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(54) **PROCESS OF TRANSFORMING A PLASTIC EXTRUSION SYSTEM INTO A DYNAMIC DEPOLYMERIZATION REACTOR**

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- (\*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

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See application file for complete search history.

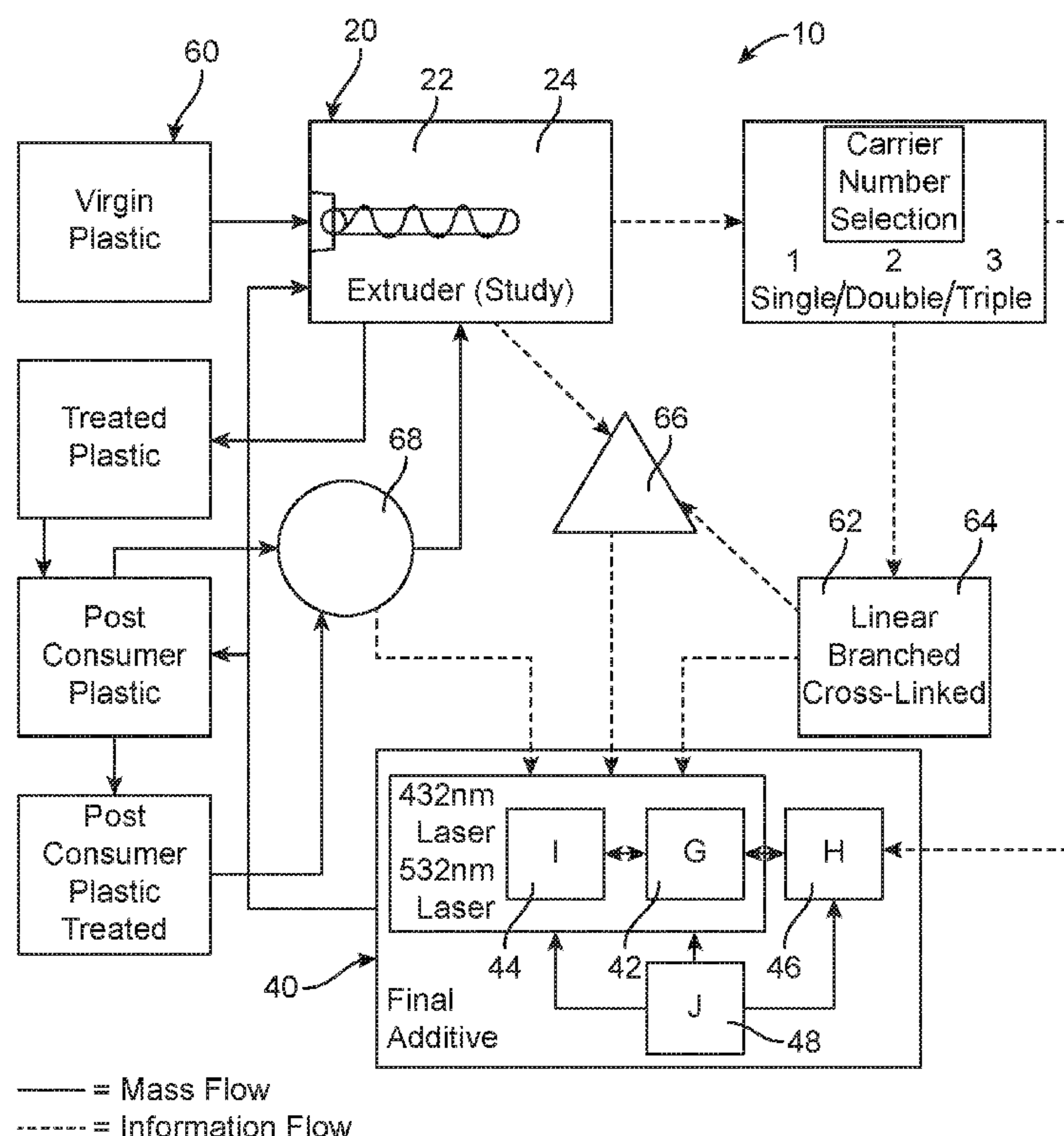
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An extrusion process of a manufacturing system for plastic which also serves as a depolymerization reactor through the use of melting point's temperature as activation energy and liquid solvents. The melting point activation energy and liquid solvents are used to generate a certain level of depolymerization at the manufacturing process of any given plastic product. The process includes several variables that are used in determining a final additive that is introduced at the beginning of the extrusion process. The final additive includes a mixture of a liquid solvents, a molecular filler, chemical carriers, and stabilizers.

