KNITTING TRADE JOURNAL

September / October 2020

Timeless classics

Knitting digital connections at Pitti Filati

Smart feet
Sensor technology for knitted uppers

Trans-technology
Warp meets weft in the machinery sector

Robust response
Knitting solutions in the Covid-19 fight

The technical magazine for the global knitting industry

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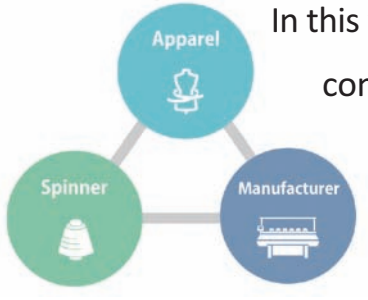

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Features

Every issue

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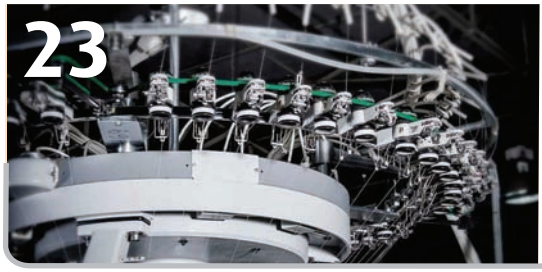

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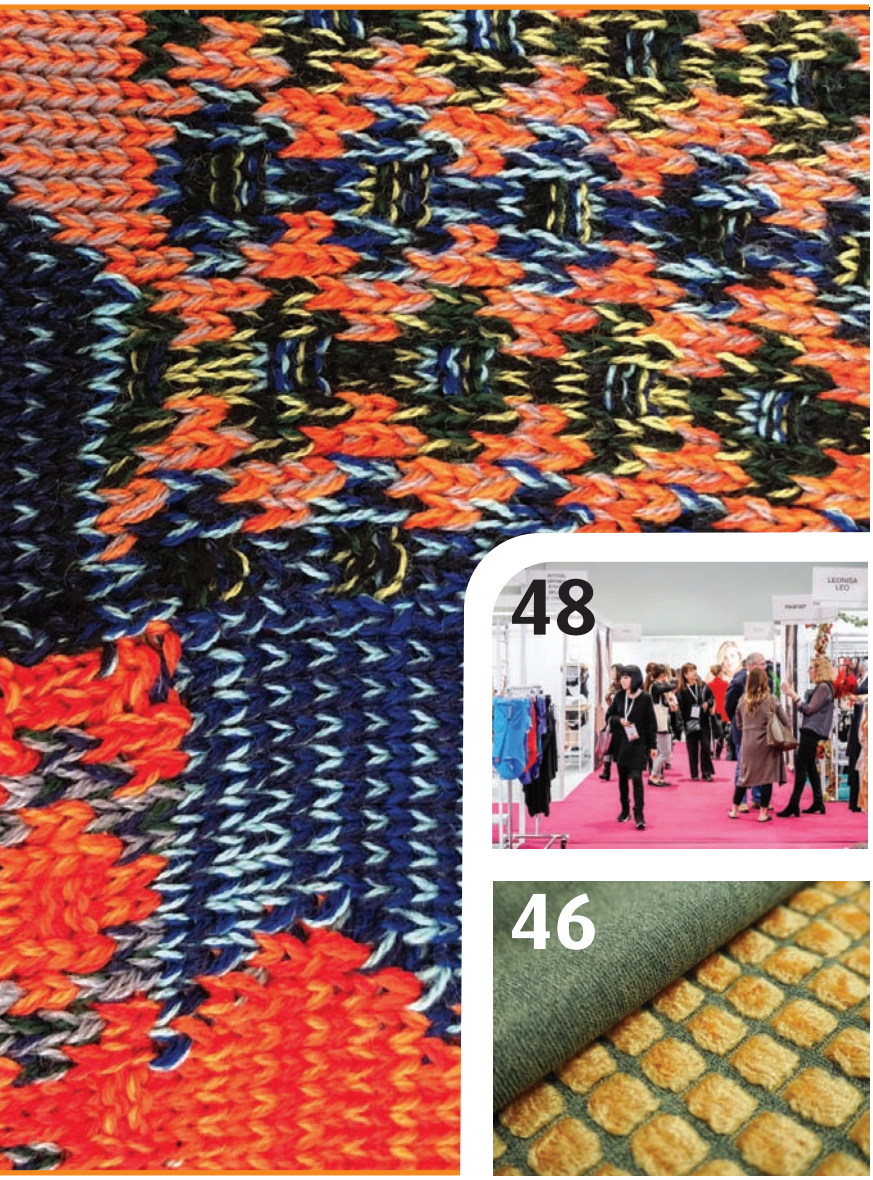

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Virtual opportunities

Despite the limitations forced upon the global knitting and hosiery industries by the coronavirus pandemic, we are starting to see a return to a degree of normality with virtual and online events picking up the slack of physical exhibitions, meetings and other face-to-face events.

As we know, the industry has been severely affected by the strict limitations of the lockdown with a dramatic slowdown in production and drop in consumption. Even though normal service is resuming in knitting mills, strict travel restrictions mean that trade shows and other elements of the industry have turned to new and different strategies to get their messages across.

Prior to preparing this latest issue, *Knitting Trade Journal* took a trip to Pitti Connect, the new Pitti Filati digital platform where we found this season's new yarn collections, many of which are discussed on page 40 of this issue.

As Agostino Poletto, general manager of Pitti Immagine declared: "We were looking for solutions to the emergency, but we also found opportunities for tomorrow." Indeed, Pitti Connect has impressed with a strong technological offering, bringing a vital element of continuity that will take us towards 2021 and beyond.

