

AutoCommuni qué

AutoCom Associates – Driving Your Communications

Upcoming Industry Events

North American International Auto Show 2019

Detroit, MI

Press Days: January 14-15

Industry Preview: 01/16-01/17

Charity Preview: 01/18

Public Days: 01/19-01/27

National Automobile Dealers Association

San Francisco, CA

January 24-27, 2019

Philadelphia International Auto Show

Philadelphia, PA

February 2-10

Chicago Auto Show

Chicago, Ill

Press Days: February 7-8

Public Days: 02/7-02/17

Geneva International Auto Show

Geneva, Switzerland

Press Days: March 5-6

Public Days: 03/7-03/17

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INFICON LEAK DETECTOR IDEAL FOR ROBOTIC APPLICATIONS



INFICON

DETROIT – INFICON, one of the world's leading suppliers of leak-detection equipment for the auto industry, has developed

an industry-first leak detector ideally suited for high-speed robotic test applications.

The new INFICON detector was shown for the first time at The Battery Show North America 2018 (Sept. 11-13) in suburban Detroit.

Equipped with high-flow technology, INFICON's XL3000flex is faster and more accurate than most systems currently in use. It also is the first product of its kind able to detect critical leaks affecting product quality using either helium or forming gas (95-percent nitrogen and 5-percent hydrogen) with similar accuracy.



"Our new leak-detection system allows users to choose the lowest-cost or easiest-to-source test gas available," says Thomas Parker, INFICON's North American automotive sales manager. "The system's high-flow technology allows it to operate with the highest gas flow available in today's market which makes it ideal for robotic testing."

Parker notes that robotic leak-detection systems are well suited for automotive applications that call for accurate and reliable high-speed test methods. The INFICON XL3000flex, for example, is capable of locating extremely small leaks in critical components such as electric-vehicle batteries and is up to 20 times faster than conventional systems.

"The auto industry serves as a benchmark for other industries, so we expect that the robotic test methodology we are developing with the INFICON XL3000flex will be adopted by other manufacturers as well, especially in the refrigeration, air-conditioning, construction-equipment and aerospace industries," Parker explains.

The XL3000flex is highly reliable under production conditions; is suitable for harsh manufacturing environments; allows high process speeds, and detects leaks even with elevated test-gas levels in the background.

GKN SX COUNTERTRACK JOINTS – OPPOSITION IS GOOD



ROESRATH, Germany – The extensive safety and comfort equipment in modern vehicles is increasingly restricting the packaging space available for the powertrain. GKN therefore has developed its series of countertrack[®] joints, which transmit the same power through a significantly reduced diameter (smaller by an average of ten percent).

This is facilitated by a characteristic S-shaped track profile and counter-running ball tracks – hence the name “countertrack.” This new design delivers a reduction in internal friction, temperature and package size paired with an increase in transmitted torque and maximum articulation angle. The benefits can be summarized as follows:

- Power losses reduced by 30 percent across the full articulation range
- Weight reduced by 15 percent while performance figures increase
- Lower operating temperature means the absorption/transmission of up to 25 percent more torque

The substantial weight reduction delivers consumption and CO₂ benefits in the development of new vehicle models. It also enables a longer wheelbase while retaining the same performance. This provides development engineers with more interior space and improves handling characteristics.

ALCANTARA DEBUTS ON VARIOUS L.A. AUTO SHOW VEHICLES

ALCANTARA **LOS ANGELES** – Performance automakers Porsche and BMW chose Italian-made luxury material from Alcantara for a host of vehicles making world debuts at this year’s Los Angeles Auto Show.

Electric-vehicle manufacturers Rivian and Genovation also unveiled new models equipped with Alcantara[®] at the L. A. show, the last major international show of calendar year 2018.

Porsche showcased the world debut of its 460-horsepower Panamera GTS and Panamera GTS Sport Turismo for the first time in Los Angeles with seating, center consoles, door panels, armrests, headliners and steering wheels all dressed in light-weight, sustainable Alcantara material. Both cars will be offered with a four-liter V8 engine and standard sports exhaust system.



Porsche Panamera GTS



BMW Vision iNEXT

BMW picked Los Angeles for the world premiere of its BMW X7 and Vision iNEXT concept vehicle. Displayed as a concept car at the 2017 Los Angeles show, the now production-ready BMW X7 was shown with Alcantara door pillars, rear deck cover and headliner.

The Vision iNEXT “represents a building block for the future of the BMW Group” and incorporates all of the company’s strategic innovation fields, including autonomous driving, connectivity and electrification.

