

# Press Release



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## Covestro steps up investments in thermoplastic composites

### New R&D tape line and hybrid injection molding machines to support portfolio expansion to market demand

Covestro is further developing its offerings and capabilities in continuous fiber-reinforced thermoplastic (CFRTP) composites in response to market trends and a growing demand from customers.

Its Maezio™ brand of CFRTP composites are based on continuous carbon fibers impregnated with thermoplastics like polycarbonates. A new tape line is now commissioned in its Leverkusen laboratory to develop new products with different fiber and resin combinations – see the [video](#). Their manufacture will in turn be scaled and commercialized at the production site in Markt Bibart in South Germany.

“We’re witnessing strong market demand for thinner, lighter, and aesthetically competitive products where thermoplastic composites like Maezio™ are making a difference,” says Lisa Ketelsen, head of the thermoplastic composite business of Covestro. “To meet the needs of a growing range of applications we need a broader base of portfolio with different matrix materials and properties. The new tape line in combination with our mass production lines will allow us to do quick iterations and scaling based on market demand.”

### New thermoplastic composites under development

One such product under development is thermoplastic polyurethane (TPU) - based CFRTP, which boasts excellent chemical resistance properties and superior flexibility in a wide temperature range. There’s a strong demand especially from the footwear and sports equipment industries for such a strong and versatile product.



“Thermoplastic composites enable significant increases in production speed for mass production, and their ability to be molded with features and produced to near net shape eliminates the need for many secondary operations,” says Dr.-Ing. Christian Wilms, Head of Technology of the thermoplastic composite business of Covestro. “Also, they are inherently recyclable, making them a genuine answer to the growing need for scalable and sustainable material solutions.”

### **Stepping up capabilities in processing know-how**

At the same time, new hybrid injection molding machines are commissioned in Covestro’s CFRTP locations in Germany and China to build on processing know-how of complex, three-dimensional composite parts in support of application development across industries. A hybrid injection molding machine combines the thermoforming of semi-finished composite parts with in-mold injection molding – a fully automated one-step processing technology which reduces cycle times and improved productivity of mass produced composite parts.

“We’re working closely with our machinery and processing partners such as Krauss Maffei and Engel to offer customers full support in their product development process,” says Dr.-Ing. Olaf Zoellner, head of application development Europe at the Polycarbonates business unit at Covestro. “A fully functional and supportive value chain with the know-how for mass production of composite parts is critical to bringing such solutions to the mainstream market.”

### **About Covestro:**

With 2018 sales of EUR 14.6 billion, Covestro is among the world’s largest polymer companies. Business activities are focused on the manufacture of high-tech polymer materials and the development of innovative solutions for products used in many areas of daily life. The main segments served are the automotive, construction, wood processing and furniture, and electrical and electronics industries. Other sectors include sports and leisure, cosmetics, health and the chemical industry itself. Covestro has 30 production sites worldwide and employs approximately 16,800 people (calculated as full-time equivalents) at the end of 2018.

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