As expected, we are also seeing the knitting and related industries continuing in their global response to the coronavirus pandemic with a number of innovations for the personal and protective equipment sector.

The VDMA, the German textile machinery association recently offered a series of webinars with companies outlining the roles they have played in the response to the global pandemic.

Topics of the first two 'Textile Machinery Webtalks were Technologies for the production of melt-blown nonwovens for respiratory protection masks (FFP masks and surgical masks), and Technologies for the production of respiratory protection masks (FFP masks and surgical masks). The third session was entitled Technology Solutions To Produce Fully-Fashioned Community Face Masks and included experts from Karl Mayer, Stoll By Karl Mayer and Jakob Müller who presented their technologies for producing everyday textile masks to an international expert audience. Further details on the webinars and the wider industry response are available on page 34.

Online conferencing has also been available from flat knitting solutions provider Shima Seiki which held an event recently to introduce its new design software and web services which, says the company will aid the sustainable and digital transformation of the fashion industry.

As you'll find out on page 24 of this issue, a key focus of the online event, watched exclusively by Shima Seiki customers and other guests, was virtual sampling with the company outlining how the fashion and textile industries can survive under the unprecedented conditions brought about by the coronavirus pandemic.

Despite the restrictions, there is still much to discuss. Thankfully, the knitting and hosiery industries continue to provide the opportunities to do so.

Haydn Davis
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What's hot on knittingtradejournal.com – our most popular online stories

Apple patent for knitted smartglove

California - Apple has been awarded a patent for a knitted 'Smartglove' that is designed to work with the tech firm's other Virtual Reality innovations such as the Mixed Reality Headset.

Virtual Texworld opens its doors

Paris - With Messe Frankfurt France's September shows postponed, the digital platforms of Texworld Paris and its sister shows has opened its virtual doors.

Delta Galil swoops for Bare Necessities

Tel Aviv - Delta Galil is adding to its online portfolio with the acquisition of intimates retailer, Bare Necessities from Walmart, Inc.

Optimism for Bangladesh knitters

Dhaka - Knitwear manufacturers in Bangladesh have welcomed an upsurge in orders with lockdown relaxations prompting a resumption of the country's vital knitwear export industry.

Global brands and retailers have begun reinstating orders for garments as COVID-19 lockdown restrictions ease, reportedly triggering a bounce back by Bangladesh's exports to record levels.

Shipments of readymade garments were responsible for the country's export earnings for July reaching a record US$3.91 billion, the highest ever figure for a single month, according to the *New Age*.

It represented an increase of 0.59 per cent - or US$23.06 million - year-on-year from US$3.88 billion in the same month of last year, said the newspaper, quoting Export Promotion Bureau data.

The rebound in export sales followed six months of negative growth as cancelled and delayed orders triggered by the coronavirus pandemic cost Bangladesh's garment industry, which is responsible for 85 per cent of the country's exports, more than US$3 billion.

However, Faisal Samad, senior vice president with the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), told KTJ's sister publication Ecotextile News that the statistics actually showed that garment exports were actually slightly down - by 0.2 per cent - on July 2019.

"The only positive here is we are better in July than June where it was down six per cent, but the reality is the increase in export in July is due to most orders which were held up in May and June cleared in July, there were no new orders which have led to this," he said.

"Overall industry is in recovery mode, and we are hopeful for business to return in the last quarter of 2020."

Industry experts said the July figures were largely due to a pre-Eid shipment rush and speculated that the growth in August might be negative.

"The earnings in the first month of the current fiscal indicate that export will rescue the economy of Bangladesh," Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh executive director Ahsan Mansur told New Age on Tuesday.

"Still we are processing the orders placed before the pandemic and we have to wait for a few months to see whether the trend of July would sustain or not."

Innovation centre opens up possibilities for knitted uppers

Changhua - German chemicals giant BASF has opened new Footwear Innovation Center in Taiwan, which includes demonstrations of the latest developments for the production of new-generation knitted uppers.

Taiwan is regarded as a key footwear-manufacturing hub in Asia with the new facility located within the footwear-manufacturing site of its strategic partner Longterm Concept (LTC) in Changhua, Taiwan.

The 7,000 square-foot centre is described as an immersive environment where BASF can help various brands to drive footwear transformation, highlighting the company's footwear materials and the latest footwear manufacturing technologies from LTC to fulfill the latest design needs.

"Taiwan is Asia's hub for many footwear manufacturing firms and has a longstanding history with a powerful network of designers," said Andy Postlethwaite, senior vice president, Asia Pacific, Performance Materials, BASF. "Differentiation is the core ingredient needed to win in the footwear industry. We are committed to constantly innovating and co-creating with our customers. The Footwear Innovation Center offers footwear customers an immersive and collaborative experience to co-create innovative components, processing, and solutions together. Also, the center will provide our strategic partners and customers with direct access to advanced technologies and high-performance materials in one place, helping them advance in the footwear market."

Combining LTC's latest footwear manufacturing technologies with BASF's material expertise in footwear, the center will enable brands to address common operational challenges, optimize manufacturing processes, and improve efficiencies. The new facility will also test and refine material innovations within a shorter timeframe, as well as evaluate concepts on a global scale. A previous collaboration between BASF and LTC on X-Swift – an athleisure shoe that showcases five BASF's advanced material innovations – was also made possible through a fully connected footwear manufacturing facility from LTC.

The Footwear Innovation Center includes three main zones: The Design Zone – an interactive display area of performance materials and artworks that stimulate footwear design processes. This area features BASF's performance materials including Freeflex, a thermoplastic polyurethane (TPU) fibre made with Elastollan, which is designed for use on knitted uppers.