DAVE CANTIN GROUP SET TO BECOME LARGEST U.S. AUTO DEALERSHIP M&A FIRM



DCG
The Automotive
Acquisition Specialists

NEW YORK – The Dave Cantin Group is on track to becoming the largest automotive dealership merger-and-acquisitions firm in the United States.

Established last year, the Dave Cantin Group (DCG) already has dealership listings worth more than three billion dollars and regional offices in California, Florida, Illinois, New York and Texas. Its headquarters are on Madison Avenue in New York.

Dave Cantin, the group's founder and CEO, is a former dealership principal who managed the second-largest automotive dealership acquisition in U.S. history – the multi-billion-dollar sale of a major dealership group. Only Warren Buffett's purchase of the Van Tuyl Group in 2015 ranks higher.



"We're in the process of assembling the largest, most-experienced group of M&A professionals in the industry," Cantin said. "Our goal is to become the world's leading automotive dealership M&A firm, as well as a 'go-to' resource for dealers seeking counsel on succession planning, employee buy-ins, partnership agreements and other equity-related transactions."

Cantin personally has closed more than two billion dollars in automotive dealership M&A transactions, and his current management team has accounted for a combined total of nearly 11 billion dollars in M&A transactions.

INTERREGS HELPS AUTO FIRMS NAVIGATE A SEA OF REGULATORY INFORMATION



InterRegs
International Regulations

FAREHAM, England – Car makers faced with continual changes in safety, emissions and fuel-economy requirements now see a host of new electric- and autonomous-vehicle requirements on the horizon.

InterRegs, the world's leading provider of regulatory information for automakers and their suppliers, currently has more than 16,000 regulatory documents in its database. Placed end-to-end, those documents would stretch more than 130 kilometers or the length of 28,000 family-sized cars.

"We annually see a 30-percent change in the existing regulatory documents we have on file," says Charles Wright, the company's technical director. "We also expect to see considerable growth in the actual number of documents in our library over the next 10 years."

Continually changing safety, emissions and fuel-economy requirements plus a host of new electric-, connected- and autonomous-vehicle regulations will test the auto industry in future years, Wright predicts.

InterRegs celebrated its 50th anniversary last year and serves more than 500 companies around the world, including eight of the 10 largest automakers today. To help new and existing customers stay up to date with a rapidly changing regulatory environment, the company offers a variety of webinars on client- and segment-specific topics.

During the company's anniversary year, Wright and other InterRegs executives visited clients in Europe, North America and the Asia Pacific region to further discuss regulatory challenges.

SERRA DONOVAN LAW MERGES WITH LIPPITT O'KEEFE GORNBEIN IN BIRMINGHAM

LIPPITT O'KEEFE GORNBEIN, PLLC **BIRMINGHAM, Mich.** – The Serra Donovan Law Group has merged with the Birmingham law firm of Lippitt O'Keefe Gornbein PLLC.

In addition to its headquarters at 370 E. Maple Road in Birmingham, the expanded Lippitt O'Keefe Gornbein practice group will maintain offices in Rochester, Michigan, to serve clients acquired in the merger.

Managing Partner Brian O'Keefe noted that William Donovan will join Lippitt O'Keefe Gornbein with the title of senior counsel. Reese Serra will serve as a special advisor to the firm.

Donovan holds the Martindale-Hubbell National Law Registry's highest rating, is a U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General and is a licensed real estate broker. His clients include major companies in telecommunications, insurance, real estate, construction, medicine, health care and manufacturing.

"Bill Donovan is a well-known, highly respected business attorney who has litigated hundreds of cases involving claims both large and small on behalf of plaintiffs and defendants," O'Keefe said. "He represents clients in state and federal trial and appellate courts, as well as before various state and federal agencies."

INFICON SHOWCASES ROBOTIC LEAK TESTING AT THE ASSEMBLY SHOW



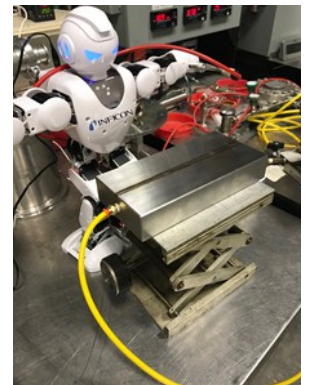
ROSEMONT, Ill. – INFICON, one of the world's leading suppliers of leak-detection equipment for the auto industry, demonstrated robotic leak-detection methods at The Assembly Show (Oct.23-25) in Rosemont last year.

"The need for modern test methods increases daily," says Thomas Parker, INFICON's North American automotive sales manager. "Coupling leak testing with robotics solves a number of production issues.

