

IDEA-04 - April 27-29 - Booth #2435  
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This year the twin focal points of our exhibit at IDEA-04 in Miami in April will be - ideas you can use to add function and value and - improvements in our contract Microcreping capabilities. We hope our newsletters have stimulated your nonwovens creativity and if you are going to the show, please take the time to let us know what you need to create or improve your products. For information about the show visit [www.inda.org/idea04/homepage.html](http://www.inda.org/idea04/homepage.html)

Those new to Microcreping will want to watch our live pilot line demonstration. If you visit, bring along samples of your nonwovens so we can discuss the potential to add softness, drape, elastic stretch and thickness. Also for an introduction to Micrex, visit our website [www.micrex.com](http://www.micrex.com). If you are one of our many existing customers, please stop and learn about new and interesting technical developments, the new Micrex®/Microcreper Mark II, and our rapidly growing contract Microcreping services.

#### Composites and the Nonwovens Industry -----

The nonwovens industry developed from two concepts, lower priced replacements for textiles, and the faster, wider production of the paper industry. In the movie, The Graduate, Dustin Hoffman was told "think plastics" and it seems that some of us paid attention. The plastic film industry is having its influence on Nonwovens, showing up in the form of composites. Everything from laminated diaper back sheets to new house wrap products and the list of new entries is growing. Perhaps the next change will be in the rapidly growing wipes market. Adding a flexible film can strengthen the absorbent layer and be a barrier to protect your hand. Composite wipes seem to be a natural and might cost less and function better than some mono-layer products.

Some laminates/composites suffer from the "beam effect". That is, they don't bend, flex or conform easily and users don't like the stiff feel. If you are covering your baby's bottom or the new addition to your home, the nonwoven should flex to fit or you may decide to find another product to do the job. The way to soften the beam effect is to Microcrepe it so the composite will stretch to cover a curved surface or compress in controlled folds to comfortably fit. Composites of nonwovens and films often have advantages over mono-layer products and now they don't have to be stiff or "boardy".

#### Strength and Toughness -----

There are a few applications for nonwovens that require weakness for easy tear, but not many. Most require a high level of resistance to damage in use and often products are designed with a high enough weight to provide more than enough strength. But that isn't the only way to accomplish toughness. In a recent Mullen burst test of a Microcreped air laid pulp wet wipe, the pressure required to burst a Microcreped web was 83% greater than the same nonwoven before processing. Similar results are seen in the differences in toughness (TEA) testing. In short, added stretch can add toughness and a nonwoven might not need more weight and tensile strength to be tough enough to do the work.

#### Microcreping Construction Nonwovens -----

It's interesting to see the increase in nonwoven use in the construction industry. Driving by a new building you might not see the nonwovens in most parts of the house from the roof to the foundation. Even the driveway and road might have a geotextile stabilizing the sub-soil. An advantage Microcreped construction nonwovens have is they can stretch to 200% or more, conform to the space, don't puncture as easily and are tougher. As a result they are better products because they can be installed faster and installed cost is likely to be lower.

#### Packaging

One of the most interesting packaging materials ever developed isn't a nonwoven, it's two layers of film with air trapped between or "Bubble Pack". Its main advantage is Z direction cushioning but it isn't the only material that can offer it. Creped nonwovens can have up to 10 times greater thickness compared to their un-creped predecessors and when properly heat set, can offer a lot of resilience. Creped nonwovens can also add another dimension bubble pack doesn't, controlled machine direction stretch as needed up to 200% or more. The advantage is offering cushioning plus stretch in the same product to make a more useful packaging product.

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If there is anything we can do to help your company better-utilize the Micrex Process to impart softness, bulk, stretch, hand improvement, absorbency, drape and decorative effects in paper, textiles and nonwovens, please contact us.

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