

AutoCommuniqué

AutoCom Associates – Driving Your Communications

Upcoming Industry Events

AutoCom Tech Crawl 2019
Birmingham, Michigan
June 11, 2019

**Advanced Automotive Battery
Conference**
San Diego, California
June 24-27, 2019

**INA PAACE Automechnika
Mexico City 2019**
Mexico City, Mexico
July 10-12, 2019

**CAR Management
Briefing Seminars**
Traverse City, Michigan
August 5-8, 2019

The Battery Show
Novi, Michigan
September 10-12, 2019

**Frankfurt International Auto Show
(IAA) 2019**
Frankfurt, Germany
September 12-22, 2019

The Assembly and Quality Shows
Rosemont, Illinois
October 22-24, 2019

SAE Global Leadership Conference
Greenbrier, West Virginia
October 10-13, 2019

2019 SEMA Show
Las Vegas, Nevada
November 5-8, 2019

Los Angeles Auto Show 2019
Los Angeles, California
November, 22-December 1, 2019

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Editor: Rebecca Kaiser

FREUDENBERG GROUP CONTINUES TO GROW



DETROIT - The Freudenberg Group completed another year of solid performance, ending 2018 with global sales of \$11.14 billion (€9.45 billion).

North American sales in 2018 rose 2.5 percent in U.S. dollars.

The group's global sales represented a strong organic growth of 4.3 percent. After including the effects of acquisitions and disinvestments, significant negative exchange-rate impact, and the effects of the new International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS 15), sales increased by 1.2 percent over the previous year.

“Our strong strategic and operational planning are the keys to Freudenberg success, along with the team spirit of more than 49,000 employees as well as agile cooperation with our customers,” said Dr. Mohsen Sohi, Freudenberg Group CEO. “With continued year-over-year investment increases in innovation (4.7 percent of sales in 2018) paired with strategic acquisitions, we want to ensure an equally successful future.”

In North America, Freudenberg's 11 business groups generated sales of \$2.89 billion (€2.45 billion) in 2018, a 2.5 percent increase over 2017.

Freudenberg also continued to invest in both manufacturing and R&D facilities in North America, spending \$98.4 million (€83.4 million).

SUSTAINABILITY SYMPOSIUM CONCLUDES IN VENICE

ALCANTARA **VENICE, Italy** – The world's fifth International Symposium on Sustainability, “Climate Change: How to Engage Society and Deploy Decarbonization,” took place earlier this year on Venice's San Servolo Island.

Organized by Alcantara with the Venice International University and support from the World Bank Group's Connect4Climate global partnership program, the two-day event (Feb. 7-8) involved more than 30 major corporations, international organizations, scientists, entrepreneurs, economists, communication experts and policy makers.

LORI SMITH NAMED PARTNER AT LIPPITT O'KEEFE GORNBEIN IN BIRMINGHAM

LIPPITT O'KEEFE GORNBEIN, PLLC

BIRMINGHAM, Mich.— Lori K. Smith recently was named a partner at Lippitt O'Keefe Gornbein, PLLC, a full-service law firm in Birmingham. The firm also announced that Angelina Cummins has joined its divorce and family law practice group as an associate attorney in Birmingham. In addition to its headquarters at 370 E. Maple Road in Birmingham, Lippitt O'Keefe Gornbein recently opened offices in Rochester, Michigan.

A member of the Family Law Section of the State Bar of Michigan, Smith has extensive experience in all aspects of family law, including divorce, child custody, child- and spousal-support, and termination of parental rights. A Macomb Township resident, she joined Lippitt O'Keefe Gornbein in 2017. Cummins currently lives in Lake Orion and most recently was staff attorney to Wayne County Circuit Court Judge Kathleen M. McCarthy.



Lori K. Smith

“Lori has made substantial contributions to the growth of our family law practice and has been an invaluable addition to our team of experienced attorneys,” said Brian O'Keefe, the firm's managing partner. “We're also extremely pleased to welcome Angelina Cummins to our divorce and family law group as we continue to expand our practice in these areas.” Smith serves as a director of the Macomb County Bar Association and is president of the Macomb County Bar Foundation in addition to serving in various positions with the Capuchin Soup Kitchen's Jefferson House, the Friends of Macomb County Veteran's Treatment Court and CARE of Southeastern Michigan.

IT'S 'SPRING TIME' FOR GKN'S AFTERMARKET PRODUCT OFFERINGS



ROESRATH, Germany – Suspension springs are becoming increasingly important replacement parts for repair shops and service centers, with damage to coil springs rising steadily over the last few years. While corrosion previously was the main culprit, the causes in today's automotive world are many. When choosing a suitable spring supplier, repair shops definitely must pay close attention to the supplier's OE expertise. Optimal ride and handling characteristics only can be retained when the replacement parts match OE specifications.

