

STRETCH

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Malaysian Rubber Export Promotion Council

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MREPC MARKETPLACE

YOUR SOURCE FOR QUALITY RUBBER PRODUCTS



CEO of MREPC Dato' Teo Suat Cheng

The MREPC Marketplace is an initiative to present to the world the best of Malaysia's rubber products in a comprehensive and easily accessible website. It is a site where prospective buyers can make inquiries about the products they are seeking, post their requirements on-line and expect quick responses, and make contact with manufacturers and exporters of a wide range of quality rubber products. For Malaysian rubber product manufacturers, the Marketplace is a showcase for their products, enabling them to display their wares to a targeted international audience.

This initiative was unveiled by the Minister for Plantation Industries and Commodities, YB Tan Sri Bernard Dompok on 5 April 2012 with much fanfare. During the launch, the Honourable Minister noted that the Marketplace would be able to provide Malaysian rubber product manufacturers access to a wider market

than they would be able to reach if they relied solely on the traditional market promotion, such as participation in trade shows and advertising. MREPC has also embarked on an extensive advertising campaign in support of the Marketplace, targeting rubber product users in specific industries, such as healthcare, automotive, infrastructure, and mining.

To take full advantage of this facility, Malaysian rubber product manufacturers need to update their catalogues and place them on the MREPC Marketplace website. As manufacturers and exporters upload their catalogues on to the Marketplace, and the range of products offered becomes increasingly comprehensive, potential buyers of rubber products are likely to find the website more useful. Buyers will be able to find the products that best suit their requirements and compare similar products from different potential suppliers.

Currently, a wide range of rubber products for a variety of applications are available on the website; the number of enquiries received is encouraging. The MREPC Marketplace has the potential to play a critical role in the marketing of Malaysian rubber products to the world and in assisting users to gain access to quality rubber products from Malaysia.

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An initiative to enhance access to suppliers of Malaysian rubber products

The MREPC Marketplace, a website designed to facilitate access to manufacturers and exporters of Malaysian rubber products, was launched by the Honourable Minister for Plantation Industries and Commodities, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, on 5 April 2012, at the Kuala Lumpur Hilton. The event, which was attended by Malaysian rubber product manufacturers, government officials and media personnel, included a video presentation on the objectives and functions of the Marketplace. A seminar on “Emerging Markets for Rubber Products” was held concurrently with the event.

In his address, the Hon Minister noted that the MREPC Marketplace is an important MREPC initiative to promote made-in-Malaysia rubber products online and facilitate interaction between potential buyers and Malaysian rubber product manufacturers. It provides a facility for Malaysian manufacturers to upload their product catalogues onto the website. Potential buyers can view the catalogues and initiate interaction with the manufacturers directly. Visitors to the site may also make enquiries regarding specific products and these will be directed to manufacturers who can meet their requirements.

The Hon Minister commended MREPC for this initiative, which is supported by an advertising campaign covering print and internet media to promote made-in-Malaysia rubber products, and is designed to drive traffic to the MREPC Marketplace website. He advised all Malaysian rubber product manufacturers to display their catalogues on the website, so as to take advantage of the advertising campaign and to offer buyers from around the world a wide range of quality products.



Minister for Plantation Industries and Commodities, YB Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, at the Launch of MREPC Marketplace





YB Minister with Chairman of MREPC, YB Datuk Billy Abit Joo

The Chairman of the MREPC Board of Trustees, the Hon Datuk Billy Abit Joo, in his welcoming remarks, outlined some of the programs undertaken by MREPC for the benefit of Malaysian rubber product manufacturers and exporters. He stressed that MREPC's research programs, capacity building programs as well as market promotion programs, are planned and implemented based on interaction with the rubber product industry at all levels. It is therefore important that the industry continues to provide feedback and input on their experiences and suggestions on improvements that can help MREPC to better serve its target groups.



MREPC Incentive Programme

International trade fairs held locally are a good starting point for rubber product companies, especially small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that are venturing into foreign markets and would like to promote their products to potential foreign buyers. MREPC provides incentives under SBIM9 to Malaysian rubber product manufacturers who participate in international trade exhibitions held in Malaysia. This incentive provides assistance to manufacturers who want to introduce their products to foreign buyers, assess buyers' response to their products and undertake market promotion without incurring the higher costs associated with market promotion overseas.

Under this incentive, the manufacturers can claim 50% of booth cost, subject to a maximum claim of RM5,000 per trade exhibition. Claims are limited to participation in four (4) international trade exhibitions per company per year. Manufacturers are encouraged to gather information on the list of relevant international trade exhibitions held in Malaysia and plan their participation accordingly.



For more information on MREPC incentives, please log on to:
<http://www.mrepc.com/incentives/Incentives2011.php>

SBIM 9

Emerging Markets for Rubber Products

The MREPC Seminar on “Emerging markets for rubber products”, held concurrently with the Launch of the MREPC Marketplace on 5 April 2012, saw participation from over 120 industry members. The seminar presented the findings from market research undertaken by MREPC over the last two years.

