INDEX™ 2026 Reinforces Geneva as the Global Hub for Nonwovens Innovation



INDEX 2026 successfully concluded at Palexpo, Geneva, reaffirming its position as the world's leading exhibition for nonwovens technologies and advanced materials. Despite global geopolitical and economic uncertainties, the exhibition delivered a strong edition marked by innovation, sustainability, technical excellence, and international collaboration. According to the official press release, the exhibition featured 625 exhibitors from 44 countries across 50,000 square metres of gross exhibition space and attracted 11,452 visits from global decision-makers, technical experts, manufacturers, and innovators.

The exhibition demonstrated how the global nonwovens industry is evolving rapidly from conventional disposable products toward high-tech, durable, lightweight, and sustainable solutions. Circular manufacturing, carbon footprint reduction, recyclable structures, PFAS-free materials, smart automation, and fibre innovation emerged as the defining themes of INDEX™ 2026.

Sustainability and Technical Excellence Shape Industry Direction

A major focus throughout the exhibition was the integration of sustainability with performance-driven engineering. Exhibitors showcased technologies capable of increasing productivity while simultaneously reducing environmental impact. The official INDEX™ press release emphasized that reducing carbon footprint is now becoming one of the industry's primary performance indicators.

The event strongly highlighted the transition toward:

- Recyclable mono-material structures
- Biodegradable and flushable products
- Reduced energy consumption
- Lightweight engineered materials
- PFAS-free protective textiles
- Circular manufacturing systems

Many exhibitors introduced products replacing traditional multi-layer structures with recyclable single-material solutions, demonstrating how sustainability is now deeply integrated across the entire nonwovens value chain.

Birla Cellulose Strengthens Sustainable Fibre Leadership

One of the major highlights at INDEX™ 2026 was the innovation showcase by Birla Cellulose, part of Grasim Industries.

The company introduced several advanced fibre solutions under its Purocel brand aimed at sustainable nonwoven and hygiene applications.

Purocel Viscose Short-cut

Purocel Viscose Short-cut fibres were introduced for flushable wipes applications. These fibres are engineered for improved biodegradability and dispersibility, helping manufacturers meet increasing demand for environmentally safe and sewer-compatible wipes.

Purocel Excel Short-cut

Another important launch was Purocel Excel Short-cut, a lyocell-based fibre designed for applications including:

- Flushable wipes
- Specialty papers
- Battery separators
- Hot filtration systems

The product combines sustainability with high strength and advanced functional performance.

Purocel Hydrophobic

Birla Cellulose also unveiled Purocel Hydrophobic, a specially designed hydrophobic viscose fibre for absorbent hygiene products, offering enhanced fluid management and improved user comfort.

These launches highlighted the increasing importance of regenerated cellulosic fibres in the future of sustainable hygiene and technical nonwovens.

Smart Manufacturing and Automation Technologies Dominate

Automation and digital manufacturing technologies played a central role at INDEX™ 2026, reflecting the industry's movement toward Industry 4.0 manufacturing environments.



Bianco Introduces Advanced Process Control Systems

Bianco launched four advanced technologies aimed at improving efficiency and quality control.

Bianco® La Magnifica

An automatic high-performance wrapping and packaging system designed for improved packaging precision and productivity.

Bianco® WEIGHTEX

A contactless weight detection sensor system developed for real-time material monitoring and process optimization.

Bianco® ECOTEX SE2

An automatic sampling and inspection system focused on improving defect detection and quality assurance.

Bianco® FTC7

A high-precision proportional photocell designed for accurate web guiding and process stability.

These technologies demonstrated how automation and intelligent sensing systems are becoming essential components of modern nonwoven manufacturing.

Trützschler Advances Sustainable Hydroentanglement

AquaJet is especially designed for popular hydroentangled wipe applications and tackles key challenges faced by nonwoven producers. This upgraded model offers a compact footprint, enhanced energy efficiency, intuitive operation, and superior nonwoven quality. Paired with the MPD drum dryer, it creates a perfectly matched duo for a sustainable, high-performance nonwoven production.ELIXRR NONWOVENS Expands Sustainable Packaging Solutions

ELIXRR NONWOVENS introduced a wide portfolio of advanced spunlace solutions including:

- EcoWrap™
- EnduraSpun™
- SoftSpun™
- SteriSpun™
- AbsorvSpun™
- EcoSpun+™

Among these, EcoWrap™ emerged as a significant innovation designed as a lightweight, durable, and eco-friendly pulp-based spunlace packaging material capable of replacing conventional plastic packaging.

