

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

European adhesive tape association appeals to ever-broader industry base at recent yearly conference, launches collaborative tool for PCF calculation of adhesives and tapes called TACK, for which IKEA (in Swedish) says “Tack!”

- Setting a record for attendance since Covid, more than 150 commodity and specialty tape professionals attended the 67th Afera Annual Conference themed “Taping Our Future” in Thessaloniki, Greece, in late September.
- Here Afera launched a collaborative tool for calculation of product carbon footprint (PCF) of adhesives and adhesive tapes called TACK, which the industry collective developed with the German Adhesives Association (IVK) and sustainability consultant Sphera.
- During the Conference, IKEA Sweden’s Material & Technology Engineer, who was a speaker, thanked Afera for developing such an aligned tool for the industry, as it will make their work towards circularity much easier.
- The Association has also released its official position committing itself to ensuring that PCFs of adhesive tape products are calculated in an aligned manner and with little effort to meet future legal requirements and requests from the supply chain.
- While in Thessaloniki, Secretary General Astrid Lejeune was recognised for 25 years of service to the tape industry collective.
- So far in 2024, Afera has seen an 11% increase in Members and a 31% increase in followers of its LinkedIn account, reaching over 2,000, demonstrating the growing collective strength of the European adhesive tape industry.



The Hague, The Netherlands,
17 October 2024
[Afera, the European Adhesive](#)
[Tape Association](#), recently welcomed over 150 commodity and specialty tape professionals from 15 countries across Europe, Asia and the U.S. for critical networking and deep diving into the hottest tape business issues at its successful 67th Annual Conference in Thessaloniki, Greece. This set a record for attendance of the premier yearly knowledge and

networking event for the European industrial tape business since the pandemic. The event also boasted the most industry sponsorship received in the same period.

“You are the key players, inquisitive minds, influencers and innovative leaders from the adhesive tape industry, said Afera President Evert Smit (Lohmann GmbH & Co. KG, Germany) in welcoming the crowd. “This event is more than just networking and knowledge sharing. It’s about co-creating,

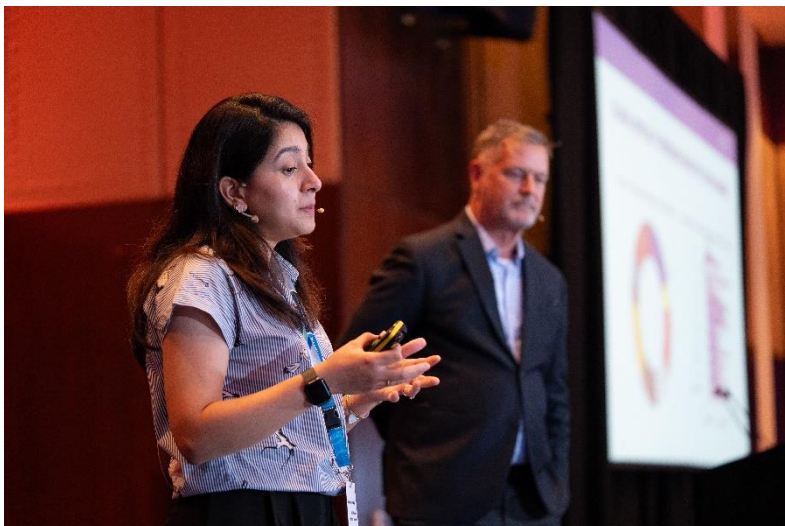
transparency, changing mindsets and meeting the new generation on its terms—and ultimately making our technologies and businesses futureproof."

A three-day programme featuring 15 seminars and three expert panel discussions offered a unique, transformative journey into the world of commodity and specialty tapes. Three separately themed working sessions focussed on *Market data and trends*, *regulatory affairs and sustainability*, and *current tape applications and technology highlights*. The Conference Working Programme was preceded by Afera's biannual [committee](#) and [flagship sustainability project \(AFSP\)](#) meetings. Social activities framed and enhanced each day's schedule, including a "5 senses" tour of the old centre of Thessaloniki and networking coffee breaks and organised conference lunches, drinks and dinners on each day.