Elsewhere, the Creation Zone showcases existing design works to encourage ideation and co-creation of breakthrough footwear solutions. It also features a sports flooring series made of Infinergy SP, a special grade of E-TPU from BASF, and a full PU impermeable structure certified by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF). The centre includes state-of-the-art footwear design software, in-house mold-making Computer Numerical Control machines, automated PU injection machines, and upper knitting machines that enable new shoe design possibilities.

BASF has three other Footwear Development Centers, located in Italy, the United States and Thailand. The Footwear Innovation Center will also complement the expertise and competences of the product development centre in Chinese Mainland's Shanghai and Nansha.

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by KARL MAYER

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New president of Cematex

Zurich - Ernesto Maurer has been appointed as the new President of Cematex, the European Committee of Textile Machinery Manufacturers. His four-year term of office will cover three major events in the pivotal ITMA series of textile technology exhibitions scheduled for Europe and Asia.

Maurer was elected at the Cematex General Assembly, on June 12. He is President of the Swiss Textile Machinery Association since 2015, serving during the same period as a member of the Cematex Board of Directors and its 1st Vice-President for the past four years.

Also elected at the General Assembly were 1st Vice-President Mikael Äremann (TMAS, Sweden) and 2nd Vice-President Charles Bauduin (Symatex, Belgium).

Cematex is the official representative body for Europe's national textile machinery associations and has been in charge of organising the ITMA exhibitions, since inaugural show in 1951, and subsequent editions in Europe, Asia and China.

Over the next four years, Ernesto Maurer will lead Cematex through a challenging period globally, taking in three major events. ITMA Asia + CITME will be held in Shanghai from June 12-16, 2021 – postponed from October 2020 because of Covid-19. This will be followed in 2022 by the next ITMA Asia + CITME in the same city, and then by ITMA 2023 in Milan (June 8-14).

"The Post-Covid-19 period will have a tremendous impact on the textile industry of today and tomorrow," said Maurer. "Cematex is determined to maintain its leadership role for exhibitions, carrying the ITMA brand to partners worldwide today and in the future, including a focus on increasingly-digital opportunities."

Lycra owner dismisses sale speculation

Hong Kong - Shandong Ruyi Investment Holding has dismissed talk of a sale of its Lycra brand with the Chinese textile giant exploring a possible flotation of the speciality fibre business as an alternative.

Ruyi purchased The Lycra Company from Koch Industries for around US$2.6 billion in 2019. However, with around $1 billion of that borrowed, *Reuters Hong Kong* reports that a sale of the business has been proposed by two Lycra creditors.

According to Reuters, Lycra's recent financial performance, exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic, as well as the indebtedness of Ruyi, has encouraged some of its creditors to hire restructuring firm Alvarez and Marsal (A&M) as an adviser, said the sources. "A&M had over the past two months sounded out potential buyers for Lycra, said one of the people, who declined to be identified due to confidentiality constraints," Reuters reports.

With no deal on the table, Ruyi is said instead to be looking at an IPO, potentially on China's new tech-focused STAR market.

The sources declined to be named because the information was not public. Ruyi and A&M declined to comment, Reuters says.

Currently, the Lycra Company operates as a fully operational subsidiary of Ruyi. The 2019 deal included eight manufacturing facilities, four research and development labs, 17 offices located in 14 countries around the world, and approximately 3,000 employees.

The purchase also included a robust portfolio of highly respected consumer and trade brands manufacturing advanced fibre and technology solutions for the apparel and hygiene industries. These include Lycra, Lycra HyFit, Lycra T400, L by Lycra, Coolmax, Thermolite, Elaspan, Supplex, Tactel, and Terathane.

The Ruyi Group primarily focuses on textile offerings with operations spanning from raw materials and textile processing, to the design and sale of apparel. Since 2016, the group has acquired several international luxury brands including Aquascutum, Sandro, Maje, and Claudie Pierlot.

It operates 13 domestic industrial parks and boasts some of the largest production lines and advanced technologies in China. The company also has a significant distribution and retail network that services a global customer base spread across six continents.

Mattress ticking specialist launches anti-viral treatment

Waregem - Circular knitter BekaertDeslee has added a new anti-viral treatment technology to its mattress ticking portfolio.

The latest addition to its Sleep Dimension 'Clean' family of products is Virase, which is designed to provide a fresh and healthy long lasting hygienic sleep environment.

The company says it is first in the industry to provide proof of a higher than 99 per cent reduction (a 2-Log reduction) of viral activity within two hours on the surface of an in-house produced mattress textile although variances are possible depending on the fabric construction.

The test protocol was executed in accordance with the international standard for determination of antiviral activity of textile products, ISO 18184:2014. "This test confirms that Virase, a special formulated textile finish, proves immediate and substantial antiviral effect on enveloped viruses," the company said, adding that the efficacy of the technology has been confirmed by the Guangdong Detection Center of Microbiology, an independent and internationally accredited lab in Guangzhou, China.

BekaertDeslee has also launched PPPRMNT, a natural antimicrobial finish that offers protection against bacteria and dust mites. By inhibiting their growth, PPPRMNT is said to deliver a safe and environmental solution to keep mattresses fresh and clean.

UK exports to the USA face continued punitive tariffs

London - The UK's knitwear industry has been dealt a significant blow with the news that the shipments to the US will be hit with an additional 25 per cent tariff.

The US authorities have confirmed that 17 fashion and textile product lines will continue to be subject to the punitive tariffs which were first introduced in October 2019 as part of a long running dispute between the US and the EU over subsidies to the aircraft industry.