The first session on rubber medical devices was chaired by Mr. Dennis Low, director of Corporate Affairs at Supermax Holdings and the second session on automotive parts and industrial products, chaired by Datuk Dr. Mahmood Abdul Kadir. Papers presented at the seminar provided information on trends and market prospects for rubber products and suggested strategies for expanding exports to new and emerging markets, specifically China, India, Russia and Ukraine.

MREPC Market Seminar - **Emerging markets for rubber products**

Speaker:

En. Adnan Abdullah,
Economics & Market
Research Advisor

1

The Market for Medical Gloves in India

The market for medical gloves in India, including present and projected utilization of surgical and examination gloves (natural rubber, synthetic and vinyl) was examined in the paper. Glove consumption patterns and procurement policies, supply and distribution channels and the competitive scenario for domestic and imported medical gloves were also discussed.

Speaker:

Mr. Sam Goh,
MREPC China
Representative

2

Market Survey on Medical Gloves Consumption in China

The paper discussed the major types of medical gloves consumed in China, the main factors affecting glove consumption and market potential. Information on distribution channels and the regulatory environment for medical devices in the country was also presented during the seminar.

Speaker:

Ms. Yap Siew Hong,
Director of Corporate
Planning & Research

3

The Market for Rubber Medical Devices in Russia & Ukraine

Information on the market for rubber medical devices, specifically gloves and condoms, in Russia and Ukraine, was presented. The major factors affecting demand, import requirements and other regulatory constraints as well as the competitiveness of Malaysian rubber medical device companies in both the markets were discussed.

Speaker:

Mr. Sam Goh,
MREPC China
Representative

4

The Market for Rubber Automotive Parts in China

The paper examined the market for rubber automotive parts in China, currently the world's largest automotive market. The regulatory environment and the supply and distribution channels were described. The presentation also highlighted the major issues and opportunities for Malaysian suppliers of rubber automotive parts.

Speaker:

En. Izwan Zarik,
Deputy Director of
Corporate Planning
& Research

5

The Market for Rubber Automotive Parts in India

The market for rubber automotive parts in India, with estimates of market size and assessments of the production and potential consumption of rubber products in various vehicle segments, was discussed in the paper. Information on supply and distribution channels, the competitive scenario for domestically produced and imported parts, and the relevant regulatory environment for automotive parts were also presented.

The Market for Condoms in Latin America

The Latin American region comprises 17 countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean, where Spanish or Portuguese is the official language. The region has a combined population of 549 million, making it an important market for a variety of health and personal care products, including condoms.

A market study undertaken by MREPC recently found that the region has potential as an export destination for condoms, given the large domestic market and considerable imports of condoms, despite some increase in local manufacturing capacity. Average GDP growth in the major Latin American countries has also been relatively high, adding to purchasing power in most of the economies.

Governments and non-government organizations (NGOs) in Latin America play a key role in the market for condoms. Each year, governments and NGOs supply free or heavily subsidised condoms to the general public as part of social programs to reduce the relatively high HIV prevalence rate. The average HIV prevalence rate is currently at 0.4%-0.5% of population aged between 15-49 years in most countries in the region. In comparison, the average HIV prevalence rate in developed economies in Western Europe and Asia is between 0.1% and 0.2%.