**7 Claims, 3 Drawing Sheets**



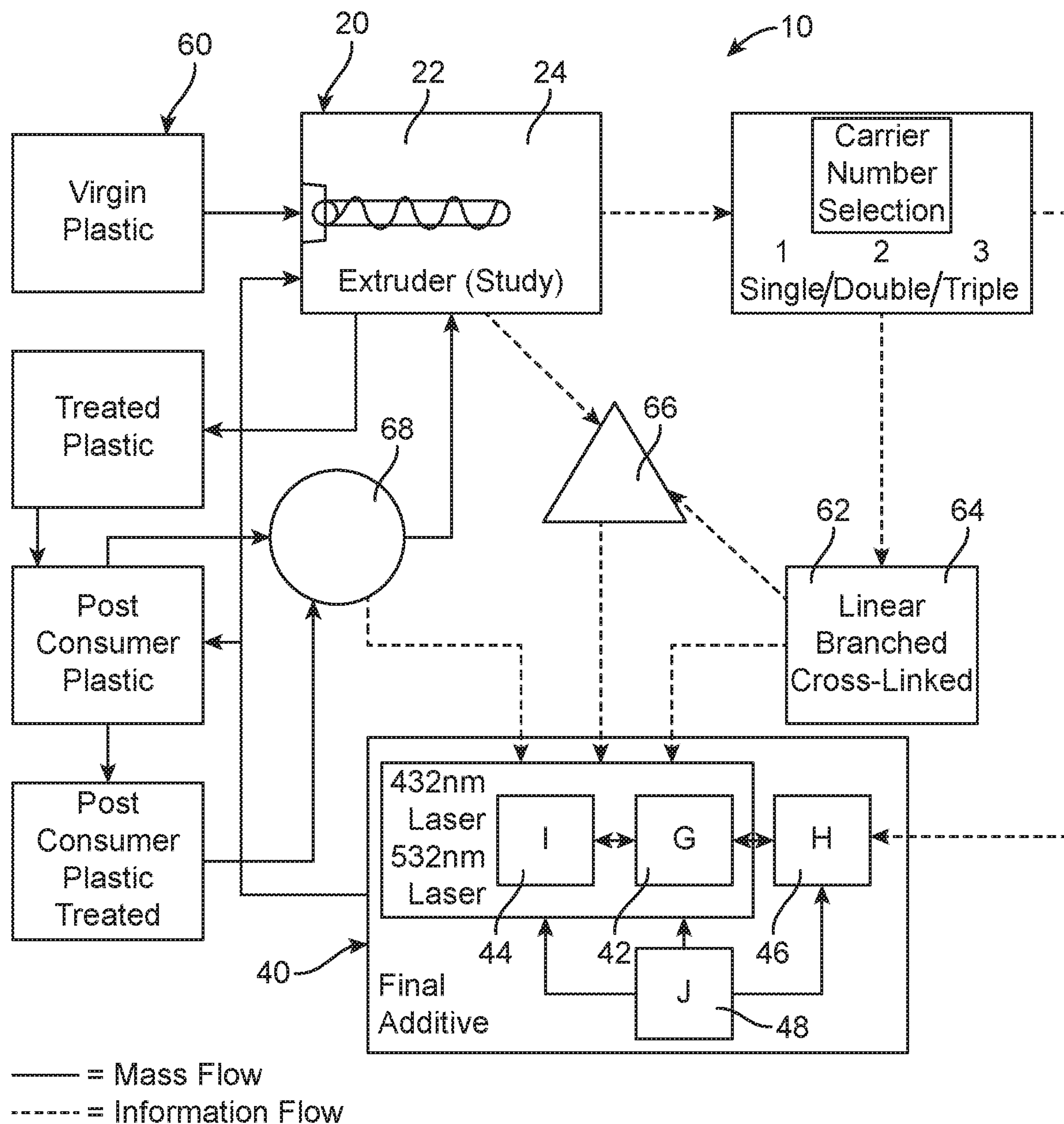


FIG. 1

Variable	Divergence	Selection Value
<u>22</u>	Single	→ 2
	Double	→ 3
	Triple	→ 5
<u>24</u>	Thermoforming	→ 2
	Injection Mould	→ 5
	Blow Mould	→ 6
<u>62</u>	Linear	→ 1
	Branched	→ 2
	Cross-Linked	→ 4
<u>64</u>	<125C	→ 0
	125C<T<268C	→ 1
	268C<T<327C	→ 3
<u>66</u>	Low	→ 1
	Medium	→ 3
	High	→ 4
<u>68</u>	Low	→ 2
	Medium	→ 4
	High	→ 8