Lamenting the tariff decision as hugely disappointing news, Adam Mansell, CEO of UKFT said the impact of the additional tariffs have been devastating for UK manufacturers selling to the USA. "We are the only country to be hit with tariffs on fashion products and the current situation piles even more pressure on companies already reeling from the impact of Covid-19 and the hugely uncertain trading situation with the EU," he said. "Waiting for the outcome of a potential free trade agreement with the US isn't enough. We need the government to take direct action now to support our manufacturing industry."

Simon Cotton, CEO of Johnstons of Elgin, which makes cashmere and fine woollen cloth, knitwear and accessories in Scotland added: "We are exceptionally disappointed that these tariffs remain in place and continue to punish our industry for a dispute which is completely outside of our control."

Bill Leach, Global Sales Director at knitwear brand and manufacturer John Smedley, said: "This is hugely disappointing. John Smedley has invested heavily into the US market for many years, resulting in strong sales and customer satisfaction across a wide array of America's finest retailers. We also enjoy strong following on social media from across the US and we are immensely proud of the excellent working partnerships we have developed with customers, clients and media over decades.

"Since October 2019, when the retaliatory additional 25 per cent tariff was applied to all of our sales to the US, John Smedley has been forced to absorb this punitive cost in order to maintain the ongoing retail pricing of our collection and to maintain our existing proposition to our valued customers and clients in the US market. As a result, we have experienced significant margin and profit.

"The fact that British-manufactured knitwear has become embroiled in the longest running trade dispute in WTO history to this extent is deeply irritating, unfairly punitive and continues to have a deep and long-lasting impact on our business in the UK. Our connections to and with the airline industry are non-existent.

"Should this retaliatory tariff application continue, John Smedley will need to take some tough decisions about our strategy for the US market."

Karl Mayer continues to evolve its jersey technology

Obertshausen - Karl Mayer is continuing with development work on its warp knitted jersey technology which was first launched at Interfiliere in Paris in January.

Since then, Jersey Evolution articles have attracted significant interest, the company says, especially among international lingerie brands.

These supple, next-to-skin fabrics were produced on the high-performance tricot machine HKS 2-S, which was used with a high machine gauge to create a sophisticated lapping design. This results in highly elastic fabrics.

It is also possible to stretch the fabric by up to 245 per cent, while still retaining a high rebound force while the elastane threads were specially incorporated to create cut-resistant edges.

Jersey Evolution also offers fabrics with a soft, smooth surface and a flowing drape, just like their circular knitted counterparts. Unlike these, however, knitted jersey goods can be produced highly efficiently: a high-performance tricot machine can replace up to 2.5 circular knitting machines, according to Karl Mayer.

The company also notes that warp knitting running costs are also lower since the needle units must be replaced less frequently. Compared to circular knitting machines, these key components can be used around six times longer, thereby halving the cost per set.

Following the successful launch, Karl Mayer has created a second Jersey Evolution series. As part of recent development work, the lapping and yarn use have been modified to achieve different fabric weights and stretch values. With regard to the lapping, variants and patterns were chosen which are commonly used by Karl Mayer's customers and which had already proved to be highly effective in the first series.

Stoll breaks ground on second construction section

From left to right: Daniel Hebisch and Cemal Isin from isin+co GmbH & Co. KG, Jörg Wilhelm from Karl Mayer, Uli Kälber from Rommel SF-Bau GmbH & Co. KG and also from Karl Mayer Andreas Schellhammer, Erhard Vöhringer and Frank Wittel.

Reutlingen - Flat knitting machine builder Stoll, which recently became part of the Karl Mayer Group has broken ground on its previously announced new premises in Reutlingen-Betzingen.

The move to the nearby Mark West industrial area follows the shifting of the company's production activities to the same area back in 2004 from historical site in Stollweg.

During two project stages, a development center will be built first, shortly followed by a customer center in order to accommodate the other Business Units.

Official start of the construction for the development center was on 26th July 2019. The building with bright and modern offices and meeting rooms for roughly 70 employees is expected to be completed by autumn 2020.

The 29th July 2020 saw the opening of the second project stage, with the aim to erect the customer centre by autumn 2021.

The symbolic groundbreaking ceremony was attended by Daniel Hebisch, Shareholder and Member of the Executive Board of isin+co GmbH & Co. KG, and Cemal Isin, Managing Partner of isin+co GmbH & Co. KG, Uli Kälber, Managing Director of Rommel SF-Bau GmbH & Co. KG as well as the following gentlemen from Karl Mayer Textilmaschinenfabrik GmbH: Andreas Schellhammer, president of the Stoll Business Unit, Erhard Vöhringer, Senior Sales/Service Manager, Jörg Wilhelm, Senior Operations Manager, and Frank Wittel, Vice Chairman of the Works Council.

The project is carried out by Rommel SF-Bau GmbH & Co. KG as general contractor. The architects come from ISIN + Co. GmbH & Co. KG. They designed a functional building complex which will be housing the reception, offices for a workforce of about 100 persons and conference rooms. Moreover, an associated industrial building will provide enough space for showrooms, machine floor areas, project rooms and for the company's own training center. The usable floor space covers approx. 5,350 m².

"With its construction project and relocation, Stoll makes important decisions for the future," the company said in a statement. "By combining development, production and administration at a single location, it is possible to ensure shorter distances, leaner processes and faster innovations. In this way, the Stoll technology that has been successful for more than 145 years, will be leading into a new age."

High-pile knitter ramps up mask production

Janesville - Circular knitter Monterey Mills, which specialises in high-pile fabrics, is continuing with its recent efforts to to meet regional and national demand for respirator masks.

