

Continuous Flow Technology: Is the Batch Process Dead?

**Lonza**

# Growth of Continuous Flow Technologies in Pharma

Dominique M. Roberge / Lonza AG / 16 June 2011

# Our extensive know-how and offering have evolved to meet customer needs

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## Financially Stable / Global Footprint

- CHF 2.7 billion (2009 sales)
- 27 facilities; 8,300 employees

## Focused on Life Sciences

- Bioresearch
- Microbial Control
- Pharma & Biotech
- Agriculture
- Nutrition
- Materials Science
- Personal Care

## Global leader in custom manufacturing

- Chemical and biological APIs, cell therapy
- Lead optimization through market supply



# Our Visp, Switzerland site is home to numerous cutting-edge technologies

## Location

- 150km east of Geneva
- Footprint: 90 hectares

## Fine Chemistry in Visp

- Cracker for C2 supply
- Continuously operating production (e.g. Niacin)
- R&D, process development, small-scale production, and fine chemical complex FCC for pharma production
- Large fermentation units

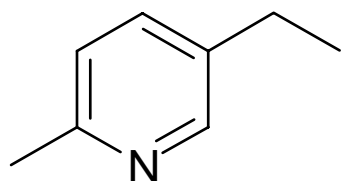


## Some key technologies

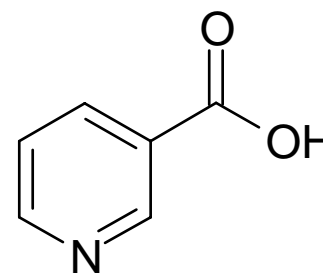
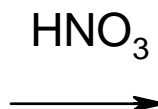
- Large-Scale (10m<sup>3</sup>; total over 400m<sup>3</sup>)
- cGMP phosgene plant
- cGMP Continuous Ozonolysis

# Lonza Niacin

- Continuous process from feed preparation to packaging
- Manufactured under **cGMP conditions**
- One dedicated facility in Visp, Switzerland

