Green Chemistry Innovation Workshop

Facilitator: Monica Becker, Monica Becker & Associates Sustainability Consultants

Panelists

- Steve Domeck, Vice President, US Commercial, InnoCentive
- Homer Swei, Associate Director, Product Stewardship, Johnson & Johnson

Summary

This workshop explored how InnoCentive uses Challenge Driven Innovation (CDI) to help companies solve problems. It illustrated how CDI could work using a real example faced by Johnson & Johnson and explored the idea of a collaborative green chemistry challenge for the GC3.

Models of innovation are changing from hierarchical to more networked or open models. InnoCentive helps companies (Seekers) identify hurdles in a challenge and break them into smaller, more solvable parts, and identifies and engages a network of Solvers from around the world to help solve the challenges. InnoCentive provides the process, platform technology, and network. Seekers evaluate the submissions for the best solutions.

Johnson & Johnson is concerned about the lack of diversity of effective preservatives for cosmetics. Regulatory and consumer concern over certain preservatives is leading to the "deselection" of certain chemicals and shrinking the pool of options for formulators. This shrinking pool of preservatives could lead to increased allergies and sensitivities from overexposure.. Of 64 registered preservatives, only 16 are commonly used. Johnson & Johnson wants to expand the pool of safe, mild, and effective preservatives. A related challenge is how to label these preservatives so that customers can make informed choices.

Challenges for Implementation

- How to involve other industries in solving problem
- Long and expensive timelines for getting regulatory approval
- Do the market benefits to one company outweigh the collaborative benefits of working together?

Helpful Actions to Advance Green Chemistry

- The issue is common to products in other sectors that use preservatives

Role for the GC3

- Facilitating collaboration among personal care/cosmetic companies and/or across the supply chain to solve this problem. There is precedent for the GC3 doing this -- the alternative plasticizer project.