample opportunity for networking outside of classes. In addition to two cocktail receptions, three buffet lunches and four coffee breaks, a special conference dinner was arranged on the second evening of the event at the Museum Brasserie attached to the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium. Here guests enjoyed fine wine and three courses of ‘revamped Belgian classics’ while enjoying the trendy décor styled by famous interior architect Antoine Pinto.

*Naturally when attending one of these conferences, networking is one of the most important aspects. Even if you are already familiar with the business, networking is always 50% of the value of the conference, because you have the opportunity to meet in one location so many people from different companies, countries—to make new contacts or renew old ones if you are already in business with them. **Andrea Küthe, Technical Service, Synthomer GmbH (D)***

Whether attendees were new or old—that is, to the Tape College or to the industry—most indicated that one of their main objectives—if not their main objective—in attending the TC was for professional networking purposes:

As a project engineer/manager from the design department, I wanted to find out what is going on in the industry and also to meet with a few customers who perhaps have some new projects to discuss with us. I came for networking purposes more than the lectures. **Martin Jöhren, Project Manager, Herbert Olbrich GmbH & Co. KG (D)**

The Tape College provides a good platform for meeting with a number of people at one location. It’s quite convenient having a number of industry players here and networking with them in a rather relaxed setting. I am here on behalf of the German national association, so that means that German adhesive tape manufacturers are here, as well as raw materials suppliers. This is a good opportunity to gain valuable information and to learn what’s going on—especially to see where people may be experiencing problems and how the association can help. **Dr. Axel Heßland, Environment and Technical Affairs, IVK (D)**

I am interested in networking here, while my laboratory colleague is interested in the technical content of the lectures. **Şebnem Kaplan Acar, Product Manager of Adhesives & Textile, Organik Kimya (Turkey)**

There are a few companies that we deal with—or have dealt with in the past—with whom I am interested to meet here at the Tape College.

Gary Preston, Advanced Tapes International Ltd. (UK)

I came for networking purposes.... I’ve met a few people I know here, and I’ve made a few new contacts. **Uri Dat, R&D, Davik Self-Adhesive Tapes (Israel)**

I have made a few new contacts here—specifically from three different companies—so the networking aspect has been very useful. **Nathalie Llop-Baïsse, Specialty PSA Technical Service Specialist, Rohm & Haas Europe Services (F)**

As a supplier of adhesive resins that go into self adhesive tape, I think the Tape College is very interesting to my colleagues, especially because here is where you meet your customers. **Leon Rodenburg, Manager Product Issue Management EMEA, Eastman Chemical B.V. (NL)**

I have worked for 10 years for Sicad, the first three in quality control and the last seven in R&D. I came to the Tape College to update my knowledge of tapes and to meet primarily with suppliers and also some competitors. **Stefano Orticoni, R&D, Sicad SpA (I)**

Afera's M + V Special-Segment Market Study

A notable addition in the area of business development to this year's TC Working Programme was a presentation entitled "Increasing the Pie for the European Self Adhesive Tape Industry: An Insight into the Opportunities to Replace Alternative Bonding and Fastening Systems" given by Isabelle Meijer and Frank Voermans of Meijer + Voermans Consulting (CH). Ms. Meijer explained to the audience that M + V supports companies in new business development, and that there are three rules for 'increasing the pie': 1) look for new markets, 2) find new applications in existing markets, and 3) compete with other joining methods. The aim of this section of the Programme was to detail Afera's MKC's latest specialty-segment market study, how it could be utilised and the benefit it could be to businesses in the tape industry.

The participants in Brussels are primarily technically-oriented and are active in R&D, technical services, etc. Their interest in Afera's market study and methodology tool is in raising awareness about other joining methods (besides specialty tapes) and using this information in product development." Isabelle Meijer, M + V Consulting (CH)

Afera engaged Meijer + Voermans Consulting (CH) to perform this non-conflicting, specialty-segment study for the Association's Membership in 2009. The team first developed a 'methodology tool', a digital programme that allows direct comparison of all joining methods on 25 criteria. The comparison tool includes data of 19 joining methods judged on joint features and production-related aspects. The second part of the study takes the form of detailed market research concerning joining methods in consumer electronics. The two-part result, consisting of a report and a methodology tool, was first unveiled at the Annual Conference in October 2009 in Cracow.

For the TC presentation, Ms. Meijer explained that they updated the tool in such a way that the results of a direct comparison between two joining methods were shown in a more user-friendly format: one page showing solely the main strengths and weaknesses of one joining method against another, and a second page in which all technical details of this comparison are explained. They also demonstrated in more detail a practical case in consumer electronics (high-end TV sets) in which this comparison tool could be used for business development.

