



The winners of the awards 2012: From left to right: Manfred Linder (Karl Wörwag Lack-und Farbenfabrik – Innovation Award *body exterior*), Fritz Wazula, Severin Sauren, Dr. Thomas Schuh (Daimler – 1st place *body exterior*), Manuel Heimerl (Grafe Color Batch – 1st place *image/product ad*), Friedrich Obermann (Burg Design – 1st place *electr./opt. parts* and Grand Award), Nicolas Beyl (KraussMaffei Technologies – 1st place *image/product brochure*), Astrid Kahlen, Stefan Müller (Johnson Controls – 1st place *body interior*), Friedrich Westphal (PME fluidtec), Murat Bozkurtlu (Teklas Kaucuk), Thilo Stier (A. Schulman – Grand Innovation Award), Dr.-Ing. Hansjörg Kurz (Volkswagen – 1st place *digital media*, 1st place *body exterior*), Peter Dill, Dieter Kerschbaumer (Röchling Automotive – 1st place *power train*), Dr.-Ing. Klaus-Dieter Johnke (SPE Central Europe), Dr.-Ing. Rudolf Fernengel (2R Kunststofftechnik).

Awards for Components and Communication

Awards Ceremony. At a ceremony held in Düsseldorf, Germany, at the end of June, SPE Central Europe granted the Automotive Awards of 2012. All components and means of communication that reached the finals include trendsetting aspects.

Every one and a half year since 1992, SPE Central Europe, a section of the Society of Plastics Engineers Inc., has granted the Automotive Division Award, which is renowned for the high quality of novelties submitted and for the objective criteria of evaluation. A high number of enterprises supported former awards, as well as the recent competition. This year, A. Schulman, Celanese, Demat, EMS-Chemie, Frimo Group, Grafe Advanced Polymers, KraussMaffei Technologies, and Ticona acted as sponsors.

Dr.-Ing. Klaus-Dieter Johnke, president of SPE Central Europe, opened the

event, followed by a brief salutatory from Willem de Vos, new chef executive officer of SPE International. Then the stage belonged to the two men visitors are always looking forward to seeing: Professor Dr.-Ing. Georg Menges and Dr.-Ing. Rudolf Fernengel. This year, their dialogue was concerned with the question whether bio-fuels are an alternative fuel of the future. They presented factual arguments against the production of biofuels from plants.

Time for Winners

Prof. Peter Laabs presented the submissions for the categories of *media & publications*, and the sponsors gave the prizes and certificates to the respective awardees and placed competitors. The event's first

highlight was the Grand Innovation Award sponsored by Ticona. The prize was granted to BASF's virtual showroom for the "smart forvision" concept vehicle. As Laabs explained: "This microsite is excellent and professional, presenting technical information in a simple and playful way. The site starts with an interactive showroom, where the user can regard all sides of the vehicle in a way similar to multi-touch operation. Via markers, he can access the following sites with texts, pictures, audio comments and videos providing further information about the innovations. This will finally interest and convince both laymen and experts."

Then Fernengel introduced to visitors the submissions obtained in the categories of *parts & components*. The first

Translated from *Kunststoffe* 9/2012, pp. 20–21

Article as PDF-File at www.kunststoffe-international.com; Document Number: PE111153



Get-together: Opportunity to scrutinize the parts and means of communication that made it to the finals (photos: Klaus Fricke, Hanover, Germany)

prize went to the part that includes the highest level of innovativeness, i.e. a drain channel by Teklas Kaucuk. It received a Grand Innovation Award sponsored by A. Schulman.

The overall winner of the evening, and thus of the 2012 contest, was the decorative ambiente light stick Burg Design de-

veloped together with Schöfer: A crystal clear film from a new material combination is printed from two sides, thermoformed, contour-processed, and back-molded with a semi-transparent material, thus generating a final component. When introducing the part, Fernengel emphasized: "This is a new material com-

bination and a film technique with a day and a night design. It was developed by young people. It shows that there's no reason to worry about young engineers." Sponsor of the award was Frimo Group.

Conclusion

At the end of the 14th competition of the SPE Automotive Award, Johnke drew his conclusion: "Looking at the prized parts, it becomes clear that, whether alone or combined to other materials, and along with improved methods and techniques, plastics can help promote outstanding progress in their applications. They have been of benefit in a high number of recent models of automotive manufacturers, so far." As a result, it was not an easy task for the jury to decide which of the many parts submitted were to be awarded – with so many top parts received, in particular in the areas of *body exterior* and *power train*. This took a lot of time, because the novelties underwent the usual, extraordinarily detailed evaluation process. ■

GG