Market data and trends

Corey Reardon and Anum Javed Beg (AWA Alexander Watson Associates, The Netherlands) reported on global and European market data concerning specialty pressure sensitive tapes, which make up 15% or 7.7 billion square metres of the total global PST market. Some of the key trends they covered include the soft-to-no growth in the economies of central Europe (affecting building and construction tapes), declining growth of the European automotive industry over the past year (affecting IC engine and EV tapes), the semiconductor shortage (affecting insulation tapes), tapes used as replacements for mechanical fastenings to reduce the size of product construction, and sustainability (affecting tapes with PCR content, bio-based materials and sustainable adhesives). What is the most disruptive technology they have seen in data? Innovation in the medical segment, although it takes a significant amount of time for any product to qualify. See [Member-discounted offer: New Afera Edition of AWA market study](#)



Mr. Smit then shared his insights into the global tape market from having taken part in the Global Tape Forum and China Adhesives and Tape Industry Association Meeting in Shanghai, China, in April 2024. This included data, strategies and other market intelligence from North America (PSTC, Pressure Sensitive Tape Council), Japan (JATMA, Japanese Adhesive Tapes Manufacturers Association), China (CATIA, China Adhesives

and Tape Industry Association) and Taiwan (TAAT, Taiwan Regional Association of Adhesive Tape Manufacturers).

Edris Parsa (WACKER Chemie AG, Germany) delivered his colleague Dirk Weckesser's presentation on the trends and challenges of raw materials for the adhesives industry. In a session devoted to key impacts on strategic planning; the dynamics and building blocks of feedstock trends, fossils and global disruptions; and options and challenges to the Industry's becoming sustainable; Mr. Parsa concluded with an explanation of the commercial implications of PCF of sustainability in about 5 years. It is important that in Europe we understand the Industry is very sustainability-driven, and whether it concerns raw materials/feedstocks or CBAMs (Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanisms), companies need to deal with this strategic issue as it affects their business models and investment decisions.

Regulatory affairs and sustainability

Moderator Brenden Drijgers (Kraton Corporation, The Netherlands) also lectured on the monetary value of carbon footprint reduction in the adhesive tape industry. How does carbon price correspond with carbon value? Of all emissions, we talk of carbon currently, because this is what the market is interested in. We are all becoming aware of the recommended best



practices for managing Scope 3 emissions effectively. Both up- and downstream, manufacturers can have the greatest impact, creating value through encouraging suppliers to utilise biobased raw materials, renewable energy sources and sustainable practices. Rethinking solutions with circularity in mind is a question of prioritising and adopting a holistic approach.

Spyros Konstantis (RULER Consult, U.K.) discussed the rapidly evolving key corporate focus area of ESG from a risk management and insurance perspective. Climate- and ESG-related disclosure obligations are developing across the globe and currently vary among the regions. Tape-related businesses in Europe may be subject to SFDR, E.U. Taxonomy and CSRD, obligations of which start in 2025.

Bastian Lehmann (mpcg, Germany) provided an overview of CSRD, ESRS and sustainability in the adhesive tape industry. The main focus of the ESRS is the double materiality assessment (DMA), which determines which sustainability issues are of material importance to a company. The biggest challenge on the path to achieving CSRD compliance is systematically collecting and managing the necessary data.

Maria Pia Spinelli (Ergo S.r.l, Italy) gave a presentation on the significance of life cycle assessment (LCA), which supports both the ESPR and GCD by shaping product design and substantiating environmental claims. LCA results can be shared through PEFs and EPDs to ensure reliable and comparable environmental information, while also supporting schemes such as E.U. Ecolabel and EMAS.

Pablo Englebienne (Afera Regulatory Affairs & Sustainability Manager, The Netherlands) introduced Afera's groundbreaking collaborative PCF calculation tool for adhesives and adhesive tapes that is in the final stages of development. First, he explained the development process and significance to the adhesive tape industry of the aligned tool, launching it under the name of TACK (Tapes and Adhesives Calculation Kit). Margarida Gama (Sphera, Germany) provided an overview of how TACK works, its features and 2 specific use cases.



Afera launches a collaborative tool for calculation of PCF of adhesives and adhesive tapes called TACK

The products of the adhesives and adhesive tape industries, as enablers of energy and material efficiency, durability, repairability, upgradability, recycling and CO₂ reduction, make an important contribution to achieving the goals of the European Green Deal and at the same time must show themselves to be CO₂-

neutral by 2050 at the latest. During this transition, supporting environmental claims with hard data will be a necessity with upcoming European regulations. European adhesive tape manufacturers, converters and raw material suppliers, therefore, need an aligned, recognised standard for measuring the sustainability of adhesive tapes for product designers and engineers and everyone else in the adhesive tape value chain, as well as regulatory bodies.

The Product Carbon Footprint (PCF), one of the most established methods for determining the climate impact of a product, sums up the total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions generated by a product over the various stages of its life cycle. PCF is also becoming increasingly important within our industry for estimating the environmental impact of all types of adhesive tapes—in particular, a “cradle-to-grave” (entire life cycle) or “cradle-to-gate” (defined life cycle phase) assessment of PCF based on the Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) approach, including factors such as the raw materials, manufacturing, distribution and end-of-life stages for B2B reporting.

