

## Press Release for ATF Magazine

### I.N.C. Celebrates 25 Years

From humble beginnings, literally on the lounge room floor, I.N.C. engineered materials proudly celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> birthday this week.

I.N.C. was initially established to provide industrial noise control for manufacturing plants and original equipment manufacturers. At that time I.N.C. stood for "Industrial Noise Control".

Their first contract awarded for the retrofit of acoustic treatments to Renault tractors purchased by the then Country Roads Board. T, as founders of the business carried out all installation work on hands and knees in open workshops in South Melbourne, a far cry from I.N.C.'s impressive three building complex in South Oakleigh.

Inspired by the lack of locally manufactured acoustic materials, I.N.C. immediately commenced manufacture of Australia's first comprehensive range of acoustic materials for original equipment manufacturers. This saw the start of a relationship with Australia's original laminator, A-Bond, which culminated in the acquisition of A-Bond in 1987.

Managing Director, Michael Coates, commented that the past 25 years has seen a dramatic change in Australian manufacturing. "When we started in business, we could list more than 20 large, international, manufacturers of tractors, earth moving equipment and fork trucks as target customers. Within five years, most of those companies had ceased manufacturing in Australia, as a direct result of the disastrous policies of the Whitlam Government".

"This is typical of the obstacles faced by small to medium manufacturers in Australia", Michael Coates went on to say. "At least recent Governments of both persuasions have realised that a vibrant manufacturing industry is critical for Australia's success".

I.N.C. has demonstrated excellent survival instincts, with sales forecast to grow by almost 50% over the next 12 months.

"We have been able to combine our expertise in Materials Engineering with our acquired technology in lamination and technical textiles, to ensure a unique position within the Australian industry", says Michael Coates. In particular, I.N.C.'s move to integrate 3-dimensional nonwovens with their existing manufacturing operations, has resulted in an organisation that Coates says "has no equal anywhere in the world".

Apart from the decline in Australian manufacturing, Coates also noted that Australian industry is made all the more difficult by the inclination of competitors to copy successful new products. "In all of our business areas, at I.N.C. we are proud to be the innovators, not the imitators", says Coates.

Coates continued, "I.N.C. has proudly lead the development of high performance acoustic materials, specialised automotive laminates, UV-cured pressure sensitive



**COMMERCIAL-IN-CONFIDENCE**

**I.N.C. Corporation Pty. Ltd. ABN 74 005 302 250**  
22 Cleeland Road, Oakleigh South, Vic. 3167 Australia  
Tel: +613 9543 2800 Fax: +613 9543 8108  
Web: [www.inccorp.com.au](http://www.inccorp.com.au)



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adhesives, and waterproof breathable laminates. “While the imitators may have cost us millions of dollars”, he says, “, I.N.C. continues to prosper. In 2003, sales will increase by almost 50%”.

ATF magazine asked Michael Coates about the secrets to running a successful technical textiles business. “There are several factors”, he replied.

“Firstly, competition may be healthy, but it can kill you. It is critical to have unique technology to minimise the threat of competition”.

“Secondly, it is vital to continue to innovate, because someone else will copy your success”.

“Thirdly, the goal posts are always moving, flexibility and versatility are essential if you want to move with them”.

“Fourthly, you can’t do it on your own so it is vital to have a talented, loyal and dedicated team”.

“And finally, you must stay true to your values. Honesty and integrity are essential. All business relationships ultimately depend on trust”.

Over the next six months Coates predicts that he will make some very important announcements. After 25 years, it seems that I.N.C. engineered materials can look forward to exciting times ahead.

*Michael W Coates*  
*Managing Director*