

Specialty & commodity tapes in focus: Key takeaways from Afera European Tape Week 2025 as PPWR expert joins line-up



From sustainable chemistries to digital transformation, the entire value chain of adhesive tapes—specialty and commodity alike—takes centre stage in Thessaloniki. Afera’s European Tape Week 2025 has now confirmed the addition of Dr. Dennis Bankmann, Managing Partner of Emerging Motif OHG (Germany), who will provide essential insights into how the forthcoming E.U. Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) will reshape the adhesive tape industry.

Held 22–26 September in Thessaloniki, ETW promises to be the most comprehensive event yet for the global adhesive tapes industry. With its dual structure—the 11th Technical Seminar and the 68th Annual Conference, plus the biannual Committee Meetings—this year’s Programme brings together cutting-edge innovation, critical regulatory insight and forward-looking market intelligence from prestigious sources. For every player in the tape supply chain, the agenda delivers actionable knowledge.

With about 30 days until ETW begins, interest in attendance has accelerated. A recent run on spots means those considering registration should act soon to secure their place. Thessaloniki not only offers a beautiful backdrop but also a practical one: the location is easy to reach from virtually any European airport, and the event hotel provides a free, quick shuttle ride from the airport. Both the hotel and surrounding accommodation options are attractively priced, making participation accessible. In addition, all Afera Members and registered European Tape Week participants have already received a current attendance list, giving early registrants a head start on networking.

Your guide to ETW

Are you wondering what European Tape Week could mean for you and your company? Let this article be your guide. Below we walk through the key topic areas of the Programme, highlighting how each carries takeaways for both specialty and commodity tape producers. By the end, you’ll see exactly why this year’s event is not just informative but essential for shaping your strategy.

Innovation in raw materials and chemistry

The Technical Seminar opens with advances in biodegradable polymers, LED UV-curable acrylics, bio-inspired adhesion, faster drying of water-based PSAs, and intrinsically flame-retardant polymers, presented by Polymat, Henkel, Dr. Höhle AG, BIOXEGY, Synthomer and ICAP-SIRA. For specialty producers, these breakthroughs mean higher performance, sustainability and safety in demanding sectors such as automotive and electronics. For commodity manufacturers, improvements in polymer design and drying efficiency can cut costs and energy use while ensuring compliance with packaging and construction standards—an increasingly important differentiator in high-volume markets.

Breakthroughs in production technologies

Sessions led by TS Converting/Elite Cameron, UPM Specialty Papers, Kroenert and artimelt focus on UV hotmelt coating, double-sided simultaneous silicone coating, pyrolysis recycling and sustainability measurement beyond PCF values. Specialty producers will find tools for meeting tight performance specifications and sustainability targets in advanced markets. Commodity producers, meanwhile, benefit directly from efficiency gains in curing and coating technologies, which are critical for packaging and masking tape production. Pyrolysis and recycling pathways will also shape compliance strategies for commodity packaging tapes under future regulatory frameworks.



Digitalisation and AI in tape development

Digital transformation is a strong theme, with ZwickRoell presenting on automated testing, Chemspeed on workflow automation, and Citrine Informatics, ai-predict and Osium AI showcasing AI-driven formulation and development. Specialty tape makers will see how these tools shorten innovation cycles and speed customisation. Commodity tape producers can leverage automation for quality consistency across high-throughput lines, while AI-assisted material selection reduces formulation costs in markets where price competition is intense.

Regulation, sustainability and compliance

The joint session of the Technical Seminar and Annual Conference brings together key voices on sustainability and regulation: Denis Hicks (Triple Helix Group) on chemicals and sustainability, Evert Smit (Lohmann/Afera) on CSRD and the doughnut economy, Dr. Martin Klatt (BASF) on Digital Product Passports, Karla Pastor on Afera's Flagship Sustainability Programme (AFSP), Pablo Englebienne on Afera's Regulatory Working Group update, and now, significantly, Dr. Dennis Bankmann (Emerging Motif OHG, Germany) on *The PPWR: The road ahead and implications for the European adhesive tape industry*.