Table 1: Condoms – Key market indicators in selected Latin American countries

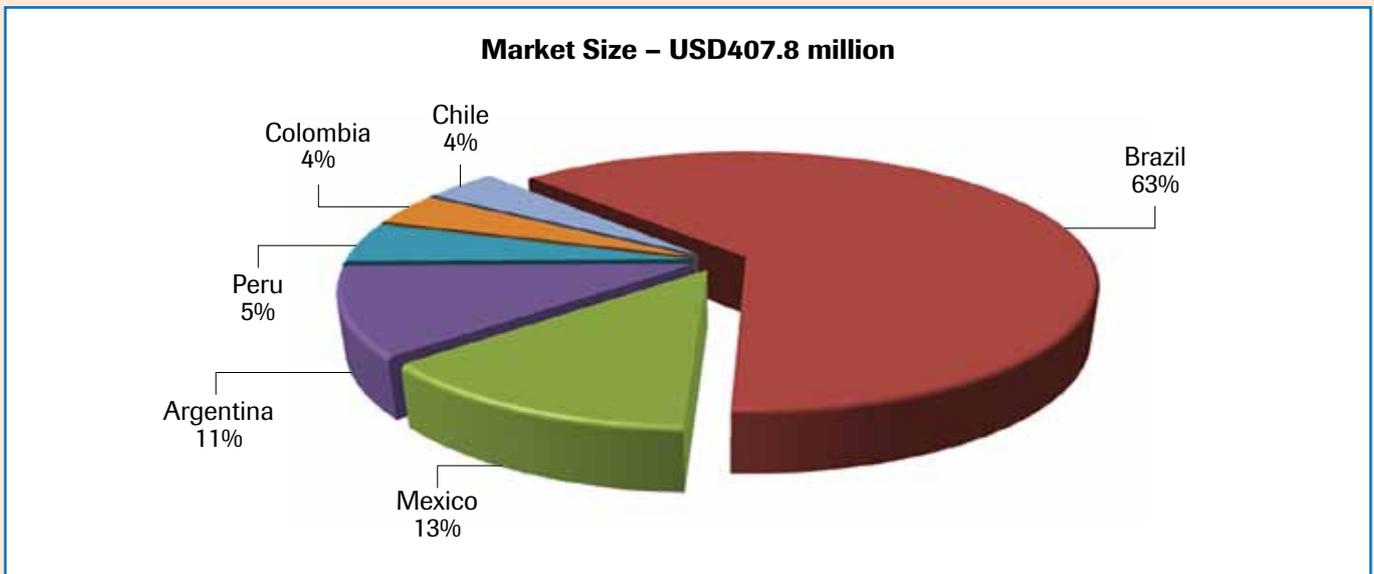
Country	GDP Growth (Average 2007-11)	Population (million)	GDP per capita (2011)	HIV Prevalence Rate*
Brazil	15.8%	194.9	12,423	0.5
Mexico	4.0%	109.7	10,638	0.3
Argentina	15.6%	40.9	11,169	0.5
Colombia	10.3%	46.1	6,685	0.5
Peru	12.0%	30.0	5,593	0.4
Chile	9.5%	17.4	13,294	0.4

*% of population aged 15-49 years affected by HIV

Market size and imports

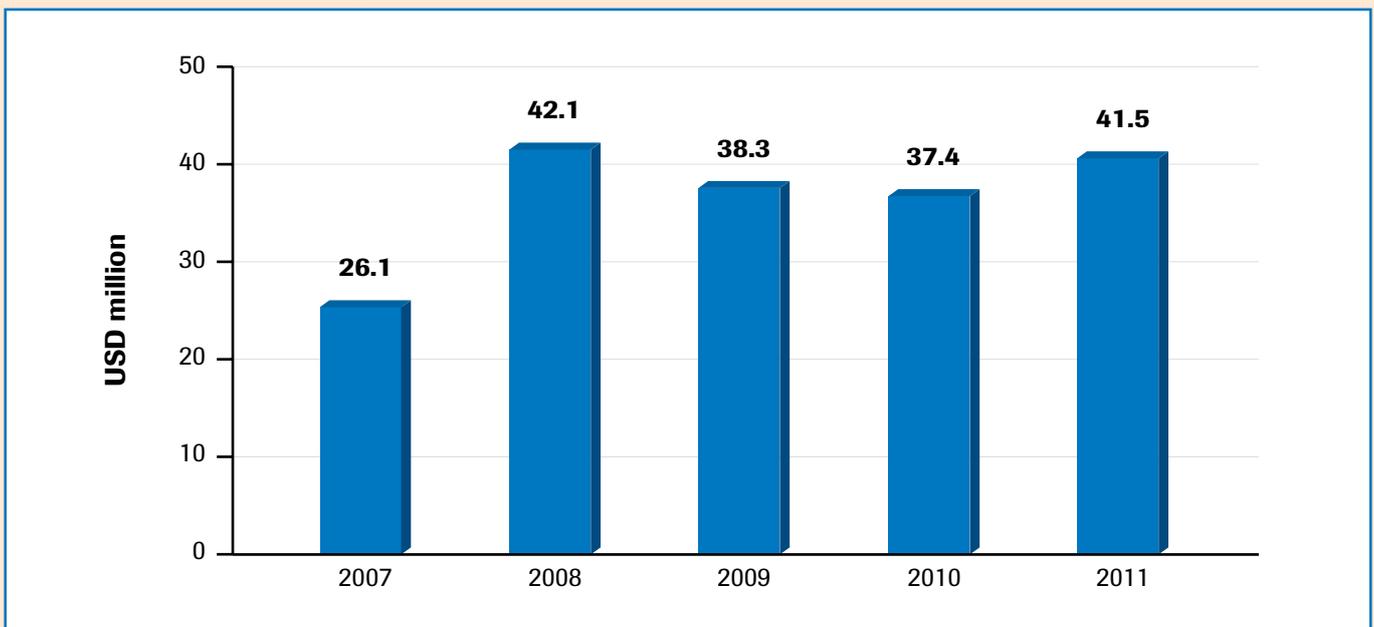
The total market size for condoms in the six major Latin American countries, i.e. Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Colombia, Peru and Chile, is estimated at USD407.8 million in 2011. In volume terms, usage of condoms is estimated to be around 1.33 billion pieces. Brazil is the largest single market for condoms in the region, valued at USD256 million or 707 million pieces in 2011. This is followed by Mexico with an estimated consumption value of USD52.3 million. The market for condoms in Argentina is valued at USD43.5 million and Peru at USD22 million. The market size for the region as a whole is estimated to have increased by an average of 4.8% annually between 2007 and 2011.

