

Publication for the
Peening, Blasting,
Cleaning and
Vibratory Finishing
Industries

Separate Print

www.mfn.li

Vol. 12
March
Issue
Year 2011

Publication for the
Peening, Blasting,
Cleaning and
Vibratory Finishing
Industries

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Vol. 12, March Issue, Year 2011

**Interview with Andreas Fischer,
Executive Director of Fischer GmbH**

**Plastic Blast Media Fischer JETplast
A Success Story Goes Into Second
Generation**



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Plastic Blast Media Fischer JETplast A Success Story Goes Into Second Generation

Fischer GmbH of Dillenburg, Germany, a worldwide renowned leading manufacturer of plastic blast media, has been in existence for over 30 years already. Established back in 1979 by Dipl.-Ing. Volker Fischer, the company enjoyed continuous growth and has in every respect (technical, logistic, personal and financial) a very sound structure. It enters its 4th decade with a completely new appearance. The reasons for this change are explained by Executive Director Mr. Andreas Fischer in the following interview for MFN.



Andreas Fischer, Executive Director of Fischer GmbH

(?) MFN: Mr. Fischer, the external appearance of Fischer GmbH, such as company logo, catalogues, website etc. has been changed completely. Why has that been done – the image of Fischer has not been bad at all.

(!) A. F.: The new appearance should symbolize to the market that several things have changed and will continue to change. We want to be prepared even better than we already are for the challenges of the future.

(?) MFN: Fischer GmbH is well known as a manufacturer of plastic blast

media. This product, being invented only 30 years ago is rather "young" and known to a circle of experts only. Kindly explain for our readers what kind of product that is and what its applications are.

(!) A. F.: In the early days only the method of "sand blasting" was commonly known. Sand blasting means to remove paint, rust or dirt from metallic surfaces by blasting them under high airpressure with sand. This was a rather efficient technique but it is rather "brutal" to the surface and thus only recommended for insensitive surfaces and greater

material thicknesses. The use of sand for these applications was been prohibited several years ago because of the danger of silicosis. The sand has been replaced by other blast media such as corundum or slag. These materials have a hardness of 8 – 9 on the Mohs scale. However, for the treatment of thinner or more sensitive surfaces the blasting media must have other technical features.

(?) MFN: Kindly explain that in more detail.

(!) A. F.: We manufacture "non abrasive" blasting media only. Such media are designed for gentle treatment of various types of surfaces. Our blast media consist of carefully and meticulously crushed parts of plastic materials such as urea- and melamine-formaldehyde resin or acrylic plates. The hardness of these materials is only 3 – 4 on the Mohs scale.

(?) MFN: Is the harder material basically not much more efficient?

(!) A. F.: As already mentioned, it depends on which kind of effect one wants to achieve at the surface of the material. If one wants to repaint, clean, deflash a surface or to prepare a surface for new painting or for adhesive bonding one cannot use abrasive blasting media which change or penetrate into the surface. For such applications a non abrasive gentle blast medium has to be used.

(?) MFN: Can all these different kinds of surface treatment not be maintained by just one type of plastic blast medium (PBM)?

(!) A. F.: This is, unfortunately not the case. As already mentioned, we produce our PBM out of three different kinds of base products, which are different in hardness and other technical properties. Of each type of PBM we offer up to 10 different standard mesh sizes within very narrow particle size limits. On top of that, the users of PBM can vary the blasting pressure and can choose from different blasting machines which guaranties that all these kinds of surface treatment can be achieved with reproducible results.

(?) MFN: How would you summarize the first three decades of Fischer GmbH?

(!) A. F.: Fischer can rightly claim to be the pioneer of the plastic blast technology. From the first tests and trials back in 1979 this method of surface treatment has developed into a worldwide accepted technique. The volume of production and the quality of the product has increased continuously. The U. S. Air Force has specified a very tight technical standard for PBM which is as MIL-P-85891 meanwhile worldwide accepted. This standard specifies approx. 20 technical properties which have to be met by the product to be certified. These tests have to be repeated every two years by independent laboratories if a manufacturer wants to remain listed as approved. Fischer has currently the approval for Type II (UREA), Type III (Melamine) and Type V (Acrylic) by the U. S. Air Force.

Last but not least – Fischer is becoming more and more "international". Parallel to our strong position in our local market we continually improved our worldwide position as manufacturer of high quality PBM.

The number of applications has dramatically risen during these three decades and this trend seems set to continue due to the increased use of new materials such as composites.

(?) MFN: What are the actual reasons for the new appearance of Fischer GmbH?

(!) A. F.: Our export volume more than doubled during 2010. We have

appointed new representatives in Switzerland, France, Russia and Japan. Other countries will follow. This fact needs a more dynamic and more international presentation of our products and of our company.

In order to carry the momentum of the past three decades into the future and to comply with the increasing market for our products we have doubled our production capacity and modernized the production technique. We have achieved this without substantial increase of production cost.

(?) MFN: How is that technically possible?

(!) A. F.: Without going into much in detail we explain this by the fact that we have at Fischer an excellent technical knowhow. We do not depend on expensive external specialists whenever we are improving our production facilities. Such external services we engage in exceptional cases only.

The service and maintenance of our machinery is also done by our own staff.

Production cost will fall further by installing an intelligent energy management system.

(?) MFN: What else has changed at Fischer?

(!) A. F.: We have changed our stock keeping system completely. Because of new markets and new applications there is an increasing demand for a higher variety of products. We would like to maintain our excellent delivery

service, i. e. within 24 hours of receipt of order, without increasing the volume of material on stock.

All the above reasons i. e. more products, more sales partners, more markets and personal changes within the company require that more information is transmitted from Fischer to its partners and also to its end-users. Therefore we have wrapped all this information in a new design which is more attractive and more informative. This includes our new and dynamic company logo, our new 8-page catalogue which is now printed in three languages, our new advertisement design and our new website, which is www.fischer-jetplast.de.

(?) MFN: Has Fischer even more in the pipeline?

(!) A. F.: I don't want to stress the slogan "If you don't go forwards you go backwards" too much. However, the fact is that for relatively small companies who operate in a very special business segment, capacities like flexibility and adaptability are vital for further successful existence.

(?) MFN: How has the personal structure of Fischer been changed?

(!) A. F.: We have changed personal in the departments of quality control and stock management. We have increased the manpower in these segments. Furthermore, I have been appointed, after managing the sales department and being product- and quality manager for over 15 years, as second managing director along with my father Volker Fischer. I am also responsible for the public relations for Fischer GmbH. The structure of ownership has not changed.

(?) MFN: Mr. Fischer, we thank you very much for this interview and we wish you all the best for your future.

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Andreas Fischer, Executive Director of Fischer GmbH

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