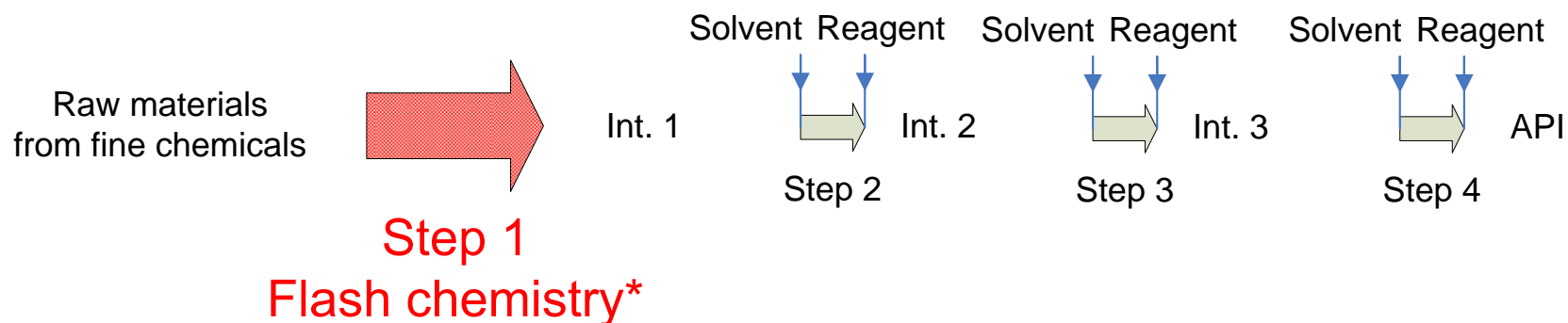


MEP



Niacin

# Re-design the Chemical Routes with the Concept of Flash Chemistry in Flow

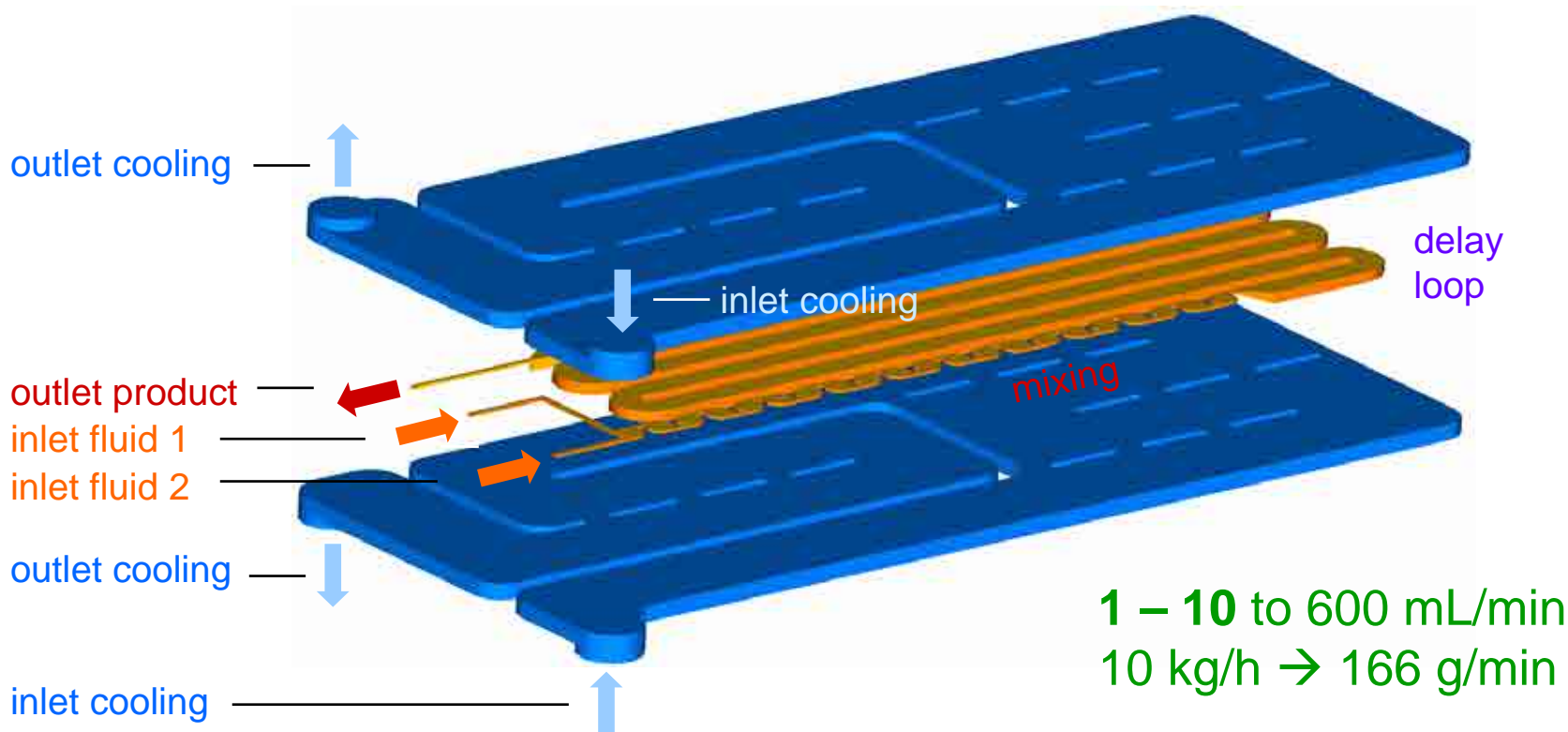


- Flow Processes / Microreactors lead to drastic improvements
  - Excellent heat transfer & mixing
  - Exact control of residence time
  - Segregation of feeds, small volume, robust (pressure) etc.
  
- **Inherently Safer Design** from the high level of confinement

**= Intensified Mini-Plant Concept**

# Microreactors are at the heart of a dramatic shift in API production

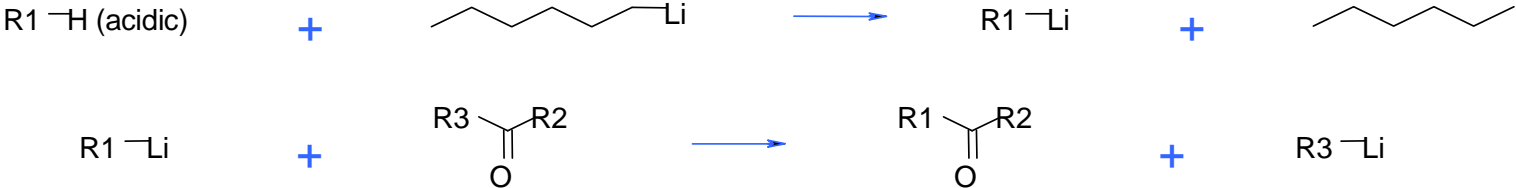
It enables **continuous processes** based on plug flow reactors with **minimal volume** of reagents, **rapid dynamic responses** and robustness, **good temperature control**, **efficient mixing**, etc.