The launch reflected the growing demand for sustainable fibre-based packaging alternatives.

Hygiene and Medical Nonwovens Continue to Drive Innovation

The hygiene and medical sector remained one of the strongest innovation segments at the exhibition.

AAB China Expands Hygiene Product Range

AAB (China) Co. showcased several hygiene innovations including:

- Mild Incontinence Towels
- Ultra-thin sanitary napkins
- T-shaped baby disposable diapers

The launches focused on comfort, absorbency, and lightweight product engineering.

SHALAG Group Introduces Wellness-Oriented Nonwovens

SHALAG Group introduced:

- SOFTY Air Topsheet & CUDDLY Air Outercover
- 3D Hybrid
- SKIN WELLNESS NONWOVENS LINE

These solutions highlighted the growing importance of skin-friendly materials and consumer comfort in hygiene applications.

Lenzing Instruments Enhances Product Testing

Lenzing Instruments introduced:

- LISTER CARE
- RUNOFF PRO

The systems are designed to improve testing precision and reproducibility for absorbent hygiene products.

Circular Manufacturing and Recycling Gain Momentum

The exhibition strongly reflected the industry's commitment toward circular economy principles.

Campen Promotes Waste-to-Value Technologies

Campen introduced:

- BioSpray System
- Campen Airlaid: From Wastestream to Innovation
- Shredder & Fiberfeeder

These technologies focused on raw material recovery, recycling integration, and waste reduction.

Masterplast Introduces Recycled PP Spunbond

Masterplast showcased rPP Spunbond produced using recycled polypropylene materials.

This launch highlighted increasing industry adoption of recycled raw materials.

IND HEMP Promotes Sustainable Hemp Fibres

IND HEMP launched:

- Premium Cottonized Hemp Fiber
- Premium Cottonized + Bleached Hemp Fiber

These solutions demonstrated the expanding use of renewable natural fibres in nonwoven applications.

Packaging Innovation Becomes a Major Focus

Reducing packaging waste emerged as another major trend across INDEX™ 2026.

IMA Launches W-PACK Technology

IMA introduced the IMA TMC - W-PACK system for feminine hygiene and light incontinence products.

The technology significantly reduces packaging material usage while improving pack stability and production speed.

Paper-Based and Plastic-Free Packaging Solutions

Several companies introduced environmentally friendly packaging alternatives including:

- Wicketed paper bags by Fiorini International
- Plastic Free Paper Bags by Foshan Xinfei Hygiene Materials
- EcoWrap™ by ELIXRR NONWOVENS

These launches reflected increasing pressure to reduce plastic consumption across hygiene and packaging industries.

Networking, Collaboration, and Immersive Experiences

Beyond product launches, INDEX™ 2026 strengthened its focus on industry collaboration and knowledge sharing.

The exhibition introduced several networking and immersive experiences including:

- Technical demonstrations
- Specialized seminars
- Industry workshops
- Women's Networking Breakfast
- "Nonwovens: In Every Layer of Life" immersive experience

According to the official press release, these initiatives helped visitors better understand the growing role of nonwovens in modern society and reinforced Geneva's position as a global innovation hub for the industry.

Pieter Meijer, Chairman of the INDEX™ Advisory Board, noted that companies are increasingly achieving competitive advantages by going beyond regulatory compliance and adapting rapidly to new market challenges.

Future Outlook

Murat Dogru, General Manager of EDANA, emphasized that innovation in the nonwovens industry is increasingly being driven by global collaboration, automation, smart chemistry, and extreme lightweight engineering. He highlighted that these developments are shaping a more efficient and circular manufacturing landscape for the future.

The strong participation and high level of innovation at INDEX™ 2026 clearly demonstrated that the global nonwovens industry is accelerating its transformation toward sustainable manufacturing, intelligent automation, recyclable materials, and high-performance technical applications.

The exhibition once again reinforced its status as one of the world’s most influential platforms for shaping the future of nonwovens, hygiene technologies, and technical textiles.