

textile **network**

11-12/2016

English edition



The international premium magazine for the textile chain

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Thoughts for the year

My personal word of the year 2016 is helpfulness. This, I suppose, is a virtue we should all be able to take for granted. And yet, so many distressing reports in the media would have us believe otherwise. Does this mean that helping thy neighbour has finally run its course?

"In times of progressing digitalisation, global political crises and social upheaval, helping others and nurturing a sense of humanity are more important than ever," writes textile network author Heike Frömbgen. In her article, she cites futurologist Matthias Horx who refers in his Future Report 2016 to the mindful person: these individuals are mindful of the world, their fellow human beings and their own feelings. The pillars (of helpfulness) include taking responsibility and being open-minded, approachable and tolerant.

Anja Menzel, Editorial Assistant for textile network, thinks that the world becomes "a friendlier and happier place" when people give each other a helping hand. Bernd Raithe, Advertising Manager for textile network, be-

lieves that helpfulness "is always worthwhile and beneficial both to your own sense of well-being and to our business relationships." "After all", says Daniel Keienburg, Head of Digital Media at textile network, "there comes a time in everyone's life when we depend upon and appreciate the support of others."

While happiness and prosperity can only be achieved through competition, the will to achieve, ambition and self-interest, if there is no sense of humanity, helpfulness and warmth, these achievements have no soul and no meaning. In his dictionary for optimists, Florian Langenscheidt writes: "Doing things for family, friends and people paradoxically makes you happier than if you care only about your own advancement." In my view, helpfulness also goes hand in hand with gratitude. In the same way that helpfulness should be a given, any help received should be met with an equal measure of gratitude.

Speaking of gratitude: We, at textile network, are grateful to you, our readers, and would like to take this

opportunity to thank you – for all your positive feedback and for the way in which you have supported our work this year! This will spur us on in 2017 and encourage us to continue down our chosen path to "360 days plus print". Along the way, we have a few surprises in store for you! And because it's nearly Christmas, we've already prepared our first little gift: Somewhere inside this issue of textile network, we have hidden three packages for you. For your chance to win one of five annual subscriptions to textile network, simply send the right page numbers to a.menzel@meisenbach.de and your name will be entered into our lucky draw (all decisions are final). Those who don't win, can take advantage of our trial mini-subscription!

We hope you enjoy reading this latest edition of textile network,
Yours

Iris Schlöski.



Iris Schlöski,
Editor-in-chief

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Photo: Première Vision



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Photo: fotolia

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Photo: Carl Weiske

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60327 Frankfurt am Main
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An Innovative Future for the Textile Industry

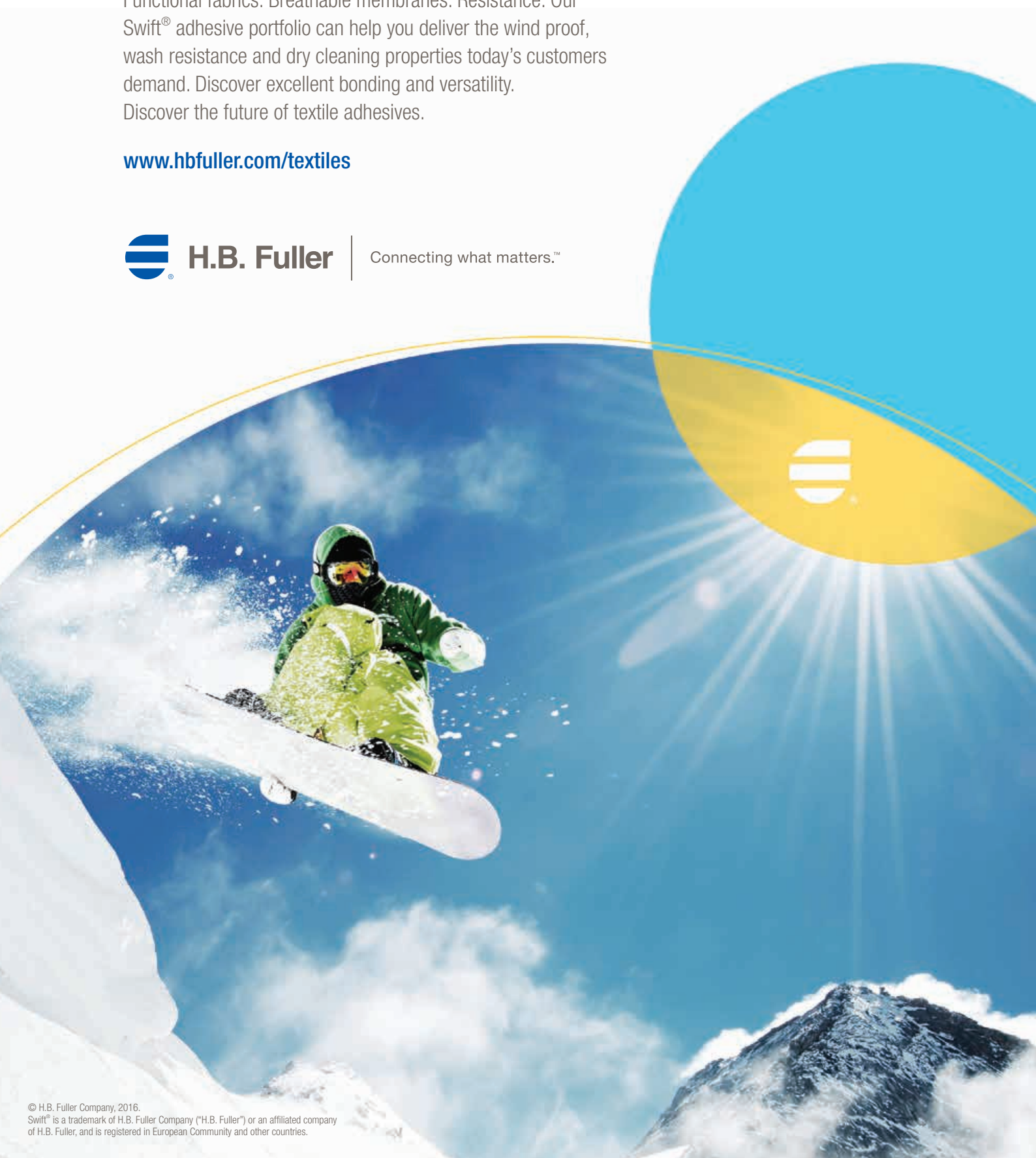
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COMPOSITES EUROPE 2016

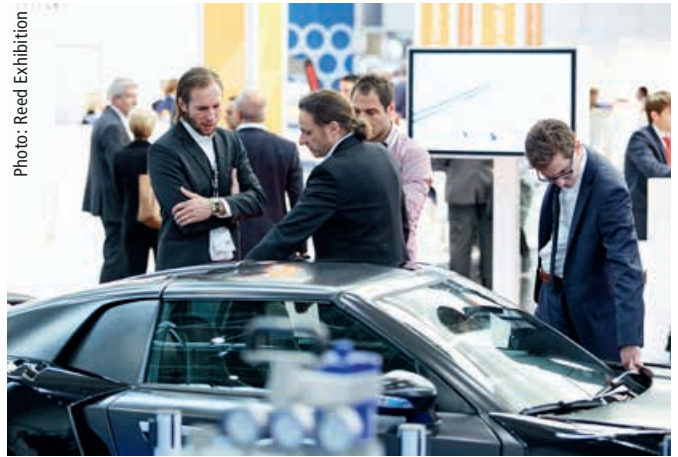
Looking into the future of composites

Lightweight construction, resource efficiency and multi-material design will be centre stage at this year's Composites Europe held in Düsseldorf from 29 November to 1 December. 350 exhibitors from 27 nations

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will be showing the state of the art and future market potential of fibre composites in the exhibition area proper but also at the numerous Event Areas, in lecture forums, during themed tours and workshops. With the new Lightweight Technologies Forum Composites Europe 2016 also addresses current issues in multi-material lightweight construction. Celebrating a premiere this year will be the joint stand of the "Wirtschaftsvereinigung Composites Germany". The umbrella organisation of the German fibre composites industry counting such firms as AVK will be represented by a total of 18



Composites Europe and Aluminium expect more than 1,300 exhibitors in total and over 30,000 experts from industry, research and development

member companies at the 350 square metre pavilion. At the "Industry meets Science" special area the institute of plastics processing "Institut für Kunststoffverarbeitung (IKV)", will present with its partner, RWTH Aachen University, composite developments and highlights under the heading "Resource efficiency for increased profitability" including developments from the areas of Industry 4.0, Additive Manufacturing and hybrid lightweight

construction. Challenges, potentials and the limits of composites in application industries will be centre stage at this lecture forum. The topics addressed by these expert talks range from mass production in the automotive industry and turbine blade manufacturing in wind generation to resource efficiency and Lightweight Design 4.0. Admission to this Forum is free for trade fair visitors.

[www.composites-europe.com]

1ST SALTEx 2016

On the right track

63 reputed companies, bodies and institutions from along the supply chain gathered in Dornbirn, Austria from 5 to 6 October 2016 to provide a glimpse at the future of textiles. Around 900 attendees from 13 countries travelled to the premiere event. The international visitors came mainly from Turkey, Belgium, Portugal, Sweden, Lithuania and Turkmenistan.

"One of our objectives was to bring together a diversity of different protagonists from the textile supply chain from the fibre right the way through to industrial production. The hope was that ideas would be generated, networks extended and visionaries united," explains Project Manager Katharina Schulz, adding, "Conversations with both exhibitors and visi-

tors have definitely confirmed that we are on the right track." The 5th Smart Textiles Symposium took place concurrently with Saltex over two days, and featured 20 speakers who shed light on the latest developments in smart textiles and fibre composites. The topics embraced everything from smart textiles for storing energy, integrated sensors and carbon

composites, to automation, textile reinforcements in construction, and medical technology. The more than 150 participants learned which technological innovations to expect over the next few years. A particular highlight was the Etos Concept Car which was presented in Austria for the first time by Schoeller, and was developed by Swiss think tank Rinspeed. The exclusive guided tour of Wolford's headquarters in Bregenz met with a positive response. Other focal themes included the Austrian Cluster Conference (Österreichische Clusterkonferenz) and a nanotechnology workshop.

The next Saltex takes place in September 2018, and will most likely be organised in collaboration with Dornbirn-MFC.

[www.saltex.at]



Saltex in Dornbirn provided attendees with interesting insights into the future of textiles (Photo: Fachgruppe TBSL / Messe Dornbirn)



Fair impressions



Photos: Munich Fabric Start

Munich Fabric Start turns 20

A trade fair full of premieres

Expanding from 5 to 7 halls, this year's 41st MFS posted more than 1,000 suppliers for the first time, featuring more than 1,700 collections and 96 first-time exhibitors. The anniversary edition of Munich Fabric Start in September 2016 was all about change.

The team behind the MFS has welcomed international experts into its ranks whilst the portfolio has been broadened to include Catalyzer as an extension to the Bluezone (denim) and Keyhouse as a centre of creativity and innovation. Sustainability, innovation and technology for fashion now take centre stage in the refurbished building, with plans in the pipeline to allow plenty of scope in the Keyhouse for dynamism and interaction. Managing Director of MFS, Sebastian Klinder, points out: „We were aware of the challenges

that our new space concepts would pose. Fortunately, our concept wasn't only accepted but also directly understood."

The Show Cases, that were curated by Kern Kommunikation and devoted to sustainable innovations, were likewise given a warm welcome. Innovative, pioneering and relevant concepts were unveiled here for the first time. Visitors, experts and creative minds were able to work in an intense yet cooperative atmosphere on the two Keyhouse days. The objective was to think outside the box and to find new approaches to production and supply chain processes during the MFS. Judging by the numbers taking part, the new concept appears to have struck a chord with attendees.

"The MFS has created a platform in the Keyhouse for interdisciplinary exchange, and af-

The next events in Munich

View from 6 to 7 December 2016

Munich Fabric Start for Spring/Summer 2018 from 31.01. to 02.02.2017

ter its successful debut it's definitely here to stay," states a self-assured Alex Vogt of Kern Kommunikation.

Sending out a clear message in uncertain times

Shaped by future fabrics, heritage, sustainability, resources and future process developments, the Munich-based fabric fair sent out the right signals to the industry at the right time. In terms of fabrics, visitors were looking for innovative articles with high quality standards.

Some went in search of more exclusivity. The strategic realignment of Munich Fabric Start has been well received by the market. According to the organiser, this event will be used as a benchmark for future fairs. [\[www.munichfabricstart.com\]](http://www.munichfabricstart.com)



textilenetwork

You can find more trade fair news at

www.textile-network.com





Product example: Pas-samaneria Frassinetti, seen at the PVA

Velours ranks among the trend themes this winter



Photo: Hövelman

Photo: Première Vision

Textile trade fairs autumn/winter 2017/2018

Clear consolidation

As in the spring, Europe's September textile fairs for A/W 2017/2018 in Paris, Milan and Munich were overshadowed by the economic and geopolitical situation.

The textiles fairs in Paris are feeling the effects of the state of emergency in France. The global sense of crisis is encouraging more localised streams of visitors to flock to the fairs coupled with a process of consolidation. At the same time, Milano Unica's decision to announce new dates in July 2017 is fuelling the debate over exhibition dates. Caught up in the national state of emergency, Paris lacked not only the excitement and anticipation that usually comes with the start of each season, but also the buyers. Texworld featuring 987 exhibitors (100 more than in September 2015) and Appa-

Product example: Hilton Fur, seen at the PVA



Photo: Première Vision

Impressions - Première Vision A/W 17/18 "accessories-Forums-animations"



Photo: Première Vision

rel Sourcing with its 540 exhibitors suffered an overall 4.6 percent dip in visitors. Given the circumstances, Michael Scherpe, President of Messe Frankfurt France, does not see this as a "drastic decline". In fact, he even went as far as to say that he was "very pleased". Turkish companies experienced delays of up to four weeks in receiving their visas, whilst governments and companies were issuing warnings to staff in the wake of the Nice attacks. The Islamic Festival of the Sacrifice also coincided with the fair. Exhibitors noticed the absence of international buyers, but noted that the French are showing greater interest in "their" home

fairs. Her Ching Knitting from Taiwan commented that Texworld had gone "better than last year". The five trade fairs that make up Première Vision in Paris-Villepinte had to shoulder an 8.8 per cent slide in trade buyers to an official total of 56,475. The number of visitors from Germany dwindled again to 2,074, falling into sixth place in the ranking of top visitor countries, and drifting behind China. Given that the number of exhibitors also inched down by 1.3 percent, ever more international exhibitors are voicing concerns that the high investment costs needed to appear at these fairs are no longer worthwhile. They note that important decision makers are staying away, having already viewed the collections at previous fairs and/or during personal meetings back home. Various suppliers such as J.L. de Ball from Germany, which is well known for its high-end fake furs and microfibre products, the Italian company Viscotex and even fancy weaving mills such as Shamrock (TR) think the exhibition dates are "too late". J.L. de Ball is, therefore, not the only company that intends to give Paris "a complete rethink". ▶



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Photo: Première Vision



Photo: Première Vision

► Juggling dates

The Italian textiles fair Milano Unica (442 exhibitors) has already responded and is bringing forward its main event for autumn/winter 2018/2019 from September to July next year. The venue and exact dates are yet to be confirmed. "Prima Milano Unica", which last took place from 6-7 July 2016, is already positioned early in the calendar as is "View" by Munich Fabric Start at the beginning of July. Market players believe that this trade fair will experience strong growths. Faced with international uncertainty, trade fairs are succeeding at a local level. One such event is Munich Fabric Start in Munich (D). The fair no longer releases absolute visitor numbers but has announced an official growth of 3 per cent. Benefitting from a

Product example:
Piemme Boutons,
seen at the PVA

Photo: Première Vision



Photo: Hövelmann

Besides lustre and rhinestones, making-up companies are choosing trimmings from Bodo Jagdberg with subtle military and vintage themes

new hall on the Zenith site, it has been able to create more space and thus raise the number of exhibitors to more than 1,000. The new Hall 6 complements the Bluezone, expanding the range of denim in the process. Commenting on the changes, Barbara Gnutti of ITV Denim spoke of a "new energy" and "new moti-



Photo: Hövelmann

Brilliantly coloured checks in large repeats are making their mark on fashion. Seen at Rafanelli

vation". The creative Italian company is also a member of the ITS (Integrated Textile Service) Network, an association of small and medium-sized Italian denim companies that join forces to tackle the challenges in the international marketplace whilst promoting sustainability. Their manifesto can be viewed at www.reteits.com. Other partners include Abbigliamento G.&G., Itac Lab, Wash Italia, Matec and Dienpi. At Munich Fabric Start, the platform for sustainable textiles known as Organic Selection has been moved to the Kesselhaus (now called "Key House") in the wake of the restructuring programme and has be-

Left: Munich Fabric Start raises its exhibitor total to over 1,000
Middle: Product example: Fixo Group, seen at the PVA

Right: Impressions - Première Vision A/W 17/18 "knitwearsolutions-forum"

en joined by the exhibitors from the fields of machine technology and recycling/cradle to cradle.