FIG. 2



Overarching Process Identification = OPI
<div>All selected values in variable divergence must be added to calculate OPI, then =</div> <div>If OPI = 8 &lt; OPI ≤ 17, Then OPI Type A</div> <div>If OPI = 17 &lt; OPI ≤ 24, Then OPI Type B</div> <div>If OPI = 24 &lt; OPI ≤ 30, Then OPI Type C</div>
<div>Formula for Type A = 21.2% G + 14.6% I + 11.8% J + 52.4 H</div> <div>42444846</div>
<div>Formula for Type B = 27.3% G + 14.6% I + 13.3% J + 44.8 H</div> <div>42444846</div>
<div>Formula for Type C = 33.7% G + 14.6% I + 16.4% J + 35.3 H</div> <div>42444846</div>

FIG. 3

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# PROCESS OF TRANSFORMING A PLASTIC EXTRUSION SYSTEM INTO A DYNAMIC DEPOLYMERIZATION REACTOR

## BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

### 1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a dynamic depolymerization process and, more particularly, to an extrusion process which also serves as a depolymerization reactor that uses the melting point's temperature as activation energy and liquid solvents.

### 2. Description of the Related Art

Several designs for a depolymerization process have been designed in the past. None of them, however, include the double use of any typical plastic goods production line's extrusion process of a manufacturing system for commercial plastic, that also serves concomitantly and on-the-go, as a dynamic depolymerization reactor through the use of its melting point's temperature as the activation energy for the chemical reaction and liquid solvents. The melting point activation energy and liquid solvents are used to generate a certain level of depolymerization at the manufacturing process of any given plastic product. The process includes several variables such as, the length to diameter ratio of the extrusion screw, heat signatures from the plastic feeder point to the point in which plastic reaches room temperature, and total residence time under heat. The variables further include, type of polymer chain, other polymeric additives used in the extrusion process, and the type of forming process. The variables will result in a selection of a value which will identify the dynamic type of overall plastic depolymerization subject of each version of the additive of the present invention.

Applicant believes that a related reference corresponds to U.S. Pat. No. 6,638,589 issued for a method and apparatus for using recycled plastic material and a plastic product produced by an extruder. Applicant believes that another related reference corresponds to U.S. Pat. No. 9,114,562 issued for a foamed polyester extrusion process and equipment that can be used in plants for producing sheets, boards or tubes of foamed polyester. However, the cited references differ from the present invention because they fail to address the issue of providing a second concomitant use to an extrusion process which also serves as a depolymerization reactor at the manufacturing process of any given plastic product. The process includes several variables that are used in determining a final additive to be fed through the extrusion machine in combination with plastic fed through the extrusion machine. This additive contains a mixture of a liquid solvent, a molecular filler, stabilizers, and a carrier selection.

Other documents describing the closest subject matter provide for a number of more or less complicated features that fail to solve the problem of plastic's unsustainability through its overengineering in an efficient and economical way. None of these patents suggest the novel features of the present invention, nor the reengineered pre-upcycled final plastic as the useful outcome.

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is one of the objects of the present invention to transform an extrusion process into a dynamic depolymer-

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ization reactor that corrects the over-engineering factor of plastic from its initial manufacturing stage.

It is another object of this invention to provide a data acquisition process that combines information into an algorithm, that makes possible to adapt this novel system to any extrusion process transforming said extrusion process into a depolymerization reactor that improves the circularity of polymers, both in terms of recyclability potential and micro-fragmentation potential in natural environments of a plastic material.

It is still another object of the present invention to provide an extrusion process with a depolymerization reactor that includes a liquid solvent(s) additive that reduces the energy required to extrude in a system.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide an extrusion process with a depolymerization reactor that includes a liquid solvent(s) that is phased evaporated or phased out before the plastic reaches its manufacturing end point.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide an extrusion process with a depolymerization reactor that produces a plastic with a lower molecular weight and half of the black specks after recycling.

