

Trends & Innovation news dedicated to abrasive producers [by Ahlstrom]

**We purify and
protect with
every fiber...**

**More than
a claim, a belief**



COMMITMENT

**Interview with
Emmanuelle Picard,
Executive Vice-President**



RANGE

**Discover the potential
of nonwovens**



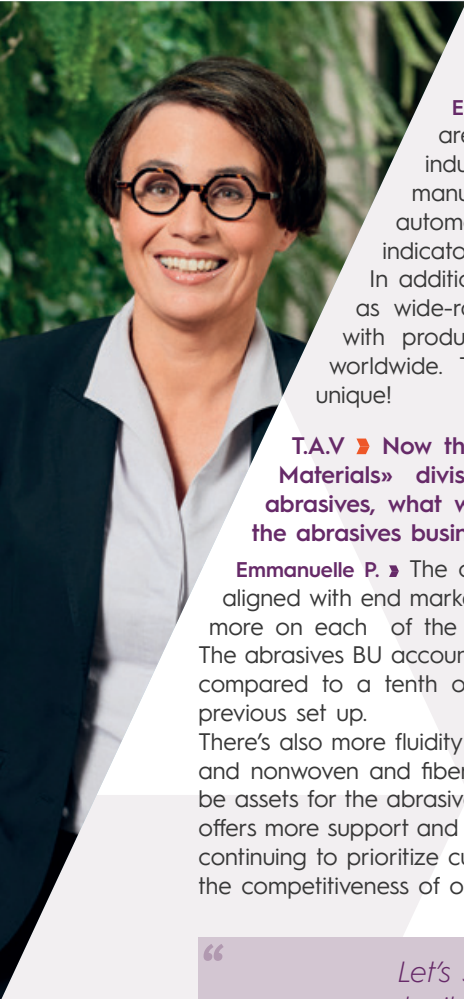
EXPERTISE

**Machine 8 : Moving
towards products with
multiple possibilities**



INTERVIEW WITH EMMANUELLE PICARD - Executive Vice-President, Building Materials

With a background in the abrasives business, more specifically grinding wheels reinforcements, Emmanuelle Picard was appointed as EVP Building Materials in October 2022. Here she shares her vision and the impetus she wants to give to the division and its abrasives customers.



The A Vision » You know the abrasives world well. What makes it special?

Emmanuelle P. » Abrasives are essential to many industrial sectors - aircraft manufacturing, construction, automotive. They are a very good indicator of industrial development. In addition, the abrasives industry is as wide-ranging as it is specialized, with products that can easily travel worldwide. This combination is pretty unique!

T.A.V » Now that you lead the «Building Materials» division, which encompasses abrasives, what would you like to bring to the abrasives business and to the customers?

Emmanuelle P. » The organization into 5 divisions aligned with end markets offers a chance to focus more on each of the business units they include. The abrasives BU accounts for a third of the division, compared to a tenth of the business area in the previous set up. There's also more fluidity between the business units, and nonwoven and fiberglass papers BUs can now be assets for the abrasives side. So this organization offers more support and assistance to the BUs, whilst continuing to prioritize customer service, quality and the competitiveness of our offer.

“ Let's seize the opportunity to accelerate the environmental transition! ”

T.A.V » The group's new claim is «We purify and protect with every fiber». Can you tell us a bit more about that?

Emmanuelle P. » Taken literally, «we purify and protect» is a direct reference to the group's original activities (filtration and packaging). «Every Fiber» refers to the use of every type of fiber (cellulose, viscose, synthetic, etc.). At the same time, we are implying «with every fiber of our soul», a symbol of the teams' very strong commitment. We are also implying a determination to speed up the environmental transition, by manufacturing in a more responsible way, which is a genuine concern: water treatment, reducing our carbon footprint, use of bio-based materials, sustainability, etc..

T.A.V » In these difficult times, what are the most promising opportunities for your customers?

Emmanuelle P. » In spite of the current context, we want to keep investing, improving and opening up to new possibilities, hence our plans for Machine 8. In this very volatile transitional period, with its wildly fluctuating energy costs, I want to seize the opportunity to accelerate the environmental transition. We are paying even more attention to production methods and ways to limit energy losses. Also, the cost difference between traditional raw materials and greener materials is falling, which can help people who are aware of the issues to take the plunge.