Consolidation of suppliers

Signs of market consolidation are becoming increasingly apparent. Giovanni Lardara, Managing Director of J.L. de Ball, has been observing this development for the past two years. Even agency owners, such as Michael Berner of Textilagentur Berner & Sohn, Munich (D), are focusing on suppliers that are healthy and fully integrated. "I want to see their balance sheets and their business models," he states. This strategy has enabled him to post healthy growths even in the difficult economic climate of recent years. He is witnessing the same development particularly among brands, many of whom are actively seeking out reliable and healthy suppliers. This need is also being fuelled by the fact that companies are introducing increasingly specific rhythms and requirements.

[Regine Hövelmann]

Cotton yarns are a "hot" topic for Gunold's embroidery with a handcrafted character. Pictured here is Cotty, which now comes in 64 new colours



Photo: Hövelmann

Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics

Quality rather than quantity

The euphoria has passed. China's economic growth is reaching its limits. This has far-reaching consequences for the global sourcing market and is triggering change. In response, China is planning a seismic shift from its current status as a production-led economy to a consumer and high-tech society, the maxim being: quality rather than quantity. The autumn edition of Intertextile Shanghai confirmed that this shift is already in full swing.

Having smashed one exhibitor record after the next in recent years, the fair is having to come to terms with stagnating numbers. Here too, Intertextile Shanghai is seeing the focus morph from quantity to quality. New sourcing markets are appearing on the global textiles arena. Besides South-East Asia and Bangladesh, Africa is increasingly edging onto the radar. China has long since recognised this trend and is successively building business partnerships with countries on the African continent. The Chinese are spending billions on modernisation and infrastructure, and in so doing, are strengthening their own position. Chinese President Xi Jinping has pledged the equivalent of 56bn Euro in development aid to Africa over the next few years. New state-of-the-art textiles factories are also being built there. In fact, it is not unusual for Chinese textile manufacturers to build a shiny new facility in Africa and take on lots of African workers whilst making Chinese staff redundant at their Chinese factories back home.

Problem: Slump in consumption

Another problem facing China's textile industry is the progressive slump in demand among the Chinese middle classes, which is being fuelled by a sharp rise in the cost of living. As a consequence, the appetite for Chinese-made apparel is declining. "Many Chinese textile companies who until now have focused entirely on the



home market are being forced to look farther afield, predominantly to Europe and the USA," states Micheal Lam of Advanced Denim.

This comes with the need to adapt designs. "Chinese tastes in terms of fashion look and style differ greatly from those in the West," concludes Isabel Gibson at Gibson Design Studio, Switzerland, continuing, "As far as swimwear is concerned, for example, Europeans prefer European-style flowers and blooms, trendy New Yorkers go for fancy animal prints in loud colours and the Chinese tend to opt for Asian floral motifs in western interpretations." The key to the Chinese textile industry's success stands and falls, therefore, with its ability to diversify design.

Yuko Watanabe, the international coordinator of Japan Fashion Week and co-organiser of the international Trend Forum at the fair, notes: "The quality of the products is improving every year." Wendy Wen, Senior General Manager of Messe Frankfurt (HK), arrives at a similar conclusion:

In Asia, Taiwan ranks as the innovation powerhouse, above all, for functional textiles

"Even though we've been posting steady growths in recent years, our long-term priority has always been to achieve quality both in terms of visitors and exhibitors. We're very much aware of the current economic situation and the challenges it brings for some sectors and it is our aim to offer the best possible international platform."

More than 4,600 exhibitors from 29 countries presented their latest collections across 10 halls covering an area of 260,000m². Even though exhibitor numbers stagnated against the year before, it is still fair to say that the significance of the Asian exhibition venue in Shanghai is steadily rising. Buyers going in search of premium products always strike lucky at the Salon Europe, the Milano Unica pavilion and the national pavilions representing countries such as ►

The Year of the Monkey



According to the Chinese horoscope, 2016 is the "Year of the Monkey" which promises to bring much unrest. Anything can happen, plans are impossible to make. Looking at the economy, the effects are already making themselves felt. Once the workbench of the world, China is now facing huge challenges. In 2015, the economy grew by a mere 6.9 percent – the lowest growth rate since 1990. The proportion of sourcing volumes flowing from China to Europe and the US is still falling, whilst wages continue to rise. The rather helpless attempts by the Chinese government to halt this process are unlikely to reverse this trend. Cheap and cheerful Chinese products are rapidly becoming a distant memory.

Photo: fotolia

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

4. Business Forum Technical Textiles 2016

11/15/16 - 11/16/16 |
Frankfurt am Main
www.conferencegroup.de

Performance Days 2016

11/16/16 - 11/17/16 | Munich
www.performancedays.com

Fast Textile – International Textile Fair

11/17/16 - 11/19/16 | Warschau,
Polen
<http://fasttextile.com/en>

Aachen-Dresden-Denkendorf International Textile Confere

11/24/16 - 11/25/16 | Dresden
www.aachen-dresden-denkendorf.de

Composites Europe

11/29/16 - 12/01/16 | Dusseldorf
www.composites-europe.com

2. Kooperationsforum „Textil und Nachhaltigkeit“

12/06/16 | Hof
www.bayern-innovativ.de

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www.domotex.de

Ethical Fashion Show

01/17/17 - 01/19/17 | Berlin
www.ethicalfashionshowberlin.com

Interfilière Paris

01/21/17 - 01/23/17 | Paris
www.interfiliere.com



Photos: Messe Frankfurt

The latest trends in the world of buttons, zippers and other trimmings on show at Accessories Vision

► France, Germany and Turkey. Other national pavilions such as Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Thailand likewise underline their importance for the global market.

In a move to bring order to the huge expanse of the fair and to help buyers keep their bearings, the organisers had created six specific product zones: Accessories Vision, All About Sustainability, Beyond Denim, Functional Lab, Premium Wool Zone and Verve for Design.

China raises the bar

If companies are wanting to gain a foothold not only on their home market but also internationally, the quality of their products has to be right. Ever more Chinese manufacturers are taking this to heart as the quality of their products continues to improve. This was certainly confirmed by the seven halls that were filled with Chinese suppliers and divided into product groups such as Ladieswear, Functional Wear, Sportswear, Swimwear, Suiting and Shirting.

In contrast to the stagnating numbers, the Beyond Denim Hall actually posted a rise in exhibitors. The Chinese company Prosperity Textile had an impressively sized stand which reflected its status as an innovative

The Asian powerhouse: Taiwan

In Asia, Taiwan is considered the innovation powerhouse particularly for functional textiles. The Taiwanese textile industry has hence coined the slogan "Think Taiwan for Textiles".

Handseltext, for example, specialises in quick-dry fabrics that transfer moisture. Its latest innovation are glowing textiles that can glow for 10 minutes after just 20 minutes' exposure to the sun or artificial light. Shinkong Synthetic Fibres presented its new generation of hydrophilic ShinCool fibres, that are endowed with effective water-absorbing and anti-static properties.



and modern denim producer whose product portfolio also includes eco-friendly denim. In 2016, it became the first company in China's denim industry to join the Bluesign system, which prohibits the use of environmentally harmful substances in the production process, whilst defining guidelines and auditing compliance with a view to guaranteeing environmentally friendly and safe production.

Even though Brexit is only everyone's lips even in far-off Asia, the standing of Europe's textile and apparel industry in China remains high and the demand among Chinese buyers for high-quality products from Europe is as strong as ever – be they luxury products from France and Italy or high-tech offerings from Germany. In its role as an international marketplace, Intertextile Shanghai gives European exhibitors and buyers the opportunity to gain access to the Chinese market. Laura S. Clerici, of the Italian silk specialist Teseo Tessitura Serica Di Olmeda, states: "Teseo has been exhibiting at Intertextile Shanghai for several seasons now. We see it as the gateway to the Chinese and Asian markets."

All the indicators in China's textile industry are pointing towards change and it remains to be seen how the Chinese market will evolve. This transformation process is already in full swing and Chinese companies that are flexible and can adapt to change even in the face of economic crisis, will come out fighting. After all, a crisis also holds many a hidden opportunity.

More news from Intertextile Shanghai and information on the fashion scene in China?

Please visit our online magazine www.textile-network.com.

[www.messefrankfurt.com.hk]
[Heike Frömbgen]



research

Photo: STFI/ Wolfgang Schmidt

'Vision meets the SME sector' podium discussion

FUTURETEX

Milestone meeting

140 associates working on the Futuretex project and their guests, including representatives from the trade press, met in September 2016 for the third consortium meeting in Chemnitz. In the spotlight sessions, the association coordinators informed the meeting about the position of the implementation projects that were already running, while during individual discussions in the Futuretex info-pool they handled questions. Stimuli for further work were provided at the 'Vision meets the SME sector' podium discussion and in contributions such as that of Jan Hill, Senior Director Technology Innovation at Adidas, entitled 'Adidas-Speed-Factory – autonomics 4.0 for the textile industry'.

According to Andreas Berthel, Managing Director of the STFI, the most important objective was to reduce the massive uncertainty for small and mid-sized companies regarding the 'textiles factory of the future' and to create, for example, a field of industry-specific research and experimentation to bring together the relevant skills. This, he hoped, would bring the textile factory of the future to life and generate transparency in the interaction between the SME sector and research. Open working parties are planned. The baseline project Open Innovation is stimulating further work focused on innovative tools and methods. A skills pool with a multi-industry character is envisaged in order to meet the challenging targets in the fields of techtex and textile machine engineering. Current trends including, for example, computerisation and demographic change are expected to encourage disruptive product innovations, technological innovations and modern organisational structures within the value chain.

[www.futureTEX2020.de]

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Photo: Sebastian Markgraf, TU Chemnitz

Detail of rope spokes

TU CHEMNITZ

High-performance fibres vs steel

Following ten years of research in the field of high-performance fibre cables for machine engineering, it was time for the Innozug team to take stock. Organised within the Professorship of Materials Handling and Conveying Engineering at the Technical University of Chemnitz, which since 2012 has also incorporated an endowed Professorship for Technical Textiles – Textile Machinery Elements, in September the InnoZug team held a Seminar to provide an overview

of the current research projects and their progress. With the support of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the team has been able to develop textile machinery elements and create new approaches to the construction of lightweight components, all within the framework of the "Entrepreneurial Regions" innovation initiative. The focus of one research project is on high-load textile cable elements, a concept founded on the huge potential offered by

high-performance fibres. The project examined a wide spectrum of high-performance fibres in an attempt to find feasible alternatives to steel. To this end, comprehensive testing technology has been developed and commissioned, providing companies working within the field with an appropriate range of services. Although industry partners were involved in the research conducted at TU Chemnitz right from the start the transfer of results into industrial applications is to be accelerated in the future and the foundation of new companies advanced. An important aspect of the research activities is, of course, the training of students, particularly of those enrolled on the "Textile Structures and Technologies"

Masters Programme. During the Status Seminar, a team representing the Professorship for Technical Textiles – Textile Machinery Elements gave insights into the development status of bicycle wheels fitted with high-performance rope spokes whilst presenting several prototypes. The development of the final product will be funded by an Exist Business Start-Up Grant. Other projects involve, for example, the design of connectors for fibre cables, innovative step-index fibre ropes and highly dynamic rope applications for wind turbines and high-bay warehousing operations. The recyclability of high-performance fibre cables is also being examined.

[www.innozug.de]

[Gisela Gozdzik]

TU DRESDEN / HP FIBRE STRUCTURES

Milestone for fibre-based high-tech materials

Scientists from five research establishments in Dresden have founded the largest research platform for fibre-based high-tech materials in the world, in order to work jointly on intelligent materials and innovative construction principles. The multidisciplinary team of 500 scientists, engineers and technicians will in future be collaborating on current issues in fibre research and textile technology. The Research Centre for High Performance Fibres and Structures and Textile Engineering Development – HP Fibre Structures, for short – brings together the unique skills and competencies that are available in the field of fibre and textile based high-performance materials at the Dresden research location. Its goal is the development of 'addi-

tive-generative manufactured' textile constructions with integrated functions that can be produced using either individual or mass-production technologies, depending on the application. The research centre acts as a technology pioneer for research, development and transfer of results in the fields of material science, multi-material design, lightweight construction, sensor and actuator technology, as well as machine en-

gineering. In the next few years, the Dresden-based scientists intend to develop complete research chains extending from basic research through applied research to implementation into marketable products. Fibre-based products and structures that can be produced close to the final shape, using bionic principles, have great potential. The participating scientists foresee applications in the transport and energy indus-

tries, in lightweight construction, healthcare, architecture and building, as well as in the field of digital communication. The work conducted at the new research centre is focused on maximum resource efficiency and sustainability.

The bodies involved in the HP Fibre Structures research centre are the Institute of Textile Machinery and High Performance Material Technology (ITM), the Institute of Lightweight Engineering and Polymer Technology (ILK) at TU Dresden, the Leibniz Institute for Polymer Research, Dresden (IPF), the Fraunhofer Institute for Material and Beam Technology, Dresden (IWS) and the The Fraunhofer Institute for Ceramic Technologies and Systems, Dresden (IKTS).

[tu-dresden.de/mw/itm]



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2. Kooperationsforum
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material.

