



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (18 June 2011)

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**FOUR KEYNOTES HIGHLIGHT CURRENT INDUSTRY TRENDS AT
2011 SPE® AUTOMOTIVE TPO GLOBAL CONFERENCE**

TROY, (DETROIT) MICH. – This year’s *SPE® Automotive TPO Global Conference*, the world’s leading automotive polyolefins conference, will feature four keynote speakers who will highlight current trends that are reshaping the global automotive-plastics market. The polyolefin supply chain has experienced major changes in recent years that are providing both challenges and opportunities for automakers and the entire supply community. Interspersed throughout the annual two-and-a-half-day event, which this year will be held **October 2-5, 2011**, organizers from the **Detroit Section** of the **Society of Plastics Engineers** (SPE®) will use keynote addresses to help attendees better understand the impact of changing conditions.

The conference will open on **Monday morning, October 3rd** with a keynote address by *Jeff Schuster*, executive director-Global Forecasting & Product Analysis at *J.D. Power and Associates* (<http://www.jdpower.com>), who will talk about “**Global Automotive Light-Vehicle Market, Where Do We Go From Here?**,” with specific emphasis on trends in North America. Schuster will discuss the pace of the automotive recovery in mature markets and growth opportunities in emerging markets. He will then focus his attention on the outlook for the dynamic North American automotive market and will discuss trends in segmentation as well as the OEM competitive landscape.

“As the automotive industry increases in complexity and continually faces a high level of uncertainty, it is clear that the concept of stability is a thing of the past,” says Schuster. “While this fluid environment poses inherent risks, the right balance of market intelligence, planning, and flexibility can also lead to greater opportunities and prosperity.”

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SPE TPO Keynotes Highlight Trends Reshaping the Global Automotive Plastics Market
2-2-2-2

Later that day, *T.H. (Tom) Henry*, manager-Global Automotive Business Development, Specialty Compounding Business, *ExxonMobil Chemical Co.* (<http://www.exxonmobilchemical.com/automotive>) will deliver the noon keynote entitled ***“Polyolefins are a Sustainable Solution.”*** Led by high growth rates in emerging economies, automotive production continues to expand globally. While not the largest energy-consuming segment, transportation – thanks to increased vehicle penetration in developing economies – contributes significantly to increased energy demand.

“Industry must accelerate the pace at which efficiency gains are achieved in order to mitigate future energy-demand growth,” says Henry. “In the automotive arena, wider use of high-performance, lightweight polyolefin-based materials can reduce vehicle weight, save energy, and reduce emissions. That’s good for everyone.”

On Day 2 of the conference, **Tuesday, October 4th**, *Leon Jacobs*, Polypropylene (PP) global business director, *SABIC Innovative Plastics* (<http://www.sabicautomotive.com>), will open the event with a keynote address entitled ***“The Opportunities & Challenges of a Globalizing Automotive Industry.”*** According to Jacobs, his talk will discuss how the globalization of the automotive industry is impacting plastics raw-material supply, in particular the supply of PP-based materials, taking into account the differing markets, their requirements, OEM specifications, and available raw materials in the context of environmental, economic, and political considerations.

“As automotive OEMs continue to globalize, they are increasingly demanding materials that meet global quality standards and specifications,” says Jacobs. “This presents a number of challenges, not least of which may be fewer global suppliers to choose from. While important benefits can be realized by working to global specifications, material purchasers must be prudent and ensure they align with those value-chain participants who have capabilities to meet demand in the short term *and* deliver supply reliability over the long term.”

The last day of the show, **Wednesday October 5th** will open with a keynote address by *Dagmar van Heur*, vice-president-Automotive at *Styron LLC* (<http://www.styron.com/>) who will speak about ***“CAFE Requirements: Lightweighting for Improved Energy Efficiency.”*** Automakers selling into Europe are aggressively pursuing weight-reduction opportunities to help them achieve European Union (EU) carbon dioxide (CO₂)-emissions legislation. Van Heur says he will discuss this trend and will detail lightweighting solutions now being sought in Europe as well as to discuss the likelihood that U.S. carmakers will move in similar directions to meet current CAFE requirements and even tougher targets being discussed by the U.S. government.

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SPE TPO Keynotes Highlight Trends Reshaping the Global Automotive Plastics Market
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“European automakers are working hard to pull hundreds of pounds out of the curb weight of passenger vehicles,” says Van Heur. “To meet those aggressive goals, they are successfully pushing plastics into more structurally demanding applications. That, in turn, is opening up exciting design as well as cost- and mass-reduction opportunities for automakers, plus new market opportunities for resin suppliers and molders.”