“ We are continuously investing and opening up even more possibilities to increase value for our customers. ”

T.A.V » What 4 words would you say sum up the momentum you are trying to create with your team?

Emmanuelle P. »

COLLECTIVE AGILITY: in a constantly changing world, where everything is interlinked, we need to make decisions as close to the ground as possible, to work together and show agility.

AMBITION: to provide additional value with innovation and sustainable development.

CONFIDENCE: to trust in our ability to bounce back and tell ourselves that the cycle will start up again.

COMMITMENT: let's seize the opportunity to accelerate the environmental transition! We are continuing to invest and open up even more possibilities for value creation for our customers.

Crises are cyclical, and growth returns after they are over. It's essential to step back so that you can glimpse the prospects for the future and be ready for them. And that's what we are doing, with the whole team!



DISCOVER THE POTENTIAL OF NONWOVENS

In its Building Materials division Ahlstrom has a business unit dedicated to nonwovens. Diego Luis PUERTA, a product manager in the BU, has been talking to us about some of these solutions.



What is it that characterizes a nonwoven?

These backings differ from paper in two main ways:

- **The nature of the fibers:** larger quantities of synthetic fibers are added to the cellulose. Glass fibers give it strength and stability. Polyester fibers are also used to give more adaptability in terms of shape, as well as for strength, stability and even softness.
- **The way the fibers are bonded together:** chemically, mechanically or thermally. Similar to paper, treatments can be used to give a nonwoven extra features, which can be on both sides or asymmetrical between the top and the back. It can also be strengthened to resist moisture, fire, or the development of molds or to improve acoustics by adjusting the air permeability.

2 technologies to appeal to a wide range of markets

There are two different manufacturing processes:

WETLAID

Short fibers are suspended in water and then deposited onto a forming wire and chemically bonded to form mats with a basis weight of 12 to 180 gsm. These are used in the medical world as wound

dressings that allow the skin to «breathe» whilst molding themselves to the shape of the body. They are also found in floor construction, plasterboard, ceiling soundproofing, digital wallpaper, etc.

DRYLAID (needlepunch)

Long fibers are carded (combed) then cross-lapped and finally mechanically consolidated by needle punching to obtain felts with a basis weight ranging from 70 to 600 gsm. With a thickness and softness reminiscent of textile fabrics, there are high-potential openings for their use in fashion, medical, acoustics and others.

The possibilities are almost endless. Dedicated R&D teams work on adapting the properties of nonwovens to different market needs. «We are sustainability-conscious, as the group is as a whole, so we are working on solutions for recyclability and the use of entirely natural fibers and binders...». A conviction woven into the fibers of these products, you might say!

NONWOVENS FOR ABRASIVES

- **FIBLEX™ fleece**, a wetlaid nonwoven, is a very stable and malleable fleece that will be integrated within the strengthening fiberglass mesh in the thinnest cutting discs. It comes as standard in black, 25 gsm, but it can be customized with other colors and basis weights.
- **NEEDLEPUNCH PRODUCTS** are thick, soft and strong like felts and could be used for applications like polishing, special finishing and buffing in the automotive industry.



DISCOVER THE DIVISION “BUILDING MATERIALS”

	GLASS FIBER TISSUE	NONWOVENS	PAPERS
	Thin glass fiber layer used as a final finish mainly in building applications	Engineered fabrics made from fibers, used in a wide range of products either combined with other materials or stand-alone	Paper backings from 53 to 500 g/m ² used for the abrasive industry and new emerging applications
Product application	GFT layer used in vinyl flooring and Carpet Backing	Facer, backings and substrates for wallcovering, decor, plasterboard and insulations panels	A to G grades used as backings to produce coated abrasives for wet and dry applications
	Glass fiber mat used for protection, insulation and preparation of surface to painting	Nonwoven layers used in automotive headliners	Latex papers, Antistatic papers, Saturating bases, Composites for combinations & cloth alternatives
	Glass veil used in roof construction	Nonwoven used as embroidery backing	Developments for cutting-off discs Blotters, Backings for fiberglass meshes
	Glass fiber layer combined w/ polymeric used in pipes, panels & wind turbines	Nonwovens layers for medical tape	Papers for new applications
		Disposable Flushable wipes for personal use	



ENJOY A NEW COFFEE TALK

Decoding sustainability of abrasive paper backings!

