

Focus on sustainability: LEONHARD KURZ presents pioneering solutions at K 2022

Fürth/Germany, 09/08/2022: The world's largest trade fair for the plastics industry, K 2022, will take place in just a few weeks. From October 19 to 26, 2022, the industry will come together in Düsseldorf to present its latest products and innovative processes. This year, the focus is on one topic in particular: Sustainability. How can circularity work in the plastics sector? Which materials and technologies improve the products' carbon footprint? These and other questions are being asked of exhibitors at K 2022.

LEONHARD KURZ, a sustainability pioneer in the industry, has been committed to the responsible use of the environment and resources for decades and, as a UN Global Compact member, has committed to complying with the strictest standards out of conviction. KURZ uses 100 percent renewable energies at its production sites in Germany and aims to achieve CO₂ neutrality by 2040. In addition, the company continuously invests in efficient processes for recycling, exhaust air disposal, plus energy saving and recuperation. KURZ has designed numerous innovative concepts for sustainable product development. At K 2022, the thin-film specialist will be presenting pioneering solutions for the automotive, home appliances, consumer electronics, and health & beauty sectors at Stand A19 in Hall 5.

Resource-saving innovations in decoration technology

At the trade fair, KURZ will demonstrate the sustainable In-Mold Decoration process (IMD), which combines several processes in a single work step. The wafer-thin transfer products are applied dry and emission-free - and the use of recycled materials such as ocean plastic or bio-based materials is also easily possible. At present, finishings with a proportion of bio-based raw materials of around 30 percent can be implemented - and this trend is on the rise. KURZ has also already succeeded in producing decoration products with CO₂ savings of up to 25 percent, which are in no way inferior to conventional products in terms of design and quality. Components decorated with KURZ products are already 100 percent recyclable.

Efficient processes and recyclable components for the automotive industry

The desire for more sustainability is already shaping the automotive sector today. Together with advancing e-mobility, concepts for CO₂ reduction go hand in hand with recyclable components that are manufactured using efficient and resource-conserving processes. LEONHARD KURZ will demonstrate how this is possible with various exhibits at the trade fair. From the component for the rear to the emblem for the front or rear of the vehicle, and the control panel for the roof-lining, all concepts are produced, refined, and equipped with intelligent functions in a single step using IMD. This 'one shot' process saves resources and energy. In addition, all exhibits are finished with the recyclable KURZ thin-film decorations, which do not affect the recyclability of the components in the recycling process. "The innovative and ecologically compatible solutions as well as the attractive designs of the KURZ Group increase sustainability along the entire value chain and give manufacturers and brand owners from the automotive industry clear competitive advantages," explains Rainer Süßmann, Head of Business Area Plastic Decoration at LEONHARD KURZ.

Design and sustainability merge in home appliances

On the one hand, household appliances should be visually appealing and, on the other hand, equipped with state-of-the-art functions. However, today's consumers also expect the appliances to be manufactured in a resource-conserving manner and sustainably finished. Manufacturers can meet these demands by relying on pioneering solutions from KURZ. These combine a significant reduction in the carbon footprint with the most stringent design expectations.

KURZ will be presenting various washing machine components at K 2022, which also use recycled materials. Control panels are manufactured using In-Mold Electronics (IME). "The efficient process combines Injection Molding, Molding, Decoration, and integration of smart touch operation in a single step," explains Nick Wagner, Head of Business Area Plastic Decoration Sales and Marketing at KURZ, and continues: "This saves energy and resources. At the same time, the innovative, durable finishing takes into account the increasingly important

sustainability concept, as the decoration does not affect the recyclability of the components, and recycled materials can be used without any issues.”

Consumer electronics with sustainable added value

In the field of consumer electronics, end consumers are increasingly placing value on environmentally friendly concepts that save energy and resources. KURZ helps manufacturers meet this requirement. The sustainable IMD and IME processes are also used in consumer electronics. Using various design-driven controller prototypes, the trade fair will demonstrate how recyclates can be decorated in a high-quality and appealing way so that it is in no way inferior to new material. Even backlighting and various lighting effects are easily possible, as is the use of partial metallization as a sustainable alternative to electroplating. KURZ product designs thus provide inspiration for the consumer electronics of tomorrow.

Innovative solutions for the cosmetics industry

The requirements for packaging in the cosmetics industry are high and complex. On the one hand, they have to boast striking designs and stand out from the crowd at first glance, and on the other hand, consumers want sustainable solutions. Visitors to K 2022 will find out how both aspects can be harmoniously combined. KURZ will demonstrate machine and process technologies for the direct finishing of containers such as tubes and jars. This eliminates the need for labels, saving resources. In addition, the machines demonstrated by KURZ subsidiary ISIMAT enable the finishing process to be implemented as part of a hybrid solution - regardless of how many steps it comprises - thus reducing the total energy requirement. If required by the customer, ISIMAT equips the machine with LED technology, further reducing energy consumption. After all, KURZ transfer products have no negative impact on recyclability.

Taking sustainability to the next level

Across industries, more and more manufacturers are striving to increase the proportion of recycled materials used in their production. LEONHARD KURZ is also a pioneer in this field and was the first company in the plastics industry to introduce a PET take-back system in the form of KURZ RECO SYS®. This means that remnants of the KURZ decoration carrier materials can be recycled and

reused as high-quality compound granulate - RECOPOUND® - in injection molding. “RECOPOUND® is a sustainable and flexible alternative to existing materials with consistent quality,” explains Johannes Romming, Project Manager Innovation & Sustainability at LEONHARD KURZ. “What’s more, the post-industrial recyclate can be decorated just as attractively and elegantly as new material. At K 2022, visitors to the stand of our partner companies Deckerform (Stand B77, Hall 13) and ARBURG (Stand A13, Hall 13) can experience this in an exciting live demonstration that we have prepared.”

KURZ is part of the VDMA Circular Economy Forum

As an additional highlight, KURZ is participating in the Circular Economy Forum of the Verband Deutscher Maschinen- und Anlagenbau e. V. (VDMA). VDMA members such as LEONHARD KURZ will present their projects and technologies to enable the recycling of plastics in ten pavilions on the open-air area of Messe Düsseldorf. At the joint stand P10, KURZ will be demonstrating how well the use of recycled materials in injection molding works, using the RECOPOUND® in-house recycling granulate as an example. In addition, the thin-film specialist, together with its machine subsidiary BAIER, will be demonstrating the finishing of recycled materials live on site via hot stamping on a BAIER BECORUN.

At a glance

K 2022 from October 19-26, 2022

LEONHARD KURZ Stiftung & Co. KG: Hall 5, Stand A19

Product group: Machines and equipment for finishing, decorating, printing, and marking

Trade fair presentation focuses on: Automotive interior/exterior, consumer electronics, home appliances, sustainability

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About KURZ: The KURZ Group is a global leader in thin film technology. KURZ develops and manufactures decorative and functional layers applied to carrier foil for a wide range of industries, from the packaging and printing industry through to the automotive, electronics, card and textile sectors. KURZ offers a comprehensive portfolio of products

for surface finishing, decoration, labeling, and counterfeit protection, rounded off by an extensive range of stamping machines and stamping tools. The company is also continuously investing in new technologies and developing innovative solutions for integrating functionality into surfaces. The KURZ Group has more than 5,500 employees at over 30 sites worldwide and produces under standardized quality and environmental standards in Europe, Asia, and the USA. A global network of subsidiaries, representatives and sales offices ensures short paths and individual, on-site consulting.

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