



E like Elastomer Technology

# Elastomer Technology for Rollers

When naked, they are not suitable for heavy work. They need a robust second skin to be fully operational. Rollers receive the functional coating, which can withstand a lot even in heavy-duty everyday operation, at Mitex in Erkrath.

One of the probably most important departments of the company is situated in the basement. The research laboratories there produce the recipes, with which the Erkrath-based company has continuously secured for many years its role as pacemaker in a worldwide active sector. This is where innovative solutions are tailored in close coordination with the customers in order to make production processes more efficient and be able to set new quality standards. Each new material composition is tested for its suitability under practical conditions in Erkrath. The six-member research crew around the scientist and head of the company, Georg Heinen, can be proud of

their achievements. One of the latest Mitex highlights is, for example, Reliance, an extremely concentrated mixed, oxidising acid resistant polyurethane coating. „We have developed a material that sets new standards and is clearly superior in the environment of extremely aggressive media such as nitric acid to any known material in dip coating and squeeze roll coating“, stated Heinen. With his self-confident words, the sales specialist makes clear what he is interested in. „We do not compete by fighting for market shares with copied products but by winning users over with real improvements“, according to his philosophy. Another new product from Erkrath also complies with this philosophy.

PURe Blue, a roller coating with stable electrical conductivity, that is predominantly used in the printing industry.

## Solutions for each application

More than 100 rollers of different sizes are coated with elastomers, such as rubber, silicone, teflon, brushes, fleece or ceramic, and made ready for shipment each day on the 11,000 m<sup>2</sup> factory site at Ludenbergstrasse. Mitex managed to establish a unique position with the in-house production of fleece material that is consistently perfected by the coating specialist. „This expansion of our product range was important for being able to independently increase the performance/application variety of our mill rollers“, explained the company's legal representative, Dr. Claudius Kohn.

The fields of application for the rollers from Erkrath are generally wide-ranging. The buyers come, for example, from the printing, textile and paper industries. The largest business sector, however, is the steel and metal industry. Sales engineer, Stefan Freitag, is constantly in touch with manufacturers and processing companies throughout Europe. „Our roller coatings meet the highest mechanical, chemical and thermal requirements. They are reliable, durable and therefore very economical.“ The production range also covers numerous custom-made and special types for the production and coating of steel strips for the automotive industry.

Dedication for the best rollers: General Manager Georg Heinen (r.), Sr. Manager Dr. Claudius Kohn (l.) and Sales Manager Stefan Freitag





Continuous equipment for roller coverings

Well-known examples of the versatility of the Erkrath products completely fill the photo walls. Mitex drive rollers coated with high-tech rubber, for example, are used in the freight systems of the Airbus A 300 – 600 ST superfreighter. Mitex supplies hologram rollers with extremely solid, top-quality, heat-proof coating to numerous manufacturers of securities and banknotes. Dr. Kohn has already targeted new markets. "The plastic processing sector will significantly gain ground in future", predicted Dr. Kohn. "More and more companies from the plastic, film and foil industries are ordering our high-performance cleaning rollers with their anti-adhesive, thermal and electrically conductive coatings. We have noticed a considerable increase in demand in this target market", confirmed Georg Heinen.

### The whole world as a market

The company founder, Hans Knott, wrote the first sentences of a more than 50-year success story. He developed the Mitex process for roller coating. The striking force of his idea was immense: Hans Knott sold his machines with great success all over the world, and the entire industry now uses the term "Knotten" for the pro-

fessional coating of rollers. Mitex has built up a licensee network in order to establish a long-term relationship with the buyers of the process and allow them to take part in the progress. There are now more than 100 partner companies on all five continents.

Georg Heinen, managing partner since 1992, explains the details: "Our comprehensive service package provides each licensee with a perfect outfit from the very start. We supply the machinery, train the employees and provide the partners with all materials. More than 600 compound types can be called off at the moment."

### Watching the markets

Mitex boss Heinen is a convinced cosmopolitan. He values the strengths of the German location without sitting back idly and letting opportunities arising in other regions of the globe go by. Mitex currently has a presence in all important future markets. In addition to the parent factory, there are manufacturing facilities in Spain and Poland. There are also two production facilities in China, five in South Africa and one in the Middle East. Several hundred employees are on Mitex's payroll worldwide, 125 thereof in Erkrath.

In order to increase the efficiency of the own network, Mitex founded the Global Roller Technologies Group jointly with the Japanese Katsura company and the US-based Rotadyne company. The group with more than 60 production sites and 2,500 employees aims at the quick exchange of innovations and information and creates technical progress, from which users around the world can simultaneously benefit. As they do from the local availability of the goods, which can be obtained direct from the network partners without long transport distances and time-consuming customs formalities.

Despite international contacts and revolutionary developments, the women and men around Mitex boss Heinen have never lost touch with the customers. "We know that we are essentially just a service and repair company that has to ensure that the rollers provide the customer with top results."

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With her colleagues laboratory assistant Katja Renner is looking for advanced innovated materials



Regular inspections guarantee high quality of Mitex roller coverings