Chart 1: Market Size for Condoms in Latin America (Selected Countries)



In terms of value of imports, the six Latin American countries purchased a total of USD41.5 million condoms from overseas in 2011. Brazil has been the biggest importing country, accounting for nearly half of the import value for Latin America in 2011. Other significant importers are Mexico, Argentina, Peru, Colombia and Chile with imports in the range of USD4 million to USD6 million in 2011. Argentina recorded the highest growth in imports of condoms, with a CAGR of 37.4% in value terms for the period 2007-11. In terms of quantity, its imports registered a CAGR of 30.4%.

Chart 2: Latin America's Imports of Condoms, 2007-2011 (USD million)



Malaysia has a strong presence in the import market for condoms in Latin America as the second largest exporter to the region. Exports from Malaysia to Latin America were worth USD11.2 million in 2011, while its market share expanded from 19.7% in 2007 to 27% in 2011. Thailand was the largest exporter to the region capturing 32.5% share in 2011.

Distribution of Condoms in Latin America

The market for condoms in Latin America is made up of the commercial and non-commercial segments. The commercial segment, which refers to the branded condoms and subsidized condoms sold in the retail market, comprises about 74% of the total value of condoms in the market. The non-commercial segment is made up of unbranded condoms purchased by the government for free distribution and this accounts for the remaining 26% of the market.

The Brazilian government is known to be the largest single condom purchaser and its expenditure on condoms is said to be the highest in the world with annual expenditure of more than USD10 million. In 2011, the Brazilian Ministry of Health spent USD36 million to purchase 1.2 billion condoms to be given out to the public including free distribution during the annual Brazilian Carnivals and AIDS campaigns over next few years. It is estimated that the demand for condoms increases by nearly 30% during the carnival season.

In Mexico, the government spent approximately USD18 million to purchase 55-60 million male and female condoms for hospitals and sex workers. The government of Argentina spent approximately USD2.7 million to purchase contraceptive products including condoms during the year. In Chile, the government spent USD6.5 million on HIV prevention campaign and sex education. This amount includes the purchase of condoms.

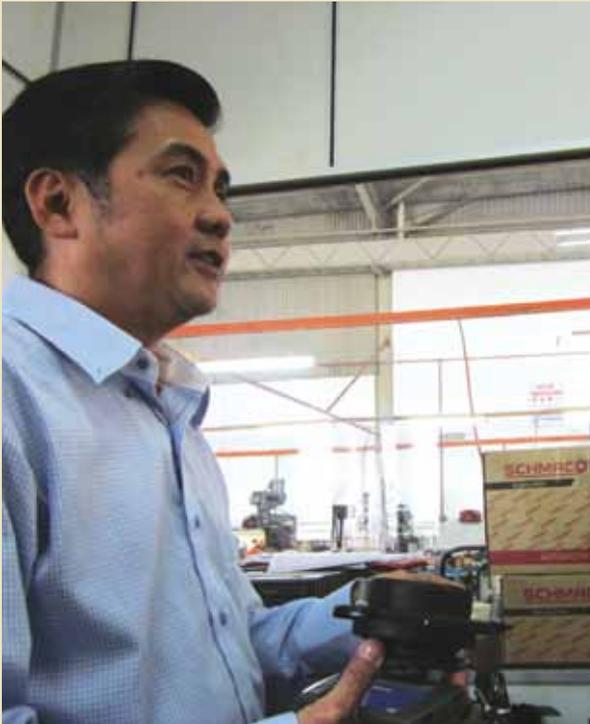
In the retail market, subsidized condoms are distributed by international and local NGOs such as DKT International in Brazil and Mexico, Apropro (Peru), Aprofa (Chile) and Profamilia (Colombia). However, these subsidized condoms are only available in the major cities of Latin America. Overall, drug stores or pharmacies are the largest retail outlets for selling condoms and a large variety of types and brands of condoms are available in these stores. Other channels such as kiosks, hypermarkets and supermarkets, and convenience stores are becoming popular in line with growth in the number of these retail establishments in the region.