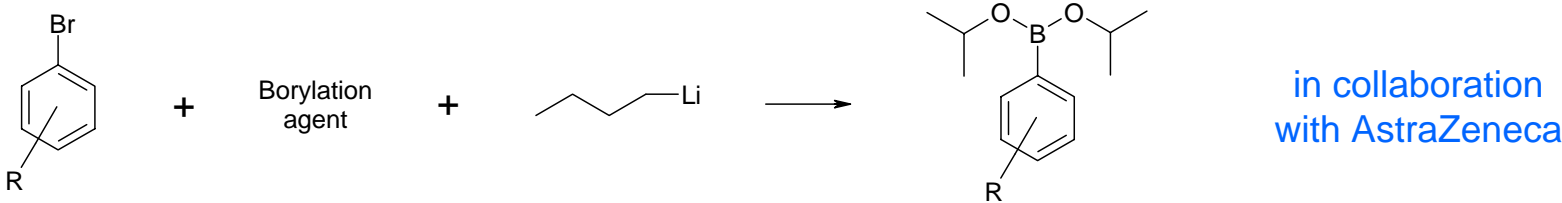


# Example 1: Control of Organometallic Reactions based on HexLi/BuLi

## 3-Feeds setup via 2 reactions in series



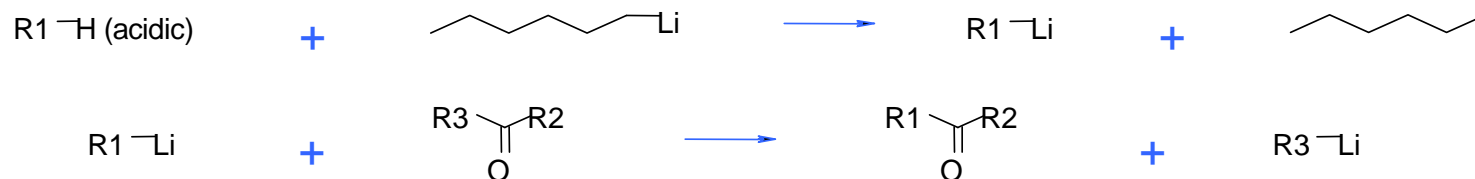
## 2-Feeds setup via 1 single reaction (In Situ Quench Method)



- **Exact control of residence time:** Li intermediates are short-living = s to m reactions
- **Perfect control of micro-mixing:** Bromo compound reacts faster than the quench reagent (borylation agent) = ms reactions

# Lonza FlowPlate™ Reactor to Control Reaction Heat

## 2-Step Synthesis: Lithiation and Coupling



### Some Disadvantages

- **Plugging** = Lonza patent applied Ultrasonic De-plugging System

First reaction: Type A, highly exothermic ( $\Delta T_{ad} > 75^\circ\text{C}$ )

- Microreactor

Second reaction: Type B, exothermic ( $\Delta T_{ad} < 25^\circ\text{C}$ )

- Use of a static mixer under adiabatic conditions

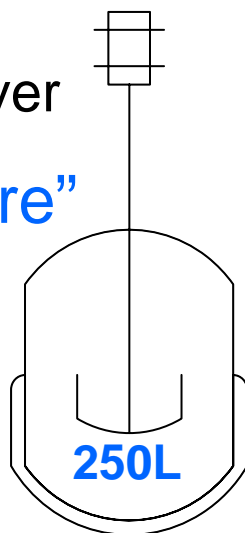


# Microreactor Technology Leads to Dramatic Process Intensifications

Process intensification to enable inherently safer processes leading to a production paradigm

- Lower reactor investment
- Less manpower
- Higher flexibility
- Enhance safety
- Faster change-over

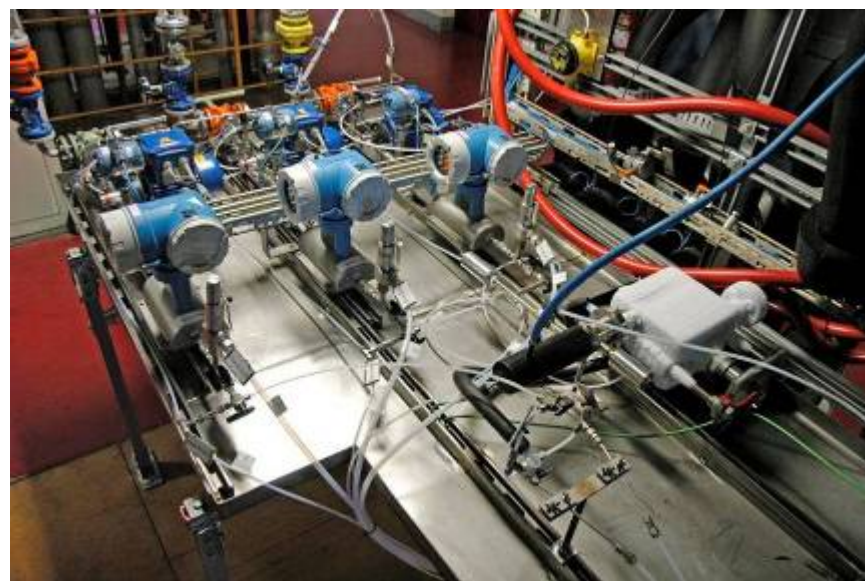
“Factory of the Future”



# Pilot Plant Microreactor Technology

## Key Features

- Multi-purpose system
  - Modular
  - Hastelloy
  - T = -80 to +180°C
- ATEX standards
- Qualifiable for cGMP production
- 3 dosage lines
  - 1 - 6 bar
  - 5 - 300 g/min (per line)



- Track record
  - Organolithium exchange
  - Organolithium coupling
  - Nitration reactions

Please visit the reactors at booth H.18

# Lonza FlowPlate™ Reactors

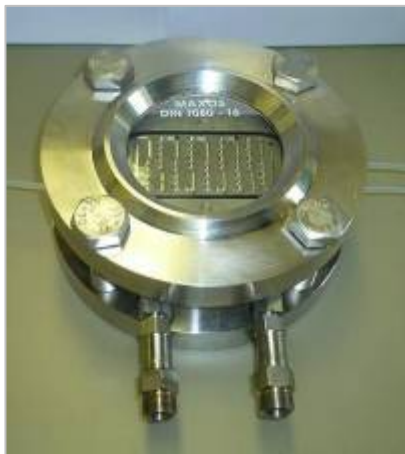
## Development Reactor

- View the chemistry
- Reaction at tiny flow rates
- Test different channel geometries