"Known problem areas such as high-pressure fuel-line connections on GDI (gasoline direct injection) engines, electric-vehicle batteries and air-conditioning systems can be tested with a high level of confidence with robotic systems. Leak testing is the key to achieving quality throughout the production process."

Parker notes that there are two types of robotic leak-detection methods – stationary and dynamic. Stationary testing employs a robotic arm equipped with a "sniffer" probe that moves to pre-selected points on the test part, then remains stationary for a defined period of time. "Dwell" times are based on potential leak rates at each point.

For dynamic tests a robotic arm moves a "sniffer" probe in a continuous path along a test part's surface. The accuracy of a dynamic test is based on the distance maintained between the part and the sniffer probe, the speed at which the robotic arm travels, and how much air and test gas the leak detector is able to "sniff."



**Robotic demonstration
with INFICON
XL3000flex**

ADVANCED PROPULSION CENTRE TO CHAMPION BRITISH INNOVATION IN USA



**ADVANCED
PROPULSION
CENTRE UK**

NOVI, Mich. – The Advanced Propulsion Centre (APC) supported six organizations representing the UK automotive industry at the Battery Show here last September.

Exhibitors at the UK Pavilion showcased advanced battery and powertrain technologies for vehicle manufacturers and tier-one suppliers from North America and around the world.

The UK Pavilion had organizations from a wide range of fields within the automotive industry, including energy storage, powertrain technologies and lightweighting solutions. Earlier in 2018, the APC's UK Pavilion was at the JSAE Spring Congress in Yokohama and Engine Expo in Stuttgart and resulted in business deals worth up to \$200,000 and more than 100 new contacts.

At The Battery Show in Michigan, UK exhibitors sought collaboration and investment to further support the UK economy. The delegation demonstrated that, as a destination for the development and production of cutting-edge battery and low-carbon powertrain technology, "Britain is GREAT."

To date, the APC has coordinated more than 18 international events to promote the UK Pavilion, showcasing 176 British companies to nearly 200,000 event delegates. The resulting 2,800 sales leads have secured millions of dollars' worth of foreign direct investment into the UK, with an average return on investment of 14:1.

HBPO OPENS PLANT TO SUPPORT DAIMLER ASSEMBLY OPERATIONS IN MEXICO



AGUASCALIENTES, Mexico – HBPO, the auto industry's leading supplier of modular front-end systems, has opened a new facility in Aguascalientes, Mexico, to support nearby Mercedes-Benz A-Class sedan assembly operations.

HBPO's 50,200-square-foot facility currently has 70 employees and is operating on two 12-hour shifts Monday through Saturday. Located in a just-in-sequence supplier park near the Daimler plant, the HBPO facility will have more than 100 employees when full production is reached later this year.

Daimler, HBPO, Plastic Omnium and HBPO supplier executives recently took part in grand-opening ceremonies for the new plant. Participants included Jens Keller, HBPO CFO; Diana Mannino, president of HBPO North America; Carlos Galan, plant manager, HBPO Aguascalientes; Larry Reid, director of industrial operations for HBPO North America; Thomas Koehle, Daimler's manager of supplier quality exterior parts in Mexico, and Abel Martinez, Plastic Omnium's director of operations for Mexico.



"Our new plant has been designed with the very latest, state-of-the-art equipment and processes," said Diana Mannino. "We know that Daimler expects its suppliers to deliver nothing but the highest-quality service and products for the Mercedes-Benz A-Class, its newest entry in the luxury compact segment. That's what HBPO plans to deliver from our new facility in Aguascalientes."

CHASSIS BRAKES AND MANN+HUMMEL WORK TO CUT PARTICULATE EMISSIONS



FRANKFURT, Germany – Chassis Brakes International and MANN+HUMMEL have signed a strategic partnership agreement to develop brake systems with an add-on particle filter to reduce particulate emissions from passenger-car brakes.

Vehicle traffic is regarded as one of the primary sources of particle-based air pollution in cities and originates from internal combustion engine exhaust emissions, as well as from mechanically produced particulates from tires and brakes.

President and General Manager OE at MANN+HUMMEL Kai Knickmann noted that although brake emissions aren't regulated, the two companies are committed to seriously addressing this topic in the near future.

Knickmann said, "The robust housing of a filter fitted close to the brake caliper will prevent particle emissions directly at the source from which brake dust passes into the ambient air and will be capable of reducing particulate emissions by up to 80 percent."



BRIAN BROWN NAMED CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AT DAVE CANTIN GROUP



NEW YORK – Brian Brown has been named chief operating officer of the Dave Cantin Group, one of the largest firms specializing in automotive dealership mergers and acquisitions in the United States.

