
The **American Leather Chemists Association**

The Leather industry's technical center for prospective development founded on a platform of peer review and discussion.



Welcomes you to the
120th Annual Convention

Hilton Chicago Oak Brook Hills Resort & Conference Center
Oak Brook Hills, Illinois

May 19 - 21, 2026

Technical Program

Welcome to the 120th Convention of the American Leather Chemists Association

On behalf of the American Leather Chemists Association, it is my honor to welcome you to our 120th Convention. This milestone marks not only a celebration of ALCA's enduring legacy, but also of the rich history and continued evolution of leather chemistry across the United States and around the world.

At this moment, it is especially important to recognize and thank our sponsors and members. In a time of challenge and change, both within our industry and globally, their continued support reflects a shared belief in the value, resilience, and future of leather. We are deeply grateful for their commitment.

Since its founding, ALCA has been rooted in a singular purpose: to serve as the leather industry's center for prospective development. Our Journal remains the cornerstone of that mission, providing a platform for peer review, open discussion, and the advancement of knowledge. As one of the last remaining English-language peer-reviewed journals dedicated to leather, it stands as both a responsibility and an opportunity for us all.

We are operating in a period that calls for adaptation. As in-person gatherings become less frequent, the importance of meaningful connection grows. This convention is an opportunity not only to engage with one another, but to consider how we expand our reach, connecting with global counterparts and emerging voices who may not have, had access in the past. ALCA must continue to evolve, building on its strengths while stepping forward into new areas of leadership.

Our commitment to education and knowledge-sharing remains central. Through our work, we continue to support students and emerging scientists worldwide, individuals who will shape the future of our industry, contribute to innovation, and strengthen the companies we represent. Investing in ALCA is, in many ways, an investment in the future of your own organization.

As this marks my final year serving as President, I do so with both pride and optimism. I am pleased to pass leadership to Donis Bosworth, who will guide ALCA into its next chapter. We have already begun meaningful advancements in our operational strategy, and I am confident the Association will continue to grow in new and impactful ways.

Thank you for being part of this important moment in ALCA's history. I wish you a productive and inspiring Convention.

Sincerely,

John Rodden

President, American Leather Chemists Association



ALCA 120th Annual Convention

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ALCA JOURNAL

Editor

Steve Lange, LRL

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

All Technical Paper Sessions will take place in the DuPage Amphitheater

Tuesday, May 19		
Council Meeting (Including Hotel Staff)	8:00 AM – 10:00 AM	La Grange
Golf Tournament (11AM Shotgun Start)	10:00 AM – 4:00 PM	Golf Course
Registration & Packet Pickup	3:00 PM – 5:45 PM	Amphitheater Foyer
Opening Reception	6:00 PM – 7:00 PM	The Marquis Tent
Dinner	7:00 PM – 10:00 PM	The Marquis Tent
Wednesday, May 20		
Editorial Board Meeting	8:00 AM - 8:45 AM	TBD
Registration	8:30 AM – 10:00 AM	Ampitheater Foyer
Opening Address	9:00 AM – 9:15 AM	DuPage Amphitheater
John Arthur Wilson Memorial Lecture	9:15 AM – 10:15 AM	DuPage Amphitheater
Break	10:15 AM – 10:45 AM	
1st Session: Technical Papers	10:45 AM – 12:00 PM	
Lunch	12:00 PM – 1:00 PM	Tin Cup Restaurant
2nd Session: Technical Papers	1:00 PM – 2:00 PM	
Break	2:00 PM – 2:30 PM	
3rd Session: Technical Papers	2:30 PM – 3:30 PM	
Bus Pickup for Cubs Game	4:30 PM – 4:45 PM	Front Lobby
Chicago Cubs vs. Milwaukee Brewers Game	6:00 PM – 10:00 PM	Wrigley Field
<i>Dinner for those not attending Game</i>	6:00 PM – 8:00 PM	TBD
<i>Social Hour for those not attending Game</i>	8:00 PM - 9:30 PM	TBD
Return Transportation to Hotel	10:00 PM– 11:00 PM	
Thursday, May 21		
Old & New Council Meeting	8:00 AM – 8:45 AM	Clarendon Hills
4th Session: Technical Papers	9:00 AM – 10:15 AM	
Break	10:15 AM – 10:30 AM	
5th Session: Technical Papers	10:30 AM– 11:30 AM	
Annual ALCA Business Meeting	11:30 AM – 12:00 PM	DuPage Amphitheater
Activities Awards Lunch	12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	The Marquis Tent
6th Session: Technical Papers	1:30 PM – 2:30 PM	
Break	2:30 PM – 3:00 PM	
7th Session: Technical Papers	3:00 PM – 4:00 PM	
Cocktails	6:00 PM – 7:00 PM	The Marquis Tent
ALCA Awards Banquet Dinner	7:00 PM – 10:00 PM	The Marquis Tent
Friday, May 22		
New Council Meeting	8:00 AM – 8:45 AM	Clarendon Hills

