



Case Study

Expert Witness Testimony

Product Liability Case with Thermoplastic Polymers

Client Situation:

A manufacturer of a coffee making system (plaintiff) was experiencing failures in the coffee pot rim during use resulting in spillage of hot coffee and injuries to users. One color rim was failing and separating from the glass bowl, while the standard black rim did not fail.

Client Problem:

The plaintiff required an expert to analyze the polymers and production process to identify the cause of the high temperature failures for the colored rims. There were also two defendants, one that provided color pellets and one that performed the polymer molding and assembly.

InnoCentrix Solution:

Evaluated both the bill of materials used to make the plastic rim and the manufacturing process. Detailed analysis determined that a lower melting point polymer was used in the color pellets of the failed coffee pots. Additionally, the lower melting point polymer in the color pellets was not compatible (miscible) in the polypropylene material used for the rim. Phase separation and the lower melting point color pellet caused a degradation of the high temperature performance resulting in product failures when exposed to hot liquids.

Client Benefits:

Provided expert opinion during the pre-trial deposition process and outlined the technical details of the failure mode. The case was settled prior to the scheduled court date and during mediation, the plaintiff was able to get the defendant to substantially increase the settlement amount. The plaintiff attorneys attributed the increased settlement to the InnoCentrix expert witness testimony.

Testimonials

Plaintiff Attorney, Breidenbach, Huchting & Hamblet –

"We were able to settle the case prior to the scheduled trial date. Your expertise, testimony, and professionalism went a long way in getting this case settled. At mediation, we were able to get the defendant to increase its settlement offer substantially. We attribute the increase to your testimony."

"Given a challenging assignment, you quickly learned all of the facts, and expressed opinions that were convincing and obviously based on meticulous groundwork. At your deposition, you handled yourself admirably despite skillful questioning from an experienced cross-examiner. In addition your demeanor while under cross-examination was superb."