See Afera's position paper [Collaborative Tool for Calculation of Product Carbon Footprint \(PCF\) for Adhesive Tapes](#).

Afera and German Adhesives Association (IVK) have been collaborating with Sphera, a specialised provider of sustainability consulting services, to develop a web-based, sector-wide tool for PCF calculation of both adhesives and adhesive tapes using an aligned, straightforward, affordable method. PCFs are to be calculated according to ISO standard 14067:2018: Greenhouse Gases – Carbon Footprint of Products through an expansion of the Together for Sustainability (TfS) PCF Guideline, and ISO standard 14040:2006 Environmental Management – Life



Cycle Assessment. A third-party validated calculation model has been collaboratively developed by and for the tapes and adhesives sectors, using feedback from over 30 companies (Afera and IVK members) representing the wide European industry. It is compatible with the supply chain up- and downstream.

Revealed in Thessaloniki under the name of “TACK”, Tapes and Adhesives Calculation Kit, the PCF calculation tool for adhesives and tapes is in the final stages of development for B2B utilisation by adhesive tape manufacturers, converters and raw materials suppliers who are Afera or IVK members. Non-LCA experts will be able to work with the pre-customised, web-based interface which could even be linked to corporate ERP systems. Users have the possibility to input primary data from suppliers or to utilise a high-quality secondary data set curated from Sphera’s LCA database. TACK’s current database for adhesive tapes consists of 74 raw materials incorporated into adhesive tapes, plus 17 recipes for generic adhesives and release coatings, totalling 91 entries. Third-party verification of PCFs calculated with the tool will be facilitated by thorough reporting and methodology documentation.

TACK is currently in the “modelling and preparation” stage of development, after which it will be reviewed, adjusted and then validated by DEKRA in Q1 2025. The final version of the web-based PCF calculation tool is currently in the development pipeline for launching in Q1 2025. More information about all aspects of TACK, including a comparison with alternative tools, is available [here](#).

Current tape applications and technology highlights

IKEA thanks Afera for developing TACK

Venla Hemmilä (IKEA Sweden AB) addressed the adhesive end-user experience in a presentation on IKEA’s road towards lower greenhouse gas emission adhesives as part of the multinational conglomerate’s broader sustainability goals. “Five years ago, those who worked in sustainability were an island of their own, and you could not implement a product which cost more if it were sustainable,” she explained. “This has changed. Now we are willing to pay more for products with CO₂ emission reductions.” Ms. Hemmilä continued, “That is why we gather LCAs, so we can identify where we get the largest CO₂ reduction per euro invested. This is the change where sustainability and business have come together, instead of being fully separate.

“*Tack* in Swedish means *thank you*, and I would like to express my thanks for your TACK, Afera and IVK’s newly developed PCF calculation tool for adhesives and adhesive tapes. So, *tack* for TACK, because it will make our work easier!” Ms. Hemmilä shared. “If we have your industry working on standardising the method of measuring LCAs, it will save a lot of time on this job of confirmation that we need to do inside our company.” She said that they have been in discussions with IVK for more than a year, so IKEA knows that they can use the data coming out of TACK.



Barry Wild (FlexEnable, U.K.) described to Afera Members how adhesive solutions have made it possible to evolve to mass production of flexible electronics products. He discussed three case studies: that of transferring flexible electronics from the lab to mass production, making an LC cell with flexible substrates, and the future challenge of moving AR from the lab to production.

Yvonne van Zadelhoff (Tape Converters Holland B.V., the Netherlands) taught us about multi-process converting and the value of a network in product development. MPC enables quick engineering, flexibility of equipment, consistent quality, scalable technology and the incorporation of sustainable practices, such as precision coating. Working within a network is invaluable, as it brings expertise together and more can be achieved jointly.



Matthias Popp (Fraunhofer IFAM, Germany) covered “debonding on demand” in view of the circular economy. Citing current strong demand from the footwear and aviation industries, he presented innovative strategies for developing adhesives with debonding properties, including future innovations. These include the mechanisms and triggers of temperature, light/UV, electricity, microwave, ultrasound, magnetic fields, solvents and aqueous solutions, of which he explored the technological challenges, environmental benefits and safety aspects of implementing debonding mechanisms in practice.

Christina Stathopoulos (Dare to Data, Spain) covered "Empowering the new era of business with AI: manufacturing and beyond." Tape manufacturers and others in the value chain can utilise AI for predictive maintenance to service machines before they break down, price forecasting of raw materials, detection of production line defects, and generative design of new adhesive formulations, material efficiency optimisation, custom tape solutions, and more sustainable solutions.