In March, the Wisconsin-based company teamed up with Eder Flag to produce the vitally needed barrier masks for use by front-line medical personnel and others seeking protective face coverings.

Monterey Mills based in Janesville, WI is the largest textile mill of its kind in North America, and supplier of knitted pile fabric used in a variety of medical and air-filtration products. Eder Flag, based in Oak Creek, WI is the nation's largest manufacturer of flags and flagpoles and is converting part of its flag-sewing operations to produce the barrier masks.

A large regional health system in Wisconsin has entered into a supplier agreement with Monterey Mills to receive the masks.

Dan Sinykin, president of Monterey Mills, said the protective facemasks are designed to be washable and reversible so that either side can be used directly in front of the face. Doctors and other health care professionals have reviewed the masks' design and materials used in production.

"We're combining air filtration and insulation fabrics, with a membrane liner to create a highly effective, comfortable respirator mask. The masks are designed to be re-useable, cleaned in an industrial or home washer, and available for multiple uses." Sinykin said. "Monterey Mills has the fabric inventory and manufacturing capacity to produce millions of masks, but we are continuing to look for more trim components, like elastic, to boost supplies and for additional cut and sew partners to support Eder's efforts."

Monterey Mills is the largest sliver knitting in North America. Founded in 1946, the company is the premier supplier of fabric to a variety of industries including: paint roller, medical, apparel, filtration, and home furnishing.

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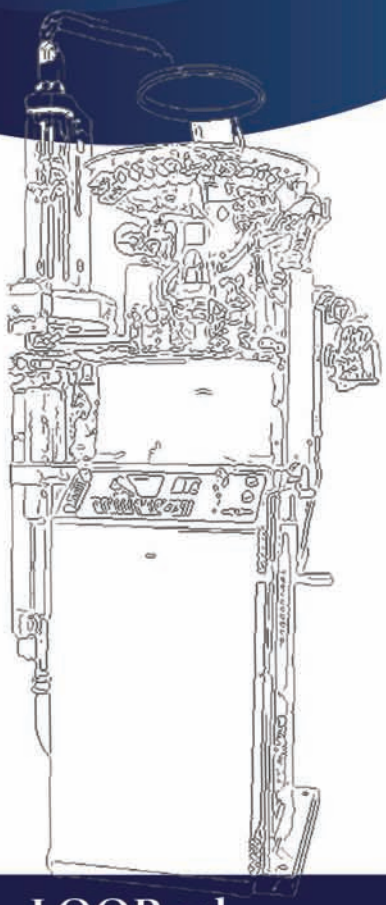

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New washing technology from H2G

Modena - H2G has launched its latest addition to its portfolio of needlebed washing machines.

The Italian firm has added the H2G Junior Evo (Evolution), which, with a new compact design and an upgraded software system, is able to offer flat knitting machine operators greater efficiency during the washing cycle.

"We are producers and sellers worldwide of the H2G needlebed washing machines made in Italy, and we aim for all knitting factories to benefit from our technology," the company said "We trust in a better and more efficient way to produce garments, so we have developed a brand new technology applied to the new compact machine."

A clean needlebed is crucial when it comes to carrying out essential maintenance on flat knitting machines with mills the world familiar with the length of time required and the exceptional levels of care that must be taken when it comes to maintaining and cleaning.

Over the last few years, H2G, part of the Galiotto Marcello Group has established itself at the forefront of this crucial service.

After a number of years spent reconditioning and cleaning knitting machines, in 2014, the company began the production and sale of its H2G needlebed washing machine.

When it comes to washing the needlebed and the necessary demounting and mounting of all the needles in the machines, the aim of H2G is to make this process significantly more straightforward.

This revolutionary equipment allows the fast washing of the entire needlebed, both on the top and under the needles, without any need of demounting them.

"Our experience in the textile world brought us to the conception and subsequently to the design and production of the innovative H2G needlebed-washing machine, patented high tech, not ultra-sounds, specific for every kind of knitting machine," the company says.

The patented spray-technology is said to ensure a quick and high quality cleaning of the needlebeds of any gauge and any size, a process that takes around one hour. The H2G is suitable for all brands of knitting machines with the system equipped with technology that is able to automatically detect the shape of the needlebed and customize the washing cycle accordingly.

A further strength says the company, is

Mayer & Cie knits fleece research success

Mönchengladbach - A new research project examining the environmental issues associated with the release of microplastics during the washing of polyester fleece garments has demonstrated a number of successes.

A group of researchers at the University of Applied Sciences in Mönchengladbach aims to develop environmentally compatible fleece fabrics. Manufactured in the conventional way, this fluffy fabric releases micro plastic that ends up in waters, oceans and soils and finally in the stomach of animals and humans.

TV station WDR has been presenting research successes that the team, led by project leader Professor Ellen Bendt, has already produced – supported by circular knitting technology from Mayer & Cie, the MPU 1.6.

The issues surrounding fleece are based on the knitting structure. After dyeing, the circular machine-knitted plush fabric is roughened and shorn which gives it more volume, but also means the garments quickly loses more fibres.

These fibres are so small that wastewater treatment plants may not be able to filter them out entirely and they may find their way into waterways and seas, or as sewage sludge onto fields. From there, it is possible the plastic works its way up the food chain.

Albstadt-based Mayer and Cie has supplied its MPU 1.6 model to project with the university using the machine to knit fabrics and then carry out washing and filtration tests as well as how best to optimise and develop textile surfaces that release smaller quantities of microplastics.

"Circular machine-knitted plush is the basis of fleece materials. That is why our experiments on low-emission alternatives start at this very point," said Professor Bendt.