## Production Reactor

- Design as key ingredient to scale-up
- Avoids total parallelization
- Multi-purpose and modular

Lab



Channel structure

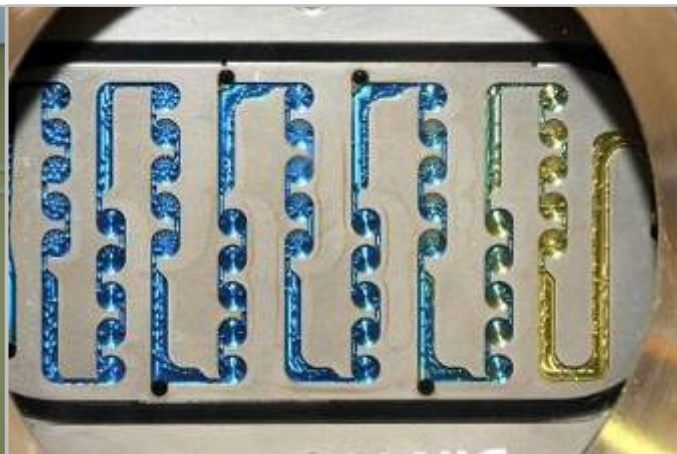


Plate Size: A6



Plate Size: A5



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# Lonza MicroReactor as Universal Modules

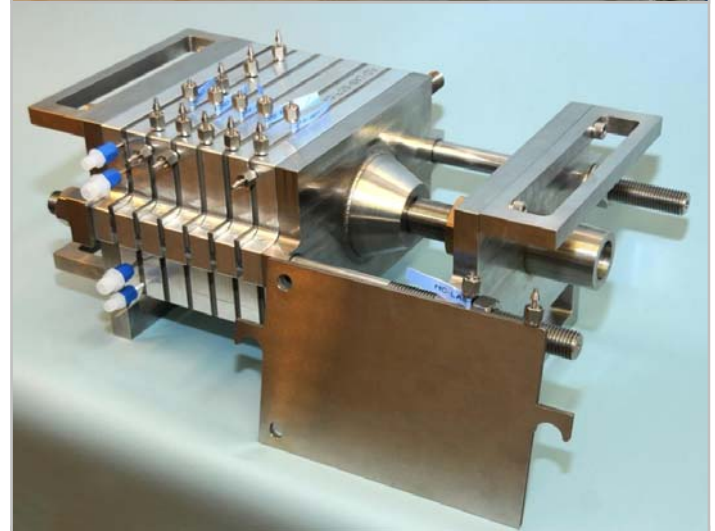
## Equipment Features

- Modular, robust, over 100 bar
- Hastelloy plates: process fluid
- Aluminum plates: thermal fluid
- Compactness, easy to adapt
- Each plate = one specific design

1



2



3

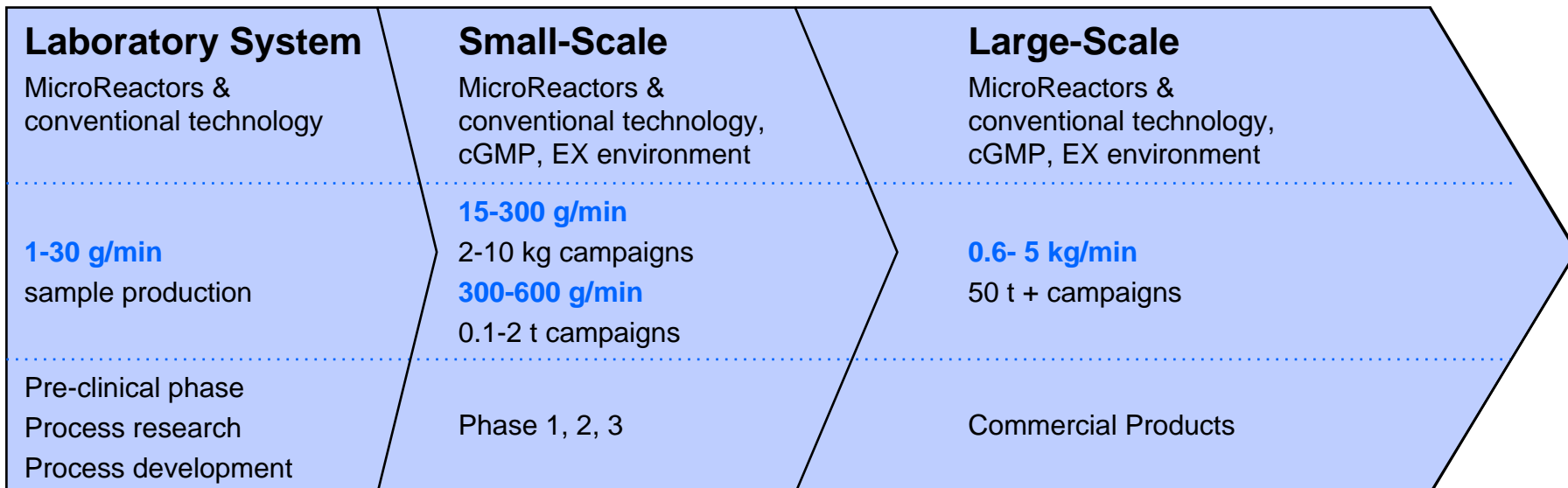
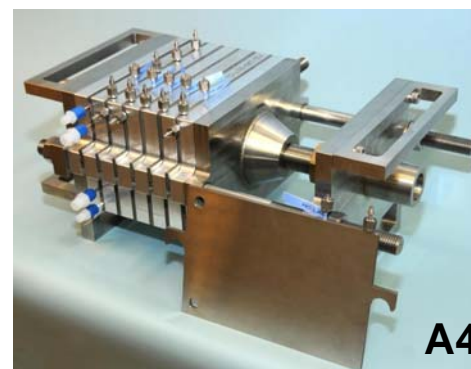


