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Editorial

Forward to special edition of Polymer containing collected papers from the conference: polymers in dispersed media—PDM 2004

We are extremely are pleased to be able to present to you a number of the very interesting papers presented at the fifth conference on polymers in dispersed media—PDM 2004. As in the previous editions of this event, the papers presented focused on a wide range of subjects in the area of the synthesis, characterisation, properties and uses of polymers produced in dispersed media. This year, the contributions to PDM 2004 were presented in 7 different sessions:

1. Kinetics and mechanisms
2. Novel chemistries and processes
3. Hybrids and nanocomposites
4. Characterization and monitoring
5. Materials and biomaterials for the environment
6. Films, adhesives and applications
7. Interfaces and colloidal stabilisation aspects

An extremely wide range of topics was treated at PDM 2004, and while it is impossible to present all of the papers in a journal such as Polymer, we hope that this cross section of 42 papers (representing approximately 30% of the work presented at PDM 2004) will give you an overview of some of the current research trends and 'hot topics' in dispersed phase polymerisation.

While the study of colloid science and particle stabilisation continued to be an important part of the PDM programme, it was very interesting to note some differences from past PDM conferences. In particular, a large number of the talks focused more on using gains in the comprehension of colloidal behaviour to make products (either new ones, or to improve the way in which existing products are made) with different end uses. This was reflected by the large number of contributions that led to the creation of sessions on the production of hybrids and composites, materials for the environment, as well as the use of emulsion polymers in films and adhesives. Finally, the session on novel chemistries and processes reaffirmed the general interest for the production of polymers in dispersed media (usually emulsion or miniemulsion systems) using controlled free radical and other types of chemistry, that only a few years ago were in their formative stages.

In conclusion, we wish to thank those of our colleagues who were kind enough to share their papers with us, and also to express our gratitude to the editors of Polymer for creating space in their publication for this special edition. We hope you find the papers enriching, and look forward to seeing you in Lyon in 2009 for the next edition of Polymers in Dispersed Media!

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