It is yet another object of this invention to provide such a device that is inexpensive to implement and maintain while retaining nominal variables of the industry and its effectiveness.

Further objects of the invention will be brought out in the following part of the specification, wherein detailed description is for the purpose of fully disclosing the invention without placing limitations thereon.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

With the above and other related objects in view, the invention consists in the details of construction and combination of parts as will be more fully understood from the following description, when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 represents the algorithm as a flow chart of an extrusion process with a depolymerization reactor 10 depicting several variables used in the extrusion process.

FIG. 2 shows a chart with selection values for the divergence and definition of the algorithm, incorporating various variables in accordance to an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 3 illustrates another chart depicting the finite number of potential outcomes of the algorithm as ranges of an overarching process identification to determine the formula to be used for a final additive.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION

Referring now to the drawings, where the present invention is generally referred to with numeral 10, it can be observed an extrusion process with a depolymerization reactor 10 which basically includes an extruder 20, a final additive 40, and plastic 60.

Extruder 20 includes various variables that are used in determining the final additive 40 to be included in the extrusion process. Extruder 20 includes an extrusion screw geometry 22 having a ratio of length to diameter. The extruder further includes heat signatures 24 of the forming process produced through injection molding, blow molding, or thermoforming. The selection of these variables is deter-



mined by a company desiring to manufacture a plastic and the type of plastic they would like to manufacture.

Final additive **40** includes a liquid solvent **42** that is introduced into extruder **20**. In the present invention, the extrusion process also serves as a depolymerization reactor by utilizing melting point's temperature as the activation energy and liquid solvents **42**. Liquid solvents **42** in combination with the energy of the manufacturing extrusion process generate a certain level of depolymerization in order to correct the over-engineering factor of plastic. In the present embodiment, liquid solvents **42** is a mixture of at least three solvents (33% of each solvent) known in the art that is determined by the type of plastic that is being produced through the extrusion process. In one implementation, with regards to polyethylene terephthalate (PET), a solvent mixture of four-chlorophenol, benzyl alcohol, and NaOH in Ethylene Glycol is introduced. In another implementation, regards to polypropylene (PP), a solvent mixture of phthalic anhydride, petrolatum, and peanut oil is introduced. In yet another implementation, with regards to polyethylene (PE), a solvent mixture of heptane, benzyl alcohol, and amyl chloride is introduced.

In yet another implementation, with regards to polystyrene (PS), a solvent mixture of acetone, amyl chloride, and cedarwood oil is introduced. In yet another implementation, with regards to acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS), a solvent mixture of citric oil/peppermint/pine oil, acetone, and amyl chloride is introduced. In yet another implementation, regarding post-consumer recycled plastic (PCR), a solvent mixture of acetone, amines, and acetate solvent, is introduced.

The solvents provided are known in the art. However, when introduced to the extrusion process, they facilitate a level of depolymerization that allows for the production of a superior plastic. Liquid solvents **42** are introduced into extruder **20** to facilitate depolymerization. Liquid solvents **42** also reduces the energy required to extrude in the extrusion process, thereby saving energy in the manufacturing process.

Final additive further includes a molecular filler **44** in the form of a solid wax-like element that is mixed with liquid solvents **42**. Molecular filler **44** maintains the quality of the plastic through the depolymerization process. Molecular filler **44** serves as a bridge between the upcycled monomers obtained through the in-manufacturing depolymerization that is still attached to a polymer chain and the wax-like materials added in the process as an additive.

In one embodiment, with regards to PET as described above, a molecular filler **44** of terephthalic acid is introduced. Additionally, with regards to PP, PS, ABS, and PRC, a molecular filler **42** of paraffin wax is introduced. Lastly, with regards to the PE, a molecular filler **42** of polyethylene wax is introduced.