- 1 Plate for multi-injection
- 2 Reactor system with 6 plates
- 3 A6 and A5 reactor systems



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# Scale-up Concept with MicroReactor in Plant



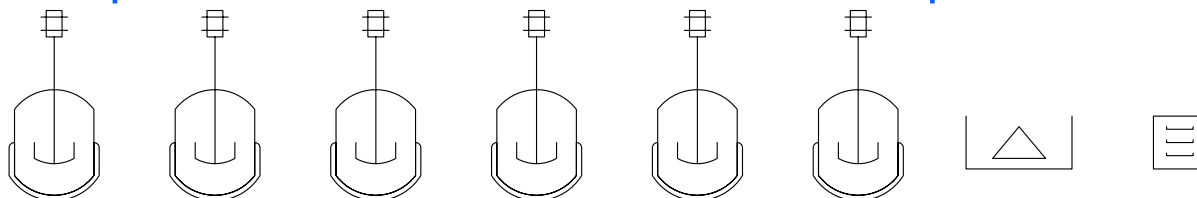
# Lonza Ultrasonic De-plugging System

- Optimize to use with Lonza MicroReactors
- Ultrasonic System to enable stable operations over days / weeks
- Imperative when working with organometallic like BuLi / Grignard
- Ultrasound is generated in the liquid → to create true cavitation
- Optimal for spot plugging like in the mixing zone or exit

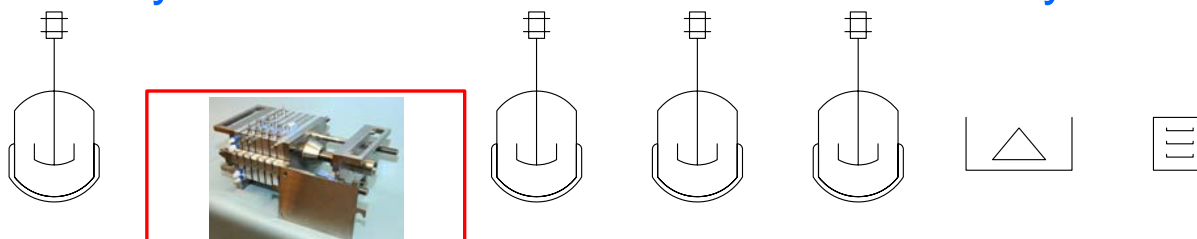


# The Future of Flow Processes: Full Integration of MRT in Production Units

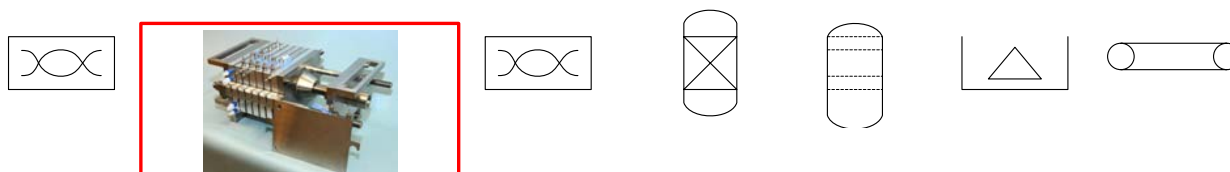
In the past conventional means all batch processes



Currently the MR is used to increase reaction yield & safety



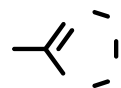
Future will lead to fully integrated flow processes: MR and more...





# Example 2: Azide Chemistry In Microreactors

## Azide-Nitrile Addition to make Tetrazole Derivatives



### Typical Type C reaction requiring several hours

The mixture was heated under a N<sub>2</sub> atmosphere at **100-105°C for 50 h**