Netzwerk Textile Innovation



Photos: DITF

Minister Nicole Hoffmeister-Kraut handing over the official notification of funding (from the left: Peter Steiger (DITF), Götz T. Gresser (DITF), Minister Nicole Hoffmeister-Kraut, Michael R. Buchmeiser (DITF))

DITF

2.3m Euro in funding

The DITF – German Institutes for Textile and Fibre Research, Denkendorf – have received a grant worth 2.3m Euro. The funding will be used to acquire two pioneering technologies for the field of high-performance fibre research. The new wet spinning machine constitutes the main interface between polymer development and the manufacture of innovative high-performing fibres. It paves the way for the development of new fibres for innovative and commercial-scale applications such as bio-based precursors for carbon fibre manufacture and polyaromatic reinforcement fibres for fibre composite materials. The new 3D weaving loom will enable multi-layered structures to be woven in a single piece into

complex near net-shape parts with openings and reinforcements where they are needed. These woven textiles will be used in many pioneering applications in lightweight construction such as in aerospace and aviation, in the automotive industry, in construction and mechanical engineering. In addition to the new wet spinning machine and the 3D weaving loom, the textile research institute in Denkendorf has invested in the processing of virgin and recycled high-performance fibres. A new set of machinery is being set up at the Institute for Textile Technology and Process Engineering (ITV) that will process long staple fibres into non-wovens or yarns. This investment is likewise being funded by the Regional Ministry for Economic Affairs, Labour and Housing and by industry. The addition of the new plant for long staple fibres means that the ITV can strengthen its leading position in Europe in the field of staple fibre technologies. These latest investments in new pioneering technologies will enable the DITF to expand its existing production chain that already covers a full range of processes from fibre production to the design of finished components.

[www.ditf-denkendorf.de]



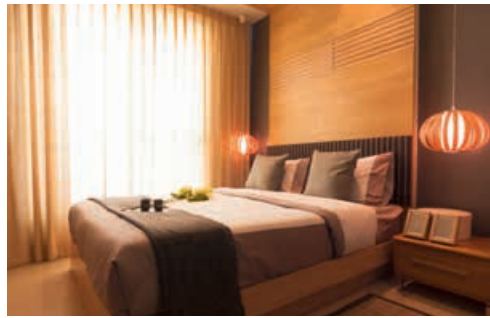
Funded by regional government and the EU: Pioneering high-performance fibres at the High Performance Fiber Center

Carl Weiske

Flame-Protect



Flame-Protect is suitable for applications requiring high hygienic standards – Example: medical textiles



Excellent rub and light fastness and long-lasting colour brilliance are particularly desirable for hotel furniture – Example: hotel

Reliable protection against fire and flames – Carl Weiske develops textile systems, polymers, fibres and yarns, with its Flame-Protect brand focusing on safety in textile technology. This innovative flame retardant PES textile provides permanent fire protection throughout its life cycle and meets all relevant fire safety standards. The fabric is extremely flexible, allowing for individual designs while ensuring the highest quality. Reliable and maximum fire protection is crucial in the automotive sector and in public buildings. Deficient fabrics can become dangerous accelerants, whereas high-quality flame retardant fabrics are an integral part of preventative fire safety

measures. The uniqueness of Flame-Protect as a fire retardant textile lies in its inherent fire protective properties. Unlike conventional non-flammable fabrics where retardants are applied as a surface coating, Flame-Protect works them into the fabric. This method ensures abrasion and wash resistance, producing a new textile that demonstrates permanent protection against fire, high quality and durability, which makes it the perfect and safe solution for demanding industries. Flame-Protect's combination of safety, quality and excellent cost effectiveness while still offering bespoke designs makes it a highly attractive product.

'All show and full of substance' is Carl Weiske's motto as it merges original designs, colourfastness and functionality, offering boundless design and colour options. Additionally, the fabric is characterised by outstanding rub and light fastness as well as lasting colour brilliance – desirable properties especially for hotel furniture and home textiles. Flame-Protect is also highly shape-retaining and hard-wearing as well as easy to clean. The innovative Hightex AV yarn undergoes a special spinning process, ensuring that Flame-Protect textiles display significantly reduced pilling as well as high abrasion performance, making them extremely dur-

able and resistant. Flame-Protect is skin-friendly, free of harmful substances, non-allergenic Oeko-Tex Standard 100 certified) and available with antibacterial properties on request. Flame-Protect is therefore ideal for applications requiring high hygienic standards, such as in hospitals.

Carl Weiske's ThinkTex division is responsible for achieving the company's strict quality standards. It routinely conducts internal and external checks throughout all stages of the production chain to ensure continuously high quality, starting with the in-house laboratory, covering all manufacturing processes and even directly on site with the customer.

ThinkTex by Carl Weiske is synonymous with quality and safety for its end-users and has already received the Bavarian Quality Award several times. Flame-Protect textiles comply with all important international fire safety standards such as DIN EN 13501-1, DIN EN 13772 and NFP 92503 to 92505 as well as 92507 (M1).

[www.carlweiske.com]

Flame-Protect offers many different design and colour options – Example: home textiles



Quality assurance throughout the textile chain – Part 5

QA and logistics?

Quality is often associated more with the product or manufactured goods than with anything else. The yarn is of the prescribed strength; the colour of the clothes matches the pattern. But the product is representative of all the value-added activities associated with it. In that sense it includes all of the activities throughout the length of the supply chain that contribute to its creation.



Logistics certainly does create value and makes a significant contribution to the overall quality of the products

pensive resource planning systems. Without an efficient logistics IT system, the web shop would not function; without high quality picking, the customer would be returning wrongly delivered goods and possibly avoiding the supplier altogether. 'Lean' must not be interpreted to suggest that any storage or transportation is wasteful and thus destructive of value.

Balanced Scorecard

The essential aspect is overall efficiency, which means trying to hit the bulls-eye on a multidimensional target – otherwise known as the 'balanced scorecard'. Total cost and capital commitment targets (total landed cost targets) on the one hand, and performance targets on the other, are thus the two fundamental dimensions that each need to be pursued across the supply chain and the product lifecycle. Supply chain quality is often focused on service as an output. From a broader efficiency point of view, one might refer to supply chain effectiveness or supply chain performance management.

It makes a lot of sense to check the way the work is distributed in the textile value chain against market conditions worldwide, and to subject it to constant optimisation. The ideal configuration at a given point in time, for example, might be a mixed supplier footprint comprising a combination of Asian and European suppliers, this footprint being balanced out ac- ►

The purpose of the supply chain, and the logistical processes and structures integrated into it, is above all to ensure availability. Production does the knitting, the weaving, the cutting and the sewing. Supply chain management ensures that items sitting ready at the sewing machine, for example, are collected, packed, bundled, warehoused, stacked and transported. The flow of goods is planned, managed and checked by means of a parallel flow of information and is linked to the flow of rights and payment streams that are triggered thereby. Contrary to much popular opinion, therefore, supply chain processes very clearly create value. Only if the right product arrives at the right time, in the right condition, at the right place and at the right price with the right information is it actually

'worth something'. Products that do not arrive or arrive too late simply do not generate any value. In referring to 'lean logistics' or 'lean supply management', from the point of view of production in its narrow sense, the implication is often that it is only production that creates value and that logistical processes and associated services do not. In its broader sense, though, 'lean' focuses not only on customer-orientated aspects but also on the matter of eliminating unnecessary logistical processes. In this sense, logistics certainly does create value and makes a significant contribution to the overall quality of the products: the bundling and warehousing of goods, which may involve the judicious use of longer journeys across the world, is clearly a service that adds value, as are packaging and ex-

► cross the product lifecycle of initial design, pattern collection and pre-orders, subsequent orders, sales and end-of-line withdrawal from the market. It is a well-known fact that supply chains become no easier to manage as they become increasingly extensive geographically and as the network involves ever greater numbers of suppliers – the result is a cocktail of complexity, risk and costs! This leads to demands for a quality management system that has appropriate ‘sensors’ for picking up activities along the supply chain and can send out early warnings and aids to decision-making for management.

Transparency – easier said than done

Only those who can withstand dips in their markets, integrate new suppliers despite all the initial difficulties, painlessly cut themselves loose from weak suppliers, rapidly bring in new employees and partners in the supplier network, and keep service providers on track even when the going gets tough, will survive to win the race. But why do companies make such

“ Logistics problems cannot be outsourced – only solutions that are designed internally beforehand and fully understood.

heavy weather of implementing transparency, keeping the supply chain events in view, maintaining total supply chain quality control throughout, and managing the processes ‘from sheep to shop/customer’?

Successful planning and implementation requires development of concepts that are founded in theory but are also pragmatic, together with action appropriate to the situation. Having the company board drive the matter forward is valuable, because without top management support, generally little happens. It is not enough, though, to send empty words and half-baked thoughts out

The author Prof. Freichel is Professor of Distribution Logistics at TH Köln University of Applied Sciences and Visiting Lecturer at Hamburg University of Technology (TUHH). He acts as an independent consultant to well-known companies on issues of strategy and operational design of the value-added chain

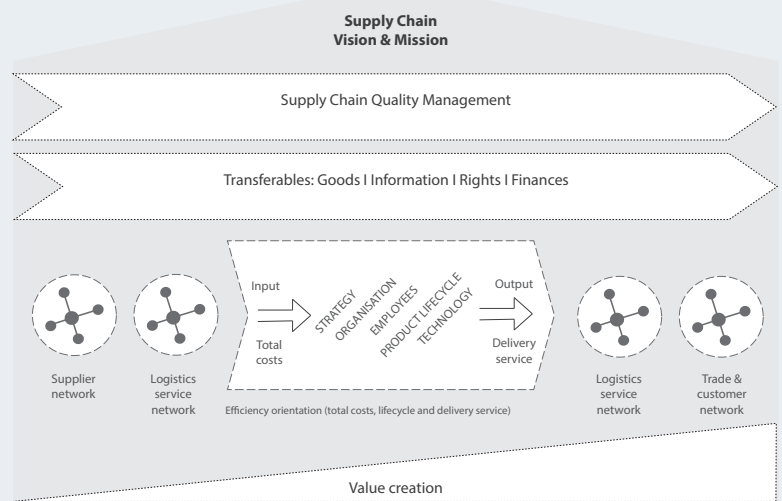
into space, perhaps demanding activity without systematic thought or resources, due either to lack of understanding or to a short-sighted desire for action. Supply chain quality, and the aim of supply chain excellence, requires an in-depth understanding and trained senior managers and employees with the appropriate tasks, skills and responsibilities, both in the textile companies themselves and among their trading partners and service providers. Where the vision and mission are anchored in the company’s business model, this provides the direction that employees will emulate, that network partners will accept, and that needs to be driven forward collectively.

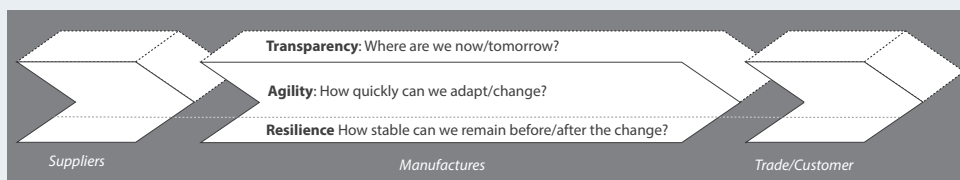
The companies that really understand how to pull out the stops on the SCM organ are well-known – Inditex is often mentioned in this context. Continuing the musical metaphor, these companies and their supply chains perform well-designed arrangements with solid harmonic frameworks, catchy melodies and pithy lyrics. Such

companies have impressive sales figures and market shares: supply chain excellence and business success are highly correlated. In most cases these companies also shine in terms of product quality. At any event, the quality of the supply chain in these companies makes a significant contribution to overall success. The supply chain can even become the differentiating factor in success (the unique selling proposition) if, for example, consistent flow times – from sales input and collection design to production, along the entire chain of different supplier stages and delivery into the stores – are measured and maintained in terms of weeks and days rather than months and half-years. Details such as logistics agreements with suppliers, service key performance indicators (KPIs) – such as accuracy of delivery, speed of reaction to discrepancies, extent and quality of information supply, accounting quality etc. – and firm but fair management of logistics service providers, comprehensive order management information systems, intelligent inventory management and packaging process can all make their own contributions to this.

The scope of a supply chain quality management system will depend on the nature of the customers as far as output is concerned, and on the suppliers on the input side. Between the

Graphic: Freichel/
S.Schlomski





two is the internal value-added process of the company, which is often at the forefront in narrower interpretations of SCQM.

The internal process incorporates the quality strategy, organisation and technology for the supply chain, as well as the employees involved. The starting points for each phase of logistical processing (sourcing, production, distribution and waste disposal) are the various related functional fields – order processing, stock management, warehouse operations, packaging and transportation. Thus supply chain quality has strategic, tactical and operational elements at the various levels.

Customer-centric quality

If a distinction is drawn in terms of quality dimensions between potential, process and outcome quality, then it is the latter that is always associated with customer-centric quality. It is, after all, the customer's perceptions of the outcome that count. Where supply chain quality is concerned, measurements concentrate on the logistical delivery service, covering the dimensions of delivery time (including frequency of delivery, order cut-off times and delivery windows), reliability of delivery (including availability by order item or order, and adherence to delivery times), flexibility of delivery (including ability to amend orders) and of course the physical condition of the delivery and information provided (e.g. undamaged delivery).

Supplier-side quality

The supplier-side quality of the supply chain relates to the corresponding quality of service against defined targets. Due to increasing dependency on larger or critical suppliers in particular, efforts here are moving in the direction of expanded in-depth consideration of multi-stage supply chains or networks. Aspects of the legal and financial supply chain, as well as aspects of integration, should similarly be considered in the broader context.

For instance, deliveries without a contract can be critical; deliveries without payment can lead to liquidity problems. Checks on creditworthiness should thus form an integral step in the logistics process, without tiresome diversions via various internal interfaces and approval procedures. Aspects of contract structure and compliance as well as matters of liability, insurance and corporate social responsibility are more than critical nowadays as elements of success. Efforts to achieve better integration of payments and services and the channels by which they are accomplished serve to reduce transaction costs in the system as a whole. New forms of information exchange, incorporating financial technology (fintech) instruments such as payments in bitcoin and data exchange using blockchain processes, lead to disintermediation and hence to improvements in the efficiency of global trade in goods. The business model, and thus the function of banks, brokers and carriers, all of which contribute nowadays to supply chain quality, will change dramatically. The supply chain is embedded in this process and it is thus ever more important to understand it as a strategic factor in success, and not as a dirty area hidden behind the catwalk, to be noticed only when it ceases to function.

Quality, from a broader perspective, is also expressed in the most efficient lean legal and financial supply chain. What is important here is that the different disciplines are closely enmeshed and have a mutual understanding. In this way, confidence and computerisation of processes can reduce costs in relation to these 'transferables' and the associated transfer channels. If logistics specialists nowadays are trained in technology, IT and marketing, they also need to know more than just the basics of law and finance.