Chicago, IL

American Leather Chemists Association

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



**TECHNICAL
CONVENTION**
MAY 19-21, 2026

Join ALCA's 120th Convention to gain insider insights from Fabrizio Nuti, a leader at the forefront of the global tanning industry!

**FABRIZIO
NUTI**

President, Nuti Ivo Group
and President of UNIC



TECHNICAL PROGRAM

WEDNESDAY, May 20th

9:00 A.M. - 9:15 A.M.

OPENING ADDRESS OF THE 120th ANNUAL CONVENTION

By President John Rodden

9:15 A.M. - 10:15 A.M.

65TH JOHN ARTHUR WILSON MEMORIAL LECTURE

The Tanning Industry and Leather as Examples of Craft Intelligence:
Challenges and Opportunities for a Natural Material in the Age of Artificial
Intelligence

By Fabrizio Nuti

Owner & CEO of Nuti Ivo Group, Santa Croce sull'Arno, Italy *and*
President of UNIC, Italian Tanners Association

Introduction by First Source Worldwide

Is there a future for leather as a benchmark material in fashion manufacturing, automotive, and interior design? Do we need to reinvent or reimagine leather, the tanning industry, and the entire supply chain? Can we do it and what should we focus on?

How can a material like leather - tactile, "physical," natural, and circular as a by-product of the meat industry - strengthen and expand a credible and tangible role in a world dominated by cold artificial intelligence and fast, short-sighted consumption?

The future of the tanning industry could be seen as an example of "craft intelligence" and as a broad, interconnected ecosystem, rather than simply a component of a vertical or horizontal supply/value chain. This story should be built by tracing the evolution of production and sales flows over the past 25 years - years marked by a series of crises that have reshaped the sector and, more broadly, the world - forcing the tanning industry, especially since the pandemic, to operate in an extremely complex, almost emergency-like environment.

A crucial call to action for the sector: the future of tanning and leather also depends on reversing how the material is perceived by customers and how our industry communicates. We must move away from a defensive stance focused on justifying leather's sustainability and shift toward a proactive approach that promotes its modernity and its sensory and performance excellence.

WEDNESDAY, May 20th

1st Session Technical Papers

10:45 A.M. - 11:15 A.M.

**From Tannin Analysis to Sustainable Leather Science:
A Visual Timeline of The American Leather Chemists
Association (1893–2026)**

Steven D. Lange, The American Leather Chemists
Association



The American Leather Chemists Association has played a central role in advancing leather science through analytical standardization, technical publication, professional collaboration and education. This presentation traces the development of ALCA from its pre-founding origins in 1893, when leather chemists first gathered around the practical problem of accurately analyzing tanning extracts, through the formal establishment of the Association on November 22, 1903. Emphasis is placed on the early work of G. A. Kerr and other pioneering leather chemists who helped establish reliable analytical methods and promote scientific tannery plant control during a period when leather chemistry was still emerging as a recognized technical discipline.

Using a visual timeline format, the presentation highlights major milestones in ALCA's history, including the launch and growth of the Journal of the American Leather Chemists Association, early official testing methods, mid-century work on tannin analysis, methods booklets, and the continued development of standardized procedures for leather and tanning materials. The timeline also recognizes ALCA's professional legacy through the Alsop Award, John Arthur Wilson Memorial Lecture, Fred O'Flaherty Service Award, Dr. Robert M. Lollar Prize Paper Award and Randall L. Rowles Memorial Scholarship.

The presentation concludes by connecting ALCA's historical mission to current priorities, including digital publication, sustainability, environmental management and advanced manufacturing technologies.

WEDNESDAY, May 20th

11:15 A.M. - 11:45 A.M.