- **Segregation of Feeds:** NaN<sub>3</sub> prepared in a special containment and precisely mixed in the reactor avoiding batch bulk handling
- **Volume Minimization & Robustness:** Atmospheric batch process with 100% accumulation of heat → in a bunker

additi



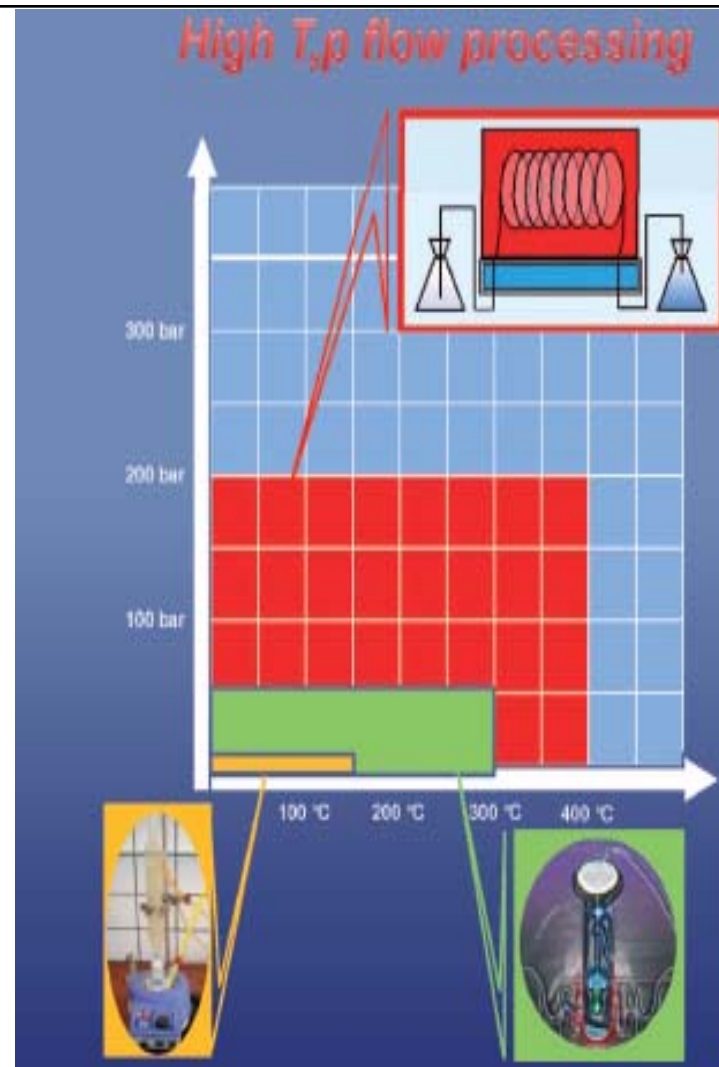
# Development of Type C Reactions in MW

## Advantages

- Small autoclave in glass of 2 mL that can sustain ca 20 bar
- Expeditious reaction mixture heat up
- Use extensively in the medicinal chemistry

## Disadvantages

- Not scalable in bulk
  - Microwave penetration is a few mm only
- Larger cost of energy
- No magic MW effect



# Strategy

## MicroWaves



[www.biotage.com](http://www.biotage.com)

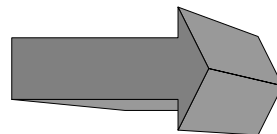
- High throughput machine
- Higher degree of freedom than in CF

## CF / MicroReactors



[www.uniqsis.com](http://www.uniqsis.com)

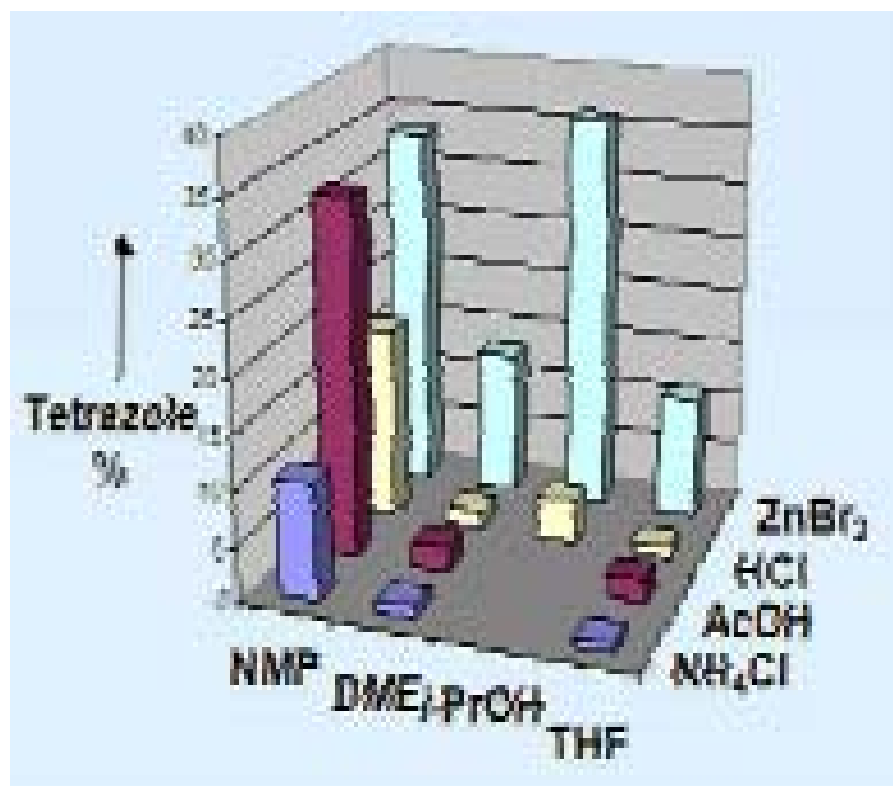
- High throughput machine as well
- Need homogeneity
- **Results are transposable**



