



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IDI Improves SMC Line Capabilities

NOBLESVILLE, INDIANA (USA) – IDI Composites International, the premier global formulator and manufacturer of thermoset molding compounds, announces a significant enhancement to the company’s Noblesville, Indiana sheet molding compound (SMC) production line. The company has implemented a major equipment upgrade, installing new automated machine control and a Human-Machine Interface (HMI) that enables highly efficient and accurate manufacturing processes. The investment in new capital equipment reflects the commitment of IDI to provide customers with optimal SMC formulations, amid the increasing global demand for thermoset composites as a replacement for metals across a wide range of applications.

With this upgrade, IDI will increase throughput in its SMC line while automatically ensuring accurate material measurements for their custom SMC formulations. The computer-controlled system reduces the opportunity for operator error through a completely new intuitive operator interface. IDI has also upgraded an automated in-line metering system that ensures a constant and proper ratio between the three key ingredients of SMC material — base, chemical thickener, and pigment — creating a consistent mix.

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The manufacture of SMC is a continuous in-line process in which the material (a viscous paste comprised of the three aforementioned base components) is metered onto a polyethylene and nylon film. Glass fibers are chopped and randomly deposited on the paste to provide the desired glass content. Paste is also metered onto a top film of polyethylene and nylon film. The top and bottom films then come together and sandwich the chopped glass in the middle. The material then travels through a compaction unit that kneads the paste into the glass for proper wet-out. The finished material is packaged in festoon fashion into either a box or returnable container. The finished material is then staged in IDI's maturation room at an optimized temperature and humidity in order to mature the material to the correct release viscosity.

“Design engineers in multiple markets — including automotive, heavy truck, and appliance — are enhancing their product assemblies and significantly reducing materials cost by converting their new product designs to thermoset SMC,” commented Tom Flood, vice president of IDI Composites International. “The improvements to our SMC line are vital to accommodate the increasing demand for custom SMC formulations, while maintaining our long-standing commitment to quality and on-time delivery.”

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About IDI Composites International: IDI Composites International is the premier global formulator and manufacturer of thermoset molding compounds for custom molders and OEMs. The company provides customized polyester/vinylester-based bulk molding compounds (BMC) and sheet molding compounds (SMC) for the world's most demanding markets, including automotive, electrical, appliance, food service, and energy.

Headquartered in a 200,000 square foot facility in Noblesville, IN (USA), IDI has a strong presence in the international thermoset composites market. To support a growing customer base world-wide, the company operates multiple wholly-owned manufacturing facilities in Europe, Asia, and The Americas.