Based in the company's Madison Avenue headquarter offices, Brown has more than 30 years of automotive experience covering virtually every aspect of dealership operations from a retail, wholesale and investor perspective.

He joins the Dave Cantin Group (DCG) from GPB Capital where he was instrumental in developing and executing the firm's automotive strategy. GPB Capital is a privately held alternative asset management company and one of the largest dealership groups in North America.

Brown directly led the seamless transition of bringing independently owned dealerships into the GPB family, while driving employee engagement along with the implementation of various operational and staffing improvements.

Prior to GPB Capital, he held management positions at General Motors Corporation in a variety of corporate, regional and field-level positions.

"Brian has a thorough understanding of our business from both a retail and wholesale perspective," said Dave Cantin, DCG's founder and principal owner. "His success is driven by a unique ability to view and understand the dealership business not as it is today, but as it needs to be for success tomorrow."

MARTIN WELLHÖFFER PROMOTED AT MAHLE EFFECTIVE APRIL 1, 2019



Driven by performance

STUTTGART – Martin Wellhöffer will assume the management of Automotive Sales and Application Engineering at MAHLE as of April 1, 2019. He will succeed Arnd Franz, 53, who leaves the company on his own request on March 31, 2019.



Wellhöffer, 40, who has held various sales positions with MAHLE since 2004 and is currently responsible for Corporate and Sales Planning, will take over Automotive Sales and Application Engineering at MAHLE on April 1, 2019. In his new role, he will join the MAHLE Management Committee and report to the chairman of the Management Board and CEO of the MAHLE Group, Dr. Jörg Stratmann.

“We are delighted to have found an excellent successor for this post in Martin Wellhöffer,” says Dr. Stratmann. “His expertise in global markets and his many years of sales experience make him a strong appointment for this important role. I’m particularly pleased that we have been able to fill the position from within the company.”

“We thank Arnd Franz for his successful service over many years and his exceptional commitment to the MAHLE Group. We wish him all the best and much success in his future endeavors.”

KLAUS HENSE APPOINTED NEW HEAD OF PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AT KIEKERT



TECHNOLOGY THAT LEADS

HEILIGENHAUS, Germany – Kiekert AG, the technology leader in automotive locking systems, has named Dr. Klaus Hense executive vice president, Product Development.

As head of Kiekert’s product development function, Hense, 43, will strengthen Kiekert’s global development activities from its corporate headquarters in Heiligenhaus and further expand its product portfolio for automotive access solutions. He has been with Kiekert since 2012 with a short break and has held several leadership positions.

In January 2017, Hense was appointed director Product Development Europe. Previously, he held various positions in quality management.

Prior to joining Kiekert, Hense worked as deputy head of Quality Management at traffic-system engineering company Scheidt & Bachmann GmbH. He also has several years of experience in engineering consulting in various industries.



Hense studied mechanical engineering at the RWTH Aachen University and received his doctorate in 2009 at the machine tool laboratory WZL of RWTH Aachen University.

Founded in 1857, Kiekert AG employs 6,500 people in 11 countries at eight production plants, seven development centers and three sales units, developing, producing and selling tailor-made customer solutions 24/7.

AUTOCOM ASSOCIATES MOVES TO NEW OFFICES IN BLOOMFIELD HILLS



AUTOCom ASSOCIATES
PUBLIC RELATIONS

BLOOMFIELD HILLS, Mich. – AutoCom Associates, a public relations firm serving businesses in the global automotive industry, has moved to modern new offices in Bloomfield Hills.

Headquartered in Bloomfield Hills since 1995, the agency's new offices are at 100 W. Long Lake Road just west of Woodward Avenue. AutoCom previously was located in the Swanson Building at 74 W. Long Lake Road.

"The move has provided us with an opportunity to upgrade our phone, computer and online-service systems," said Larry Weis, AutoCom's president. "And we'll be easy to find as well. We're just a pitching wedge and a putt west of our previous offices and a Rory McIlroy drive down the road from the Bloomfield Hills Country Club.

Over the past 20-plus years we've seen a tremendous amount of change in the public relations field and in the auto industry. What hasn't changed is our commitment to providing exceptional service to our clients."



North American International Auto Show 2019

January 14-27, 2019

Cobo Center
1 Washington Blvd., Detroit,
MI 48226

SAVE THE DATES

2019 **NADA**SHOW

National Automobile Dealers Association

January 24-27, 2019

Moscone Center
747 Howard Street, San Francisco,
CA 94103



Chicago Auto Show

February 9-18, 2019

McCormick Place
2301 S King Dr, Chicago,
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