

**SPE Thermoforming Division  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SPE THERMOFORMING DIVISION CONFERENCE TO TAKE PLACE SEPTEMBER 20-22, 2021  
IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY**

***In-Person Event Will be Held September 20-22 at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, JW Marriott Grand Rapids Hotel and DeVos Place, Grand Rapids, Michigan***

**Danbury, CT (June 10, 2021)** . . . The Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE) Thermoforming Division is pleased to announce it will be holding its 28<sup>th</sup> biennial SPE Thermoforming Conference September 20-22 in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

“We are forging ahead! The SPE Thermoforming Conference will go forward in Grand Rapids as planned,” said Steve Zamprelli, SPE Thermoforming Division Chair. “We recognize that some individuals may not be able or wish to travel, so most conference presentations and the exhibit hall will also be available as a virtual conference- a first in our history.”

As the USA begins to reopen, more people are traveling and live, in-person trade shows and conferences are happening once again. In Grand Rapids, all pandemic restrictions are expected to be lifted as of July 1.

“The conference team has developed a comprehensive program with a heavy focus on automation,” said Brian Golden, 2021 SPE Thermoforming Conference Co-Chair. “Two panel discussions will address smart manufacturing technologies from OEM and user perspectives; a third panel discussion will tackle the shared challenges we continue to face with supply chain disruptions created by the pandemic and Mother Nature.”

This year’s conference, with a theme of ‘Smart Manufacturing – Intelligently Forming the Future’, will be a 3-day event devoted to Heavy Gauge and Thin Gauge Thermoforming. In addition to a large number of exhibitors the conference will feature numerous break-out sessions and events. Highlights of the conference include:

-Welcome Reception

-Technical Conference, featuring full-day Heavy and Thin-Gauge Thermoforming Workshops led by McConnell Company and Mark Strachan

-Over 15 Technical Sessions Addressing Sustainability, Automation, Productivity and More

-Executive Forum (by invitation only)

-Student Radio-Controlled Car Race and Design Competition

-Virtual Plant Tour of Styl'monde, Priay, France

-Thermoforming Awards Dinner

In addition, ArtPrize®, an independently organized international art competition, will be taking place in Grand Rapids at the same time as the Thermoforming Conference. For 18 days, art is exhibited throughout the city in public parks and museums, in galleries and storefronts, in bars and on bridges. For those who attended the 2012 Thermoforming Conference in Grand Rapids, this is the same unique and fascinating event. Learn more about ArtPrize at <https://www.artprize.org>.

For more information and registration for the SPE Thermoforming Conference, go to <https://thermoformingdivision.com>

#### About SPE Thermoforming Division

THE SPE THERMOFORMING DIVISION is a technical division of the Society of Plastics Engineers, based in Danbury, CT. The Thermoforming Division's mission is to facilitate the advancement of thermoforming technologies through education, application, promotion and research. The Division hosts a biennial educational conference and publishes an award-winning technical journal, *SPE Thermoforming Quarterly*®. The Division has also funded over \$275K in equipment grants and tens of thousands of dollars in undergraduate scholarships since it was first formed. For more information, please visit <https://thermoformingdivision.com>.

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