

## Forming Special Interest Groups

In organizing the New Technology Forums for ANTEC each year, we have the opportunity to identify emerging areas of plastics technology and explore the possibility of the formation of a Special Interest Group (SIG). George Schmitt and Vicki Flaris have noted the background for SIGs. In one sense, NTC has established all SIGs. Lately, however, the route commonly used for SIG establishment has been through an NTF, followed by a Focus Group and transition to a SIG. In recent years, NTC has been instrumental in forming several SIGs, such as Plastics Educators; Flexible Packaging (currently a Division in Formation); North American Radiation Processing of Polymers (which held its first successful one-day conference in November 2005); and Advanced Energy Storage. A relatively small number have arisen through independent action by groups—usually in Europe—who wanted to start one. If we think a topic has the potential to become a SIG, we will schedule a Focus Group at an ANTEC to stimulate interest and identify individuals to nurture its formation.

Special Interest Groups can remain SIGs or can evolve to SPE Technical Division status. While SIGs have undergone transition or have failed, still the procedure was developed by NTC, and it still serves a needed function.

If you are interested in a topic for us to champion in the form of a New Technology Forum for an upcoming ANTEC program, please contact us. We would love to hear your ideas and will guarantee action on your recommendation.

—*Maggie Baumann*