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# POLYMERS

## *Communiqué*

**Tech**  
**nology** Soul of  
the Plastics  
Industry

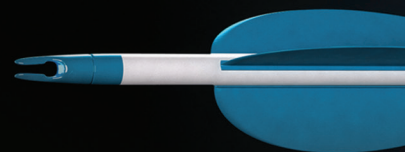




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Identifying customer needs and actively working on fulfilling them is what APAR does best. As the company branches out into various verticals, it is the automobile sector that they have their eyes set on and to do this, they have a volley of excellent vendors and suppliers along with a prolific team that makes it possible to hit the desired goals, summarises Kamal Sharma, in dialogue with POLYMERS Communiqué.

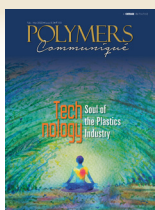


**Q. You have ventured into a niche sector. Could you throw some light on how you plan to diversify and what is the future of APAR going to look like?**

Earlier, the majority of our focus was on industrial and irrigation applications. We are now shifting a part of that towards building a strong and state-of-the-art infrastructure to cater to the growing needs of the medical sector. We are also venturing into the vast 'kids and toys' industry. For this, our current emphasis is on getting an IATF (International Automotive Task Force) certification and OHSAS (Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series) certification. Our goal is to get both the certificates in place by the end of this year. The automobile segment is undergoing a massive transformation from ICE technology to EV and there will be disruptions in polymer requirements by the industry; and so, exploring those opportunities will be our immediate agenda.

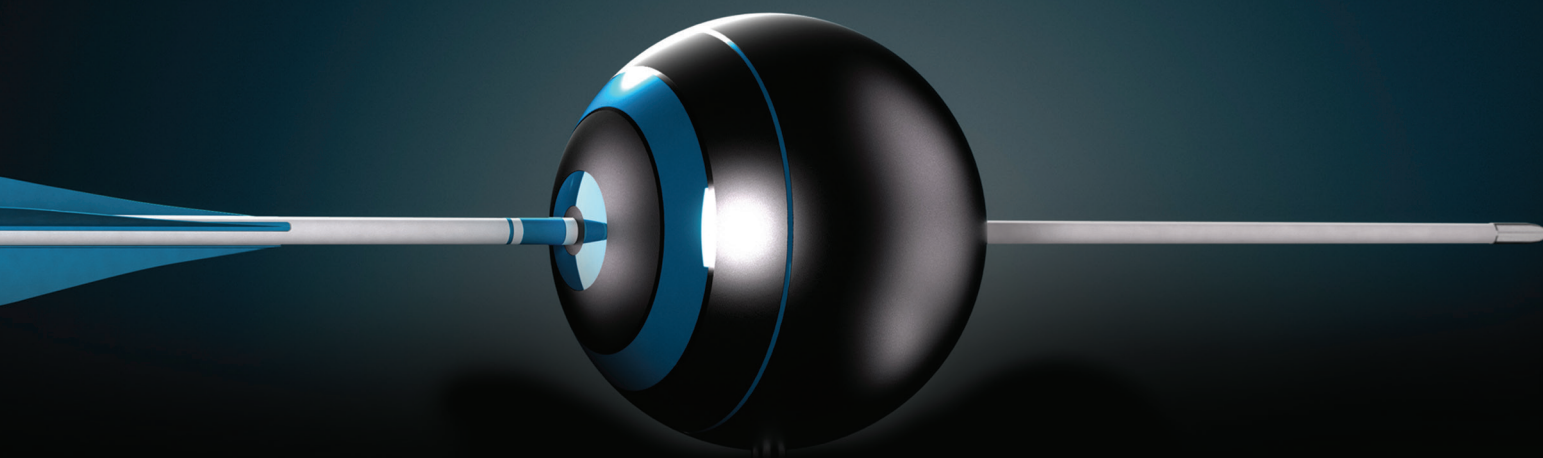
**Q. Amongst automobile, medical and packaging - which of the verticals, do**

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**Kamal Sharma**  
Business Head -  
APAR Polymers,  
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# Creating an Impact One Vertical at a Time



## **you think, is the fastest growing and why?**

The automotive sector is currently very prone to challenges. Right from facing issues in the supply chain management to the emerging strong competition from electrical vehicles, the automotive sector is currently a tricky vertical. Shortage of semiconductor chips will also impact automotive production. For these reasons, I truly believe that it is the medical and the packaging sectors that will fare better.

