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**Challenges and opportunities in biobased epoxy market, says Wessex Resins ahead of METSTRADE**

In a climate of political, economic and social upheaval, David Johnson, sales director for Wessex Resins and Adhesives, says that maintaining prices for a cost sensitive market is one of the biggest challenges currently facing the company (which makes WEST SYSTEM®, PRO-SET® and ENTROPY RESINS® under license from Gougeon Brothers Inc).

But it's not as challenging as: "Simply ensuring that we have the product to service our customers. It doesn't matter what the cost is if we can't make our products. We took the decision to carry more stock of key raw materials when the supply chain disruption began in early 2020, to ensure that we were able to continue to supply our customers."

He says the company is delighted to see supply of key raw materials coming back online especially as there is so much interest in its latest PRO-SET biobased epoxies (tailored specifically for composite manufacturers), but prices remain volatile across the fractured supply chains.

Johnson terms the PRO-SET biobased range as "an inventory of high-performance resins and adhesives". They're all based on a product that was previously in a 100 per cent oil-based form. At heart, PRO-SET biobased epoxies are a laminating, infusion and adhesive based epoxy systems containing with between 24-32 per cent bio content in the resin component. The bio content comes from a waste-stream that would otherwise go into landfill.

The PRO-SET biobased epoxies started evolving pre-pandemic, and as Johnson says: "Boat building and yacht engineering is very innovative. But, while it's open to innovation, the whole bio scene is a slow-burn realisation. People have to trust in products, and that happens over time.

"Boats are being made with flax or basalt and biobased epoxy, but with all these environmental gains, builders need to feel comfortable with what they're doing, and that will then translate into confidence for the products to be use widely."

Noting that epoxy wood construction already has a long lifespan, providing that the design stays contemporary, Johnson says the proof of the biobased products will come with time.

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"The mood of everyone is that they're analysing what they are doing and using biobased epoxy where they can. If boat builders are already creating a vessel with a 100 years of integrity in its structure and aesthetics, there'll need to be a significant reason to change methods."

That significant reason is coming as a couple of ongoing case studies with the PRO-SET biobased epoxies are already providing impressive results.

"With the formulation modifications, they have a respectable bio content with no loss of properties," Johnson says.

He believes that although there is a price increase for biobased (born out of sophisticated chemistry to make the high-performance products), builders will soon realise that biobased offers a huge sales advantage to an environmentally conscious end market.

The custom formulated, modern, high-performance biobased epoxies are specifically for composite manufacturers wanting to reduce their carbon footprint and produce lightweight, durable structures for the demanding composite industry. The biobased products include systems for infusion through to hand laminating, to assembly adhesives. These have been formulated based upon the company's vast experience and knowledge of the demanding performance criteria needed from epoxy systems.

To discuss the PRO-SET biobased epoxies visit Wessex Resins at stand(s):12.605 METSTRADE or visit https://wessexresins.co.uk/pro-set/epoxies/.

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**Notes to Editors:**

A selection of images is available online at <https://maa.agency/media-centre/>

* Wessex Resins and Adhesives manufactures WEST SYSTEM, PRO-SET and Entropy Resins epoxy products in the UK under license from Gougeon Brothers Inc., and distributes these leading brands across the whole of Europe, Africa and the Middle East via a well-respected distribution network. Wessex Resins and Adhesives provides international support for the world-renowned WEST SYSTEM, PRO-SET and Entropy Resins epoxy brands.
* Whether an epoxy is needed for laminating, bonding, coating, tooling or infusion, the combined breadth of WEST SYSTEM, PRO-SET and Entropy Resins products will provide the solution. WEST SYSTEM and PRO-SET have passed extensive quality testing. They are certified by Lloyds Register and DNVL.
* WEST SYSTEM epoxy was created by Gougeon Brothers Inc. in 1969 and since then the resin and hardener formulations have been continually tested and improved to produce the most reliable and well-balanced epoxy systems available. Wessex Resins manufactures WEST SYSTEM products in Romsey, UK under license from Gougeon Brothers.

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