Spidan coil springs offer exactly the same color markings as series-production springs, making life easier for repair shops. Because Spidan uses identical spring steels and complies with original design specifications, repair shops can achieve a 1:1 swap for ride and handling characteristics. Spidan springs also come with factory-fitted isolator sleeves over the first coils, a frequently overlooked detail of most modern coil springs. Isolator sleeves provide effective noise insulation between the suspension and bodywork. Depending on axle and bodyshell designs, some springs make ideal sound bridges. Together with multiple paint layers, isolator sleeves also improve corrosion resistance in those areas particularly susceptible to mechanical load (e.g. wearing of the spring element on the spring plate) or stone chips. Where factory specification requires, Spidan springs are fitted with OE-quality isolator sleeves.

GKN Driveline Service is confident in the quality of its Spidan springs, offering an extended five-year warranty if the springs are replaced in pairs – the best guarantee of safe handling characteristics.

ALCANTARA'S FIVE-YEAR EXPANSION PLAN IS UNDERWAY IN ITALY

ALCANTARA

MILAN – Alcantara, the global luxury and lifestyle consumer brand, has completed the first phase of its 300-million euro expansion of its production facilities in Nera Montoro, Italy.

The five-year expansion program is expected to double Alcantara's production capacity to meet strong global demand for its luxury material in the automotive, fashion, consumer electronics, interior design, and aviation and yachting industries. Akihiro Nikkaku, chairman, CEO and COO of parent company Toray Industries, Inc., and Andrea Boragno, Alcantara's chairman and CEO, recently took part in grand-opening ceremonies for the recently completed first phase of the project.



The newly expanded facility includes the facility's fiber, felt and PRAU utilities departments to date and will allow a 15- to 20-percent increase in production capacity to come online during the second half of 2019.

Employment at Alcantara's Nero Montoro facilities has increased from 482 to 552 – an increase of 12.7 percent. When completed in 2023, overall employment at the expanded facilities will reach 800 people, a 35-percent increase. New hires will include researchers, process engineers and technicians specializing in sustainability, safety and environment, quality and energy recovery.

MAHLE ACQUIRES LEADING TRANSMISSION DESIGN SPECIALIST

MAHLE

Powertrain

STUTT GART – MAHLE's acquisition of the German transmission specialist ZG- Zahnräder und Getriebe GmbH adds significant extra transmission expertise to MAHLE Powertrain, one of the leading independent specialists in high-efficiency propulsion systems in Europe.

ZG will become part of the MAHLE Powertrain family, and the acquisition complements perfectly the company's dual strategy for optimizing the internal combustion engine (ICE) while focusing on new developments in alternative drive technologies.

“As drivetrains are increasingly integrated in pursuit of reduced emissions, efficiency gains come from increasingly focused refinements,” says Simon Reader, MAHLE Powertrain engineering director. “Gears can be overlooked, whether in the ICE, transmission or an electric driveline. Today's high-torque hybrid powertrains demand exceptional gear refinement and durability, but there is a constant need to reduce component size and weight.

“This is where the ZG acquisition fits in. The ZG team has proven expertise in optimized gear design and transmission layouts. These can facilitate marked improvements in NVH, friction performance, packaging and weight reduction, leading to improved efficiency, especially for electric drives. Every aspect of our work, from full powertrains to electric drivelines, can be improved by good gear and transmission design, which is why ZG's acquisition is an important development for us.”

The deal is the latest investment in future powertrain development facilities and the expertise of MAHLE Powertrain, the propulsion systems development specialist, which also has expanded its award-winning £8.3m Real Driving Emissions Center to help the automotive industry meet stringent future efficiency targets.

KIEKERT SPONSORS AUTOMOTIVE HERITAGE JOURNALISM AWARD PROGRAM



PLYMOUTH, Mich. - The Automotive Heritage Foundation has selected Kiekert AG, the technology leader in automotive locking systems, as the official sponsor of its 2019 journalism awards competition.

The annual awards program recognizes outstanding journalism in 10 automotive heritage categories, including best book, best vehicle-restoration article and best broadcast story. Based in Heiligenhaus, Germany, Kiekert has a long-history as a leader in the development and production of automotive latches and entry systems. The 2019 awards will be presented at the Concours d'Elegance of America on Sunday, July 28 in the Brembo Media Center at the Inn at St. John's in Plymouth, Michigan. The entry deadline for this year's program is May 30.



"Kiekert is ideally suited to be the presenting sponsor for our 2019 journalism awards program," said Steve Purdy, founder of the Automotive Heritage Awards (AHA) program. "Founded in 1857, Kiekert has a long and distinguished history in the auto industry dating back to the mid 1800s."

Award winners are selected by a jury of more than 20 auto journalists, headed by Csaba Csere, former editor-in-chief of Car & Driver magazine, and Gary Witzenburg, a North American Car of the Year juror and Motor Trend magazine correspondent.