**Blood Veins: Structural Origin, Elastin Resistance,
and Control Strategies**

Olga Ballús PhD(*), Matías Cobo (1), Ricardo Micó (2),
Cromogenia Units, Barcelona, Spain



Blood veins are among the most persistent structural defects affecting the aesthetic and commercial value of finished leather. Their presence is particularly critical in full-grain, aniline, and light-colored leathers, where surface correction is limited and the natural hide structure is fully exposed. This defect originates from venous structures in the dermis, whose walls are rich in elastin, a protein highly resistant to conventional leather-processing conditions.

This study provides an in-depth analysis of the anatomical, biochemical, and technological factors influencing the visibility of blood veins, with particular emphasis on elastin behavior during beamhouse operations. The limitations of traditional liming processes are discussed, and selective enzymatic treatments are proposed as an effective strategy for elastin modification.

Beamhouse processing is highlighted as the decisive stage for defect control, and practical guidelines are presented to reduce vein visibility during retanning and fatliquoring.

Despite the intrinsic resistance of venous structures, optimized chemical and mechanical processing offers an effective pathway to minimize vein marks and enhance the commercial quality of finished leather.

Keywords: Blood veins, elastin, beamhouse processing, enzymatic treatment, leather defects

Note: The presenter is indicated by underscoring when papers have been prepared by multiple authors.

12:00 P.M. - 1:00 P.M.

Lunch

WEDNESDAY, May 20th

2nd Session Technical Papers

1:00 P.M. - 1:30 P.M.

Why The 1% Matters - The Role of Exotic Leather

Karl Flowers, Authenticae Ltd, Northamptonshire, England



The leather industry results from humans eating meat. The hide/skin is a non-determining co-product (by-product) of the meat industry. Five domestic species comprise ~99% of the hides and skins globally, namely Cattle, *Bos taurus* (including the sub-species indicus); Buffalo, *Bubalus bubalus*; Goat, *Capra hircus*; Sheep, *Ovis aries*; and the Pig, *Sus domesticus*.

The remaining 1% is a lesser contributor (by volume) to the leather industry and is considered more ethically closer to fur. Nothing could be further from the truth. This paper will consider the estimated monetary value, the role exotics play in the leathergood and shoe sector, and how conservation is the key driver for these farming/ranching businesses.

The paper will look at the effect these species conservation programs have on the communities they exist in and how they make a difference to species recovery and the planet. The paper will consider how the 99% can view the 1% with a new vision.

NOTES:

WEDNESDAY, May 20th

1:30 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.

**From Defense to Distinction: Telling the American
Leather Story with Pride**

Christy Gilmore, American Tanning & Leather LLC, Griffin,
Georgia



The global leather industry has spent the last decade responding to criticism. In doing so, much of our messaging has shifted toward reassurance, explaining to consumers why leather is acceptable to buy, why it can be sustainable, and why it should not be dismissed.

That work matters. In many sectors, including highly regulated and conservation driven systems like alligator, sustainability is not just relevant, it is essential and deeply valuable. But it is not enough.

Consumers, particularly at the high end of the market, are not motivated by permission. They are motivated by desire, by excellence, and by story. The most successful brands in the world do not lead with justification. They lead with mastery. Hermès is not purchased because it meets a standard. It is purchased because it sets one.

The American leather industry has a story that is just as powerful, yet we have not told it with the same confidence.

This is an industry built over more than a century, shaped by multigenerational businesses, grounded in technical expertise, and defined by a level of craftsmanship that still exists in very few places in the world. We operate with transparency, strong regulatory frameworks, and an ability to innovate that is uniquely American. And yet, while countries like Italy have spent decades positioning their leather as synonymous with artistry and prestige, the United States has often remained quiet, or worse, reactive.

This presentation challenges the industry to shift its posture.

Not away from sustainability, but beyond it.

From explanation to elevation.

From defense to distinction.

From asking for permission to owning our place.

WEDNESDAY, May 20th

2:00 P.M. - 2:30 P.M.

Break

3rd Session Technical Papers

2:30 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.