Market Outlook

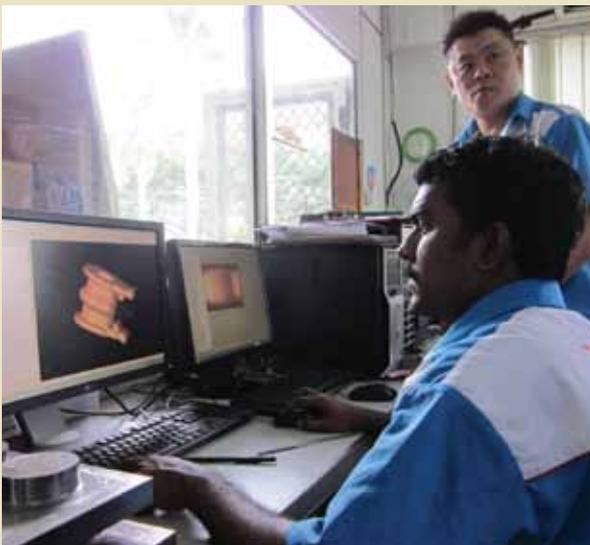
The demand for condoms in Latin America is forecasted to increase consistently each year to reach 1.75 billion pieces in 2015. The growth in demand during the period 2012-2014 is estimated to be 7.1% per annum (CAGR). Brazil will lead the growth in condom use, thanks to the continuous efforts by the government and NGOs to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. Other major markets, including Mexico and Argentina will also see growing demand in the government segment.

In addition, major sporting events that will be held in Brazil namely FIFA World Cup in 2014 and Summer Olympics in 2016 will see a significant rise in demand for condom as witnessed during the Brazilian Carnival held annually. Increased buying power in growing economies such as Brazil, Argentina and Peru could also shift some of the demand to branded condoms, from the subsidised and free condoms distributed by government and NGOs.

SMES in the rubber product industry



Mr Edmund Tan, MD of Schmaco Auto Parts Industries Sdn Bhd



In-house design capability at Schmaco

SCHMACO Auto Parts Industries Sdn Bhd - Venturing into new markets

Schmaco was set up in 2008, as a spinoff from Lokco Auto Parts, a company manufacturing auto parts for the Malaysian domestic market. Edmund Tan, then a partner in Lokco, set up Schmaco, initially to supply Lokco with rubber automotive parts for the replacement market for distribution within Malaysia. With his engineering background, his initial focus was on improving quality and production efficiency. Finding the local market to be price-driven and limited in demand for quality replacement parts, Mr. Tan decided to explore foreign markets, particularly new and emerging markets and to develop a brand that would be acceptable to foreign buyers.

The first attempt to venture into foreign markets in late 2008 was at a difficult and challenging time. The Malaysian ringgit was strengthening, the market for automotive parts in Europe and the US were in steep decline and there was stiff competition from other producing countries, notably China and Thailand. Schmaco's first foray into the international market at Automechanika Frankfurt (with MREPC), was an eye-opener and strengthened their resolve to develop their own brand. They also found that the less developed markets, such as the CIS countries, the Middle East and some African states, were markets with potential for their products.

Today, 70% of Schmaco's production is for export, mostly of rubber automotive parts for the replacement market. These include suspension parts and engine mountings, bushes, CV boots, and a range of moulded and rubber-to-metal bonded parts made to suit a wide range of Asian car models. More than 90% of sales are products under the Schmaco brand. The brand has been registered in most of the markets where the products are sold.



Schmaco booth at Thailand Auto Parts & Accessories Show

Recognising the high cost of moulds for the wide range of parts that Schmaco manufactures, the company has set up a metal tooling section where moulds are fabricated for the rubber parts produced. Rubber compounds to meet specific product requirements are sourced from compound suppliers. Metal components for the rubber-to-metal bonded parts are developed with trusted companies, as the cost for developing moulds for metal parts is high and there has to be some assurance that the metal parts will not be sold to competitors.

With sales of over RM9 million in 2011, Schmaco is working at almost full capacity. The work force of 90 employees works as many as three shifts a day when necessary to meet orders. Mr. Tan has plans to expand capacity and is reorganising the factory layout at its present location in Selayang, Selangor, to improve work flow and productivity, while actively looking for land to build a larger facility.

Schmaco is still very much a family business, although there are some external investors who have a stake in the enterprise and are directors of the firm. Mr. Tan has brought his son into the business to coordinate marketing activities, and other family members are also involved in the business in different capacities.

With a clear vision to create a world class brand for quality rubber auto parts for the replacement market, Schmaco has made a significant impact in its target markets in the short space of four years. If this focus and direction is maintained, there is every likelihood that this family enterprise will grow to be a valuable asset to the rubber product industry in Malaysia.

Associated First Rubber - Quality for exports

Set up in 1999 as a joint venture between Cooltech Industries Sdn Bhd, a manufacturer of automobile air-conditioning components and accessories, and First Rubber of Thailand, Associated First Rubber Sdn Bhd (AFR) manufactures a wide range of rubber moulded parts, including O-rings, diaphragms, seals, grommets and gaskets. The range of products that the company has experience in manufacturing has applications in many different industry sectors, including automotive, plumbing and sanitary ware, air-conditioning, electronic and



Mr KK Yeaw, the Managing Director of Associated First Rubber



The range of products from Associated First Rubber

electrical products and various types of pumps. The company's founder and principle shareholder, Mr K K Yeaw, has focused on supplying quality rubber parts to automotive manufacturers, initially for the domestic market, but recently has begun to export to a few destinations.