The integration aspect starts with internal commercial functions. Because the links are formed not by means of

Graphic: Freichel/
S.Schlomski



Our series on quality assurance throughout the textile chain until now has consisted of:
Part 1 Quality – what is it? (issue 1-2)
Part 2 Quality assurance (issue 3-4)
Part 3 Moving from Quality-Assurance to QPM (issue 7-8)
Part 4 Hazardous substances in fabrics – and now? (issue 9-10)

instructions but through market or contractual relationships, the connections to network partners in industry, commerce and services demand other methods, skills and instruments when designing the transactions. The transfer of tasks to suppliers such as logistics service providers is in practice all too often complicated by unclear and incomplete specification. Thus rough averages without carefully considered scenarios are provided, instead of daily and weekly graphs covering several years including a forecast. Processes are described imprecisely for outsiders; data quality is inadequate. The capital requirement leads to rapid reduction in assets by means of shifts of item positions etc. Is it any wonder if the customer and the company ultimately suffer losses? Total supply chain quality covers the quality of the relationship and the performance with regard to the integration of external elements and players in the network. Supply chain management and all of the logistical processes therein consists of a service performance that is a means to an end: it is derivative, not bankable, and is only as good as each individual performance.

[Prof. Dr. rer. pol.
Stephan L.K. Freichel]

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Portugal's Textile Industry

"Think global, think Portugal"

The motto "Think global, think Portugal" of Aicep Portugal, the government's foreign trade and investment agency, is aimed at potential investors from large-scale industries, including the international textile industry, as an encouragement to invest in Portugal.

The Portuguese economy has experienced several difficult years. According to the German Federal Foreign Office, "Portugal has been under pressure as a business location for the last ten years due to continued globalisation and increased international competition. After joining the European Community (EC) in 1986 and receiving substantial cash inflows from the former EC, Portugal initially achieved above-average economic growth."

Since then, the country's economy has taken a downturn. "After hitting the low point of its recession in 2013, Portugal slightly recovered during the second and third quarter by 1.1 percent and 0.2 percent respectively. In 2014 the economy grew by 1 percent. Growing exports also contributed to a positive current account for the first time in several years," explains the Federal



Foreign Office. The forecast remains optimistic. Recent estimates by the Portuguese Central Bank for 2016 – 2017 indicate a continued gradual recovery of Portugal's economy and predict a GDP growth rate of 1.5 percent and 1.7 percent respectively. (This development is consistent with the European Commission's

forecast for the Eurozone of 1.7 percent in 2016 and 1.9 percent in 2017.) According to the Portuguese Central Bank, exports are expected to increase further and constitute 40 percent of the country's GDP in 2015 and 42 percent in 2018.

Clear skies ahead for the textile industry

The Portuguese textile industry has been considerably affected by the onset of globalisation, suffering a sudden flight of customers to low-wage Asian countries in the last decade. The biggest share of Portugal's loss in custom moved to Turkey. The current situation there, however, could trigger a tipping point. The Turkish president Erdogan went as far as issuing threats against companies and their managers, prompting the rating agency Standard &

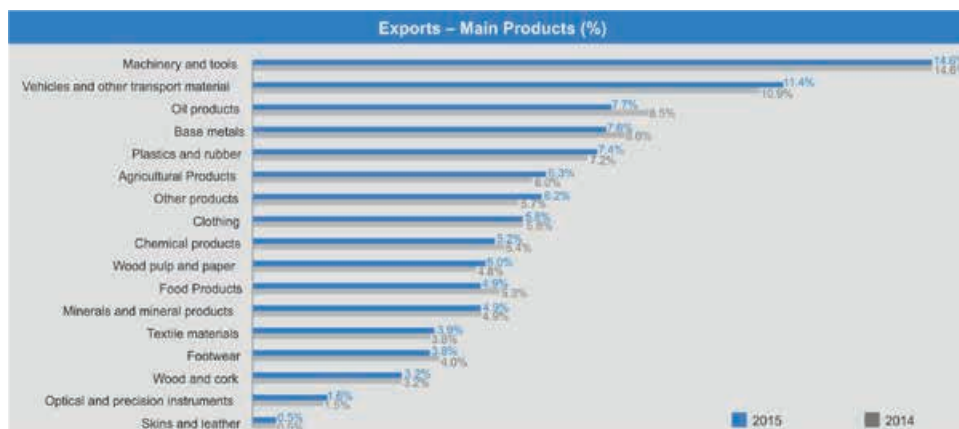




Photo: Messe Frankfurt

Poor to refer to Turkey as a "high-risk country". As purchasers and business representatives of companies that source their textiles and fabrics in Turkey become more reluctant to enter the country, Portugal has been put back on the map of favoured suppliers, including in the home and household textiles sector. Portugal appears to have left the trough behind it. "The Portuguese textile and clothing industry has succeeded in turning the tide that had dominated the economy until 2014. Indeed, 2014 turned out to be the most successful of the previous eleven years in terms of exports. Exports amounted to 4.5bn Euro, resulting in a growth of 8 percent compared to 2013, and a trade surplus of 1bn Euro was recorded," reported the German-Portuguese chamber of industry and commerce. 2015 showed even more improvement. Based on data from the Textile and Clothing Association of Portugal, the Chamber states that, "Export growth figures rose by 2 percent in the first quarter of 2015 compared to the same period of the previous year."

As early as February of this year, German business magazine Wirtschaftswoche ran the headline "Portugal's textile industry no longer coming apart at the seams". The Swiss broadcasting company SRF even dedicated a programme to Portugal and reported that, "Textile manufacturers have found a way out of the crisis and the industry is in recovery. New enterprises have emerged while established ones ►

Heimtextil Frankfurt – The world's largest trade fair for home and household textiles provides Portuguese companies with a platform to showcase their products. Pictured here: J.F. Almeida



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Photos: Messe Frankfurt

► have been restructured. Achieving such success in one of the most traditional business sectors – the textile industry – has caught everyone's attention. Many believe this is just the beginning."

Amongst the companies having undergone reorganisation is the More Textile Group created in 2011 from the household textile manufacturers Coelima, JMA and Antonio Almeida & Filhos. The once individually flourishing companies suffered significant losses due to their customers shifting to Asian markets. Investors decided to pool the capabilities of these three enterprises in an attempt to jump-start their profitability. Artur Soutinho, President and CEO, is reluctant to label it as a merger since each company still operates as a separate entity while internal processes, such as finances, have been integrated.

Family businesses operate vertically

Currently 120 manufacturers of household textiles are located in Portugal, in the north in and around Guimarães and Porto. Most of them are fully integrated with spinning mills, weaving mills, dyeing shops, printing facilities, sewing shops and finishing. 95 percent of their production is exported to a total of 130 countries. Several companies produce their own labels on a small scale, while the majority of their output is destined for the private labels of renowned home textiles manufacturers and brands. One of the oldest vertically integrated businesses is Lameirinho. Founded in 1948 and still family owned, it employs 680 staff, records a turnover of 56.9m Euro and exports to over 30

Heimtextil Frankfurt – The world's largest trade fair for home and household textiles provides Portuguese companies with a platform to showcase their products. Pictured here: Lameirinho

Portugal's minister for economic affairs Manuel Caldeira Cabral visits Lameirinho Indústria Têxtil, a manufacturer of high-quality household textiles in Guimarães



countries. Among its customers are illustrious names such as Macy's USA, El Corte Inglés and Zara Home in Spain, Vincenzo Zucchi and Missoni in Italy, Designers Guild and Liberty in the UK, Marimekko in Finland and many others. Lameirinho, however, does not rest on its laurels and instead explores new avenues, such as digital printing. Tania Lima, head of marketing at Lameirinho, explains: "Digital printing is the future. It enhances colour brilliance and allows us to be more flexible with regard to order volumes." One of the company's innovations is non-iron linen bedding. Looking ahead, Lameirinho has set its sights on the hotel sector.

Some company histories sound like fairy tales. Lasa, for instance, established as a tiny handkerchief manufacturer in 1971 by Armando da Silva Antunes, now has 800 employees and spins 800 tonnes of yarn per month, and produces bathroom, kitchen, decorative and upholstery fabrics, posting a turnover of 65m Euro. Different business units serve different areas. Lasa International supplies the European market, including retailers directly, and produces two catalogues per year. A&A focuses on decorative and upholstery fabrics, mainly for the interior design and contract business sector. Kroma is pioneering in the field of digital printing. The bedding manu-

facturer Luzmont was acquired in 2000 and now produces bedroom and bathroom textile coordinates. Filasa is the in-house spinning mill. La Granja offers kitchen fabrics and Lasarito is Lasa's line for kids.

Another big player in the fully integrated textile industry is Almeida S.A. with its three large production sites. Considerable investment efforts have seen the inauguration of a new logistics centre at the beginning of the year and soon ten more looms will become the newest additions in production. Commercial Manager Paulo Pacheco comments: "Then we will have 84 machines weaving terry fabrics in three shifts." Almeida's own small bed-linen brand 'Mi Casa es tu Casa' currently records sales figures of 5m Euro. For 2016, the group's turnover is expected to reach 45m Euro. Almeida is already established in Spain's contract business/hospitality sector but Paulo Pacheco still sees more potential.

Smaller companies such as Domingos de Sousa, Castros & Marques or Pereira da Cunha are equally finding their footing. Sergio Marques, Commercial Director at Castros & Marques says: "Customers are returning. They can buy smaller volumes in Portugal and distribution channels are shorter than when purchasing from Asia."

Portugal features on the global stage of influential international trade fairs such as Heimtextil Frankfurt, New York Market Week and Intertextile Shanghai Home, also with its own Portugal pavilion. This June the first Guimarães Fashion Week took place in Guimarães, right in the heart of Portugal's textile industry. This new platform in their home country provides Portuguese textile manufacturers with the opportunity to introduce themselves to an exclusive and international clientele. Portugal is worth keeping an eye on.

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[Ilona Schulz]

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London Design Festival

In the shadow of Brexit

Every September, London becomes the mecca of the design world, attracting interior decorators, designers, manufacturers and buyers of furniture, home accessories, fabrics, carpets and wall coverings. The festival in the city on the Thames draws in people from far and wide.

The "London Design Festival" takes place in seven London districts, in elegant showrooms, disused factory buildings and exciting outdoor locations, as a complement to the three main fairs – Decorex in Syon Park, 100 % Design at Earls Court and Focus at the Chelsea Harbour Design Centre.

At the start of the festival, Nigel Farage hit the headlines once again. After disappearing like a shot after the Brexit vote, he loudly proclaimed in the lurid British tabloids: "We must leave the EU as quickly as possible." British companies are by no means in agreement. "We were incredibly disappointed with the outcome of the vote," explains Amanda Back, Head of Communication for Designers Guild. "We're an international company, we act and think like Europeans. And we'll do everything we can to ensure nothing changes for our customers." The German representative of a big British carpet supplier was just as dismayed. "We were so shocked at the result of the vote. None of us saw it coming. We

will have to keep an eye on developments and then discuss how to respond."

The fact that Brexit is preying on everyone's mind was demonstrated only too well at a panel discussion that generated a lot of attention at the London trade fair Decorex. Interior decorators and designers aired their views on "the post-Brexit future of British design". (see page 25).

Other respondents at the trade fairs expressed their hope that the final exit would take a long time. Hopefully "at least two or three years. Until then, it'll be business as usual," says the London office of a big German textile publisher. Stark Carpets chimed in with this view. "We'll wait for two or three years to see what happens. We'll just have to wait and wonder." Nobody really knows what is in the pipeline. And that is precisely the problem.

Business remains sceptical

GTAI – Germany Trade & Invest, the economic development agency of the Federal Republic of Germany,

Berlin, reports that British businesses are sceptical about the future. „In a survey published on 18/19 July 2016 by the British Manufacturers' Organisation EEF, the companies interviewed expressed their concern over the future," stated the GTAI. Furthermore: "Around 38 percent of the companies interviewed said they intended to curb investments over the next twelve months following worsening economic conditions in the wake of the referendum. This

Margo Selby shows sophisticated jacquards in geometric designs



Panel discussion at Decorex on the topic of Brexit. From the left: Paddy Prowse, And so to Bed; Giles Kime, Country Life; Tim Gosling, Gosling Ltd.; Joanna Wood, Interior Design; Sally Storey, John Cullen Lighting



Photo: Ilona Schulz

DECOREX

Brexit casts its shadow

The fact that Brexit is preying on everyone's mind was demonstrated only too well at a panel discussion that generated a lot of attention at the London trade fair Decorex. Interior decorators and designers aired their views on „the post-Brexit future of British design“. The uncertainty pervading the luxury interior design sector was palpable. Although business in the luxury sector is still brisk, doubts remain and are even growing as to whether this level of performance can be sustained. "Business has taken a turn for the worse since June," states Paddy Prowse, Managing Director of And so to Bed, a manufacturer of designer luxury beds and bedroom furniture, continuing: "Our international customers are still buying though."

"The Brexit decision was completely unexpected," says Sally Storey of John Cullen Lighting. "After the vote, orders started slowing down and arrived with big delays." Joanna Wood, Interior Design laments: "This Brexit is an absolute disaster. The day after the vote, we lost a big order, and the budget for another order was suddenly halved." Giles Kime of "Country Life" magazine, comments: "So what will be your next step?" Joanna Wood: "We're going to start looking to the Middle and Far East. But as soon as we set foot outside Europe, we will lose our copyright. We mustn't forget that the 'European umbrella' protected us." The search for new markets was seen as an option by all panellists. Tim Gosling is optimistic: "If we step out into the world, we can bring new ideas back home with us. We Brits have been doing that for generations." Forced optimism, one could say. And what about the hope for a revival of "Britishness"? In response to a question from the audience on "What is Britishness?" Joanne Wood replies: "Taste and style. A state of mind." Go for it!

Tradition and modernism

Beyond the discussions surrounding Brexit, the products shown at the fairs reflected the sheer abun- ►



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Alternative Flooring
has acquired a licence
for Liberty flowers
on rugs



► dance of creative and innovative fabric developments, which included, of course, the traditional British country style with its more subtle floral designs. Sanderson, for example, was inspired by English cottage gardens with delicate grasses and blooms. Tricia Guild recreates motifs from old drawings and copper etchings such as those by world travelers, including courageous women such as Maria Sibylla Merian. Digital prints are being used with greater frequency as they produce "much more brilliant colours," says Amanda Back. "Textures are becoming

more important," says Tricia Guild. Clarke & Clarke mixes floral patterns with stripes and geometrics. Mulberry Home is moving between ethnic Ikat-inspired stripes and Oriental looking patterns. The creative minds at Colefax & Fowler and Jane Churchill are looking to the future as they call for a new, modern British look that embodies luxurious elegance. The Isle Mill, on the other hand, is offering traditional, masculine woollen fabrics in shepherd's plaid, herringbone and dog's tooth designs etc. for sofas and armchairs, whereas Margo Selby presents sophisticated jacquards in modern, geometric interpretations.

Floral patterns are also appearing on rugs and carpets. Alternative Flooring's interpretation of its Liberty fabrics licence has great artistic appeal. The Rug Company is pinning its hopes on the pull of prolific designers such as Paul Smith, Vivienne

Westwood and Elie Saab, who are also lending their unique signatures to rugs. Finally, texture is playing an increasingly central role in carpets with relief-like weaves and sophisticated devorés.