**Developments in Syntan Manufacture and
Application: Toward Bisphenol-Free Leather
Chemistry**

Riccardo Pasquale¹ PhD, GSC Group S.P.A., Vincenza, Italy



Regulatory momentum in the EU, US (California Proposition 65) and Asia is rapidly shifting bisphenol A and related analogues such as bisphenol S and F from provisional BPA substitutes to substances of high concern, with emerging group restrictions, low limits of quantification, and brand-level Restricted Substance List RSL adoption. In leather, however, bisphenols are largely unintended: they arise as residuals from non-optimized condensation pathways in syntan manufacture rather than from deliberate addition, unlike epoxy/plastics markets where bisphenols act as crosslinkers. This distinction requires a process-centric strategy rather than simple substitution.

This contribution maps the chemical origins of free bisphenols in phenolic and sulphone/DDS-based syntans, clarifying the thermodynamic/kinetic windows that favor their formation, and studies in deep the performance attribution between residual monomers and the polymer matrix.

GSC Group presents an integrated strategy to produce ultra-low-bisphenol syntans while preserving full performance. The approach relies on redesigned condensation pathways and tighter process control to limit bisphenol formation, supported by DDS-based polymer structures and tailored hybrid systems that ensure stable molecular-weight profiles. A robust analytical workflow based on ISO 21135 and ISO/DIS 11936 monitors BPS and BPF in chemicals and leathers respectively, enabling continuous optimization and reliable supplier documentation.

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WEDNESDAY, May 20th

2:30 P.M. - 3:00 P.M. cont'd

Case studies demonstrate sub-ppm residuals with maintained or improved retannage, bleaching on chrome leather, and lightfastness versus conventional benchmarks, alongside reduced wastewater impact. Besides, an application of such development with respect to GSC Group OMW leather technology was also provided to show a positive synergy for tackling environmental issues and obtain a more sustainable leather.

Overall, the work translates regulatory imperatives into manufacturable chemistry, offering a scalable route for the leather supply chain to meet global bisphenol expectations while preserving application efficiency and product quality.

Keywords: Bisphenol S, strategy, leather manufacture, sustainable processes, bisphenol-free syntans.

NOTES:

WEDNESDAY, May 20th

3:00 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.

Exceptional Performance of DMTMM: From Metal-Free Leather Tanning to Advanced Packaging and Antimicrobial Systems

Valentina Beghetto^{1,2*} PhD, University Ca' Foscari of Venice, Venice, Italy & Crossing Srl, Treviso, Italy



4-(4,6-Dimethoxy-1,3,5-triazin-2-yl)-4-methylmorpholinium chloride (DMTMM) has emerged as a highly efficient, sustainable, and versatile zero-length condensation agent with outstanding performances across diverse industrial applications, including leather processing, packaging, paper coatings, and antimicrobial synthesis.

In leather technology, DMTMM acts as a metal-free tanning agent, promoting direct amide cross-linking within collagen, under mild aqueous conditions. Remarkably, it achieves shrinkage temperatures up to 87°C, while eliminating heavy metals, reducing chloride load, lowering water consumption (~56%), and shortening processing time.

In leather and paper-coating applications, DMTMM-mediated amidation of CMC in fully aqueous conditions, enables the preparation of hydrophobic coatings with contact angles up to 105°, drastic reductions in oil absorption (up to 99.8%), and substantial improvements in water vapor barrier and mechanical properties.

In polysaccharide-based packaging systems, DMTMM efficiently cross-links carboxymethyl cellulose (CMC) and chitosan, generating covalent amide or ester networks that dramatically enhance mechanical strength, barrier properties, and water resistance. CMC films cross-linked with DMTMM exhibit tensile strengths up to ~76 MPa, significantly reduced water vapor permeability ($2.6 \times 10^{-10} \text{ g m}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1} \text{ Pa}^{-1}$), improved oil resistance, and high transparency, making them competitive sustainable alternatives to fossil-based plastics. Similarly, DMTMM-crosslinked chitosan/adipic acid films reach tensile strengths up to 83 MPa with improved UV-barrier and moisture performance.

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WEDNESDAY, May 20th

3:00 P.M. - 3:30 P.M. cont'd

Beyond materials science, DMTMM-derived triazine quaternary ammonium salts demonstrate promising antimicrobial activity, achieving complete disinfection against Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacteria at low concentrations, with favorable cytotoxicity profiles.

Overall, DMTMM combines high reactivity, aqueous compatibility, non-toxic and recyclable byproducts, and absence of residual incorporation into final materials, positioning it as a powerful green tool for advanced sustainable manufacturing.

References by V. Beghetto

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Technical Sessions Adjourned for Today

4:30 P.M.