The MPU 1.6 knits plush, velour, terry and fleece fabrics. "We wanted a German manufacturer who will be on site quickly if questions arise," said Bendt, "After all, talking about a standard application. We wanted to be sure that we are making full use of the opportunities available in the knitting sector."

At present, conventional polyester spools are fitted on the MPU 1.6. Two sets of material have been tested so far with more to follow.

According to Bendt, the research is not aimed at discouraging the use of polyester although the team is looking into alternative fibre materials.

"What we are after is a mass-market solution, and on price grounds alone the solution must continue to be or to include polyester," she said.

"Whether that will be possible remains to be seen. Two years of research still lie ahead for the TextileMission project."

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the software, which is said to be intuitive, easy-to-use and designed to allow an automatic management of the entire washing cycle. The software allows the choice of three levels of washing: light, medium or heavy, depending on the amount of dirt on the needlebeds, with a recommended washing temperature of 40°C, regardless of the cycle employed.

A complete drying process then begins automatically following the washing phase. Resource saving is also addressed with, for example, the presence of a filter to gather the dirt and oils which allows the reuse of the same liquid several times, up to a maximum of 20 hours of work with the full tank (200 litres).

Water changes can be programmed according to the customer's needs with an alert on the monitor to indicate the need for a filter change and water change.

The company also now offers the H2G Junior for use with needlebeds up to 150cm wide with the washing process taking only 20 minutes, and the H2G Robot, which ensures the most straight-forward movement of the needlebeds and is able to demount and mount both front and back needlebeds.

Shima Seiki Europe unveils latest WHOLEGARMENT technology

Castle Donnington - One of Shima Seiki's most flexible and versatile WHOLEGARMENT knitting machines has arrived at the UK headquarters of Shima Seiki Europe.

First unveiled at ITMA 2019, the MACH2VS has evolved from MACH2S machines and carries on the capability to knit in a range of production styles. As a conventional shaping machine, it is capable of all-needle knitting in its available range of 8 to 16 gauge, while WHOLEGARMENT knitwear can be produced in half-gauge fabrics.

The range of usable yarn and material has increased as well, thanks to i-DSCS DTC as standard equipment. The R2CARRIAGE system that yields quicker carriage returns for greater efficiency, now features a lighter carriage for even higher productivity.

For versatility, MACH2VS is even capable of gaugeless knitting whereby a number of different gauges can be knit into a single garment. A new full-colour touch-screen monitor improves operability over the previous monochromatic one.

At ITMA, MACH2VS featured a number of prototype options, including motorized auto yarn carriers that do not require extra carriage courses for yarn carrier placement along with a needle bed gap adjustment function for further easing switching between conventional shaping and WHOLEGARMENT production.

The specification at the model at the Castle Donington office is a 12G machine that can produce 6G WHOLEGARMENT items.

Fabdesigns offers new knits courses

Los Angeles - Fabdesigns, the California-based knitted textile research and innovation centre, is holding a series of new educational seminars aimed at supporting the growth of 3D knitting trends.

Connie Huffa, president and textile engineer at Fabdesigns, said that the events would cover "the how, the why, the costs, the tricks & best practice tips' of this increasingly influential knitting technique".

"All have a big impact on not only the look and content of your products, but also the ROI," she said. "Designing and creating 3D knit products has never been more popular. But many designers, engineers, brands, and companies have no idea where to start. Are you an apparel designer with so many great ideas for sustainability, but you're not sure if the machines can make any of them?

You want to buy machines to on-shore your products, but you don't know which one?"

The 'Learning with Leaders' Education Program, will have four different tracks under the headings of Technology, Materials, Stitches and Design.

"We've spent decades developing cutting edge 3D knitted products for major companies, re-imagining the machinery, innovating parts and materials, and teaching these new technologies to major brands, individuals and engineers around the world," Huffa added. "Chances are you're wearing, driving, sitting on, or playing with something that we've touched."

The classes are aimed at the entire knit supply chain including students of apparel design, textile instructors and professors, designers, knitters and factory personnel as well as new knitting machine owners.

There are also options for apparel manufacturers, apparel & footwear brands, industrial designers and those involved in the 3D print (additive

manufacturing) sector, as well as anyone who wants to know more about sustainable manufacturing.

For more details visit: www.fabdesigns.com or contact info@fabdesigns.com

Textile microfibre summit set for 2021

UK – As the global apparel industry starts to get to grips with its contribution to pollution related to textile fibre fragmentation, the Microfibre Consortium will hold an online edition of its Fibre Fragmentation Summit between March 23 - 26th, 2021 – in partnership with Planet Textiles.

Since the inaugural Microfibre Leadership Summit in 2017 (co-hosted by Ocean Conservancy and the Bren School of Environmental Science & Management), new studies, innovations, methodologies and policy discussions have elevated global awareness of microfibre pollution.

However, there isß still a huge knowledge gap about the exact scale, sources, fates and impacts of textile fibre fragmentation, with the best practices for mitigating shedding only just beginning to emerge.

"Since the last summit, we have seen so much great research understanding come through, yet the topic remains complex. The interconnection between different approaches and stakeholders engaged in fibre fragmentation is key to progress," noted Sophie Mather, Managing Director at the Microfibre Consortium. "By bringing together the global topic community from researchers to policy makers, we are looking to drive and facilitate action, ultimately reducing impact environmentally.'

As such, and working in partnership with Planet Textiles – the well-known sustainability event owned by the publisher of *Ecotextile News* – the Fibre Fragmentation Summit will provide a unique online platform, spread out over a 4-day period, to convene global apparel and textiles brands, supply chain partners, legislators, NGOs, academics and other thought leaders for the next round of cross discipline presentations, discussions and action planning.

