

# Shaping the Future with Polyurethanes

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One of the most fulfilling aspects of my job as the leader of Dow's Polyurethanes business is working with customers and value chain partners to solve some of their biggest challenges using materials science and polyurethane chemistry. By working together, we can make a big impact on today's and tomorrow's world – from the homes we live in, the cars we drive, the mattresses we sleep on, the food we eat and so much more. As the pandemic has hindered our ability for in-person engagement with our stakeholders, we looked for new ways to connect and found an innovative way to continue our critical discussions.

In late March, Dow Polyurethanes (PU) pioneered a flagship virtual event – together with industry experts – called **“Shaping the Future with Polyurethanes”**, to explore the immense potential of Polyurethanes in delivering solutions that can change the way we live. Sustainability, Digitalization and Innovation were at the center of our virtual event and more importantly: they are critical in shaping the future with Polyurethanes.

**Sustainability**

If the pandemic has taught us anything, it's that we're all in this together. No company, no institution and no individual alone can address the environmental, social and technological challenges of our complex, interdependent world. I believe that collaboration is key, and nowhere more so than in creating a truly sustainable world.

Industry needs to come together to respond to evolving environmental challenges and regulation, like the European Green Deal, so that we can be part of the solution. Value chain collaboration is the only way to holistically address the entire product lifecycle and unlock the full sustainability potential of materials – such as PU – so we can derive even more value from materials over and over again, contributing to a circular economy and preventing waste. An example of how we can partner and connect value chains to maximize polyurethanes' value at the end of its life is our **RENUVA™ mattress recycling program**. By thinking differently and connecting more, we can unlock new business ecosystems and find opportunities for growth all while contributing to a more sustainable future.

## **Digitalization**

Our digital journey at Dow has taught me a lot about how technology enables an improved customer experience. The question we're asking ourselves at every stage of this journey is, "How can we make it easier for customers to do business with Dow?"

And we've found that the answer lies in rethinking and optimizing every single process, from R&D to digital commerce, to smart supply chains and manufacturing itself. And just as with sustainability, collaboration remains key to the way we are improving our company, our customers' experience and the world.

To expedite the development of new customized formulations, we created our novel **predictive intelligence capability** by integrating Microsoft's machine learning and Artificial Intelligence (AI) capabilities with our existing material science expertise. This is just one example of how through digitalization, we can speed up and improve research and development, transform how we work together and make our processes more sustainable and cost-efficient. Our digital journey is about changing the way we think and work so we can create a more sustainable future.

## **Innovation**

To deliver better sustainability, better performance and better productivity with polyurethanes, I don't see us relying heavily on traditional ways of manufacturing and doing business. Innovation is vital for the kind of future we want to shape. What we are trying to do is step back and take a fresh look at challenges. And bring in diverse people – whether it's from within Dow or from our customer and supplier partners – or all of the

above and come up with the best solution together. We seek to join our customers at the design table – whether that design table is physical or virtual – and work toward a common goal. When I say ‘let’s shape the future with polyurethanes’, I would like you to join us in creating opportunities for the future to unlock a better world for all of us.

Looking back at our **Dow Polyurethanes virtual event** where we explored and discussed sustainability, digitalization and innovation with participants from more than 30 countries, I have never been more excited about the important role that Polyurethanes play in solving the world’s challenges. And I have never felt as optimistic about how industry and value chains are coming together to turn those challenges into opportunities to create something new and better, together.

Watch my **webcast** at the event for more on our growth vision for the future.

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