As a company just beginning to venture into export markets, AFR has placed its priority on timeliness and quality in serving customer needs. With the 5S workplace organization method effectively in place, the factory is well maintained and functions smoothly. The company prides itself on the orderliness and cleanliness of its factory and offices and the relatively young and aggressive work force. AFR obtained ISO9001:2000 certification in 2003 (upgraded to ISO9001:2008 in 2009) and ISO/TS16949:2009 in 2011.

AFR shares the same premises as Cooltech Industries, with a total floor area of over 10,500 sq metres at a light industrial park in Batu Caves, Selangor. Mr Yeaw, who is also the Group Managing Director, oversees operations of AFR as well as Cooltech Industries and Cooltech Marketing. With 120 employees, more than 90% of whom are Malaysian, AFR is able to undertake a range of functions, including manufacturing, marketing and quality control. Although design capability is limited, the company is able to work

from samples or drawings to prepare prototypes for testing and customer approval. Some simple moulds are fabricated in-house but most often, mould making is outsourced. Similarly, some testing and inspection may be done internally but most often testing is done externally. AFR is in the process of better equipping its testing laboratory, to enable more in-house testing to be done. All rubber compounds are purchased from contract compounders.

As for most rubber product manufacturers, mould fabrication is a significant cost, especially when the quantity of the final product that can be sold is unclear. The cost of developing a product for a particular customer, including mould fabrication, is sometimes borne by AFR, and amortised as a part of the cost of manufacture of the product. If the quantity of product required by the customer is not very large, then the customer may be required to pay the cost of the tooling required before the product is manufactured. Where parts are manufactured for the replacement market, mould costs have to be borne by the company.



A clean and comfortable working environment at AFR

Tooling costs have become more critical as AFR ventures into foreign markets, as competition is more intense in terms of pricing and quality, and customer requirements are more stringent. Currently the company markets 95% of their output in Malaysia, with only a small quantity being exported. It is only recently, over the last two years, that the company has been actively promoting its products in international markets by participating in trade shows and visiting buyers in foreign markets. Mr. Yeaw has set the company's sights on expanding its export market segment significantly in the next few years, within the ASEAN region and in new and emerging markets.

AFR will continue to seek opportunities in original equipment manufacturing (OEM), by partnering with Tier 2 suppliers.

Over 85% of Malaysian rubber product manufacturers are small and medium enterprises.



Malaysia's Exports and Imports of Rubber Products (RM'000)

	Exports		Imports	
	2012	2011	2012	2011
January	1,059,666	1,072,198	307,775	291,462
February	1,150,189	978,449	310,868	246,124
March	1,268,148	1,304,658	360,001	332,316
January–March	3,478,003	3,355,305	978,644	869,902
% Change (January–March) 2012/2011	3.7		12.5	

Source: Department of Statistics, Malaysia

Major Destinations for Malaysia's Rubber Product Exports (RM'000)

Country	January–March 2012	January–March 2011	% Change	% Share (2012)
USA	930,848	837,025	11	26.76
EU-27	833,612	902,776	-8	23.97
ASEAN	358,255	330,604	8	10.30
Japan	186,898	183,048	2	5.37
China, P.R.	140,740	135,401	4	4.05
Brazil	133,948	151,444	-12	3.85
Australia	109,676	86,550	27	3.15
Canada	61,421	48,442	27	1.77
Turkey	57,004	68,050	-16	1.64
South Korea	54,663	65,703	-17	1.57
Hong Kong	46,606	55,290	-16	1.34
UAE	31,307	27,050	16	0.90
Subtotal	2,944,978	2,891,383	1.9	84.7
World Total	3,478,003	3,355,305	3.7	100

Source: Department of Statistics, Malaysia

CMEF Spring 2012, Shen Zhen, China,

17 - 20 April 2012



MREPC staff attending to visitors at CMEF 2012

The 67th Chinese International Medical Equipment Fair (CMEF) Spring 2012 was the largest exhibition for medical equipment and related products and services in the Asia-Pacific region. Held at the Shenzhen Convention & Exhibition Center, Shen Zhen, China, the event attracted over 2,000 exhibitors and 70,000 visitors. More than 90% of the visitors were local Chinese while the remaining were visitors from the United States, Middle East, Europe, Thailand and other Asian countries.

MREPC led a strong contingent of eight Malaysian rubber medical device manufacturers, most of whom promoted medical gloves. During the event, MREPC arranged business meetings between Malaysian manufacturers and major distributors of healthcare products in China. MREPC also received a considerable number of enquiries related to gloves and other rubber medical devices.