The use of liquid solvents **42** may have a negative effect in plastics that come into contact with food. To overcome this issue, we program liquid solvents **42** to phase out completely by including a chemical carrier **46** into final additive **40** to protect the depolymerization process for a given period of time. Chemical carrier **46** will aid the plastic in homogenously distributing the heat and energy from the extrusion process in a way such that 100% of the liquid solvent **42** is evaporated or phased out before the plastic reaches its manufacturing end point and during its extrusion residence time. The extrusion process also aids with this through the constant stirring of the extrusion screw. As a result, the total time per application and manufacturing system, in which the plastic is receiving energy in the form

of heat and pressure is calculated. This calculation is then used to determine the final total level of liquid solvents **42** in final additive **40** which will be reduced to zero in terms of the amount of liquid solvents **42** in the final plastic. In one embodiment, chemical carrier **46** is provided as a bio based or plant-based oil that is specifically selected for its compatibility with the particular heat signatures **24** of the manufacturing process. As a result, the extrusion temperature doesn't surpass the ability of the oil to do its purpose before fuming or phasing out. Each plastic application in the extrusion process of the present invention will have its own chemical carrier **46** tailored specifically for each particular case. Chemical carrier **46** may include a selection or combination of palm oil, soybean oil, or dioctyl terephthalate.

The chemical carrier **46** is determined by the extrusion screw geometry **24**. The length to diameter ratio of the extrusion screw geometry is directly proportional to the output and melt temperature in the extrusion process. Chemical carrier **46** must be selected to fulfill its purpose based on the output and melt temperature. Higher temperatures increase the amount of energy the chemical reaction receives. Therefore, the entire composition of the additive must withstand such temperature without fuming or phasing out. The higher the length to diameter ratio, the more carriers are needed to aid in the extrusion process. In one embodiment, in a length to diameter ratio of 20:1 and 24:1 a single carrier will be selected to perform optimally in at a melting zone. This single carrier may consist of 100% of either palm oil or dioctyl terephthalate. In another embodiment, in a length to diameter ratio of 25:1 two carriers will be used. A main carrier that is designed to perform optimally in the melting zone and a secondary carrier to be selected to perform optimally in a compression zone of the extrusion process. The two carriers consist of 50% soybean oil and 50% dioctyl terephthalate. In yet another embodiment, in a length to diameter ratio of 30:1, there will be selected two carriers as described for the length to diameter ratio of 25:1. A third carrier were then be selected to perform optimally at a feed zone of the extrusion process. The triple carrier may consist of 33.3% palm oil, 33.3% soybean oil, and 33.3% of dioctyl terephthalate.

Final additive **40** may also include a stabilizer **48** ranging from surfactants, silicas, and UV stabilizers to aid the in the depolymerization process.

In the present invention, plastic **60** may be provided in the form of virgin plastic that is fed through extruder **20**. Plastic **60** also includes several variables that go into determining final additive **40**. Plastic **60** includes a type of polymer chain **62** ranging from linear, branched, and cross linked. Plastic **60** also includes a melting point **64** ranging from temperatures: less than 125 degrees Celsius, less than 268 but greater than 125 degrees Celsius, and less than 327 but greater than 268 degree Celsius. Plastic **60** may further be provided from in house recycling **66** and outsourced recycling **68**.

The extrusion process with a depolymerization reactor **10** includes a first step. In this first step, each of the variables for extruder **20** and plastic **50** will result in a selection value which will identify the mixture of final additive to be introduced in the extrusion process. The selection value represents the energy that the extrusion process receives, the selection values are then added to determine the amount of energy that is received in the extrusion process. It is observed in FIG. 2, a chart containing selection values for the various divergence of several variables described in this specification. Once the divergence for each variable is identified, the selection values are added to determine an



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overarching process identification value which represents a total amount of energy in the extrusion process concluding the first step.

The extrusion process with a depolymerization reactor **10** further includes a second step. In this second step, final additive **40** is mixed into extruder **50** to generate a depolymerization reaction. The final additive includes a combination of a liquid solvent **42**, a molecular filler **44**, a chemical carrier **46** and a stabilizer. The percentages of this combination are determined by the overarching process identification value calculated in the first step. It can be observed in FIG. 3, a chart depicting various ranges of the overarching process identification value. If the value falls within a specific range, a certain type of formula for final additive **40** is used. The present embodiment discloses three ranges for the overarching process identification value; however, it should be understood, that further ranges and further formulas may be included. In one example, if the overarching process identification value is less than or equal to 17 but greater than 8, then a "Type A" formula is utilized. The "Type A" formula consists of 21.2% of liquid solvent **42**, 14.6% of molecular filler **44**, 11.8% of stabilizer **48**, and 52.4% of chemical carrier **46**. This formula provides the appropriate final additive which generates the most effective depolymerization reaction. FIG. 3 goes on to depict other ranges with their appropriate formula for final additive **40**. Variables are calculated and combined to determine one of three categories that will be used to create the composition used to make a dynamic depolymerization reactor. The variable and their calculations can be found below:

- a) Calculate a first variable by first determining the extrusion screw length-to-diameter ratio. A ratio of 20:1 or 24:1 defines a single carrier category; 25:1 defines a double carrier category; and 30:1 defines a triple carrier category. A different chemical/element or combination of chemicals/elements are assigned per category. A single carrier category is assigned either palm oil, soybean oil, or DOTP (Dioctyl terephthalate). A double carrier category is assigned a combination of 50% soybean oil and 50% DOTP. A triple carrier category is assigned a combination of 1/3 palm oil, 1/3 DOTP, and 1/3 soybean oil.
- b) Calculate a second variable based on the type of polymer chain. Three polymer categories are used for this depending on melting point. A polymer having a melting point lower than 125 degrees Celsius defines a first polymer category and given a value of 0. A polymer having a melting point between 125-268 degrees Celsius defines a second polymer category and is given a value of 1. A polymer having a melting point between 268-327 degrees Celsius defines a third polymer category and given a value of 3.
- c) Calculate a third variable based on whether the polymer chain is linear, branched, or cross-linked. A linear polymer chain is assigned a value of 1, a branched polymer chain is assigned a value of 2, and a cross-linked polymer chain is assigned a value of 4.
- d) Calculate a fourth variable named the in-house recycling variable. Three categories are used, a low, medium or high in-house recycling category. If the production recycled is between 0-5% a low in-house recycling category is assigned. If the production recycled is between 5-20% a medium in-house recycling category is assigned. If the amount of production recycled is above 20% a high in-house recycling category is assigned. A low category is assigned a value of

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1, a medium category is assigned a value of 3, and a high category is assigned a value of 4.

- e) Calculate a fifth variable categorized as a low outsource recycling category defined as 0-25% of total production, a medium outsource recycling category defined as 25-50% of total production, a high outsource recycling category defined as above 50% of total production. The low outsource recycling category is assigned a value of 2, the medium outsource recycling category is assigned a value of 4, and the high outsource recycling category is assigned a value of 8.
- f) Calculate a sixth variable based on the molecular filler of a given plastic. A PET category is assigned a TPA wax molecular filler, a polypropylene category is assigned a paraffin wax molecular filler, a polyethylene category that is assigned a polyethylene wax molecular filler, and a fourth category that includes either polystyrene, ABS, PVC and is assigned a paraffin wax molecular filler.
- g) Calculate a seventh variable being a solvent based on the kind of polymer used. Each solvent is a combination of elements/chemicals in equal 1/3 parts. Polyethylene terephthalate (PET) is assigned a) 4-chlorophenol, b) benzyl alcohol, and c) NaOH in Ethylene Glycol (50/50). Polypropylene (PP) is assigned a) phthalic anhydride, b) petrolatum, and c) peanut oil. Polyethylene (PE) is assigned a) heptane, b) benzyl alcohol, and c) amyl chloride. Polystyrene (PS) is assigned a) acetone, amyl chloride, and c) cedarwood oil. Acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS) is assigned a) citric oil/peppermint/pine oil, b) acetone, and c) amyl chloride. Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) is assigned a) acetone, b) amines, and c) acetate solvent.
- h) Calculate an eighth variable based on the type of stabilizer used. Three stabilizers are used in varying proportions. The three stabilizers are surfactant between 50-90% by weight, fumed silica between 9-40% by weight, and a UV stabilizer between 1-10% by weight.
- i) Calculate a ninth variable based on three types of forming processes. Thermal forming is given a selection value of 2, injection molding is given a selection value of 5, and blow molding is given a selection value of 6.

Once these variables are calculated they are then used together. First, the selection values are added and if their summation is between 8 and less than or equal to 17 it is assigned to an Overarching Process Identification (OPI) of Type A. If their summation is greater than 17 and less than or equal to 24 it is assigned to OPI Type B. If their summation is greater than 24 it is assigned to OPI Type C. Each Type is assigned a composition make-up. The preferred percentage is disclosed and the effective ranges are in parenthesis. All percentages are by weight. OPI Type A is assigned 21.2% (15-20%) of the selected solvent, 14.6% (5-40%) of the molecular filler chosen based on the calculation of the sixth variable, 11.8% (5-25%) of the stabilizer in an effective proportion of each, and 52.4% (10-75%) of the carrier selected based on the calculation of the first variable. OPI Type B is assigned 27.3% (20-30%) of the selected solvent, 14.6% (10-40%) of the molecular filler chosen based on the calculation of the sixth variable, 13.3% (10-20%) of the stabilizer in an effective proportion of each, and 44.8% (10-60%) of the carrier selected based on the calculation of the first variable. OPI Type C is assigned 33.7% (25-35%) of the selected solvent, 14.6% (14-40%) of the molecular filler chosen based on the calculation of the



