

Methyl methacrylate monomers of Evonik's VISIOMER® brand: A tradition of reliability

- Realignment of methyl methacrylate (MMA) business
- Focus on customers and efficient processes
- Global availability in high quality

Darmstadt (Germany) – Whether in durable coatings and adhesives or in ultra-transparent plastic, methacrylate monomers are part of many everyday products and applications. “Methacrylates are the versatile “specialists” among monomers,” says Hans-Peter Hauck, the head of the Methacrylates Business Line at Evonik. “As a leading provider, we offer a broad range of methacrylate monomer products for various industry sectors within our VISIOMER® brand.”

Focus on customer benefit

Since April 2016, the Methacrylates Business Line has comprised three product lines. While the Bulk Monomers Product Line pursues a strategy focused on cost efficiency and reliability with large-volume monomers, such as MMA, the Application Monomers Product Line has positioned itself as a system provider with a number of specialty monomers. The third product line, Molding Compounds, concentrates on PMMA molding compounds that are combined under the PLEXIGLAS® brand. Its unique products represent an important share of the methacrylate value chain. “This structure enables us to focus even more on the respective requirements of our customers, to help shape their businesses and set standards in our markets,” says Hauck.

Reliable partnership and service

Methyl methacrylate (MMA) is the business line's largest product by volume. Among other applications, it is used for ultra-transparent polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA), which Evonik markets under the PLEXIGLAS® brand and it is employed as a core component in paint and coating resin. “We are an MMA manufacturer with more than 80 years of tradition and the corresponding know-how, which is also reflected in the quality of

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our product,” says Hans–Detlef Luginsland, the head of the Bulk Monomers Product Line.

“Besides tradition, the intelligent shaping of the business model is an important component of the newly restructured unit. Our current focus is particularly on the digital transformation of business processes in the supply chain, customer service, and production planning,” Luginsland continues. “Our customers’ markets are changing rapidly. As the world’s second–largest MMA manufacturer, we want to support them in their development. That requires future–oriented, agile management and processes.” The product line is increasingly focusing on key customers and core regions, which will contribute to the long–term strengthening of the business.

The Bulk Monomers Product Line produces in four plants on three different continents (China, Germany and the U.S.) and is represented worldwide in important countries. “This structure enables us to serve global and regional customers with a high level of supply security and regional service,” says Luginsland.

“Our continuous investments in safety and in improving the efficiency of all manufacturing facilities form the backbone of an integrated methacrylate production network and guarantee our future competitiveness. In addition, our efficient and reliable supply chain enables on–time product deliveries,” he explains further.

Delivery situation

Demand for MMA continues to be very high. Solid growth has also been observed so far in 2017, at a level above the GDP. However, several planned and unplanned shutdowns led to a shortage in the supply chains of all regions in the first six months of 2017 and affected Evonik as well. “This bottleneck, occurring earlier this year, and the continued low inventory are a challenge for all customers and suppliers,” says Luginsland. Internal analysis shows that a high level of capacity utilization and consistently high demand can also be expected for the second half of the year and beyond. “We are preparing for this,” Luginsland emphasizes.

That's another reason why the Methacrylates Business Line is continuously working to improve key technologies. "Our top priority is to increase yields, together with reducing the consumption of raw materials and energy," explains Hans-Peter Hauck. "Ultimately, these projects will allow us to continuously improve system availability as well as the production volume to accompany the rising regional demand within the existing integrated manufacturing system."

Evonik is a worldwide manufacturer of PMMA products sold under the PLEXIGLAS® trademark on the European, Asian, African and Australian continents and under the ACRYLITE® trademark in the Americas.

Company information

Evonik is one of the world leaders in specialty chemicals. The focus on more specialty businesses, customer-orientated innovative prowess and a trustful and performance-oriented corporate culture form the heart of Evonik's corporate strategy. They are the lever for profitable growth and a sustained increase in the value of the company. Evonik benefits specifically from its customer proximity and leading market positions. Evonik is active in over 100 countries around the world with more than 35,000 employees. In fiscal 2016, the enterprise generated sales of around €12.7 billion and an operating profit (adjusted EBITDA) of about €2.165 billion.

About Performance Materials

The Performance Materials Segment is managed by Evonik Performance Materials GmbH. The segment focuses its global activities on developing and manufacturing polymer materials and intermediates, especially for use in agriculture and in the rubber and plastics industry. In 2016, the segment's roughly 4,400 employees generated sales about €3.2 billion.

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