BUS PICK-UP IN FRONT LOBBY OF HOTEL FOR BASEBALL GAME

THURSDAY, May 21st

4th Session Technical Papers

9:00 A.M. - 9:30 A.M.

Improving Efficiency and Quality in the Leather Industry through Data Analysis and A.I.

Cesare Dal Monte, GER Elettronica S.r.l., Vicenza, Italy



Quality, efficiency and costs are the main drivers of each industrial process. Today the appliance of artificial intelligence (A.I.) can help the tanning process stabilize leather quality while reducing production costs.

The application of the A.I. requires a data driven approach where “data lakes” become the main asset for companies.

The aim of the presentation is to illustrate necessary steps, such as traceability, data collection and computer vision, to introduce A.I. in the leather industry. Furthermore some concrete applications of A.I. in the tannery process will be demonstrated.

9:30 A.M. - 10:00 A.M.

Latest Development in Drum Technology/Process Controls and Data Driven Leather Manufacturing

Peter Mastelic, Hüni Group, Zurich, Switzerland



This presentation examines recent advancements in drum technology, process controls, and data-driven methodologies in leather manufacturing. Innovations in drum design and materials are improving process uniformity, chemical uptake, and energy efficiency. At the same time, automated control systems and real-time monitoring of key parameters are enabling greater consistency and reproducibility. The integration of sensor data and analytics is supporting a shift toward predictive process management and measurable sustainability gains across our industry. Challenges in adopting these technologies within existing operations will also be briefly addressed.

THURSDAY, May 21st

10:00 A.M. - 10:30 A.M.

Break

5th Session Technical Papers

10:30 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.

Evolving Expectations: Aligning Leather with Future Brand Demands

Niccolo Duranti, 821 Sourcing, Copenhagen, Denmark



Global brands are reshaping expectations for leather in response to evolving consumer values. Priorities now include transparency, traceability, consistency, and measurable sustainability alongside performance. For leather chemists and tanners, this creates an opportunity to reinforce leather's strengths while addressing gaps in data, environmental impact, and supply chain visibility. The session provides practical insight into how brands evaluate materials and where the industry must adapt to remain competitive.

11:00 A.M. - 11:30 A.M.

Compostability of Leather Finishes Under Standard Conditions

Michael Franken, TFL Ledertechnik GmbH, Langenfeld, Germany



In the context of circularity and environmental sustainability, the biodegradability and compostability of leather are important topics currently being discussed within the leather industry. In this regard, the roles of raw hide, tanned hide, retanned hide, and the finish itself must each be examined individually.

This study focuses exclusively on the leather finish, independent of the crust leather and its method of production. Various typical finishes and different finishing chemistries used for shoe uppers, furniture upholstery, and automotive leather were evaluated for their degree of degradation under different composting conditions.

The results of the study show varying levels of decay and disintegration of leather finishes, depending on the chemistries applied.

THURSDAY, May 21st

11:30 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

Annual Business Meeting

ALCA 120th Convention Agenda

Welcome

Membership

- New Members and Life/Retired Members
- In Memoriam: A Moment of Silence
- Membership Status

Operations, Finance & Council

- Management Changes
- Retiring Councilors; Election Results
- Randall Rowles Memorial Scholarship
- Technical Committee Report
- Appointments
- Editor's Report
- Ways & Means Report

Convention Report

- Convention Financial Review
- Attendance
- Convention 2027

Fundraising & New Business

- Sponsors
- New Business

Open Floor Q&A

Adjourn

12:00 P.M. - 1:30 P.M.

Activities Awards Luncheon

THURSDAY, May 21st

6th Session Technical Papers

1:30 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.

Building the Future of North American Leather Supply Chains

Omar Velazquez, Curfimex - Leather General, Dallas TX



The global leather industry is entering a period of structural change driven by nearshoring, geopolitical shifts, sustainability expectations, shorter development cycles, and increased demand for transparency across supply chains. As brands reassess sourcing strategies, regional manufacturing ecosystems in North America are receiving renewed attention, including Mexico's long-established leather and footwear industries.

This presentation explores how leather chemistry professionals, tanneries, and product development partners can contribute to this evolving landscape beyond traditional production roles. Drawing from the perspective of Curfimex, a Mexican tannery with deep roots in leather manufacturing, and Leather General, a U.S.-Mexico market development and sourcing initiative, the session will examine the growing need for cross-functional collaboration between chemistry, manufacturing, design, and commercialization.

