

Quick Way to Find the Right Adhesive

Online Tool for an Easier Adhesive Search

Searching for the right adhesive is a very complex process. The wide range of manufacturers and products makes it hard to keep track. Users can find a suitable adhesive more easily and quickly with the Substratec search engine. Further functions have now been added to this search engine.

The adhesives market is complex. The Substratec search engine promises a quick overview of possible products © Thodonal, Adobe Stock



These days, even in the business world, products are often searched for online. For complex problems, however, this search, frequently via Google, quickly reaches its limits. The range of suppliers and products is just too confusing. Since 2016, the search engine Substratec (www.substratec.com) has been offering a more targeted way to find the right adhesive. This year, the website is to be relaunched with the introduction of various new functions.

At the heart of Substratec is the substrate navigator. This is an online tool that makes it possible to search for adhesives according to various categories. Users first specify the two substrates they want to join. Then they can choose further parameters such as heat resistance, curing mechanism, and processing. Over 100 different substrates and 26 parameters are available.

On the basis of this selection, an algorithm determines which adhesives can be considered and how suitable these are. On the results page, users can see the possible adhesives displayed together

with an assessment of how far, in percentage terms, they meet requirements. The basic data for the algorithm come from the technical data sheets of the adhesives and the information provided by the manufacturers. "We carry out a substrate comparison together with the manufacturers, in which we discuss how well an adhesive works with different substrates," explained the founder of Substratec, Andreas Reizenzahn.

KO Criterion Is Heat Resistance

For the algorithm, the various parameters were also assessed for their relevance to the adhesive bond. Heat resistance, for example is therefore a KO criterion. If an adhesive fails to meet the specified expectations in this respect, it is automatically rejected. With other parameters, on the contrary, it is only downgraded.

Until now, the relevance of the criteria has still depended on the assessment of the Substratec creators. After the relaunch, however, users themselves can determine how important certain par-

ameters are to them and what might even be KO criteria. "In the new version of Substratec, users themselves can determine which adhesive properties are key to them. While we may not regard, for example, the color of the adhesive to be particularly important, it may play a crucial role for many users and even be a KO criterion. In future, we would like to allow users to make this judgment themselves," explained Reizenzahn. Once website visitors have decided on an adhesive, they can see additional information displayed on an overview page and download the data sheet. They also have the option of contacting the manufacturer via a form.

So far, some 400 adhesives from 30 different manufacturers, including names such as Weiss Chemie and Rampf, can be found through the search engine. This number is set to increase, thinks Reizenzahn, especially since the website has been available in English as well. International companies, in particular are showing great interest. Merz+benteli AG and Kisting AG, two Swiss companies, for example, now are added. The search en-

gine's database does not actually include every available adhesive and manufacturer. The Substrattec business model is based on companies paying an annual fee for mention on the website. The fee is determined by how many products are listed. At present, companies can list a maximum of 20. This is intended to prevent a manufacturer from dominating the search engine.

Further Search Engines Planned

Besides searching via substrates, it will also be possible to see suitable adhesives displayed for different application sectors such as automotive, medical technology or microelectronics. This application navigator is at present still in the beta phase but should be fully available from May. In addition, visitors to the website can see companies displayed by competencies and areas of application served. As well as these navigators already available on the website, further ones will be introduced

during 2020. For example, one is planned for application technologies and machinery. With this navigator, users will be able to search for fully and semi-automated adhesive application machines and manual dispensing equipment. "At this point, crosslinking between the search engines begins. Website visitors searching for a specific adhesive will also receive suggestions as to how it can be applied. And vice versa, the application machinery display will show the adhesives for which the equipment is suitable. This gives users a comprehensive insight into the whole subject of adhesives," said Reizenzahn, summing up the concept.

By the end of the year, a search engine for coatings is also planned. With this tool, users will be able to see coatings displayed for various substrates. Here again, it will be possible to refine the search using different parameters such as corrosion classes, and abrasion and chemical resistance. In 2021, a navigator for 3D printing will be added. This will include

both materials and software tools as well as the actual printers. Reizenzahn believes the individual navigators complement each other, which therefore offers users of Substrattec an extra benefit: "Where companies carry out adhesive bonding, they are frequently also involved in coating application, and vice versa. In 3D printing, too, post-processing is very important, often with coatings. There are very many synergies between these two sectors." ■

Florian Streifinger, Editor

Service

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