



Quality Assurance Programs



The creation of a comprehensive quality assurance program for adhesives is essential, since post-production testing can be costly and time consuming. Fortunately, many reliable test methods are available through ASTM International (www.astm.org), the Pressure Sensitive Tape Council (www.pstc.org), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (www.nist.gov/index.html), as well as other governmental agencies and trade associations. These methods can be adapted or adopted for most adhesive applications. Your suppliers may provide Certificates of Analysis (C of A's) containing data on their products to minimize your lab work.

Unique Applications Tests

Occasionally a bonding application may have unique properties not described in the standard test methods. Adaptation of a standard test method to provide valuable, significant test data is preferred if possible. Of course, this modified method must be used during the adhesive selection phase (please see our Tech Tip, *Adhesive Selection*) to assure that the adhesive performs properly, and meet your customer's expectations. The test method may be simplified for QC protocol. It is best to work with your supplier to make sure it is acceptable to the supplier for his certificate of analysis.

If no modified standard test method provides the required data, then a new, unique test method must be devised. Care must be taken to assure the method can be repeated in different labs within defined significant variances at both the supplier and processor test facilities. This new test method may not enjoy the credibility of tests created by outside agencies such as those listed above, and will probably cost more to perform. Precision, accuracy and reproducibility all must be established. It is clear that special test methods should be avoided if possible in the interest of time, cost, and level of communication.