Summit 2021 participants can expect:

- Research updates from leading academics on fibre fragmentation
- Overviews of emerging tools and methods designed to guide low-shed material development
- Insights from technology providers that support a portfolio approach to emerging solutions
- Global collaborative commitment to elevating and driving impact
- Breakout 'Action Sessions' to identify and commit to new areas of focus
- Facilitate virtual networking across sectors and geographies

The Fibre Fragmentation Summit will also deliver outputs in the form of a summary report, including an actions roadmap to drive progress on microfibre pollution following the event.

Save the date 23rd – 26th March 2021 in your calendar and register your interest in through the event email: findoutmore@microfibreconsortium.com

Pakistan knitters bemoan lack of government action

Lahore - Industry bodies in Pakistan have raised concerns over a lack of government action following a slump in hosiery and knitwear exports over the last three months.

The Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PHMA) has expressed deep concern over a declining trend in textile exports, which have dropped by 37 per cent to $751 million in May 2020 compared to the same period in 2019.

Although accepting the impact of the global coronavirus pandemic, PHMA vice chairman Shafiq Butt said that the industry was still waiting for a number of mooted incentives from the government, including the payout of sales tax refunds. Butt noted that this was the second successive month of huge reductions in textile exports amid the global pandemic. All categories of textile exports witnessed double-digit declines with exports of cotton yarn seeing the steepest decline, from $107 million in May last year to $52 million in May this year.

Knitwear exports, which account for 24 per cent of Pakistan's textile industry exports, were down from $274 million last May to $181 million this year.

Following the pandemic, the PHMA had suggested a number of measures such as reviving zero-rated status to help with liquidity and a reduction in sales tax to help the industry to compete with regional competitors.

He said that the PHMA had also requested a continuation of the energy package for the export industry to ensure the provision of electricity at 7.5 cents per kWh and gas at $6.5 per MMBTU in next budgetary year.

Vietnam knitter teams up with Coats

Ho Chi Minh City - Phong Phu International (PPJ), one of Vietnam's largest vertically integrated knitted garment manufacturers is looking to increase its productivity through collaboration with industrial thread manufacturer, Coats Digital.

PPJ is using the FastReactPlan system from Coats, which is described as a fashion production planning and control software application.

Coats Digital and PPJ say that they have successfully navigated the challenges of Covid-19 to maintain the pace of a digitization journey which is critical for recovery and sustainable growth. This has enabled the completion of a project to digitize best practice production planning and control processes, from master planning across multiple factories to detailed line and machine level planning of complex manufacturing processes, the companies say.

"At the beginning of the pandemic, we produced a resilience plan that highlighted the need for more agile project delivery. This included using new digital channels for more frequent engagement with our customers," Keith Fenner, managing director, Coats Digital, said. "The fact that we have successfully completed the

implementation of a large FastReactPlan project using these new digital channels and an adapted approach to training is testimony to the investment we have made in this critical area to re-think software delivery. The proof that training, enablement and support can be as effective online as onsite is vital for the industry as we emerge from Covid-19 and navigate towards the new normal."

"Covid-19 stopped nearly all international travel," added Simon Van Weeren, COO & managing director, Phong Phu International. "We don't know when, perhaps if, it will fully return to normal which means businesses have to collaborate online to develop and update plans across multiple teams. The ability to have online training from any location with screen sharing makes it is as effective as being together onsite and with less distractions. I believe the results are actually more focused and effective! Coats Digital is leading the way by delivering excellent training material using online platforms that allow us to review, refresh and replay when we need it."

PPJ is headquartered in Ho Chi Minh City, and is one of the leading textile producers, garment manufacturers and exporters in Vietnam. The company was built in 2007 by consolidation within the Phong Phu Corporation to serve the purpose of promoting denim and knitted fabrics and converting fabric into high quality apparel.

Primaloft signs licence deal to grow biofibres business

Latham - PrimaLoft, Inc. has announced a new partnership agreement with Fiberpartner as it looks to expand the application of PrimaLoft Bio fibre technology to new markets.
The new licensing agreement allows Fiberpartner, a global supplier of stapled fibres, technical yarns and plastics, to develop the use of Primaloft's Bio technology in multiple new industries.
PrimaLoft Bio is made from biodegradable, 100% recycled fibres that break down when exposed to specific environments – such as landfills, oceans and wastewater systems.
PrimaLoft Bio is said to enhance fibres to be more attractive to naturally-occurring microbes found in these environments; in so doing, fibres are broken down at a faster rate, returning polyester to natural elements.
These fibres maintain their structure throughout use, only biodegrading when exposed to the naturally-occurring microorganisms found in landfills or marine environments.
Announcing the partnership, Mike Joyce, president and CEO of PrimaLoft said: "PrimaLoft Bio is an important step forward in providing sustainable solutions for microfiber pollution, throughout the entire life-cycle of a product.
"We are excited to begin this relationship with Fiberpartner and to bring this responsible technology to a multitude of industries."
Fiberpartner CEO, Thomas Wittrup added: "We see an increasing demand for biodegradable polyester, and consider PrimaLoft's technology to be a game-changer.
"The staple fibers produced with PrimaLoft Bio from Fiberpartner will be developed to supplement regular polyester fiber for use in a variety of end-uses."

New showroom to highlight Bemberg benefits

Hong Kong - Asahi Kasei has opened a new showroom in Hong Kong, dedicated to showcasing the benefits of Bemberg, its biodegradable and compostable cupro fibre.

Working with its local strategic partner Cheung Hing Hong (CHH) Group, Asahi Kasei is also launching a luxury Bemberg yarn dyed stock service for linings and introducing a Bemberg smart tag for its fabrics.

