

NEWS

## Simtec keeps focus on LSR in medical with 'best year ever' in 2025



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The Simtec team shows off the firm's injection-molded medical components at MD&M West in Anaheim, Calif., Feb. 5. Second from left is Mary Ellen Thomas, with Daniel Polster to her left. (Rubber News photo by Andrew Schunk)

By **Andrew Schunk**

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**ANAHEIM, Calif.**—Simtec Silicone Parts Inc. closed 2025 with double-digit annual growth—the best year in the company's history—driven by medical technology demand and strategic capacity expansions at its Miramar, Fla., facility.

The liquid silicone rubber (LSR) and high-consistency rubber (HCR) specialist, owned by Thalheim, Austria-based Rico Group, nearly doubled its production footprint from 50,000 to 100,000 square feet, added packaging automation and expanded to close to 50 production lines while maintaining a stable work force of 95 employees.

“It was a very successful year for us in 2025,” Managing Director Daniel Polster told *Rubber News* Feb. 5 at MD&M West in Anaheim, where thousands of med-tech companies gathered. “It was, in fact, the best year Simtec ever had.”

Simtec, which sits just outside of Miami, exists in rarefied air in the med-tech space, catering to high-volume, complex designs.

The company works exclusively with OEMs.

Medical technology remains Simtec’s strongest segment, Polster said. The firm also works in automotive, consumer electronics and industrial applications.

Applications driving growth for Simtec in medical include glucose monitoring devices, dental components, eye surgery products and hearing aids—incredibly tiny products that require micro-molding, overmolding and two-shot LSR processes.



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“Medical clients have become pickier,” Polster said. “There are more applications, even as the applications themselves get smaller.

“But it is good to see the medical segment growing more than other segments.”

The shift toward value-added, vertically oriented services processes sets Simtec apart, Polster said.

The company leverages Rico Group's vertically integrated capabilities—from precision tooling designed at Rico Elastomere Projecting GmbH in Austria to fully automated packaging at Simtec that ships shelf-ready products direct to customers' distribution centers.

“We really do bring the process from the tooling to getting to a shelf product,” Polster said.

For hearing aid components, for example, Simtec produces parts, packages them and delivers them retail-ready to distribution centers and retail outlets.

“It's really a complete value chain for our bread-and-butter: LSR,” said Mary Ellen Thomas, Simtec's business communications specialist.

Simtec handles LSR production and some tool maintenance within the Rico ecosystem, while all black rubber is managed by Semperit, Rico's parent company.

Based in Upper Austria, the 500-person Rico Group has production companies in Austria, the U.S. and Switzerland.

They include Rico Elastomere Projecting; HTR in Austria; Silcoplast in Wolfhalden, Switzerland (LSR and high-temperature vulcanizates); and Simtec in the U.S. (LSR parts production).

“With our abilities, absolutely, I think Simtec offers the whole package,” Polster said.

The company continues to invest in both infrastructure and workforce development, despite headwinds in automotive—a segment that remained weaker than expected in 2025, Polster said.

“We have faced some pressure from the downturn in the automotive sector,” he said. “But there has been a lot of positive change here over the last year-and-a-half. We purchased new (injection molding) machines, and we are still waiting on another machine.”

Training remains central to operations, particularly as Simtec optimizes operations with automation and shifts to more lights-out manufacturing.

“This is key—the integration and investment in people and infrastructure,” Polster said. “The knowledge of our people is the most important stuff we have. We don’t have fancy offices. Most important is the training we offer our employees.”

The company now runs six hours of unattended, third-shift production daily, with some lines operating 24/7.

“It is all driven by customer demand,” Polster said. “And there is a kind of magic to having a stable process. Sometimes, things are OK, they’re running.

“But in Austria, it’s running, and in Florida it’s not running. Is it the humidity? Questions can sometimes take awhile to answer.”

Overall, the formula for success has a common denominator for customers—getting in early.

The greater understanding a customer has early on of product’s functionality, the better.



Simtec, based in Miramar, Fla., excels in high-volume, complex liquid silicone rubber medical components. The firm's clean room is pictured here. (Photo courtesy of Simtec Silicone Parts L.L.C.)

Almost entirely automated at the production level, Simtec does use simulation at the onset of a project to reduce risk and costly iterations.

“This is the way we want to go,” Polster said. “Automation in medical is becoming more and more of a trend. (Rico) Group has its own automation team.”

And collaborations are as important as communication, Thomas said.

The future is bright for Simtec as Rico Group realizes growth from its U.S. property. Polster said Semperit allows Rico to be what it always has been—an expert in LSR injection molding.

“Simtec did a great job for the company last year,” Thomas said. “Overall, there is significant incremental growth with existing customers and new opportunities with new customers—and that is a nice balance.

“And there is still a lot to come in 2026.”

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