We've already talked to you about our Coffee Talks, the events that allow you to interact with experts who give you all the ins and outs of a specific subject connected to the abrasives industry, with the goal of boosting innovation. This brand new format is divided into two sections, an interview to watch followed by an AMA session, so that you can ask your questions live. Now we are bringing you a second edition, and this time the focus will be on sustainability. Estelle Seibert, host of the show, tells us more.

The A Vision » Estelle Seibert, can you tell us how the first Coffee Talk went down?

Estelle S. » When you see comments like «Really thank you for your coffee breaks. I really enjoyed your interview», I think that says it all! The format was really very popular... It gave people the time to watch the initial interview and then ask questions, and some participants liked it so much that they wanted their colleagues to sign up for the program so that they can join in the next Talks.

T.A.V » In the next Coffee Talk, we'll be talking about sustainability. Can you tell us a bit more about that?

Estelle S. » Improving the environmental performance of our customers' products is something that really matters to us. In fact it is one of Ahlstrom's priorities, and we have therefore put a lot of resources and research into finding innovative, more environmentally friendly solutions, using fiber-based materials.

JOIN OUR COFFEE TALK

The second interview will be broadcasted in March and the related **AMA sessions** will be taking place on **March 30**.

To join us,
[SIGN UP HERE](#) »



T.A.V » But is that relevant to abrasives?

Estelle S. » Absolutely! We can help customers in a variety of ways. Firstly, by becoming a sustainable partner for them thanks to our way of selecting our raw materials and manufacturing: reducing carbon footprint and increasing recycled water rate are two key drivers in our actions.

Then by proposing backings that reach their full potential while using energy sparingly or backings that cut out some of treatment steps, or even replacing film or cloth for certain applications.

Abrasives and their packaging are also subject to legislation that requires them to be «sustainable» or «recyclable», etc. We can usefully share some of the knowledge we have on these notions applied to paper. And to bring the picture into focus for our customers, it is Natasha Chorlton,



» **NATASHA CHORLTON**

Manager, Circular Economy and Recyclability

Sustainability allows us to unlock the full potential of fiber-based products

our circular economy and recyclability expert who will be our guest this time. With her knowledge of the value chain and packaging constraints, she will be able to clear up a lot of questions.

T.A.V » So what kind of questions will be covered?

Estelle S. » We'll be talking in particular about renewable raw materials and possibilities for making the papers more sustainable. We'll also be covering certifications like FSC; you have to realize that using certified pulp is not enough to obtain certification for abrasive papers. The entire chain of custody has to be traceable to get a certificate.

We will also address the end-of-life and recycling issue, to give a broad overview over some subjects that can be complex and not always black-and-white.

T.A.V » Can we send in questions to be tackled?

Estelle S. » The video will be out on 15 March. If the video has already been made, I'll make sure I cover the points in the AMA sessions. You can also email me suggestions for future topics at any time.



SPECIAL

AMA PARTICIPANT'S BONUS



By taking part to the Ask Me Anything Sessions (AMA) after the video is broadcasted, you will receive a «**Green Claim**» guide dedicated to abrasive paper backings + a **checklist** to help you check your claim is valid.

Sourcing of bio-based materials: we want to hear what you think!



As you know, Ahlstrom is putting all its energy into achieving a faster environmental transition and making its products more sustainable. Now, the abrasives team would

like to have your feedback on the use of bio-based materials. By bio-based materials we mean raw materials that consist entirely of substances of natural origin. For example, in a bio-based approach, for our Blue Line latex papers, we would be using a «bio-binder», i.e. a natural-origin binder that provides cohesion, to replace the synthetic latex products currently used.

What do you think about having a range of products made entirely from bio-based materials?

What's your opinion on the subject? What do you see as the priority in this type of project?