Thailand Auto Parts & Accessories (TAPA 2012), Bangkok,

26 - 29 April 2012



An overview of the Malaysian pavilion

The 5th edition of Thailand Auto Parts & Accessories 2012 (TAPA 2012), one of the largest auto parts trade shows in Thailand, had more than 330 exhibitors and attracted more than 10,000 visitors. Five Malaysian rubber automotive components manufacturers participated together with MREPC at TAPA 2012, and drew a considerable number of enquiries for rubber moulded parts, anti-vibration devices and hoses.

MREPC and Malaysian manufacturers also attended a networking dinner organized by MATRADE Bangkok where a few Thai automotive suppliers and distributors were present. MREPC presented an overview of the rubber automotive components industry in Malaysia which drew an encouraging response from the participants.

Africa Health 2012, Johannesburg, South Africa,

9 - 11 May 2012



The Malaysian contingent to Africa Health 2012

Africa Health 2012 was a three-day exhibition and medical congress for healthcare professionals and medical trade buyers. Held for the second time in Johannesburg by Informa Life Sciences Exhibitions, the event was supported and endorsed by the South Africa Medical Association (SAMA), with participation from over 370 exhibitors from 33 nations, including pavilions from China, Germany, France, Korea, India, Taiwan, Italy, Malaysia and Egypt. There were also 25 South African exhibitors displaying the best that the local market has to offer.

The Malaysian pavilion comprised MREPC with nine rubber medical devices companies. Despite the relatively low visitor turnout, MREPC received a fair number of enquiries during the three-day event, mainly from South African trade visitors. Among the guests visiting the MREPC booth were the Malaysian Deputy High Commissioner to South Africa, En Ilham Tuah Illias, and the Malaysian Trade Commissioner, Puan Norhaliza Halid.

Exposanita Exhibition, Bologna, Italy,

16 - 19 May 2012



MREPC European representative presenting "Medical Gloves: What you need to Know"

Exposanita 2012 was organized by Senaf Mestiere Fiere, in Bologna. It is Italy's unique exhibition and Europe's second largest event dedicated to health care and assistance. Established 30 years ago, it provides a platform for manufacturers, wholesalers and distributors to meet the medical community of the Mediterranean area. Exposanita 2012 was the 18th edition of this biennial exhibition. Over 900 exhibitors from 23 countries showcased their products and services in this event, which was attended by about 30,000 trade visitors.

MREPC participated with a promotional booth at Exposanita 2012. Participating Malaysian rubber glove manufacturers were Tekmedic Sdn Bhd and TG Medical Sdn Bhd, who were located in the same exhibition hall. MREPC promoted Malaysian-made rubber medical devices, with specific focus on SMG-certified gloves during the exhibition. In conjunction with the exhibition, MREPC made a presentation entitled "Medical Gloves: What You Need to Know".

Kazakhstan International Healthcare Exhibition 2012, Almaty,

16 - 18 May 2012



The MREPC representative attending to VIP visitors

MREPC, together with five Malaysian manufacturers of rubber products, participated for the first time in the Kazakhstan International Healthcare Exhibition (KIHE 2012). KIHE is among the largest medical forums in the Central Asian region with 209 exhibitors from 22 countries. MREPC led the participation of five Malaysian rubber product exporters, Kossan Latex Industries, Dongkuk Techco Rubber Industries, Nupon Technology, Supermax Glove Manufacturing and TG Medical. The MREPC pavilion won the “Debut of the Year” award at the show, for the interest generated and the outstanding stand design.

A considerable number of enquiries were received both by MREPC and participating exhibitors. Visitors’ interest was primarily on medical gloves, condom and rubber catheters. MREPC also presented a paper on “Medical Gloves: What You Need to Know” which was attended by local healthcare workers and glove distributors. The presentation was well received and will serve as a stepping stone to promote Malaysian gloves in Kazakhstan.

Medical Gloves Mission to Russia and Ukraine,

14 - 24 May 2012



Seminar participants at Kiev

A specialized mission on medical gloves to Moscow, Russia and Kiev, Ukraine was organised by MREPC from 14 to 24 May 2012. Seminars, business matching sessions with potential buyers and business meetings with relevant organizations were held during the mission, which was led by MREPC’s CEO, Dato’ Teo Suat Cheng, with participation from four Malaysian medical gloves manufacturers, namely Top Glove, Latex Manufacturing, Comfort Rubber Gloves and Quality Gallant.

The seminars to promote Malaysian rubber gloves and inform medical practitioners on the advantages of using rubber medical gloves and the regulations governing their import and sale were well attended, in Moscow as well as Kiev. The business sessions and meetings with relevant organisations also helped the participating manufacturers to gain a better understanding of the market in Russia and Ukraine.