**Q. COVID-19 has been a turning point for a lot of businesses - not just in terms of the actual business, but also the way in which business owners are viewing and handling their work now. How has this post-pandemic shift affected you, personally and professionally?**

It was a trying time for most industries and ours wasn't spared either. COVID-19 caused massive disruption at a time when businesses like ours

were already battling raw material shortages and an exponential rise in shipping charges. Post-pandemic, it has become crucial for businesses to provide accurate information to their suppliers and customers for adapting and adjusting their business plans and expectations.

At APAR, we not only displayed the resilience to withstand these disruptions, but also effectively utilised the downtime to improve the production capability at our manufacturing facility to prepare for the inevitable resumption of demands. The biggest challenge was the non-availability of a forecast from customers, which is affecting our planning system. We adapted to this 'new normal' very quickly and evolved working systems to be able to respond to our customers faster.

**Q. Can you take us through the whole process of manufacturing - right from understanding customer requirements, to the**

## **R&D that you do and the final implementation of it?**

Thermoplastic elastomers are highly customised compounds where understanding the customer requirements is of utmost priority. Here, effective flow of communication is the key, right from the customers to our sales managers and then to the R&D team.

The same flow also continues when it comes to reverting to our customers. Whether it is a query or a request for a sample, we strive to achieve quick turnarounds. We have a special team that works on coordinating between the sales managers and the R&D team where we all work in a cohesive way to meet the customer requirements. Another crucial part of this work chain is the feedback we get on the submitted samples. We keep a tab on the status of the trials too. This is how we stay connected to the roots.

We believe in always venturing for new applications, compounds and businesses that steer us towards success.



**Q. What made you choose ECON as your preferred supplier for pelletisers?**

From ECON, we have always received world-class technical support, apart from excellent quality and timely deliveries. We view ECON as a company that offers us global quality at local affordability. Their products are at par with European standards. To top it, ECON has a young and energetic team that pushes the company towards being a market leader. For us, ECON has provided us with the best value for money along with an unwavering reliability. I truly believe that ECON is contributing towards the growth of Indian markets at present.

**Q. What has made you stick to their product and services for all these years?**

ECON became our partner in success. We have improved our product quality as well as our productivity with their help. We trust them to service us with world-class professionalism that also encourages them to deliver consistently, reliably and also offers scope for product versatility.

**Q. Explain how these pelletisers fit into your manufacturing process.**

Pelletisers are the key equipment in the entire manufacturing process of polymeric compounds. A right and efficient pelletiser can make the entire business successful by delivering quality products. This, in turn, can make you a credible source for your customers, encourage worry-free shop floor operations and optimised productivity.

**Q. It is now a common norm to have a pulse of the carbon footprint and ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) parameters; please tell us your views on the same and how APAR inculcates these facets into**

**its business?**

Our ESG framework is built around creating long-term value for our stakeholders. Our approach to ESG is based on the following principles:

- Ensure the well-being and safety of employees.
- Mitigate the impact of our operations on the environment to create a positive impact.



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- Uphold strong governance policies.
- Be good corporate citizens.

A detailed report is available on our website talking about the measures taken by our company to handle climate change and initiatives taken to encourage biodiversity.

**Q. What are your company's risk management SOPs in case of an unfortunate occurrence?**

We have a detailed risk assessment conducted periodically. It is frequently monitored and corrective plans are implemented, if required. We also have a robust self-governance mechanism to address possible risks in the production cycle and business. We also conduct periodic drills to

assess the preparedness of our staff to respond appropriately. We have provided a set of guidelines to our vendors as well on steps to be followed during an unplanned, unfortunate accident.

**Q. Talk to us about failures. Have you faced any failure that taught you a valuable lesson; please elaborate?**

In business you are always on a learning curve and the price needs to be paid for the right knowledge. The right mix of experience and subject expertise will help you overcome failures in a shorter time. One lesson I have learnt from this is that quick solutions do not work; you must consider thoughtful solutions, rather than quick fixes.

**Q. Do you look up to a role model?**

Our Jt. MD, Mr. Chaitanya Desai is my role model. I am fortunate to be able to grow under his able guidance. He taught me how to patiently handle stressful situations and the power of delegation, which in turn helped me build an excellent team. The major learning here was to keep a close eye on the bottom line while managing a business. He is my mentor and he taught me how to work towards building a great organisation.

**Q. Is there another industry that you seem to have developed a keen interest in something that you would love to do?**

Our organisation has a bouquet of business segments, right from power, lubricants and automobiles to cable solutions and polymer compounds. We are always looking for newer opportunities in other sectors too. My area of interest is to work towards sustainable solutions, mainly in the organised polymer recycling segment, which is currently highly unorganised and does not offer sustainable solutions. ■■