All in all, it's well worth keeping the Brits on our radar. Not only from a political point of view.

[www.dcch.couk/Focus]

[www.decorex.com]

[Ilona Schulz]

Textures and reliefs
are trending, also on
rugs, as shown here
by Jacaranda



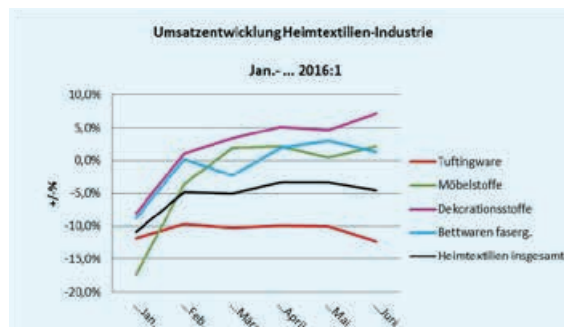
GERMANY'S HEIMTEX ASSOCIATION

Positive outlook for heterogeneous industry

"The upturn in the German economy that began two years ago has continued throughout this year. In its economic forecast for 2016, market researcher ifo Institute anticipates a 1.8 percent growth in GDP in real terms," reports Germany's Heimtex association. This growth is largely being fuelled by domestic demand. Driven by favourable lending conditions and a lack of alternative investment opportunities, demand in the construction sector remains high. "This would normally suggest that the German home textiles industry would perform well in such a climate. However, this does not ring true in all sectors or product segments within the home textiles industry whose performance is, in fact, extremely varied." In the first half of 2016 tufted goods, for example, watched sales plummet by

12.2 percent. This slide is primarily the result of dwindling domestic demand in the low to mid-price brackets and cannot be seen as a reflection of the entire floor covering sector. By contrast, Heimtex reveals that higher quality goods in the tufting, weaving and needle felted segments, also including other applications (e.g. acoustics) and/or the hospitality, architecture and interior design fields, are all performing

Photo: Germany's
Heimtex association



extremely well. Textile floor coverings have been competing fiercely with hard floor coverings in the private and public realms for several years now. German manufacturers of textile floor coverings are responding by offering a broader spectrum of products. Accordingly, classical fitted carpets are being complemented by modular textile floor coverings and measured rugs, mats and runners. Exports must be seen in terms of individual products, companies and countries. Business with Europe is largely stable, whereas the Russian market has dried up. Equally, the dynamism that once characterised Eastern Europe and Asia appears to be waning.

[www.heimtex.de]

[Ilona Schulz]



Photos: Messe Frankfurt

The Heimtextil fair is on a strong path, with countless events and innovations

Heimtextil

On track for even greater success

With even more exhibitors, Heimtextil – the largest and most important international trade fair for home and contract textiles – kicks off the new year between 10 and 13 January 2017. Many interesting events and innovations await the visitors, in particular in the Theme Park and Digital Print areas.

The fair has grown in particular in the area of decorative and furnishing fabrics, as a result of which Hall 4.0 has been opened up as an additional exhibition space. An especially large number of new companies from Belgium and the USA have registered but so have important editors from Italy and the UK.

Speaking to textile network, Thimo Schwenzfeier, Marketing Communication Director, stated: "We shall be very selective but there may also be some high quality Indian producers in Hall 4.0 – India is a traditional and high quality country for textiles." Another of the areas seeing significant growth is table linen in Hall 9.0.

In the 'Theme Park' in Hall 6.0, Messe Frankfurt continues with the 'Trends in home textiles' theme first conceived in 1991. The overarching topic for this year is 'Explorations', with an invitation to make a journey into a world of curiosities, staged by

the French fashion bureau Carlin International under the direction of Exalis, from Berlin (see page 28). "We want Theme Park 2017 to re-inspire people to contribute," says Thimo Schwenzfeier. "There is something new to be discovered around every corner."

Highlight: Micro Factory

Until now, the Theme Park has been by itself in Hall 6.0. For reasons of space – and because they fit well together – the whole of the Digital Print area has now been integrated into Hall 6.0. The Digital Print Technology product group covers printing machines, software and accessories in the growth sector of digital printing. "Digital print supports the trend towards individuality," continues Thimo Schwenzfeier. He explains: "Using digital print, there is no problem printing small production runs." The construction of a 'micro-factory' will be a major high-

light – Industry 4.0, the subject of the future, in miniature. According to Schwenzfeier, "An entire production cycle will be demonstrated, with all the machines networked." Similarly right up to date is the theme of sustainability, conservation of resources and adherence to social standards in the interior textiles sector. The 'Green Village' area reappears to cover this area.

Olaf Schmidt, Vice President Textiles & Textile Technologies at Messe Frankfurt, explains: "As hosts of the leading trade fair in the world for home textiles, our aim is to strengthen the market for green textiles and to act as a guiding and stimulating force. For this reason, Heimtextil is offering a forum for companies that operate in a sustainable manner, bringing resource-efficient products into the limelight and issuing invitations to a parallel event programme. We are convinced that the future belongs to the market for sustainable textiles."

Interior, Architecture, Hospitality

The area formerly known as 'Contract Business' has undergone a change. "We had to acknowledge that the term 'contract' was not clear for visitors such as interior architects," says Thimo Schwenzfeier. This area will therefore now fall under a new banner, 'Interior, Architecture, Hospitality'. At the forum in Hall 4, students will be designing hotel rooms. Outside the ►

Advertisement





► grounds of the trade fair – in the city of Frankfurt – there will be guided tours of different hotels as examples. And a new IAH Guide is being produced.

In 2017, the Heimtextil trade fair becomes a partner for the first time in the 'Finest Interior Contracting' industry award. An honorary jury will select the award winners from among the best nominations in 16 categories ranging from 'Hotels', via 'Bars' and 'Restaurants' to 'Stores', 'Offices' and 'Public Buildings'.

Olaf Schmidt, Vice President Textiles & Textile Technologies, is a member of this jury. The award will be made during a private dinner held in parallel to Heimtextil and the winners will be introduced in the course of a Heimtextil press conference. Since 2014, the Finest

Interior award has gone to particularly individual and professional examples of contract furnishing. In conjunction with selected brand partners, the prize rewards the creative work of interior architects, interior designers and outfitters for holistic individual planning, furnishing and decoration of new or refurbished buildings. The Finest Interior prize is awarded independently and takes no account of brand.

Heimtextil Insiders

Messe Frankfurt is once again providing the free 'Heimtextil Insiders' programme exclusively for interior designers. For the first time, the service is being expanded outside Germany's borders to include the whole of the German-speaking world, in

According to Thimo Schwenzfeier, Marketing Communication director, "Heimtextil is recording good growth levels in decorative and furnishing fabrics"

Olaf Schmidt, Vice President Textiles & Textile Technologies, comments: "The future belongs to the market for sustainable textiles"

response to the wishes of visitors from Austria, Switzerland and northern Italy. Owners, managers and employees at interior design businesses can register as 'Heimtextil insiders' for free and with no obligation at www.heimtextil-insider.com. "We offer interior designers first-hand information at the most important industry event in the world," says Heimtextil director Sabine



HEIMTEXTIL TRENDS 2017/2018

Exploring new worlds

Heimtextil 2017 takes its visitors on a journey into the unknown, full of exciting discoveries and fascinating curiosities. "Explorations" – this year's motto and leading trend at the Theme Park from 10 to 13 January 2017 – will be brought to life by the French trend agency Carlin International under the guidance of Exalis from Berlin. The team is also the creative mastermind behind the accompanying Trend Book and the new website. Trend researchers are following the ambitious call for exploration and their desire to discover uncharted territories. "Inspired by the "Explorations" theme we have set out to find materials, textures and elements that bring innovations to life", says Natalie Weinmann of the design agency Carlin Interna-

tional/Exalis. The new Trend Book along with the fair's Theme Park will spark visitors' curiosity, encouraging them to embark on an investigative journey through groundbreaking ideas in manufacturing and novel marketing strategies.

Overview:

Virtual Explorations: Digital processes open up new possibilities of interpreting transparency. The iridescent holographic shimmer of films and silks is reminiscent of reflections in water. Extravagant floral patterns, embroidery, jacquards and lace take the spotlight. Technical materials are given a seemingly poetic and sensual flexibility through organic structures gleaned from the natural world.

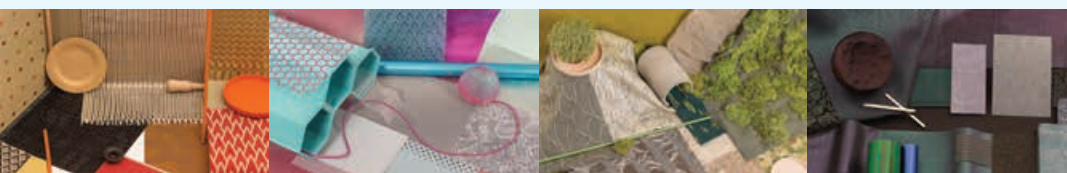
Cultural Explorations: New emerging urban multicultural influences are also shaping developments in interior design. Traditional methods and technologies are being modernised and combined in new ways, resulting in luxurious state-of-the-art modifications.

Planetary Exploration: New materials are infused with protective properties and thus far unfamiliar textures. Distinctive voluminous fabrics with a lunar feel serve as soft protecting shells while new wipe techniques create delicate structures of mineral-like fineness.

Natural Explorations: Nature leads the way in urban reinvention as interiors are entering into a symbiosis with the natural. Textures imitate the effect of natural fibres, such as wood or bark-like reliefs and structures, becoming detailed reflections of nature. Lush greens along with wood and earthy browns dominate the colour palette. Today more than ever, the use of natural materials in industrial manufacturing processes is increasingly popular and relevant.

[Ilona Schulz]

from the left to the right:
Cultural Explorations
Virtual Explorations
Natural Explorations
Planetary Explorations



Interview with Chris Nicolaes

Clinching new market shares

The most important task for the future is to digitalise the entire supply chain so that fashion can be brought to the customer more quickly and flexibly

It's no longer just about fabrics and cuts. A new trend is sweeping through the fashion industry and the buzzword is: digitalisation. textile network speaks to Chris Nicolaes, Managing Director of Lectra Deutschland, about tomorrow's apparel market and Lectra's commitment to digitally networking the sourcing, design and product development divisions of fashion companies.

Textile network: How do you see the apparel market of the future?

Chris Nicolaes: The big changes in society are already manifesting themselves. Globalisation and internationalisation are shaping and influencing people's tastes and appetite for different fits. The younger generations are displaying far less brand loyalty and tend to jump on new trends much more quickly. At the same time, consumers are increasingly looking for cheap yet trendy apparel. And then, of course, there are the technological changes that are transforming both demand and company supply chains.

Textile network: In what way are these technologies changing the demand for fashion?

Chris Nicolaes: With the continued rise of the internet and social media, the distribution channels are being mixed to an ever increasing degree. The top inner-city retail locations will remain as before while online trade and the web applications associated with it will continue to grow. We'll soon have apps that can calculate body measurements using photographs. After all, the most important element



Chris Nicolaes talking to textile network about the future of the apparel market and how Lectra is responding

of fashion will always be the fit. This will make it possible to view yourself as a 3D avatar that can try on garments in a virtual environment. Customers will be able to personalise the clothing with just a few clicks. In Asia, a lot of money is currently being invested in technologies that enable companies to produce affordable made-to-measure garments in batches of one. Today's companies can find out much more about their customers and their interests through social media and big data. Fashion firms responding to these developments will reap the benefits of greater market shares. As in many other fields, the market is gradually changing from a push to a pull or demand-led market.

Textile network: How do you think fashion companies should be equipping themselves for the future?

Chris Nicolaes: I think the most important task is to digitalise the entire supply chain so that fashion can be brought to the customer more quickly and flexibly. Fortunately, the fashion industry has always been a highly creative sector. Around 18,000 brands around the world develop their clothing with software from Lectra; the technologies needed to do so are freely available on the market. Equipped with the right hard and software, our customers are slashing their design-to-sale time to little more than a week. So basically, they'll analyse a trend that's circulating on social media and have the corresponding garments on the high street or online within the week. 3D design

Chris Nicolaes has been Managing Director of Lectra Deutschland GmbH since June 2014 and is responsible for the Central and Eastern European markets, including Russia and the CIS. Born in the Netherlands, he started his career as a company consultant and successfully founded and managed several software and PLM companies in a wide variety of industries and countries.

and virtual prototyping have a huge part to play in this. The impact of different sizes and designs on material consumption and cost can be simulated immediately using the 3D model. This means that the cheapest solution is sought as early as during the development phase. Moreover, the number of physical prototypes can quickly be reduced to a third or even less. This gives rise not only to considerable savings but also to a significant increase in the speed of product development. Having 18 to 20 collections a year could soon become standard.

Textile network: What role does Industry 4.0 play in the fashion industry?

Chris Nicolaes: In the fashion industry there's still a lot of potential for automation and digitalisation on the one hand, and for networking the processes and data streams on the other. This slow start can also be seen as a great advantage. It gives companies the chance to make sensible decisions right from the beginning and to combine the best ideas of today with those of tomorrow. The centrepiece of our developments for the fashion industry is the fashion platform Lectra Fashion PLM. It links up all the divisions within a clothing company as well as those of its suppliers. Everyone involved, from design to production, works with identical, product-related data. The deluge of emails and Excel files suddenly becomes a problem of the past. The experience gleaned from our customers shows that this system saves them around 90 per cent of the time previously needed to locate the necessary

data. The time-to-market can be slashed by two to six weeks. The fact alone that data never has to be compiled twice, saves between 150 to 200 working days per season based on a workforce of 30. Overall production costs are cut by an average of 10 per cent. The opportunities are there, it's just a case of taking the right steps.

Textile network: And where does Lectra see itself with respect to digitalisation and Industry 4.0?

Chris Nicolaes: Since 2007, our cutting solutions, for example, have been operating with integrated intelligence; machine data is used to optimise production in real time and to control and plan maintenance accordingly. We at Lectra are increasingly focusing on streamlined production and cloud-based company software. In addition, we plough huge sums every year into research and development, equating to around 10 per cent of our annual sales. To enter into the digital age, you don't just need the right technologies but they also have to be implemented properly across all corporate processes. Drawing on 40 years of experience, we see it as our responsibility as a consultancy and service company to provide our customers with all the guidance they need.

Textile network: How does cooperation between suppliers and fashion companies look set to change, perhaps in the context of near-shoring in Eastern Europe?

Chris Nicolaes: We're certainly seeing brands in Germany, France and Italy opting more frequently for suppliers in Eastern Europe than in Asia.

Lectra Fashion Forward Event

From 11 to 12 October, Lectra invited customers and journalists from more than 20 countries around the world to take part in a high-calibre informative workshop in Bordeaux and Cestas. The speakers included, among others, Jami Dunbar of Under Armour, Mark Charlton of Calvin Klein, Celine U, Les Enphants and Edwin Keh of the Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel (HK RITA). The guests also gained a profound insight into the areas in which Lectra is currently focusing its research and development activities. textile-network.com features a detailed report on this exceptional event.

