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Going Global Part II

Last month, I reported that GMIC has opened its membership to companies that melt glass outside of the United States. There are a number of reasons why this move has been taken. The most practical—and the most compelling—is that the glass industry is a global enterprise that faces global challenges. The most serious of these are the cost of energy and the impact of the industry (and all industry) on the world's climate.

I also reported last month that GMIC works primarily through its committees and that the Internet allows this work to be conducted with little regard for boundaries and time zones. Some of the activities that may be of interest to glassmakers from diverse geographical locations are focused in these committees:

- **Energy**—This committee is focused on a search for existing and potential technologies to reduce the practical levels of energy required to melt glass in the face of increasing energy prices and our wish to reduce emissions (less

energy fewer emissions). This group was the organizer of the excellent workshop the GMIC sponsored at the conclusion of the 68th Conference on Glass Problems, “Path to Sustainability – The Search for Energy Efficiency.” More than 100 participants stayed a day after the conference’s conclusion to attend the session (A CD of presentations is available—contact the GMIC)

- **Environment**—Concerns for long-term sustainability and the need to reduce emissions of all types are leading all industries to seek approaches that will lighten their “footprint.” This committee is seeking alternatives for reducing emissions as well as attempting to develop collaborations within the industry and with government agencies that will lead to emissions’ reductions without damage to the industry’s viability. International exchanges will improve the options for all.

- **Safety**—Operating under the principle that “safety is too important to be competitive,” this committee is identifying safety practices and policies that will help an already safe industry to become even more so. International exchanges will benefit all.

- **Education**—As engineering studies have become less appealing to university students, our industry is faced with an increasing shortage of specialized trained professionals. This committee is identifying industry needs, existing resources for education and training and will create curricula for academic and practical programs. International resources and participation will be welcome.

- **Innovative Uses**—This committee organized the “Strength in Glass” contests and is continuing to pursue the possibility of developing means to substantially strengthen our universally

useful product. New applications and markets will develop as the age-old limits on glass strength are surpassed. In the long term, this initiative likely will be the most important of all!

- **Research and Development Alliance Committee (RDAC)**—Collaboration and “leverage” are the way forward! This committee will identify technology priorities from glass company strategic objectives, identify university and research institutes able to address those priorities, and create coalitions of glass companies and associate members to participate in and support practical research projects, seeking funding from any of a number of potential interested sources.

One additional benefit to international members is that this writer is fluent in both French and Spanish and has knowledge of several other languages. Communications, while primarily in English, can be expanded to serve the needs of our membership!

All of the above are equally relevant to any global glass company. International members will have equal rights and opportunities to participate in and benefit from these activities as do members with facilities in the U.S.

For information on membership conditions and benefits, visit our web site or contact the GMIC at: mgreenman@gmic.org.

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