



The plastics sector has owned up to its responsibility. This thesis is put forward by Prof. Hans-Josef Endres in our Special on the circular economy in which he summarizes important trends at K2019 for recycling precious plastics (p. 19). So, with K over, have all the problems been solved?

Unfortunately not. In short-lived applications, plastics lose their value all too quickly once their purpose has been fulfilled – packaging is a prime example. We are reminded of this by the mountains of superfluous gift wrapping after Christmas. We remove the contents, and the previously important functions of the now empty wrapping are immediately ren-

The Idea of Circularity Is Gaining Momentum

dered obsolete, no matter what material has protected the product until then. Even, and especially, a high-tech product such as multilayer film then becomes useless.

But does it necessarily have to be worthless? No, argues Alexander Baumgartner, head of a large manufacturer of flexible packaging and chairman of the Flexible Packaging Europe association. He sees a definite need to catch up in Europe when it comes to dealing with plastic waste. A look at Asia, where the recycling industry is receiving a boost from political regulations, shows – surprisingly – how things could be different (p. 16). Such ideas for more sustainable products and recycling systems are always welcome, wherever they are to be found.

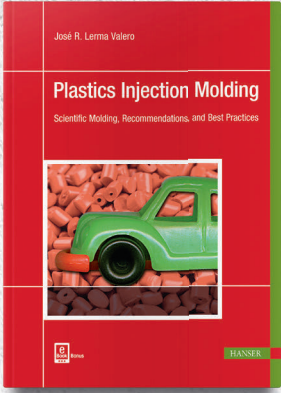
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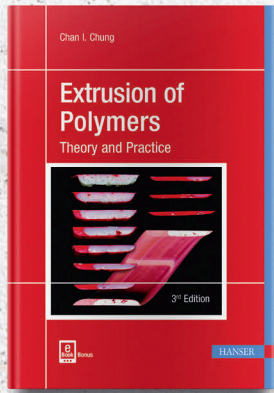
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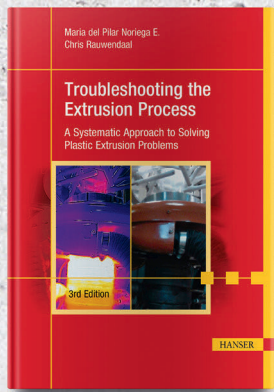
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