About the Automotive TPO Global Conference

Since 1998, the ***SPE Automotive TPO Global Conference*** has highlighted the importance of rigid and flexible polyolefins throughout the automobile – in applications ranging from semi-structural composite underbody shields and front-end modules to soft-touch interior skins and bumper fascia. Throughout that time, polyolefins have been the fastest-growing segment of the global plastics industry owing to their excellent cost / performance ratio. The show typically draws over 400 attendees from 20 countries on four continents who are interested in learning about the latest in rigid and elastomeric thermoplastic polyolefin (TPO) as well as thermoplastic elastomer (TPE) and thermoplastic vulcanizate (TPV) technologies. Fully a third of conference attendees say they work for a transportation OEM, and roughly 20% work for a tier integrator / molder, with the balance representing materials or reinforcement suppliers, equipment OEMs, industry consultants, media, and members of academia. As such, the event offers attendees a rich environment in which to network and explore the latest developments in materials, processing, and applications for these versatile families of thermoplastic resins.

Traditional technical sessions on *Materials Development*, *Polypropylene Compounds*, *Applications Development*, and *Surface Enhancements* are planned for this year’s program, as well as new sessions on *TPO / TPE Interfaces* and *Polyolefin Foams & Advances in Olefin Processes*. A venue change to the Detroit-Marriott-Troy hotel (<http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/dtttt-detroit-marriott-troy/?clusterCode=MW1>) has been made for the 2011 conference. A variety of sponsorship packages are available for companies interested in showcasing their products and/or services. There is still time for those interested in submitting papers or presentations for the technical program, which should be eMailed to TPOpapers@auto-tpo.com.

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SPE TPO Keynotes Highlight Trends Reshaping the Global Automotive Plastics Market
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About SPE®

The mission of SPE International is to promote scientific and engineering knowledge relating to plastics worldwide and to educate industry, academia, and the public about these advances. SPE's Detroit Section is active in educating, promoting, recognizing, and communicating technical accomplishments for all phases of plastics and plastic-based composite developments – particularly in the automotive industry. Topic areas include applications, materials, processing, equipment, tooling, design, and development.

For more information about the ***SPE Automotive TPO Global Conference***, to view the conference's evolving technical program, or to register to attend the event, please visit <http://auto-tpo.com> or <http://speautomotive.com/tpo.htm>, or contact the group at +1.248.244.8993, or write SPE Detroit Section, 1800 Crooks Road, Suite A, Troy, MI 48084, USA.

For more information on the Society of Plastics Engineers International or other SPE events, visit the SPE website at www.4spe.org, or call +1.203.775.0471.

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TROY, (DETROIT) MICH. – On **Tuesday, October 4th**, the second day of the **SPE[®] Automotive TPO Global Conference**, the show will open with a keynote address entitled “**The Opportunities & Challenges of a Globalizing Automotive Industry**” given by *Leon Jacobs*, Polypropylene (PP) global business director, *SABIC Innovative Plastics* (<http://www.sabicautomotive.com>), a strategic business unit of Saudi Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC)). In his current role, which he has held since June 2009, Jacobs is responsible for running SABIC’s existing polypropylene automotive business in Europe, and expanding these activities in other regions. Prior to this assignment, Jacobs held leadership positions as general manager of the STAMAX[®] and PP-copolymer businesses of SABIC, and was general manager of the European sales office for large and international accounts. He began his career in 1986 as an analytical chemist at DSM and has since held various commercial roles in marketing, sales, and product management. He became part of the SABIC organization when DSM’s petrochemicals operations were acquired by SABIC in 2002. He holds an MBA in Marketing and Finance from the University of Diepenbeek in Belgium.

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TROY, (DETROIT) MICH. – Dagmar van Heur, vice-president-Automotive for Styron LLC (<http://www.styron.com>), will give a keynote on “*CAFE Requirements: Lightweighting for Improved Energy Efficiency*” at the **SPE® Automotive TPO Global Conference** on **Wednesday, October 5th**. Styron LLC was previously owned by Dow Chemical and was acquired by Bain Capital in June of 2010. Before joining Styron last June, Van Heur spent 18 years at The Dow Chemical Co. in a variety of positions. He began his career in 1992 working in the Polycarbonates unit on medical and lighting applications, and in 1996 transitioned to polycarbonate/acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (PC/ABS) technology. In 2002, van Heur was named global marketing manager-Instrument Panel Solutions at Dow, and in 2002 he became responsible for Polypropylene product management globally for Dow Automotive. In 2004, he became European sales director, and in 2006 van Heur established a new division at Dow Automotive called the Commercial Transportation Group. Originally from the Netherlands, he holds an M.S. degree in Aerospace Engineering from the Technical University of Delft and an MBA from the Northwood University. Styron LLC is a leading global materials company with strong global positions in four business areas – polystyrene and styrenic polymers; emulsion polymers; polycarbonate and engineered compounds; and synthetic polybutadiene and styrene-butadiene rubber (PBR, SBR).

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