Near-shoring has obvious benefits in terms of short and quick transportation routes and reliable delivery and quality. Fashion companies are also more interested than ever in forging lasting partnerships and are keen to include their suppliers in their own snug, digital supply chains. We recently brought brands and manufacturers together at an event in Romania. Some of our customers there have already come a long way in terms of "digital production". You may be able to reduce wages more easily by going to the Far East, but if you can use IT solutions to build a bridge from development to production, creating a joint platform with full data continuity, it becomes possible to avoid errors caused by incorrect data transfer, saving time and materials, and at the end of the day also money. Whereas wage costs account for around 10-13 per cent, fabrics still swallow up the biggest portion of more than 50 per cent of the total cost of a garment.

Textile network: Does Lectra intend to exhibit at texprocess in 2017?

Chris Nicolaes: For some years now, we've been focusing on our own events. This enables us to respond more individually to our customers' expectations and it enables us to bring our products to life. We're also keen to focus on individual markets and customer business models, and we like to bring the market players together. The feedback we've received so far has been really positive, confirming that our strategy is right. Chris Nicolaes, many thanks for talking to us.

The questions were posed by Iris Schlomski on behalf of textile network.

[www.lectra.com]



In Bordeaux/Cestas, France, Lectra is researching and developing solutions for the textile world



CHINA

Two place on one trip

Hong Kong is a major apparel trading hub in Asia - Vicky Sung about the fashion shows Hong Kong Fashion Week (HKFW) and the FashionSZshow in Shenzhen.

Her conclusion: Korea is the largest overseas exhibitors for both the Intertextile Shenzhen and FashionSZshow. It means that there is room for foreign textiles and fashion brands to penetrate the China market. Shenzhen as a city is also becoming more urbane and beginning to play the role of a trading hub for all industries, especially for textiles and apparel, for South China. For an uncertain economic climate, these 3 events – HKFW, Intertextile Shenzhen and FashionSZshow had fared satisfactorily. The determination of the exhibitors to find new paths for business opportunities is most encouraging. The T&A industry is taking on the approach of making changes and upgrade. Faced with rather complex and challenging external factors, on the whole China's T&A industry has the strength to maintain steady development transiting from a low labour cost production to innovative and technology based. Once the uncertainty of the global economy is cleared the T&A business will pick up. As they say, "The Show Must Go On".

[www.messefrankfurt.com.hk]

[www.hktdc.com]

fashion

Dean

High flyer from Southern Germany

It is unusual for a twelve-year-old boy to ask his grandmother to help him make a dress for his own mum. That's what Dennis Dean Fisher did, and with him it didn't end with that one dress. Twelve years on, the fashion entrepreneur, now aged 24, has his own company headquarters in the Swabian town of Pfullingen.

Here in Pfullingen is Dean commissioned to design collections, employs eleven seamstresses and is on the way to his first collection in his own name, under the 'Dean' label. Dennis's grandmother was employed as a cutter

"We make anything that the customer wants," says owner Dennis Dean Fischer, "and that includes upcycling products such as pencil cases and belts from old bicycle tyres and inner tubes."

in the textile industry in Reutlingen; his grandfather worked at Stoll and developed flat knitting machines.

The Fascination of Clothing

"Clothing has always fascinated me," says Dennis, who after leaving school in Metzingen qualified as a tailor on a state-recognised course. There followed six months in retail and another six months with the company that he now owns. It previously traded under the name 'Belinski', producing only off-the-peg knitwear and woven bedlinen. When the company was put up for sale, Den-

nis – then just 21 years of age – did not hesitate for long.

Young entrepreneurship – 'Made in Germany'

He obtained financing with the aid of a guarantee bank, took over the seamstresses and the machine room and extended the lease on the premises. He employed someone to work in the office and undertook a "complete re-founding" of 'Dean', involving "setting up an office structure." He then set about acquiring customers, making contacts and nurturing them.

The company continues to produce bedlinen for its original customers. Dennis stands fair and square behind the real 'Made in Germany' concept and in his opinion, "we have no need to apologise for our wages and salaries in Germany." Nonetheless, he also relies on other European countries so that, for example, he can deliver quickly if necessary, and has also established contact for that purpose with a company in Romania. He says he has no



Dean – in Pfullingen eleven seamstresses work for Dean

Photos: Dean



wish to subject himself to the dictates of price reductions, since 'the sales' can ruin fashion. For his first womenswear collection, therefore, he wants to give himself time, rely on the zeitgeist but offer classic elements such as t-shirts, blouses and jackets. He aims to bring these to market for the 2017/18 season. Trousers, however, will not form part of that first collection. "Too complicated – it's expensive, getting the cut for a perfect fit." In any event, they are expected to

be bio-cotton products – that is, cotton from certified organic cultivation. His collection designs are already in demand from companies that want to differentiate themselves with an outfit of their own. He is currently designing t-shirts for employees of the radio broadcaster RT Neckar-Alb. "We make anything that the customer wants," says Dennis Dean Fischer, and that includes upcycling products such as pencil cases and belts from old bicycle tyres and inner tubes. Every

customer has the freedom to bring in their own style. Nobody is pigeonholed, according to the credo of the talented young fashion entrepreneur from Southern Germany. But quality is at the forefront – high quality fabrics, high quality work, fair and sustainable products and a love of detail. His aim is even broader: if he has his way, the German scene will enjoy a renaissance under the tagline: "Knowing each other and recommending each other." The country and the industry need

young entrepreneurs such as this. "'Dean' isn't just clothing but an appreciation of textile products."

[www.dedean.de]
[Ingrid Sachsenmaier]



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Kornit Digital

The future of textiles is digital (printing)

Just imagine – it's quick, it's highly individualised. The fashion is designed on a screen; the design is used to generate a pattern; the pattern is printed directly onto the fabric; the fabric is cut, sewn and pressed – and voilà! There you have your trendy new garment.

What once sounded like a dream has since evolved into a technological reality – a reality that is within reach. Kornit Digital recently demonstrated how this can be done at an exclusive workshop staged at its new premises in Düsseldorf-Rath. It is certainly fair to say that the attendees were deeply impressed with what state-of-the-art digital printing can achieve these days.

In an area of 500m² at the Kornit Democenter, the company's guests were invited to view the digital printing solutions from Kornit Digital (especially Allegro) as well as the products of technology partners Caldera, Zünd and Assyst. During the practical demonstrations, a complete live workflow was shown,

which included everything from the design and 3D visualisation of the garments to the printing and cutting and finally the finished textile.

Established in Israel in 2003, Kornit Digital has created a unique selling point for its textile printing solutions in that the pre-treatment of the textiles is fully integrated in the printing systems. Normally, textiles have to be pre-treated with a special fluid before they can be exposed to the inkjet printing process. This is the only way to ensure that the ink drops preserve their shape and position on the absorbent textile surfaces. This treatment is frequently applied to the textile with spray bottles or separate systems and has to be dried using a hot press or tunnel dry-

Following a demonstration of Kornit Digital's Allegro system, Kornit's partners Caldera (RIP and colour management), Assyst (pattern integration and 3D visualisation) and Zünd (cutting technology) presented their latest developments. Pictured here: Printmarker / Assyst

er before printing can take place. By contrast, the systems from Kornit apply the pre-treatment fluid in the printer. There is no need for intermediate drying as the printing can take place in a wet state, i.e. the ink is applied to the damp textile. The textile is dried in a final step and is immediately ready to wear.

Kornit's "Allegro" roll-to-roll printer operates with water-based pigment inks and is suitable for all fabric types be it cotton, polyester, viscose, wool, silk or blended cloth. The setting process takes place in the machine and consists of hot-air blow-drying. External finishing steps such as steaming or washing are no longer necessary. The printing process can thus be installed to a working area of roughly ten by seven metres. With the exception of air humidification, water consumption is negligible.

Thanks to a recirculating ink system, ink consumption is kept to a minimum. Spoonflower, an online marketplace for printed fabrics, is one of Allegro's first European clients. Any customer uploading a print design has the option to give other Spoonflower users access to their creations. If the design is used by other Spoon-





Photo: Kornit Digital

The new, generous premises give Kornit space to expand, leaving enough room for a spacious Demo-Center for customer visits and sample prints. The centre features various textile printing systems as well as the Allegro roll-to-roll printer

flower customers, the “designer” receives a reward. Spoonflower already has more than 3.5 million users worldwide and 350,000 designs. Headquartered in Durham, North Carolina / USA, the company already operates from three Allegro systems. Spoonflower has also established an office in Berlin where it installed another Allegro last spring. This latest move is seen as the company’s doorway into the European market.

Doing the possible

Caroline Okun of Spoonflower was the keynote speaker of the day (see our exclusive interview in the box). Wearing an Allegro-printed dress that she had created herself, Caroline captivated her audience as she

described Spoonflower’s humble beginnings in a garage back in 2008. Learning a lot as it went along, the company has since evolved into the most successful supplier in its sector. Spoonflower has introduced two additional products to complement its fabric printing business: Sprout Patterns is a patterning service transforming Spoonflower designs into attractive garments. The company also works with well-known designers in this sector. Dubbed Roostery, the other service focuses on upholstery fabrics. Both Sprout Patterns and Roostery provide an all-round production service on request; this means that customers can have a finished dress or rocking chair delivered straight to their home.

Spoonflower is a prime example of how a printing service provider can create completely new business models. As long as the entrepreneurial spirit and dynamic ideas are there, everything else will follow, ensuring that orders keep the machines working to capacity. The Kornit printing system incorporates properties that pave the way for a simple production set-up coupled

with volumes in “batches of one”. Mass customisation is within reach, allowing customers to receive a truly individual product, whilst benefiting from economies of scale.

In her presentation, Merav Zimmerman, Kornit’s Product Specialist for the Allegro, described the development of the textile printing market in the era of digital production technologies. She noted that four trends are pushing the shift from analogue to digital printing: growing environmental awareness among consumers, the customers’ desire to develop their own style, the need for short-term rewards and the influence of social media. This, she said, is giving rise to breath-taking growth rates: online textiles supplier Redbubble, for example, posted a 62 percent leap in sales in 2016. By comparison, bricks-and-mortar textile retailers saw their growth rate inch up by just one percent in the same period. Kornit Digital is planning to stage additional customer events on a variety of different topics in Düsseldorf. Textile network will keep you in the loop!

[www.kornit.com]

[Iris Schlomski]

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SPROUT PATTERNS

Printing your clothes made easy

Sprout Patterns is a new service that offers public indie sewing patterns that you combine with Spoonflower designs to create customized cut and sew projects. Spoonflower is the parent company and Sprout Patterns exclusively are using their designs to create projects. Spoonflower has a long and extensive history of printing in an environmen-



Caroline Okun

tally friendly way and is a leader in the digitally printed fabric community. Each project is digitally printed by Spoonflower at their Durham, NC headquarters. The platform opened to the public on October 15th, 2015. textile network spoke to Caroline Okun from Sprout Patterns about the idea behind the platform. Read the complete interview online.

Textile network: Sprout Patterns just celebrated its first anniversary — how has the website been received in the United States?

Caroline Okun: There was a beta version of Sprout called Sew Projects, which was hosted on the Spoonflower site. It was so successful that we decided to give it its own site and branding!

Textile network: Who are your target customers? Consumers, designers and start-ups or clothing companies?

Caroline Okun: Right now we're focused on customers who want to either sew their own garments and accessories or use our White Glove service to sew for them.

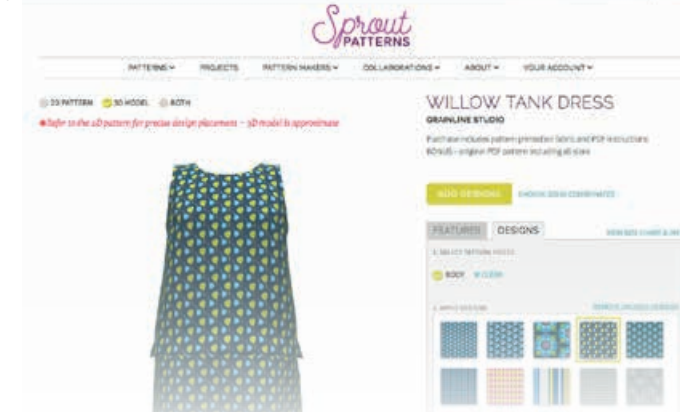


Photo: Sprout Patterns / spoonflower

Textile network: Let's say I want to make a dress with my own design. How does it work?

Caroline Okun: To order a dress with your own design, you first upload your design to Spoonflower. There you can order a test swatch in the fabric you like best, or you can order without one. You use the same login and password at Sprout as you do at Spoonflower. Once you're logged in, you select the dress pattern you like, choosing the fabric, size and any optional features. When you go to add a design, your Spoonflower designs will automatically show up on the screen as the first option. Next you just click on the design you like, then apply it to the dress. Once you like the placement of the design, just add it to your cart, enter your shipping information and purchase with either a credit card or PayPal.

Textile network: How long does it take to get my dress printed and shipped?

Caroline Okun: The dress will take anywhere from 5-8 days to print, then the shipping to Germany takes about 14 days, regular post. Of course the shipping in the US is a bit faster!

Textile network: As a designer, if I make my patterns and creations available to others, does Sprout Patterns offer a share in the profits when someone purchases them?

Caroline Okun: When someone purchases a project (dress, bag, whatever), with your design on it, you get 10% of the cost of the fabric, determined by how much fabric is used. We calculate according to the pixels ordered, so it's very precise!

[www.sproutpatterns.com]

EPSON, FOR.TEX, F.LLI ROBUSTELLI

New Monna Lisa textile printers

Epson, For.Tex and F.Lli Robustelli present the Monna Lisa Vinci and Monna Lisa Evo Tre, two new machines for digital textile production that, according to the manufacturer, reduce downtimes, whilst enhancing efficiency and flexibility. The new Epson TFP Precision Core print head is characterised by an improved positioning of the ink drops, leading to better printing quality, even at high speeds and irrespective of the number of passes. The service life of the print heads is reported to be two years longer than any other printing solution currently on

the market. Both machines use water-based Genesta inks, developed by Epson in cooperation with For.Tex specifically for the production of high-quality textiles. The companies Epson, Robustelli and For.Tex have been working together for around 15 years, pooling their expertise in the development of textile printing solutions. Frank Schenk, Head of ProGraphics and Industrial Printing: "The printing solution developed by the three companies is currently one of the best on the market. It reduces production times whilst improving the flexibility of man-



Product example Monna Lisa

ufacturing textiles with a diversity of designs, achieving high quality standards even in the case of small production lots. This addresses the needs of both the luxury textiles market

and fashion and apparel companies with discerning quality requirements."

[www.epson.de]

[www.robustelli.it]

[www.fortext.it]



IVGT

IVGT – Association news

The manufacturers' network

Networking is at the heart of everything the IVGT does. In a move to fuel the dialogue across the textile chain, the Industrial Association of Finishing, Fabrics, Yarns and Technical Textiles (IVGT) organised its first joint Facility Manager Debate in the spinning, weaving and finishing sector which took place from 28-29 September 2016 and attracted more than 60 participants from Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

It was, in fact, the 101st meeting for the 3-cylinder and rotor spinning mills, and even the 105th meeting for the weaving sector. Following invitations from Hch. Kettelhack GmbH & Co. KG and Setex Textil GmbH, visits were organised to the companies located in Rheine and Hamminkeln. The organisers engaged experts in the

field of software-based Spare Parts and Maintenance Management for the panel discussion and the technical debate. The event commenced with presentations on Smart Maintenance by the Competence Centre Maintenance Management at the Research Institute for Operations Management (FIR Aachen) and on the application of flexible methods by the Forum Vision Instandhaltung e.V.

