



Closing the Loop: Vision and Practice

By Marcia Swan, Editor

In this issue of *Flowfront*, we look at the concept of “closing the loop” and how it inspires business strategy, technology research and development, and critical thinking that impacts every stage of product development through manufacturing.

Today, increasing numbers of manufacturers are realizing the benefits of investing in innovative software technologies that automate what used to be time-consuming design engineering and manufacturing processes.

Moldflow’s president and CEO, Roland Thomas, outlines the company’s strategic vision to optimize processes from design through manufacturing. Realizing this vision requires implementing processes at each stage which both feed information forward and receive information from subsequent stages to close the loop between manufacturing-driven design and analysis-driven manufacturing.

In practice, this vision translates to developing better ways to share information directly among the software technologies now in use. Here we review recent research on developing a two-way interface between Moldflow design analysis and manufacturing process set-up tools. We also see how the principle of lean thinking is applied to optimize product development processes.

Case history after case history documents the benefits companies have realized by investing in automation and optimization technologies to retain their competitive edge. As you will see in this issue, Moldflow customers Alcan Distribuzione, Diam France, Edel Tapp, Kanbishi Corporation and Radici Plastics are using Moldflow products to reduce product development times, enhance the quality of their products and services, cut time to market and maximize production efficiency.

Finally, we gain a perspective on how the current trend toward real-time performance management is driving manufacturers toward real-time-based solutions at the manufacturing and enterprise level.

Take note of the 2005 International Moldflow User Group Conference brochure that is included in this issue. Plan to join us in Orlando, Florida this October 25-27. In addition to presentations from peers, industry and Moldflow product experts, you will find a full complement of technical training opportunities offered before, during and after the conference, and you will be able to see firsthand the product innovations that Moldflow and our technology partners offer to truly close the loop and optimize processes from design through manufacture. Find iMUG05 details on the Web at www.moldflow.com/imug.