Bankmann will give an overview of the PPWR articles most relevant for adhesive tapes, clarifying what is already fixed in the legal text and which requirements will emerge from secondary legislation and European standards. He will illustrate, with examples, how adhesive tape applications might be assessed under the regulation in the future, and the market shifts that could follow.

Drawing on more than a decade in adhesives and coatings R&D, a PhD in chemistry, and recent work leading sustainability and circularity projects through his consultancy Emerging Motif, Bankmann brings both scientific and strategic expertise to the discussion. His involvement in drafting guidelines, whitepapers, and standards on recyclability and product safety gives him a unique ability to translate complex regulation into practical implications for business. For specialty tape producers, his insights provide foresight into how sustainability requirements will reshape advanced product designs and documentation. For commodity tape makers, particularly in packaging, his analysis highlights what recycled content, recyclability, and digital product information will mean for market access and competitiveness in Europe.



Risk management and the global economy

Economic resilience is another central theme. Speakers include Andrea Boltho (Oxford) on the global economy, Bill Allmond (ASC) on U.S. policy implications, Dimitrios Sakipis (PwC Greece) on financial sustainability, Sam Strijckmans (Nitto) on thriving through turbulence, Jan Noordegraaf (Innograaf) on renewable raw material pricing, and Waltraud Gläser on managing organisational change. Specialty producers will gain insights into global disruptions and sustainability pressures affecting high-value applications. Commodity producers, often most exposed to price volatility and policy shocks, will take away concrete strategies for managing costs and maintaining competitiveness in packaging and construction markets.

Market data and strategic foresight

Two cornerstone market reports—AWA’s specialty tape market update and Freedonia’s commodity tape industry report—anchor this track, supported by perspectives from Corey Reardon and Ephraim Reyes (AWA), Elliott Woo (Freedonia), Brenden Drijgers (Kraton/Afera), Melanie Ott (artimelt), Dirk Weckesser (Wacker), Pierre Larnicol (Arkema), and Carlo Maria Righetti (NAR). Specialty tape manufacturers will gain clarity on global growth drivers, innovation trends and energy cost impacts. Commodity tape producers receive an equally strong focus, with Freedonia and Afera survey data providing rare visibility into volumes, pricing and SME competitiveness. The session led by NAR’s Righetti addresses the specific opportunities and challenges facing family-owned SMEs in Europe’s commodity tape sector.

Application-driven innovation

The agenda closes with application-focused sessions on battery technologies and mobility (Henkel, Arkema), packaging and automotive solutions (H.B. Fuller, tesa SE), and construction, electronics and domestic appliances. Specialty producers will find new



avenues for differentiation in energy storage, mobility and high-performance electronics. Commodity producers, meanwhile, gain actionable insights from packaging-focused presentations, particularly H.B. Fuller and tesa SE on the green transition, which highlight how even standard packaging tapes must evolve to remain competitive through recyclability, renewable feedstocks and improved cost-efficiency.

Why it matters

The adhesive tape industry is at a crossroads. Specialty and commodity producers alike are being challenged to adapt to rapid technological advances, increasingly stringent sustainability requirements and volatile global markets. Afera European Tape Week 2025 provides a rare forum where all these forces are addressed together, linking the science of new materials, the realities of production, the insights of digitalisation and the hard edge of regulatory compliance.

The addition of Dr. Dennis Bankmann’s expertise on the PPWR ensures that participants gain not only an understanding of the law as it stands today but also foresight into how secondary legislation and

standards will shape market access in the years to come. This is critical knowledge for both specialty producers navigating high-value sectors and commodity manufacturers competing in cost-driven, highly regulated markets.

Equally, the Programme's market data and economic outlook sessions give companies the tools to make informed decisions in uncertain times, while the application-driven tracks show how new demands in packaging, mobility and construction can be turned into opportunities for growth. Combined with Afera's focus on sustainability and collaboration, the event provides attendees with a practical roadmap for resilience and competitiveness.

With just weeks to go and strong interest already driving registration, European Tape Week 2025 is more than a congress—it is the industry's strategic meeting point, equipping businesses with the knowledge and connections to move confidently into the future.

For more information and to register, visit www.aferaeuropeantapeweek.com.