Topics include changing customer expectations, the importance of communication between technical and non-technical teams, balancing craftsmanship with modern performance requirements, and how chemists can position themselves as strategic contributors within regional supply chains. The presentation will also discuss opportunities and challenges facing Mexico as North American brands diversify sourcing outside of Asia while seeking quality, flexibility, and authentic material storytelling.

Rather than focusing solely on tanning processes, the session aims to provide a broader industry perspective on where leather manufacturing is heading and how technical expertise remains essential in building the next generation of competitive leather supply networks.

THURSDAY, May 21st

2:00 P.M. - 2:30 P.M.

Integrating Advanced Material Technology into Tannery Operations: From Chemistry to Scale-Up

Gracia El-Ayle PhD, Modern Meadow, Nutley, New Jersey



The leather industry is undergoing rapid transformation, driven by sustainability, regulatory pressure, and the need for consistent, high-performance materials. Our technology introduces a next-generation approach to material processing that integrates protein and biopolymer chemistry with existing tannery operations, enabling improved product performance while reducing environmental impact.

This presentation will provide an overview of our core technology, including its chemical foundation, performance advantages, and compatibility with conventional leather processing workflows. Emphasis will be placed on how the system interacts with substrates during key stages such as wet-end processing and finishing.

A central focus of the talk will be the tannery onboarding process, outlining how new technology is successfully implemented at scale. We will walk through:

- Process integration strategies within existing tannery infrastructure
- Key control parameters and operational adjustments
- Training and knowledge transfer for tannery personnel

Together, these elements provide a practical framework for moving advanced material technologies from technical validation to successful tannery adoption.

2:30 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Break

THURSDAY, May 21st

7th Session Technical Papers

3:00 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.

The Science of Smell and What it Means for Leather

Michael Costello, Muno Group, Barcelona, Spain



Reducing odor in leather has become a hot topic in the automotive industry recently. In this talk, Michael Costello will demystify the science by explaining how our noses and brains process odors and store them in memory. The origin of odor in leather will also be discussed, and he will dig into why some people appear to have a stronger sense of the leather smell than others, and why smell is so selective. The presentation will emphasize how the link between olfactory science and leather chemistry is critical to understanding how odor in leather can be reduced, or enhanced, depending on your preference.

NOTES:

THURSDAY, May 21st

3:30 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.

**Consumer Perception of Leather and Sustainability
in the Automotive Sector**

Roger A. Pinto PhD, Pangea Made, Inc., Rochester Hills,
Michigan



We are seeing a paced and steady change in the content of leather used across the automotive sector and how customers choose it. This change isn't driven by new technologies or advancements in material science, but by evolving consumer expectations and economic pressures. Buyers are becoming aware of how their purchases relate to environmental impact, resource use, and the broader supply chain. This growing awareness is reshaping expectations, influencing market regulations, and prompting OEMs to rethink what "premium" should mean inside a vehicle.

The leather supply chain, however, is far from simple. It is a global, highly interconnected system, and at the center of it sits the customer making decisions driven more by emotion than by technical understanding. When budgets allow, research shows that emotional factors dominate buying behavior. Qualities such as durability, natural appearance, and the way leather ages in a vehicle carry significant weight for informed buyers.

However, industry assumptions often diverge from these preferences. While many OEMs pursue perfectly uniform coated surfaces, consumers tend to associate authenticity with some natural variation, leather that feels real, wears in, and lasts. When design choices reflect these preferences, they often lead to more sustainable outcomes, with less overengineering of the leather surface. Despite their strong opinions, most consumers still know little about how leather is made, what "genuine leather" means, or how its supply chain works. When they face technical terms used in leather manufacturing, confusion and hesitation are almost inevitable.

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THURSDAY, May 21st

3:30 P.M. - 4:00 P.M. cont'd

This gap between customer perception and reality creates both risk and opportunity for the industry. Clearer communication and design choices that reflect what customers truly value can build trust, support lower-impact materials, and redefine what premium materials should represent in automotive interiors.

This talk shares insights of current market research to illustrate how rising consumer awareness and sustainability pressures are reshaping automotive leather and what the industry must do to stay competitive.

4:00 P.M. - 4:15 P.M.

Closing Address

NOTES:

**This Concludes the Technical Sessions of the
120th ALCA Annual Convention**

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thank you
