

## **PRESS RELEASE**

Kirchheim, November 24, 2020

### **Recyclate Initiative**

#### **Premium ink system contributes to better quality recyclate**

**The cross-sector project “Recyclate Initiative”, organised by leading companies from the plastic, ink and recycling industries, including hubergroup, has reached an important milestone. Extensive testing to improve the recyclate quality of polyolefin foils has confirmed that the recycling properties of BOPP/BOPP laminates can be significantly improved by using the appropriate ink systems. The result is a high-quality granulate with material properties comparable to virgin materials. This granulate can then be processed, e.g. using injection moulding technology, for use in the automotive industry, for example. Packaging is therefore given a new lease of life in high-quality applications.**

#### **Ink is a major factor for high-quality recyclate**

Ink has a demonstrably significant impact on the quality of recyclate. Previous use of a standard NC ink system did not deliver the desired results. Decomposition products discolour the regranulate and significantly deteriorate the mechanical and sensory properties.

Dr Christian Schirmacher, technical representative for hubergroup Print Solutions in this project, reports on the development process: “Our first challenge was to understand the recycling process on a chemical and physical level. Subsequently, in the second phase of the project we developed laboratory methods in order to find raw materials that meet the complex requirements of this process. From this information, we were able to determine suitable ink formulations.”

By switching to a polyurethane-based ink system (Gecko Platinum Flexo), the Kirchheim printing ink manufacturer made a major contribution to the success of the project. The Gecko Platinum ink series from hubergroup, which was specially developed for demanding applications in the sterilisable packaging sector, can withstand the high temperatures used during the regranulation of polypropylene foil due to the PU technology. Thanks to the ink stability, the regranulate retains its high-quality material properties, which are comparable to those of virgin material.

“We are proud to be part of this initiative and to be able to celebrate these initial successes today. This achievement was only possible due to cooperation throughout the supply chain and by combining the knowledge and expertise of every individual,” Schirmacher praises the positive and constructive cooperation of the project partners.

## **What is the “recyclate” initiative?**

The recyclate initiative is a collaboration between several companies from the ink, plastic and recycling industries. The companies involved include Maag (packaging), Taghleef Industries (foils), Henkel (laminating adhesives), and hubergroup Print Solutions (printing inks), amongst others.

The driving force behind this collaborative initiative is the increasing demand for recyclable plastic packaging. Another factor is the EU’s environmental objective to achieve a circular economy for single-use plastic packaging by 2030.

In order to achieve this aim, hubergroup is also extremely active in other industry projects as well as in different collaborations such as CEFLEX.

## **About hubergroup**

hubergroup is a family company based in southern Germany with a 255-year history. The Print Solutions division produces and sells printing inks and printing aids for packaging printing and commercial printing. The Security Printing division for international producers of bank notes and identification documents is run separately through our subsidiary company Gleitsmann Security Inks. The Chemicals division markets raw materials such as pigments, resins, and additives produced in India. The company has always focused on customer success. That is why hubergroup works on innovative solutions, technologies and services every day in order to optimise the value creation in the printing and chemical industry and to enable their customers to achieve first-class results. In 2019, the company generated an annual turnover of approximately €780 million and hubergroup is represented by 3,700 employees worldwide in over 30 countries.

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