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sixth variable, 16.4% (10-20%) of the stabilizer in an effective proportion of each, and 35.3% (5-50%) of the carrier selected based on the calculation of the first variable. OPI stands for overarching process identification.

The foregoing description conveys the best understanding of the objectives and advantages of the present invention. Different embodiments may be made of the inventive concept of this invention. It is to be understood that all matter disclosed herein is to be interpreted merely as illustrative, and not in a limiting sense.

What is claimed is:

1. A composition for generating a dynamic depolymerization reaction in an extrusion process, comprising:

- a) a mixture including a preselected type of plastic selected from a group comprising at least one of polyethylene terephthalic (PET), polypropylene (PP), polystyrene (PS), acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS), polyvinyl chloride (PVC), or polyethylene (PE), said preselected type of plastic dissolved into a solvent bath, said solvent bath containing a solvent selected from a group comprising at least one of; 4-chlorophenol, Benzyl alcohol, NaOH in Ethylene Glycol (50/50), Phthalic anhydride, Petrolatum, Peanut oil, Heptane, Benzyl alcohol, Amyl chloride, Acetone, Cedarwood oil, Citric oil/peppermint/pine oil, Amines, or Acetate solvent;
- b) a molecular filler, wherein said molecular filler is selected from a group comprising at least one of; Terephthalic acid, Paraffin wax, or a Polyethylene wax, wherein said molecular filler is selected depending on the preselected type of plastic that was dissolved, wherein said molecular filler is Terephthalic acid when said preselected type of plastic is Polyethylene terephthalate (PET), wherein said molecular filler is Paraffin wax when said preselected type of plastic is Polypropylene (PP), Polystyrene (PS), Acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS), or Polyvinyl chloride (PVC), and wherein said molecular filler is Polyethylene wax when said preselected type of plastic is Polyethylene (PE);
- c) palm oil;
- d) soybean oil; and
- e) a surfactant.

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2. The composition of claim 1 wherein said composition includes a chemical carrier being Dioctyl terephthalate.

3. The composition of claim 1 wherein said composition further includes a UV stabilizer.

4. The composition of claim 1 wherein said composition includes a stabilizer being fumed silica.

5. The composition of claim 1 wherein said plastic being entirely dissolved within said solvent bath.

6. The composition of claim 1 wherein a selection of said surfactant is adapted to depend on its hydrophilic-lipophilic balance (HLB), suitable for the proportion of water-in-oil (W/O) present in the previous combination.

7. A composition for generating a dynamic depolymerization reaction in an extrusion process, consisting of:

- a) a mixture including of a preselected type of plastic selected from a group consisting of polyethylene terephthalic (PET), polypropylene (PP), polystyrene (PS), acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS), polyvinyl chloride (PVC), or polyethylene (PE), said preselected type of plastic dissolved into a solvent bath, said solvent bath containing a solvent selected from a group consisting of; 4-chlorophenol, Benzyl alcohol, NaOH in Ethylene Glycol (50/50), Phthalic anhydride, Petrolatum, Peanut oil, Heptane, Benzyl alcohol, Amyl chloride, Acetone, Cedarwood oil, Citric oil/peppermint/pine oil, Amines, or Acetate solvent,
- b) a molecular filler, wherein said molecular filler is selected from a group consisting of; Terephthalic acid, Paraffin wax, or a Polyethylene wax, wherein said molecular filler is selected depending on the preselected type of plastic that was dissolved, wherein said molecular filler is Terephthalic acid when said preselected type of plastic is Polyethylene terephthalate (PET), wherein said molecular filler is Paraffin wax when said preselected type of plastic is Polypropylene (PP), Polystyrene (PS), Acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS), or Polyvinyl chloride (PVC), and wherein said molecular filler is Polyethylene wax when said preselected type of plastic is Polyethylene (PE);
- c) palm oil;
- d) soybean oil; and
- e) a surfactant.

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