You can complete our short survey here >



Save the date! DediCOATED will be back in autumn 2023



Still glowing with the success of its first outing, the virtual online trade show dedicated to coated abrasives, DediCOATED, will be back for a second edition running from **3 to 6 October 2023**.

All the partners from the first edition will be back again and there will be a rich program of talks. You can listen to these talks individually or take part in shared events. Either way you can enjoy enlightening sessions on:

- ▶ **Sustainable abrasives with a 360° vision.** We will be answering a key question: «How to make concrete improvements to your sustainability by relying on your supply chain?»
- ▶ **Product performance.** There will be several talks on raw materials covering «6 key points to understand to boost your performance»

And as for the first edition, there will be some distinguished guest speakers. So make sure you note the dates of the fair now. There will be more information coming very soon!

AN INFINITY
number of resources

SUSTAINABILITY & QUALITY SUPPORT

1



A central **SUSTAINABILITY TEAM** with experts in circularity, recyclability, climate, LCA and product footprint

7



Internationally recognized, third-party audited standards **ECOVADIS Platinum, ISO 9001/140001/45001/50001, FSC® Chain of Custody (SGSCH-COC-110070 / SGSCH-CW-110070), SEAM**

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Videos with content to help you create value around paper
[Click here to watch the videos](#)

OUTSTANDING EVENTS

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Coffee Boxes sent - fun while you learn

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Unique participants in the webinar series I and II

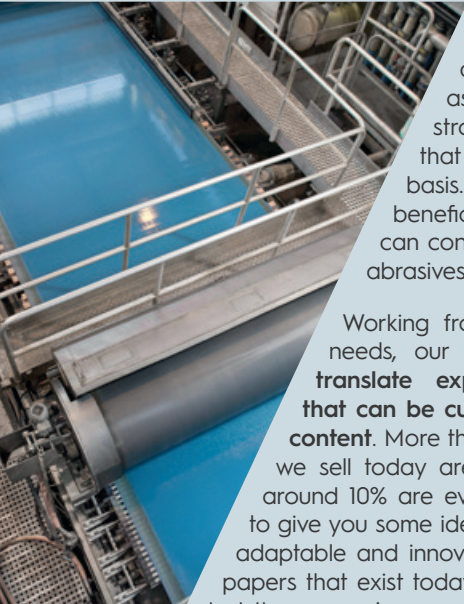
1632



Conference registrations during DediCOATED

MACHINE 8: Moving towards products with multiple possibilities

We already know how versatile it is when it comes to paper production, we know all about its advanced control system, its extensive possibilities with colors and the ability of its production team to drive the machine to deliver high-quality and customized solutions when required... But Machine PM28, the feather in our cap, still has some surprises under its hat! In summer 2023 we will be investing and give it even more value added and the potential to produce an infinite number of innovative solutions.



Constantly being on the lookout for new possibilities and building on our position as technical leader requires a strong investment policy, one that Ahlstrom applies on a daily basis. And that is all the more beneficial as it means that you can continue to be pioneers on the abrasives market.

Working from the expression of your needs, our group is already able to **translate expectations into solutions that can be customized to your heart's content.** More than 50% of the products we sell today are made to order and around 10% are even fully exclusive. And to give you some idea of just how dynamic, adaptable and innovative we are, 25% of the papers that exist today have been created in the last three years!



And so, after Machine no. 6 in 2018, **it's the turn of the iconic number 8 to see its flexibility increased.** As part of our push for optimization, the machine

will be part of an even more virtuous and efficient production line, as we keep our focus on innovation.

The new version of **the machine will be operational in September 2023**, ready to produce the original prototypes you want to try out, the fruit of your infinitely creative imagination.

Tell us now what areas you are interested in and we will prioritize putting your ideas into practice.



For this is a story we want to write with you... 8 might be the number of the machine, but the figure 8, if we look at it from a different angle, also becomes the infinity symbol. **And an infinite number of possibilities is precisely what we need to supply to the abrasives market**, working from a shared perspective. So let's put our heads together to work out what the market needs and use the full technical potential of our 3 machines, to build high-potential products that meet your expectations and those of your customers.



Machine 8 will provide an infinite number of new customizations

THE VISION

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