Seminar on Markets for Rubber Medical Devices in South Africa and Condoms in Latin America

26 April 2012

Two papers on market research findings, on “The Market for Rubber Medical Devices in South Africa” and “The Market for Condoms in Latin America” were presented by Ms Yap Siew Hong, Director of Corporate Planning and Market Research, and Mr Izwan Zarik, the Deputy Director of the division. The presentations provided seminar participants with insights into prospects for the selected products in the target markets, as well as information on the marketing channels and regulatory constraints that may be faced.

This was followed by a presentation on “Doing Business in South Africa”, by Dr. Nicholas Boden, the co-chairperson of the Malaysia - South Africa Business Council. His entertaining approach to explaining the opportunities in South Africa for Malaysian exporters and investors drew many questions, resulting in a lively discussion at the end of the session.



Dr Boden on ‘Doing Business in South Africa’.

Seminar on Reverse Engineering of Rubber Compounds and Market Updates on RAC (Turkey) & IRG (India)

27 June 2012

A seminar on “Reverse Engineering of Rubber Compounds” was presented by Dr Abdul Kadir Mohamed, the Deputy Chief Executive Officer of MREPC and Dr Faridah Hanim Abdul Hanan, from the Materials Characterization Unit of the Malaysian Rubber Board (MRB). The first speaker covered “The Basics of Rubber Compounding” while the second speaker focussed on “Reverse Engineering of Rubber and Rubber Products”. The presentations were followed by a technical discussion on reverse engineering and some case studies.

The technical presentations and discussions were followed by two presentations on market research findings, on Rubber Automotive Components (RAC) in Turkey by Ms Yap Siew Hong, and Industrial Rubber Goods (IRG) in India, by Mr Izwan Zarik, from MREPC.



Dr Abdul Kadir presenting a token of appreciation to Dr Faridah Hanim from MRB

Seminar on Recruiting Foreign Labour

22 May 2012

At this event, three speakers, Puan Shariza Harun from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA), Puan Norlia Anak Jawor from the Ministry of Human Resource (MOHR) and En Muhammad Azlan Shah Che Ahmad from the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), made presentations on topics related to recruitment of foreign workers in Malaysia. The 25 participants at the seminar, mostly human resource and administration personnel from rubber product manufacturing companies, were briefed on the eligibility requirements, documentation and procedures for obtaining approval and hiring foreign workers.



Speakers from MOHR, MOHA & MITI with all the participants

Johannesburg Gateway to Africa

Johannesburg, or Jo'burg as it is called by the locals, is the largest city in South Africa. Johannesburg is also the wealthiest city and, without doubt, the economic powerhouse of Africa. It is the hub of South Africa's commercial, financial, industrial and mining enterprises and the centre of a large-scale gold and diamond trade.

During a recent visit to Johannesburg for Africa Health exhibition, we managed to set aside a day to explore the sights of Johannesburg and its surroundings. Our hotel, located in the Johannesburg inner city, is close to City Hall and the Newtown Cultural Precinct, an area that is undergoing a complete transformation. The Market Theatre and its surroundings now form the heart of urban revival, and the Johannesburg inner city is the largest employment centre in South Africa.

To maximize our great day out, we decided to visit the Lion Park, and then the Lesedi Cultural Village.

The Lion Park is home to over 80 lions including rare white lions and many other carnivores such as cheetahs, wild dogs, hyenas and jackals.

We were informed by the tour guide that visitors are able to view the herbivores at close proximity by riding a Segway (a two-wheeled transporter). A wide variety of antelope, wildebeest, giraffe, zebra, gemsbok and springbok roam freely in an area for herbivores.



White lions in their enclosure



Herbivores roam freely in the open



Giraffe feeding session



The tribal village a Lesedi



Colourful local souvenirs

We had an opportunity to interact with the animals in the Cub World area. There is a giraffe feeding platform where we could feed giraffes, which was a fun experience for all of us. This was followed by a visit to the popular lion cub area, where we could touch the lion cubs and take photographs.

On arrival at Lesedi in the afternoon, we were welcomed by tribesmen in the traditional African way and escorted to “their” village. Our introduction to the South African cultural experience began at the Ndebele village with a multi-media presentation on the history and origins of today’s rainbow nation. This was followed by a guided tour of the villages representing the four ethnic homelands - Zulu, Basotho, Xhosa and Pedi. At the end of the village tour, we were escorted to the Boma, or the central enclosure, for traditional songs and dances describing stories that date back to the days of their ancestors. We were then treated to a fantastic traditional African feast.

While in Johannesburg, I had the opportunity to visit the famous Nelson Mandela Square, a shopping centre in Sandton, Johannesburg. Formerly known as Sandton Square, it was renamed Nelson Mandela Square on 31 March 2004 after a 6-metre statue of Nelson Mandela was installed on the square to honour the former South African president.

Our tight schedule did not give us time to visit the other attractions of Johannesburg. I hope I have the opportunity to come back again for an extended visit.

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