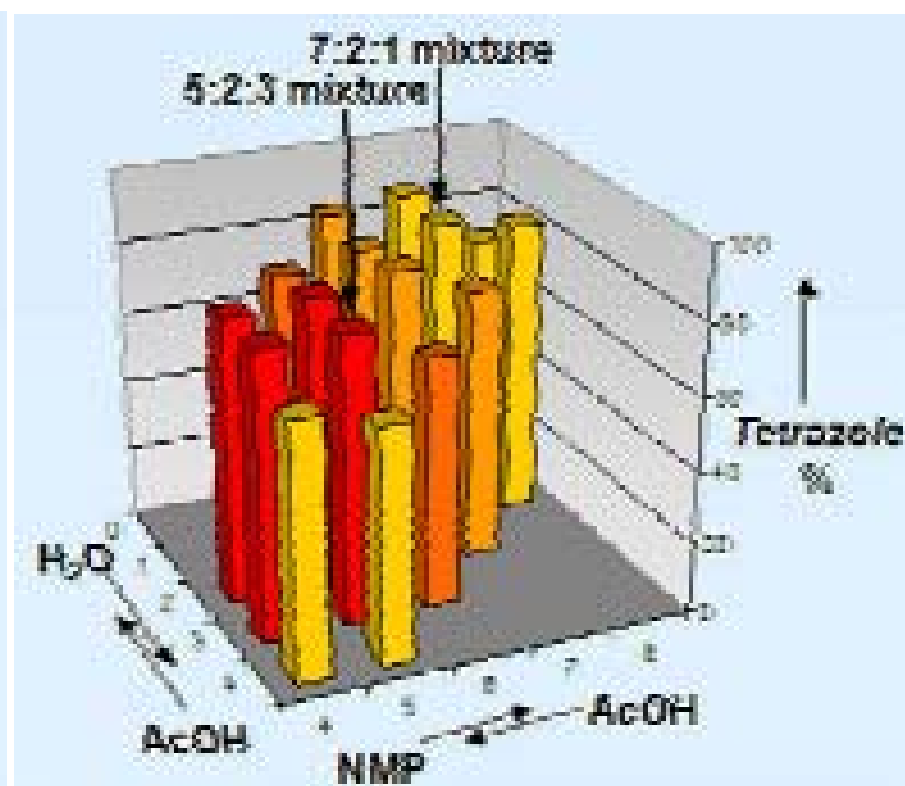
**transpose**

# MW Screening Results

Solvents / Additives



Solvent Composition



Solvents / Additives

# Optimization in CF

$$R-CN + NaN_3 \xrightarrow[NMP/AcOH/H_2O, 220^\circ C, 10 \text{ or } 15 \text{ min}]{}$$

- 1 M Nitrile in NMP/AcOH
- 5.2 M NaN<sub>3</sub> in H<sub>2</sub>O
- feed A/feed B 0.69:0.31

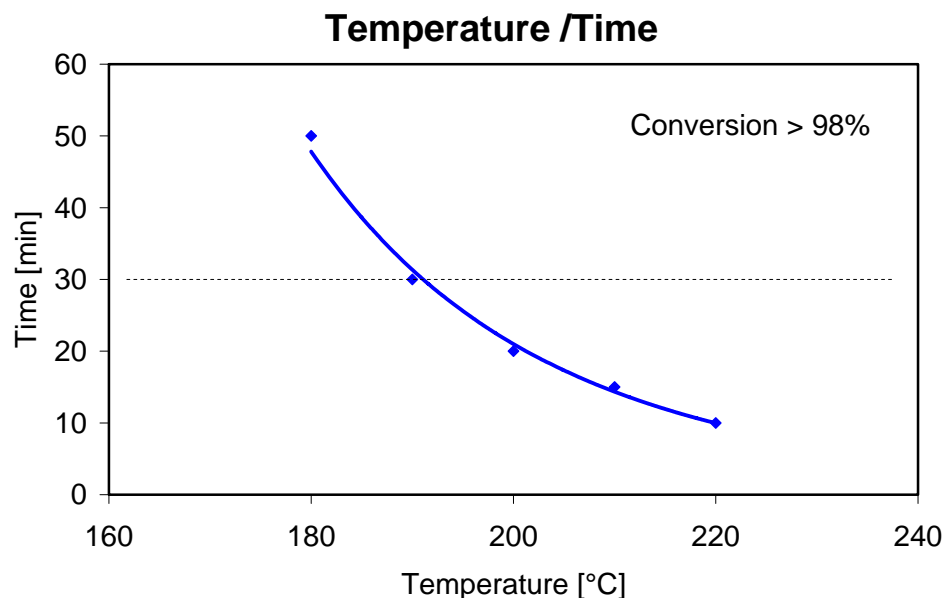
[www.uniqsis.com](http://www.uniqsis.com)

	H	10 min (95%)	10 min (98%)		10 min (98%)		15 min (82%)
	4-Me	10 min (98%)			10 min (74%)		
	4-Cl	10 min (98%)			10 min (88%)		
	3-Cl	10 min (87%)					
	4-Br	10 min (97%)					
	4-F <sub>3</sub> C	10 min (97%)					
	3-MeO	10 min (90%)					
	3-NO <sub>2</sub>	10 min (88%)					
	H	10 min (94%)					
	4-Cl	10 min (92%)					