The journalism awards competition is one of four AHA programs, including Concept Car of the Year, Future Collectible Vehicle of the Year and Lifetime Achievement Award. Other AHA sponsors include the National Automotive History Collection, the Society of Automotive Historians, Brembo, the Concourse d'Elegance of America and America's Automotive Trust.

AUTOCOM ASSOCIATES NAMED AGENCY OF RECORD FOR UK-BASED CHIPEX



BLOOMFIELD HILLS, Mich. – Chipex, a global supplier of car-care products and popular "do-it-yourself" kits for the repair of car and light-truck paint damage, has selected AutoCom Associates as its public relations agency of record in North America. Based in Oxfordshire, England, just north of London, Chipex is the developer of industry leading kits to repair scratches and paint damage on virtually any car, SUV or light truck in the market from Fords and BMWs up to super luxury sports cars such as Ferrari, Lamborghini and Maserati.

Founded in 2009 with the launch of its popular Chipex paint-repair kit, the company today also provides a variety of high-quality car-care products ranging from award-winning car shampoo and interior cleansers to stain removers and wheel cleaners.

"Chipex is a rapidly expanding company that expects to see double-digit growth rates for its car-care products in North America in the coming year," said AutoCom President Larry Weis. "We're looking forward to working hand-in-hand with Chipex founder Johnny Graham. Anyone looking to buy or sell a used car needs to jump on the Chipex bandwagon."

CHASSIS BRAKES DEVELOPS FAMILY OF BOOST AUTOMATED PARKING BRAKES



FARMINGTON HILLS, Mich. — Chassis Brakes International has developed a new family of Boost Automated Parking Brakes (APBs) especially designed for vehicles equipped with an electric brake booster.

Designed and engineered at the company's research and development center in France, the new Boost APB family from Chassis Brakes will be produced at Chassis Brakes International plants in Europe, North America and the Asia Pacific region. It is expected to appear on new vehicles within the next several years.

APBs account for more than 32 percent of the total global market for parking brakes and their popularity continues to grow. Chassis Brakes currently holds a 20 percent share of the global market for APBs. "Our new APB Boost family was developed to deliver higher levels of performance, safety and customer satisfaction compared to current designs," said Bernd Schemer, global vice president of Sales, Engineering and Project Management at Chassis Brakes International.

Schemer noted that electric, hybrid-electric and autonomous vehicles in the future will require more complex brake-control strategies, adding that the company's APB Boost system is another step in the evolution of wheel brakes from mechanical towards mechatronic systems. Advantages compared to standard APB products include a maximized clamping force with a downsized APB; reduced brake packaging with increased performance and an overall reduction in weight.

INFICON RELEASES WHITE PAPER ON ROBOTIC LEAK-TESTING FOR THE AUTO INDUSTRY



DETROIT – INFICON, a major global supplier of leak-detection equipment, has published a white paper on robotic leak testing to help automakers and their suppliers reduce costs, improve quality and increase assembly-line speeds.

Available free of charge online (<https://www.inficon.com/markets/automotive/robotic-sniffing-white-paper/>), the new guidebook discusses differences between static and dynamic "sniffer" testing, why a leak detector's gas-flow capacity is important and which test configurations are most suitable for specific applications. It also provides a series of important tips for successfully installing robotic leak-detection systems.

"Only five percent of all U.S. automotive plants currently have robotic leak-detection systems," notes Thomas Parker, the company's North American automotive sales manager. "We expect that number to climb to 20 percent or more within the next five years."

Parker believes that a properly installed robotic station can make the difference between outstanding product quality and an expensive exercise in futility.

Robotic testing, he adds, is a critically important first step in eliminating costly human error that invariably takes place when leak-detection tests are conducted manually.



REBECCA KAISER AWARDED INTERNSHIP AT AUTOCOM ASSOCIATES



BLOOMFIELD HILLS, Mich. - Rebecca Kaiser has been awarded a six-month internship at AutoCom Associates, a Michigan-based public relations agency providing communications services and counsel to businesses in the global automotive industry. Kaiser will assist agency clients with editorial services, event planning and media relations.



Rebecca Kaiser

She currently is pursuing a bachelor's degree in international business at the Technische Hochschule in Nürnberg, Germany, with a focus on public relations and marketing. She lives in Royal Oak, Michigan.

Three other students also have been awarded internships, starting this summer: Julian Ebner (University of Applied Sciences in Regensburg); Sarah Heuser (University of Applied Sciences in Würzburg), and Ramona Sommerstorfer (University of Applied Sciences in Regensburg).

AutoCom's annual Tech Crawl will take place on June 11. The program brings together clients and automotive journalists for technology presentations and has won a variety of local and national awards. AutoCom clients taking part in Tech Crawl 2019 include Chassis Brakes International, Chipex, Kiekert AG, INFICON and Rodin Cars.

For more information, please contact Rebecca Kaiser at rkaiser@usautocom.com or tl. 248.647.8621.

SAVE THE DATES



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**CAR Management
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August 5-8, 2019
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**Frankfurt International Auto
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