Kiran D Malhotra (PSTC, Pressure Sensitive Tape Council, U.S.) shared insights on behalf of Michel Merckx (American Biltrite, Inc.) from the 2024 Global Tape Forum in Shanghai and PSTC's Tape Week in Orlando. The GTF and Global Test Methods Committee Meetings centred around market overviews, regulatory developments and adhesive tape test methods being developed for harmonisation: Afera's Dynamic Shear TM and PSTC's High Speed Unwind TM. Tape Week incorporates application tracks, including those of their particular focus as high-potential market sectors for increased usage of adhesive tapes: construction, automotive, appliances and medical.



Astrid Lejeune celebrates silver anniversary as Secretary General of Afera

On the second evening of the Annual Conference, Astrid Lejeune (Afera Secretary General) was recognised for her 25 years of service to Afera. Ms. Lejeune, who began working for Lejeune Association Management in 1990, took on her leadership role within the Association in 1999. Afera President Evert Smit surprised her with a heartfelt speech, the presentation of a certificate of recognition and a gift.

"Running this Association--watching the European Tape Industry progress and become organised and represented by its best minds and decision-makers with our support—has been so rewarding and fulfilling in my career," she told the group of 150 tape industry conference attendees at a

candlelit dinner at the Polis Convention Centre. "I am so grateful to have known and worked with some of you since starting at Afera, which feels like a family to me."

Moderators Sonja Haug (Loparex) and Mr. Drijgers concluded the event by highlighting the importance of reporting within the entire supply chain (noting that Afera had had every type of stakeholder on stage); understanding the challenges associated with raw materials; collecting data; following regulatory compliance timelines (especially in the cases of SMEs); knowing the viewpoint of the end user (and how the tape industry can greatly affect the environmental friendliness of products); and using the new TACK.

"There is so much we have learned about the world of tapes around us this week that we can take back to our companies for discussion and implementation – to ensure that we are all moving in the right direction: towards creating value," Mr. Smit said as he closed the event.

All Annual Conference attendees received access to the Conference proceedings (slide decks). Access the programme booklet [here](#). Find out more about Afera Membership [here](#).

Afera's next events

Afera 67th Annual General Assembly
19 November 2024
15.00-16.30
Online

Afera European Tape Week
68th Annual Conference, 11th
Technical Seminar & Committee
Meetings
22-26 September 2025
Hyatt Regency Thessaloniki, Greece



8th Global Tape Forum & Global Test Methods Committee Meetings
17-19 November 2026
Hamamatsucho Convention Hall, Tokyo, Japan

2024 increase in members and followers demonstrates growing collective strength of European adhesive tape industry

Just as Afera set a record for attendees at its latest yearly conference, the Association has seen its membership base grow by 11% since the beginning of 2024, welcoming the following new members:

- Alimac S.r.l (Italy), a manufacturer of carry handle tapes
- BNT Tapes (Turkey), a manufacturer of packaging, masking and industrial tapes
- Hueck Folien GmbH (Austria), a manufacturer of plastic films and foils
- Inktech B.V. (The Netherlands), a supplier of inks and coatings
- Polifibra Folien Handelsgesellschaft mbH (Germany), a manufacturer of plastic films and foils
- SIGA Manufacturing AG (Switzerland), a manufacturer of building & construction tapes
- TM.E. S.p.A - Termomeccanica Ecologia (Italy), a supplier of solvent recovery installations and mixers
- TS Converting Equipment Ltd. (U.K.), a supplier of converting equipment for the paper, film and foil industries.

Afera has also increased followers of its LinkedIn account by 31% in 2024 to over 2,000. For more information, visit www.linkedin.com/company/afera and www.afera.com.





Astrid Lejeune
Afera Secretary General



Evert Smit
Afera President
Lohmann GmbH & Co. KG

[Afera, the European Adhesive Tape Association](#) unites stakeholders along the value chain of the European tape industry, to ensure and increase the relevance of the tape business in the world of tomorrow. The go-to community of the European tape industry is comprised of 125 member companies from more than 20 European countries that include adhesive tape manufacturers, suppliers (raw materials, machine and packaging), converters, national tape organisations, research institutions and universities. With the goal of making the tape industry future-proof, Afera actively studies and involves itself in relevant market, standardisation, sustainability and regulatory issues, provides platforms and programmes for discussion and learning, and facilitates contact among its members and all other pertinent bodies at national and international levels. Founded in Paris in 1958, Afera has operated with its head office in The Hague, the Netherlands, since 1999 under the management of Lejeune Association Management.

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