



Milling drum opens up new possibilities

Erretre's latest version of the Ambra milling drum will give tanners the chance to make leathers with a feel and special effects that would have been impossible without the new technology, according to leather chemicals developer Stahl.

Specialist developer of milling drum technology and other tanning machinery Erretre has said it is pleased by the reception of the latest version of its Ambra drum in the market. Erretre designed and developed the Ambra milling drum in 2014 and 2015 and launched the latest version at Tanning Tech 2016.

The new version offers better control of friction and heat inside the drum by controlling airflow. This works through a connection between the drum and a central system, making it possible to take a reading at any time and see immediately if there is a change in the environment inside, making it much easier for tanners to control temperature, humidity, formulations and “chemical milling”.

Chemical milling is a patented technology developed by Erretre to enhance the characteristics of leathers during the milling stage. It offers greater flexibility, consistent milling results and safer working conditions for operatives, the technology provider has stated.

Because the Ambra is a smaller sized pilot-scale milling drum, it has also proved to be especially suitable for article development in laboratory environments or at tannery pilot plant scale for research and development projects, product development or smaller production batches.

Specific to laboratories, one organisation that has responded positively to the new drum is leather chemicals developer Stahl. Matteo Baldi, the manager of Stahl's centre of excellence for shoes and leathers in Castelfranco di Sotto in Italy, goes as far as to say the new version of the Ambra drum makes possible “a completely different process of milling leathers”.

One consequence, according to Mr Baldi, is that the milling drum has given Stahl the opportunity to develop new chemicals for the leather industry and to develop articles that tanners will be able to replicate in production much more exactly than before. “Special effects, touch, feel and roundness of the leathers are only possible by applying special



The new self-cleaning version of Erretre's Ambra milling drum has made a big impression at Stahl's centre of excellence for shoes and leathers in Castelfranco di Sotto in Tuscany.

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chemicals during the milling process,” he explains. “If applied in the conventional way, by spraying or roller coating, it would be not possible to achieve the same results.”

Articles that Stahl's team in Castelfranco di Sotto has been able to develop in this way are going to form part of its footwear, leathers and garment collections for the coming seasons and Matteo Baldi describes this as giving tanners “new concepts” to choose from, a special segment with leathers that have “a

special feel and effects.”

Another characteristic that has proved popular is the drum's automatic and programmable self-cleaning system.

“This is very helpful,” Mr Baldi says, “especially these days when production must be faster. In a drum without this system, cleaning would require time and people before being able to start the next process. Here, by just pressing a button, the machine itself is able to do all the cleaning process automatically, saving time and speeding up production.”