Often "overlooked", narrow textiles are, in fact, one of the most innovative and technically demanding sectors in textile manufacturing. Ribbons, straps, braids and meshes are part of our everyday lives and are used in products such as car safety belts, shoulder straps on rucksacks, fishing nets on fishing trawlers and braided

stents in medical technology. No garment gets by these days without a textile label, with or without integrated RFID technology, and all goods, be they on a lorry or on their way to the International Space Station, have to be safely lashed down. Leading manufacturers of these products have joined forces within the IVGT to create a specialist group that meets on a regular basis to discuss technical issues.

The first-ever Saltex in Dornbirn from 5 to 7 October 2016, was seized by the organisation as an opportunity to meet with producers from Austria and Switzerland. The IVGT represented its members at an exhibition stand and organised a networking evening. Attendees also had the chance to visit the member company Alge Elastic



Participants at the first joint Facility Manager Debate from the fields of spinning, weaving and finishing

GmbH in Lustenau. Another meeting is planned for 2017 at the internationally leading trade fair Techtextil in Frankfurt am Main. According to a preliminary survey, additional companies look set to join them in 2017. The IVGT's stand F47 in the middle of Hall 3.1 will once again be available to members to use as a base.

[www.ivgt.de]



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Oeko-Tex

Confidence in Textiles

From product certification in accordance with the Oeko-Tex Standard 100, which was first introduced in 1992, the International Oeko-Tex Association has now, through the continuous further development and expansion of their portfolio, established itself as a full-service provider for independent certifications and services for greater sustainability along the textile value-creation chain.

Oeko-Tex is now also taking account of this strategic change from niche provider for human-ecological product safety to a global system solution for brands, retailers and manufacturers with a new brand architecture. The focus is on the Oeko-Tex logo and the claim "Confidence in Textiles",

A new brand strategy

"The theme of sustainability has represented increasing challenges for our customers from industry and trade for years and they are looking for suitable solutions", explains Oeko-Tex General Secretary Georg Dieners. "With our product portfolio we are able to provide wide-ranging assis-

tance for this. We offer practical tools that they can use to successfully overcome the varied requirements at all operational levels. For our customers, however, it does not matter what the individual solutions are called. The important thing for them is that Oeko-Tex is a reliable and competent partner. Therefore," summarises Dieners, "in our future communication, the umbrella brand "Oeko-Tex" and our slogan "Confidence in Textiles" will be in the foreground. Our individual product modules, or rather the sufficiently known brands within the Oeko-Tex system, are arranged under the umbrella brand to strengthen this and meet the needs of our customers."

Oeko-Tex has already presented the new brand design during the market launch of the Mystep database, the Made in Green product label and the Eco Passport certification for textile chemicals. Now the modernised appearance will also be used with the most well-known Oeko-Tex brand, the Standard 100, and the Step certification. The new Standard



The new umbrella logo

With the new umbrella logo, the Oeko-Tex Association is conveying their importance as a global full-service partner for the implementation of greater sustainability along the textile value-creation chain. The current Oeko-Tex portfolio consists of five certifications and services for manufacturers, brands and retailers along the textile supply chain. Over the past almost 25 years Oeko-Tex logo and the claim "Confidence in Textiles" has become known across the industry – an international synonym for effective consumer protection, responsible handling of chemicals and the use of environmentally friendly production technologies and compliance with fair working conditions.

100 product label and the refreshed Step logo for B2B communication is also be available to more than 10,000 partner companies around the world. Also as part of these changes, the Oeko-Tex certification centre in Frankfurt (Main) ceased operations on June 30th. "Germany was the only country within the Oeko-Tex Association in which the laboratory tests and the issue of the certificates in accordance with the Oeko-Tex Standard 100 have previously been carried out by two separate institutions", states Dieners to explain the closure of the certification centre. "However, globally standardised processes and structures relating to the certification process as per the Standard 100 do not just simplify the work for us," says Dieners,

"they also simplify the work for our customers. They will have a central contact person in the future with whom they can discuss all issues relating to the certification." Oeko-Tex is an international association of independent research and testing institutes focused on enhancing both product safety and sustainable production in the textile industry. The Association is made up of 16 member institutes with representative offices in more than 60 countries all over the world. As an official Oeko-Tex member institute in Germany, the Hohenstein Textile Testing Institute GmbH & Co. KG will take on the laboratory tests as well as the issue of Standard 100 certificates.

[www.hohenstein.de]
[www.oeko-tex.com]



GT Nexus

Supply Chain financing redefined with the Cloud

The classic system for financing trade and suppliers is as old as global trade itself. It is true that in the last 20 years, advancing computerisation has automated many of the processes that were originally paper-based, and has thus made them significantly more efficient. Supply chain financing has not truly been revolutionised, however, by electronic developments in payment processes.

What if all of the data throughout the entire value-added network of a company and its trading partners could be taken into account in the decision-making processes of supply chain financing? It is a question that many leading companies have asked themselves many times. The answer is not merely wishful thinking. Supply chain financing is reinventing itself, thanks to the Cloud and Big Data. These two technologies of the last decade have the potential to revolutionise supply chain financing and to turn the vision of complete supply chain transparency into a reality.

Nowadays, it is possible to collate all of a company's processes and transactions with all of its trading partners in real time via Cloud platforms: every order, every step in production, every quality check, every despatch, every inward delivery, every stock level, every sale, every return. The complete picture, from the cotton field to the shop shelf – and beyond.

The vast quantities of data thus generated can be called up over the cloud, simultaneously and in real time, and if necessary selectively shared with every participant in the supply chain.

If all of the data throughout the entire value-added network of a company and its trading partners could be taken into account in the decision-making processes of supply chain financing – what then? It is a question that many leading companies have asked themselves many times. The answer has already become a reality today. Supply chain financing is reinventing itself, thanks to the Cloud and Big Data.

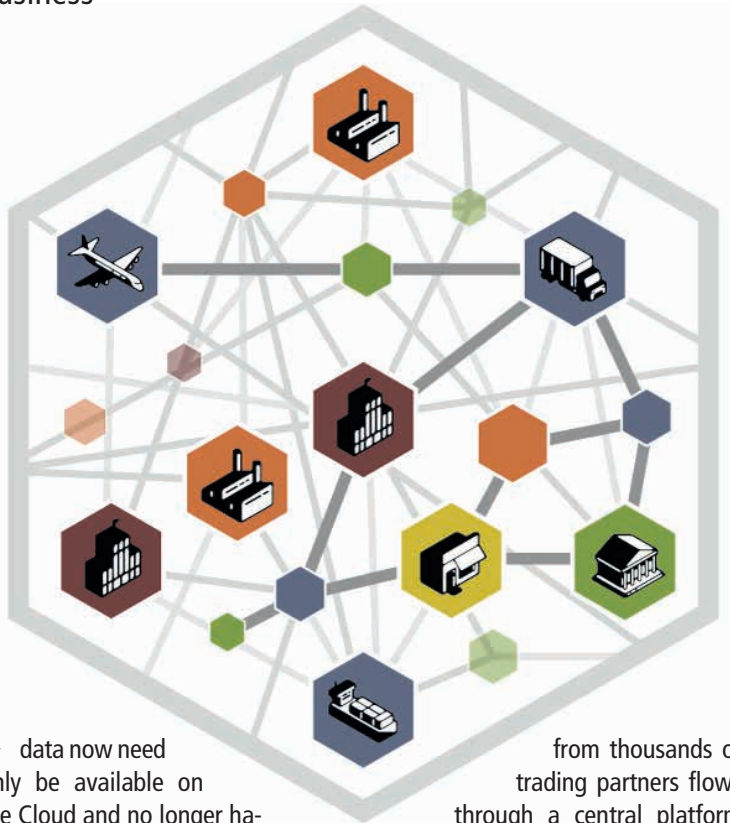
Credit based on adherence to social standards

Companies such as Puma and jeans manufacturer Levi's, for example, are making use of a World Bank initiative that allows advantageous terms of credit to suppliers who adhere to high environmental standards and

ensure socially sustainable working conditions for their employees. Credits are based on a scoring system allocated according to a verification process.

The suppliers receive credits from the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a subsidiary of the World Bank. For the IFC, it is important to make the programme scalable. The essential goal is to improve working conditions in small and micro-businesses in emerging nations in Asia, Latin America and Africa, not only in individual pilot projects but across the board.

At this point, the Cloud comes into play: the cost of equipping small businesses in underdeveloped regions with expensive hardware and software would be too great to automate a programme supply chain financing. For that reason, the necessary software runs in the Cloud. Even more important, however, is the fact that all orders, invoices, transport documents and other ►



► data now need only be available on the Cloud and no longer have to be despatched all the way across the world. This allows access to the data to be better managed and controlled. It is these controls that give the programme the necessary level of security. All 550 of Levi's suppliers have now committed themselves to the high standards required under the programme. Many of them are now in a position, for the first time ever, to finance their production operation independently of the local banking system.

Cheaper loans on the basis of Big Data

The programme, which was set up by the Cloud platform GT Nexus together with the finance service provider Seabury TFX, goes a step further than this. It makes decisions on granting credit on the basis of the supplier's entire transaction history, instead of making a supplier's creditworthiness dependent on its balance sheet and any security offered. Analysis of data from this transaction history and from the thousands of other suppliers and customers on the platform allows for a far more comprehensive and thus more meaningful assessment of the risk of default. Has all production and have all deliveries been made according to plan? How often were which milestones reached on time or missed? The fact that all transaction data

from thousands of trading partners flows through a central platform generates an enormous potential for analysis which changes the principles of supply chain financing fundamentally.

Until now, the challenge has been as follows. Traditionally, financing was available only against checked invoices. The supplier therefore had to pay in advance – for purchases of raw materials, for example – in order even to produce and deliver the goods that had been ordered. From the banks' point of view, the risk of default was too high, making supply chain financing on this model almost impossible and threatening in particular the very existence of small suppliers. The new model works on the basis of rewards: if a supplier has always delivered reliably and on time for a number of years, this ought to be taken into account.

Big Data analysis, by examining the supplier's entire transaction history, makes it possible to grant access to credit on a larger scale as soon as the order is placed. This is the new world of supply chain financing. This type of financing takes pressure off micro-suppliers in developing countries, secures their existence and ensures security in the supply chain, at the same time as improving sustainability in the supply chains of the companies themselves.

[www.gtnexus.de]

[Stefanie Wagensonner]

What if all of the data throughout the entire value-added network of a company and its trading partners could be taken into account in the decision-making processes of supply chain financing?

Two questions: Where does the supplier data come from? And how does it get into the Cloud?

Stefanie Wagensonner answers:

"Every supplier, logistics company and partner is connected to the Cloud. Depending on the company's needs, this can be done either via an interface or even a simple internet connection. In this way, the data from all the partners in the supply chain is made available in the Cloud, rendering it visible to everyone involved in the process. The logistics partners involved in the transportation of a product, for example, are constantly updating the current status of a product (e.g. the truck has left the warehouse, the product is being loaded onto a ship, the ship is leaving port, etc.). Both the senders and recipients of such information can trace the location of each product, plan the next steps and, in the case of unforeseen delays, make alternative arrangements more quickly and efficiently.



Our author, Stefanie Wagensonner

Stefanie Wagensonner is the Marketing Manager for Germany, Austria and Switzerland at the Infor group company GT Nexus, the largest Cloud platform in the world for global trade and supply chain management.

About GT Nexus

GT Nexus, an Infor group company, operates the largest Cloud-based network in the world for global trade and supply chain management. More than 25,000 companies from all industries, including Caterpillar, Adidas Group, Lenovo, Citi, Pfizer, Columbia Sportswear, DHL, Levi Strauss & Co., Electrolux and HP as well as the largest German logistics service providers, DHL and DB Schenker.

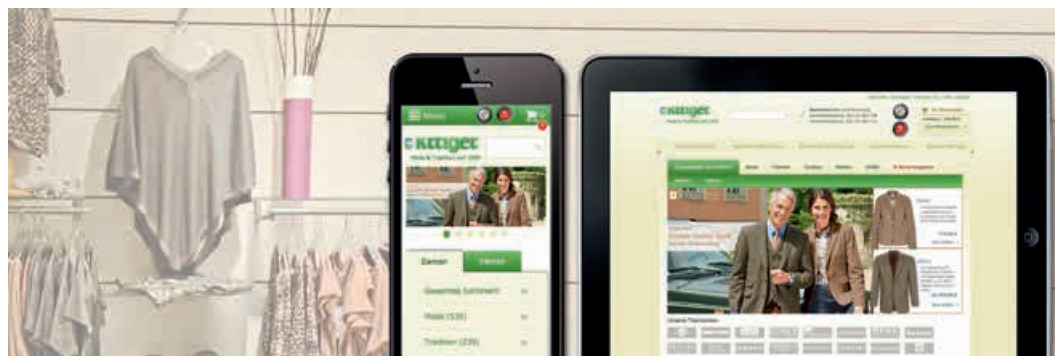
Nestlé and Sears, use GT Nexus as the standard platform for cross-company cooperation. Trade, industry, logistics service providers and banks work with a shared database and, by means of different trading and logistics functions, optimise their global flows of goods documentation, information and trading documents from order placement to payment.

Krüger Kleidung

From traditional retailer to omni-channel trader

Having analysed its target group, extended its product range accordingly and developed a comprehensive e-commerce strategy, Krüger Kleidung, a German fashion house specialising in country and traditional fashion, has repositioned itself, advancing from a mail order company with a flagship store in Steinheim, Germany, to an omni-channel trader.

When they entered the managerial echelons of Krüger Kleidung, siblings Daniel Krüger and Sabine Stuke were faced with the challenge of equipping the company for the future. The objective was to attract new consumer groups whilst holding onto their existing customers. And so it was that a new idea was born. The goal was to create target group shops that evolved organically from the core business of traditional country fashion and special collections for outsizes. "The aim was to position ourselves in separate, clearly defined markets," says Daniel Krüger. "The era of cata-



Online store on tablet and smartphone

logue shopping is gradually drawing to an end as younger customers gravitate towards online shopping rather than leafing through catalogues. We were finding it impossible to reach all our target groups with a single approach and so we came up with our target group concept, involving different online stores."