Ms. Meijer and Mr. Voermans received positive feedback about their presentation and study, but unfortunately, as their presentation was one of the last on Friday's Programme, this slot was more poorly attended than usual because of travel problems caused by the Icelandic volcanic eruption. In the meantime, the team have received more inquiries from new companies regarding the presentation and study/tool. Some companies have indicated an interest in scheduling in-house instruction sessions, during which Ms. Meijer would explain the ins and outs of the study/tool, and how this tool can be used as an innovation device in business development.

For their upcoming presentation at the Annual Conference in October 2010, Ms. Meijer and Mr. Voermans plan to focus on the utilisation of knowledge of joining methods and the comparison tool in the daily business activities of companies active in the speciality tape market.

The complete Afera market study is available for purchase at www.afera.com or via Afera's Secretariat on tel. +31 70 312 39 16. A purchase of €300 includes a hardcopy of the report and a write-protected USB stick containing the methodology tool. Anyone interested in an individual or company-based instructional session is encouraged to contact Ms. Meijer on isabelle.meijer@mvconsulting.ch or +31 74 852 67 62 for further information.

Afera's SDC Group

As mentioned above, a notable addition to this year's TC Working Programme was a lecture on "Increasing the Pie for the European Self Adhesive Tape Industry: Engineered Adhesive Solutions" delivered by Steve Barwick of Parafix Tapes & Conversions, Ltd (UK). The aim of this presentation was to familiarise the audience with tape converting solutions and specialty die cutters (SDCs), which make up a new Marketing Committee Subgroup of Afera. "We make the raw material more convenient for our customer to use," emphasised Mr. Barwick, who provided an efficient overview of what SDCs do, the value they bring to the market, why products should be converted, who uses and buys converted products, their presentation and quality, and what SDCs can provide.

Afera's Specialty Die Cutters (SDC) Group represents the European tape converting industry. Established in 2008, the SDC Group is an active subcommittee of Afera's MKC with the mission of establishing one strong voice promoting the functionality of engineered PSA solutions in Europe.

The SDC Group, chaired by Michael Punter, Managing Director of Parafix Holdings Ltd., consists of senior directors and managers representing various regions and companies, both large and small, who are actively involved in the specialty tape conversion market.

"We make the raw material more convenient for our customer to use." **Steve Barwick, of Parafix Tapes & Conversions, Ltd. (UK)**

The Group is committed to 'growing the pie' for the European self adhesive tape industry through the development and appreciation of self adhesive component parts, which are engineered to meet the needs of end-user customers, including the design of product placement systems.

The SDC Group recognises the value of the 2009 Meijer and Voermans specialty-segment tape market study and

therefore is actively promoting its use as a process appreciation tool.

Although it is recognised that over the last ten years, tape producers have come to appreciate increasingly the value of engineered parts, it is thought that a capabilities and value proposal should be published in the form of a converter handbook to further assist professional tape solution sellers. The SDC Group are currently working on this project.

To support the SDC initiative, the Group plans to present a paper at Afera's Tape College/Technical Seminar annually. The Group also plans to deliver a lecture as part of the Working Programme at Afera's Annual Conference in October 2010 in Stockholm. For more details about this and the other presentations scheduled at the Annual Conference, turn to page 11 to see the complete Working Programme.

Furthermore, a serious attempt will be made to differentiate the SDCs at industry trade exhibitions, where the focus will be this Group, from machine builders and equipment suppliers, tool makers and complementary substrate suppliers to primary product suppliers. Further details of the SDC Groups' proposed exhibit at ICE 2011 are to be announced.

To learn more about the SDC Group and to inquire about Membership, please contact Afera Secretary-General Astrid Lejeune, mail@afera.com, tel. +31 70 312 39 16, fax: +31 70 363 63 48. Furthermore, check back at Afera's website, www.afera.com, for the SDC Group's planned new section in 2010.

Wrapping Up

The closing day of the Tape College began with intense speculation on the effects of the Icelandic volcanic eruption on air travel and ground transportation. Unfortunately this led to a certain amount of distraction and absenteeism from the last four lectures of what was the more business development and public affairs end of the Working Programme. Mr. Donker and other presenters were diligent about announcing alternative travel possibilities and gave regular updates on airport closures, train station and car rental locations, etc. Far beyond these logistical frustrations, the 4th Tape College will be remembered for its quality organisation, Programme and participants. Of equal importance is the strong, better-than-expected showing at the event, reflecting an industry with strong foundations and a stabilising market.

*Unfortunately, I had to cut my stay in Brussels short due to the ash cloud and the resulting transport troubles. **Pascale Gouttenoire, Development & Technical Customer Service, Ahlstrom LabelPack (F)***

Next Year's 5th Technical Seminar

Check back at www.afera.com for updated information on the Tape College's sister event, the Technical Seminar, which will be held in Spring 2011.

Notes and Additional Info.

The proceedings of the Tape College Programme were distributed to participants at the start of the event. A detailed Tape College Working Programme, as well as this article, can also be found at www.fera.com.