## Optimized in CF

- NMP/AcOH/H<sub>2</sub>O = 5/2/3
- Slightly reduce reaction rate

# Drastic Intensification via Flow

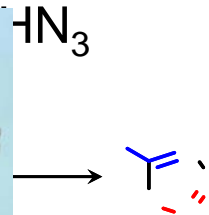
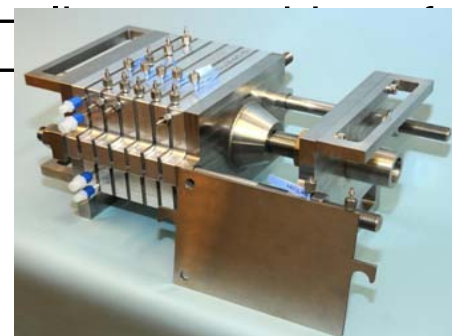
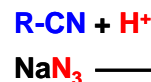


## Optimized Conditions

- Acetic acid as proton donor = in situ formation of  $\text{HN}_3$
- Water to allow solubility of  $\text{NaN}_3$
- Micromixer at higher T = avoidance of precipitation
- No  $\text{HN}_3$  headspace and in-

## Segregation of Feeds

- Feed-1: 1 M nitrile in NMP / AcOH
- Feed-2:  $\text{NaN}_3$  in water
- NMP/AcOH/ $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  = 5/2/3, 2 equi. of  $\text{NaN}_3$



# Reaction and Work Up Integrated in One Flow Unit

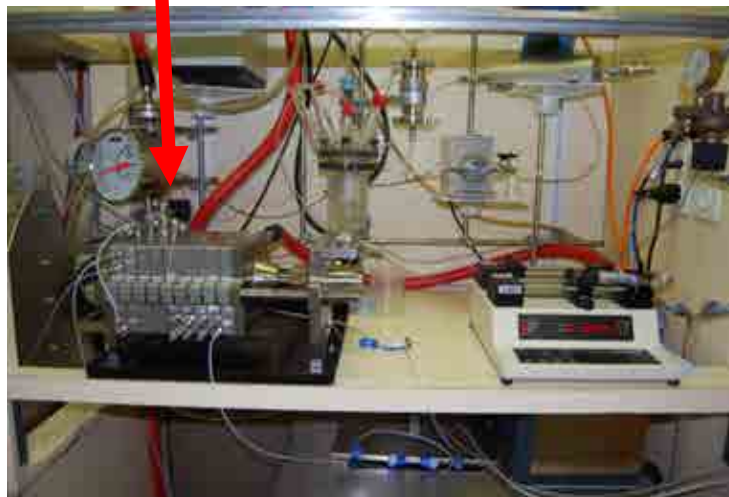
Mini-Plant concept to enable **New Processes** and extend the design space of how we perform chemistry

## Key Features

- Microreactor for a **flash reaction**
- CSTR for precipitation
- High pressure valve
- Filter to removal salt
- Wiped film evaporator
- Fraction collector

## Throughput

- More than 1 kg/day of product; distillation is limiting





# Mini-Plant Technology at the Center of Flow Processes

Mini-Plant concept to enable **New Processes** and extend the design space of how we perform chemistry

- Microreactor for **flash reactions**
- Mixers-settlers/acid neutralization
- Distillation
- Reactor cascade (CSTR)
- Liquid-liquid extraction
- Fully automated system



## Throughput

- 250 mL → 10 kg/day of product
- 1000 mL → 40 kg/day

# Batch Versus Flow: Comparison at Various Scales

Example 1: Process development in clinical trials / kg scale	
Batch Process	Flow Process
Reactor volume = 250 L	Reactor volume = <b>250 mL</b>
	Faster change over & cleaning
	<b>Manufacturing gain = up to 30%</b>
Example 2: Commercial manufacturing / ton scale	
Batch Process	Flow Process
Reaction time = <b>10 - 14 h</b>	Reaction time = <b>0.2 h</b>
Reactor volume = <b>10 m<sup>3</sup></b>	Reactor volume = <b>0.03 m<sup>3</sup></b>
Cycle time = 21 h	Cycle time = 16 h
<b>Productivity = 764 kg/d</b>	<b>Productivity = 977 kg/d</b>
Need bunker to cover the 10 m <sup>3</sup> Investment = <b>4 MCHF for a bunker infrastructure</b>	<b>Lower assets usage</b> ; special confinement

Please visit the reactors at booth H.18

## Conclusions

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Flow technologies are at the forefront of a quantum leap in pharmaceutical manufacturing leading to greener processes at lower costs

- Design new chemical routes

Lonza is a leading manufacturer of fine chemicals using flow processes and advanced technologies

- The heart of the process is the microreactor

## Acknowledgments

- N. Kockmann, M. Eyholzer, M. Gottsponer, J.-P. Roduit, C. Noti, B. Rittiner (Lonza)
- O. C. Kappe, B. Gutmann (University of Graz)