A full-service partner

Limited resources and the complexities of developing and realising digital distribution channels led Krüger to find a full-service partner in w&co MediaServices. The media services provider was charged with advising the company in all things e-commerce and online marketing whilst providing the necessary long-term services from a single source. Krüger's first challenge was to carve out a distinctive place in the market

for its five online stores designed for different target groups – not only in terms of content, but also branding, and coordinated customer services and assistance. Secondly, Krüger was eager to ensure that the development and operation of the online shops would be sustainable and economically viable as part of an holistic omni-channel marketing strategy. Ultimately, the established mail order business, the retail stores and the growing e-commerce operations were to be united within a coherent sales and brand strategy. The company's first encounter with digital trade was in 2007 when krueger-kleidung.de went live as the company's main online store. Featuring a more traditional e-commerce design, it showcased the full range of products for its well-established customer groups. Krüger also uses this platform for its well- ►



Current collection
Krüger Women



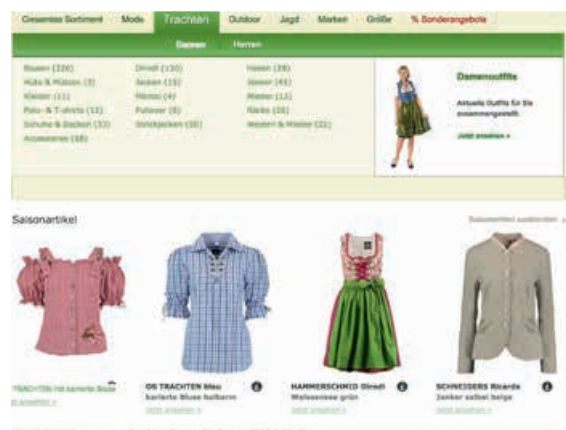
From left to right:
Josef Krüger, Sabine
Stuke, Daniel Josef
Krüger



► known online catalogues, for telephone consultation and to take orders for the print version of the catalogue. In 2014, krueger-kleidung.de switched to responsive design for a more convenient shopping experience, also for mobile devices. Although the main online store was witnessing a steady rise in sales, the way in which the market was developing sent out a clear message: traditional costumes in classical and trendy designs were gaining in popularity among young consumers across the country. It became evident, therefore, that this target group would have to be approached in a different way. In response, Krüger tweaked its range for customers aged under 30 and, creating the brand alm-fashion.de, launched a progressive online sub-store in 2010. In 2012, alm-couture.de took the same approach and was followed in the same year by the launch of two more online shops: krueger-grosse-grossen.de and trachtenmodewelt.de. Online stores, mail order, online marketing and promoting sales at retail – the challenges facing Krüger's omni-channel commerce are diverse and involve complex, time-sensitive processes from the concept through to the de-

Current collection
Krüger Men

Screenshot of the
website



sign. This task has become even more complicated since the opening of Krüger's new "Trendhütte" store with "Men's Lounge", which targets young consumers in Steinheim.

The sheer complexity of the job in hand prompted Krüger to outsource much of its marketing communication. "As an all-round service provider, w&co knows and appreciates all our needs and is able to give us specific advice and take the strain, freeing us up to focus on our strategic marketing direction," explains Daniel Krüger, adding "At the same time, w&co works with a central Enterprise Content Management System with digital workflows, giving us direct access to all the relevant marketing processes, thus simplifying and speeding up coordination." w&co creates the integrated IT infrastructure for omni-channel commerce and produces content on behalf of Krüger. This effectively means that w&co does the product photography in its own studio for all the e-commerce sites, as well as for the catalogue and marketing. The presentation formats – be it a dummy, a torso, or laid on a surface – are created in a single shoot; the copywriters are also on set so that they have direct access to the garments, making it easier for them to communicate the main features and package them in SEO-ready texts. The content is created in all its variations and versions and centrally organised within an Enterprise Content Management System without being assigned to specific media.

The processes of compiling, proof-reading and releasing the media content are reflected in dovetailed technical workflows for a single-source approach. This guarantees that different media channels are efficiently supplied with content through system-controlled processes that draw on a single reservoir of content.

Krüger and external service companies can access the system using standard browsers with defined roles and rights. This approach speeds up the processes, avoiding errors and "frictional losses".

The online stores are directly linked to the content platform, simplifying cooperation with respect to content and shop management. The same applies to the print and online catalogues, for which w&co also creates the layout. Similarly, w&co assumes responsibility for the creative design of all the advertising featured in the online stores and the newsletters. w&co uses responsive design not only for the main store but also for alm-fashion.de and trachtenmodewelt.de, whilst including necessary service functions such as a real-time chat for website visitors. This enables Krüger to approach, above all, younger target groups in the medium price bracket, who expect individual interaction and easy and convenient access to shops, also through their smart phones.

The collaboration with w&co as its core service provider has enabled Krüger to streamline its processes to great effect. Campaigns can be run more quickly, repetitions are avoided and the number of interfaces are minimised – inevitably leading to cost savings. The ensuing competitive gains are huge. Krüger Kleidung is now in a position to target its customers individually and in an event-driven manner thanks to its perfectly coordinated mix of print and digital marketing.

[www.krueger-kleidung.de]
[Gisela Knabl]



Prato has been heralded as the textile centre of Europe for over 800 years, but the city can be proud of a much longer history and looks steadfast into the future.

For Prato, quality is not just a slogan, it is the essence of being. Especially its wool yarns are renowned, maybe today more than ever, for their attractive and innovative quality. Not surprisingly, demand and exports are on the rise.

The Manchester of Tuscany

In Prato is all about "Made in Italy". Prato is proud of a long history and looks steadfast into the future!

Already in the Middle Ages little botteghe specialised in selling a selective range of goods and the city had its own "wool association".

Following the advent of industrialisation in Italy during the late 19th century, company after company started to specialise in certain products and services. This development earned Prato the nickname "the Manchester of Tuscany" and laid the foundation for an economic ripple effect still felt today.

The city experienced its biggest boom in the 1950s when the number of people working in

the textile industry exploded from 22,000 to over 60,000 in the span of 30 years and cotton, viscose, linen and silk joined traditional wool in the ranks of high quality products. Today, Prato covers about 3% of the European textile production with upholstery and decorative fabrics as well as home-ware in all shapes and forms gaining in importance.

Prato's textile products and know-how are sought after by prestigious designers and luxury labels such as Burberry, Prada, Valentino and Armani. Approximately 8,000 textile companies and their 35,000 employees are spread out across 13 small villages as well as the city itself, covering an

area of about 700 square kilometres. Unfortunately, however, the remaining high numbers of suspected illegal Chinese tailoring shops and factories pose a challenging problem for Prato and could taint its reputation.

Prato is proud of its (textile) history

Previously housed in Prato's town hall, the textile museum Museo del Tessuto moved into the former workshops of the Campolmi textile mill in 2003. Spread out over 2,400 square metres within the mediaeval city walls, it displays textile machines and technologies as well as an exhaustive selection of historical fabrics. The muse-

um also regularly hosts special exhibitions. Apart from the must-see museum and the charming old town, Prato also offers a unique shopping experience with many companies opening their doors for factory sales of premium fabrics.

Despite several Tuscan businesses reporting declining export figures for the first time since 2009, such as in the food sector (except olive oil), the textile and fashion industry not only remains steady but is growing. Prato's textile and clothes exports alone achieved a plus of 8% during the first half of 2016, reducing the number of people in short-time work at the same time.

[Ingrid Sachsenmaier]



TEXTILE NETWORK ONLINE

Our industry on social media

Textile network is available not only in print but is also very much at home in the digital media. If we write a story on textile-network.de or textile-network.com, it is continued in our magazine, shared on Facebook, mentioned on Twitter and presented on YouTube. So as you can see, we're networking every day in many ways. And you can get networking too!

What topics does our industry discuss on social media? textile-network presents all of the important posts on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram etc live and around the clock on <https://textile-network.de/Social-Stream>. This new service allows both you and us to actively monitor certain market sectors and gain a generally good overview of what's going on.

Is your news still missing? Getting involved is really easy! As with our live reporting from the Mtex+ trade fair last spring, it's the hashtag that decides: Simply use the #textilenetwork on your social media posts and follow our Facebook page.

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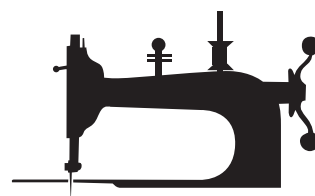
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Franz-Ludwig-Straße 7a
96047 Bamberg/Germany
Postfach 2069
96011 Bamberg/Germany
Phone: +49 951 861-0
Fax: +49 951 861-158
www.textile-network.com
www.meisenbach.de

Managing Director: Ulrich Stetter

Head of editorial office: Sabine Stenzel

Head of online editorial office: Daniel Keienburg

Manager sales / distribution / marketing: Christian Matthe

Editor-in-chief: Dipl.-Ing. Iris Schlömski
Phone: +49 5527 979440
Fax: +49 5527 979441
Nordhäuser Straße 34
37115 Duderstadt/Germany
i.schlömski@meisenbach.de

Editorial Staff: Anja Menzel (Assistenz)
Phone: +49 951 861-117
Fax: +49 951 861-170
a.menzel@meisenbach.de

Contributing Iris Schlömski, Regine Hövelmann, Heike Frömbgen, Gisela Gozdzik, Stephan L.K. Freichel, Ilona Schulz, Ingrid Sachsenmaier, Stefanie Wagen-sonner, Gisela Knabl, Vicky Sung

Advertising Sales: Bernd Raitchel
Phone: +49 951 861-145
Fax: +49 951 861-161
b.raitchel@meisenbach.de

Advertising Administration: Matthias Fichtel
Phone: +49 951 861-169
Fax: +49 951 861-161
m.fichtel@meisenbach.de

Responsibility: Responsible according to the German press law for Editorial: Dipl.-Ing. Iris Schlömski for Advertisement: Bernd Raitchel (both: Franz-Ludwig-Straße 7a, 96047 Bamberg/Germany)

Layout: Andrea Mühl

Print: Schleunungdruck GmbH
Eltertstraße 27
97828 Markttheidenfeld/Germany

Sales: Ulla Schiel
Phone: +49 951 861-101
Fax: +49 951 861-158
vertrieb@meisenbach.de

Distribution: Meisenbach GmbH
Reader's service textile network
Franz-Ludwig-Straße 7a
96047 Bamberg
Phone: +49 951 861-101
Fax: +49 951 861-158
vertrieb@meisenbach.de

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The next issue of **textile**network will be published on 27th January 2017 and these are some of our topics:

Odlo – Always one step ahead

Always be one step ahead!" is the maxim of Odd Roar Lofterød, who founded Odlo back in 1946. His innovative spirit shapes the Swiss company even today. In its most recent move, the enterprise has implemented the "WP Model" collection management /PLM solution. Read our first progress report since its introduction.



Photo: Odlo

Photo: Thursday Finest



Companies that have achieved success

Thursday Finest – a Brooklyn-based husband-and-wife team is seeking to disrupt the traditional business model for textile and apparel manufacturing with a startup company that produces neckties, socks and scarves on a custom-order basis using the latest 3D knitting technology. We report on Thursday Finest and two other equally as innovative textile start-ups in the USA.

New series in 2017: Polyester, cotton and more

In 2015, global fibre consumption amounted to around 98 million tonnes! The proportion of natural fibres totalled 30 million tonnes, 23 million tonnes of which was cotton. In the 1960s, global consumption amounted to no more than a quarter of today's total, with subsequent growth being achieved primarily by polyester. In our series in 2017, we will be taking a closer look at the materials on which our textile products are based. Part 1: Man-made fibres.



Photo: fotolia

Off to Africa – Mauritius and Madagascar

Mauritius and Madagascar are island idylls in the Indian Ocean. Luxury tourism accounts for a large portion of the GDP in both independent republics. However, the islands also offer exciting opportunities for the global sourcing sector and, in view of the world's growing interest in Africa, they are increasingly edging onto the radar. textile network provides some fascinating insights.



Photo: Margalida Resort & Spa, Flic-en-Flac, Mauritius



Global Lifestyle Monitor IX – 2016

What are the Germans saying?

According to the statistics, in 2015 the Germans spent EUR 64.1bn on clothing, while consumers in the European Union as a whole shelled out EUR 320.4bn on fashion. The Global Lifestyle Monitor 2016, conducted by Cotton USA, indicates that spending on clothing between now and 2030 is likely to increase moderately: an increase of 11% is expected in Germany and of 20% across the EU. The international study is conducted every one to two years and examines changes in consumer purchasing behaviour in fashion and clothing. The majority (68%) of Germans are prepared to pay something extra for higher quality. Specialist independents are the most frequently used shops, at 23% – but clothing chains and online stores are almost as popular, at 22% each. In fourth place and lagging far behind in shoppers' affections come department stores and off-price stores, at only 8% each. The figures were similar for Europe as a whole. Over a half of all Germans enjoy buying new clothes and shop spontaneously; 43% do so at least once a month. And although consumers are opting increasingly for omni-channel shopping, they still prefer to make their actual purchases in a physical store. Having said this, as many as 34% of the Germans interviewed were inspired by the internet to make fashion purchases.

Where fashion is concerned, two out of three consumers trust the brand and retail chain websites more than others. The POS display was a source of inspiration to 33% of respondents and an identical proportion turned to the outfits of friends and colleagues. Other people were the inspiration for 25%.

Research on the web, shop in store

Seven in ten consumers in Germany buy predominantly from bricks-and-mortar shops but use the internet for an initial pre-check. 54% go to the web to search for fashion, 39% compare prices from different suppliers and 27% look for information on special offers. Most consumers would prefer to try on the garments and hold and feel them before buying. Since this is impossible on the web, one-third do not buy via the internet at all. 32% of respondents express concerns about the security of personal data, while for 29% unclear postage costs are a barrier to purchase. On the other hand, 28% of participants in the survey do not buy because the quality is unclear. The most important aspect of clothing for 96% of German men and women is comfort, while quality and fit also have a significant influence on the decision whether or not to buy an item. For 91% and 90% respectively,

however, colour and price also have to be right. The clothes must represent good value for money.

Increasing popularity of online shopping

In spite of all the reservations, online purchases of clothing and shoes are expected to rise by 32% by the year 2020. Whereas online expenditure in 2015 lay at about EUR 9.9bn, by 2020 a figure of EUR 13bn is anticipated. More detailed information from the suppliers

about material, quality, fit etc. can make a contribution here, as can better support when shopping online.

Sustainable production: it's down to producers

Two-thirds of German consumers believe it is the responsibility of the manufacturers to ensure sustainable production methods. They blame the producers and the brand if this is not the case. Although more than half of them consider sustainability to be important, however, fewer than a third of all respondents at present actively seek it out. Cotton is and remains the most popular natural fibre: 78% of Germans prefer goods with a high cotton content, which they believe offer functionality combined with emotional benefits and sustainability.

The Global Lifestyle Monitor

The international Global Lifestyle Monitor is conducted every two years by Cotton USA in cooperation with Cotton Incorporated. Between November 2015 and January 2016, Ipsos Public Affairs Inc. interviewed some 10,000 female and male consumers across ten countries (approx. 1000 interviews per country). In Germany 60.1% of the sample for the online interview were women and 39.9% were men.

Important finding from the current

German consumers buy clothing more impulsively than other Europeans and Americans, whilst also attaching more importance to quality. They use the internet primarily to compare products and as a source of information. German consumers expect their fashion to be sustainable. Consumers in the UK shop less impulsively and are always searching for a good bargain. Italian consumers give sustainability high priority. 66 percent of Italians say that sustainability is important, whilst 58 percent actively seek it out when they go shopping. Turkish consumers still prefer to go shopping in town, with online shopping still struggling to catch on in a big way..

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