## 1) Schmid Group and Lauffer had thus proven the efficiency of their new, membrane-free laminating process for the production of solar modules

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“PAT successfully completed” was the eagerly awaited pronouncement on 15 June 2011 at Maschinenfabrik Lauffer in Horb am Neckar, Germany. The Schmid Group and Lauffer had thus proven the efficiency of their new, membrane-free laminating process for the production of solar modules.

This new lamination process was developed by Schmid and Lauffer in joint cooperation and optimally combines the knowhow of the two technology leaders. The innovative concept is based, on the one hand, on the membrane-free technology patented several times over by Schmid and, on the other, on the Lauffer Company’s long-standing years of experience in press and lamination technology.

Lauffer is the exclusive supplier of the custom-designed laminator systems. Membrane-less lamination of modules allows savings in operating and maintenance costs of several thousand euros a year. It also saves the time-consuming process of changing the membrane, which in turn significantly increases the uptime of the system.

The multi-level design of these new laminators allows temperature to be steadily introduced to glass-glass and glass-film solar modules from both sides with a +/- 1°C temperature homogeneity never before achieved by similar systems. This significantly shortens the process times in comparison to standard membrane laminators; as a result, process times of less than seven and a half minutes have become the new standard in glass-film module production with immediate effect. The new lamination process also opens up further potential for the significant reduction of process times using suitable, innovative film types.

The latest laminator, designed for a 60MW system, has been delivered to an Italian client. The next large-scale project - a four-level laminator designed for a 120MW module line - is already in the pipelines. It will be installed next fall at another client’s premises in Canada.