It is hoped that Bemberg's new showroom in Hong Kong will highlight a more engaging way of updating its retail retail customers. As with the site in New York, the showroom will include a space dedicated to the yarn manufacturers' customers including apparel brands, factories and tailors but also to design schools, colleges and private label designers. There will also be a space for a programme of workshops.

It also recently launched a range of Bemberg luxury yarn dyed ›

jacquard linings that can be customized following brands' designs, all of which will be made in Japan. "We have chosen to cooperate with a Japanese producer to offer customized Bemberg yarn dyed Jacquard lining starting from 55 yards, per colour," the company said. "The collection stands out for its attractive designs and the precious aesthetics while keeping its usual technical performances and the precious touch."

Bemberg has also launched a new tag to be applied on items with Bemberg lining for both the body and sleeve parts of the garment.

Asahi Kasei uses its proprietary technologies to refine and dissolve the linter from pre-consumer cotton that is not normally used as fibre, transforming it into the pure regenerated fibre. Using a traceable and transparent closed loop process, the resulting fabric is soft, like a second skin as well as being exceptionally smooth. It also offers antistatic and breathable properties and is biodegradable and compostable.

Ascend launches antimicrobial technology

Houston - Ascend Performance Materials has introduced Acteev Protect, a breakthrough technology specially formulated to guard against the growth of mildew, fungi and other microbes to keep knitted textiles and nonwoven fabrics fresher for longer.

The technology has a number of applications areas offering protection for face masks, apparel, upholstery, air filters and more, said Lu Zhang, Ph.D., Ascend's vice president leading the Acteev launch. "Bacteria, mildew and other microbes growing on fabrics and filters cause the item to break down, discolor and give off unpleasant smells," she said. "Acteev Protect guards against that microbial growth, keeping the articles clean."

The technology has been in development for several years, but with the recent shortage of articles resistant to microbial growth, Ascend accelerated the product launch by partnering with independent labs for testing and reallocating resources to scale up production. "The current global scarcity of microbe-resistant materials is not going to end unless manufacturers are able to obtain the right media," Dr. Zhang said. "We saw a way we could quickly meet those urgent needs with this innovative technology."

Acteev Protect combines zinc ion technology with polyamide-based woven, nonwoven and knit fabrics. The active zinc ions are embedded into the polymer matrix, providing a long-lasting solution that does not wash away, unlike topical finishes or coatings. The polyamide fabrics are durable yet soft to the skin, and the nonwoven filtration media – available as nanofibers, meltblown and spunbond – efficiently keep out unwanted particles.

The embedded zinc in its ionic form is a powerful inhibitor of bacterial growth, said Vikram Gopal, Ascend's senior vice president of technology. "Zinc is an essential element needed for bacterial growth, so bacteria readily allows it inside the cell body. But the zinc ion outcompetes other essential elements such as manganese and magnesium and chokes their ingestion channels," he said. "Without those minerals, the microbes can't grow or reproduce."

Other products use silver as an antimicrobial, Dr. Gopal said, but that metal comes with unwanted environmental consequences. "Silver is typically used as a finish or a coating," he said. "That process is water-intensive, and the excess silver has to be disposed of, eventually ending up in our waterways."

Zinc, however, is labeled Generally Regarded as Safe by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Additionally, the fabrics feature all the benefits of premium polyamides, which offer more comfort than polypropylene in single-use masks and allows knits and wovens to be dyed, printed on and laundered.

UK knitter opens new Japan store

Derbyshire - UK-based luxury knitwear firm John Smedley has opened a new retail store in Kyoto, Japan.

"We're pleased to announce that we've opened a new store on the 1st floor of 'Shinpukan', which opened as a new landmark of Kyoto," the company said. "It will be a new store following the Futakotamagawa store that conveys the world class craftsmanship of John Smedley."

Established in 1784, John Smedley was founded at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution and today operates one of the oldest manufacturing factories in the world. The firm's products are distributed in over 40 countries worldwide with a strong market base in Europe and the USA as well as its growing presence in Japan. The company, which has been investing heavily in Shima's Seiki's latest fine gauge WHOLEGARMENT technology in recent years, also holds a Royal Warrant.

Underpinning this growth is a comprehensive knitting plant, which has been augmented, in recent years by Shima's Seiki's latest 15G machines for fine gauge WHOLEGARMENT production. As well as helping with address the skills shortage in the making up area, the WHOLEGARMENT technology has also opened up other design areas which cannot be knitted conventionally such as bound-off or roll edge necks and certain patterning in the area of a fully fashioned seam.

Stoll partners with meepl on ‘made to measure’ knitwear

Reutlingen - Stoll has teamed up with Swiss technology company meepl, which specialises in 3D smartphone body scanning software, to offer bespoke made-to-measure knitwear.

This unique collaboration is said to be a first for the knitwear fashion market - combining sustainability with personalization.

Coupling meepl’s 3D scanning app with Stoll’s knit and wear technology, will allow knitwear to be customised on an automated and scalable level, using meepl’s highly accurate measurements fed straight into the knitelligence software controlling Stoll’s machines.

Ferdinand Metzler, Founder and CEO of meepl, said that the partnership means the Swiss firm will be able to offer a bespoke shopping experience to knitwear consumers across many global brands. “By combining our technologies, we can offer an unparalleled service that addresses sizing and quality of fit, bringing us closer to achieving our goal of eliminating standard sizing once and for all,” he said. “From a sustainability point of view, both ourselves and Stoll feel passionately about reducing landfill when it comes to the disposal of clothing garments. We hope that by harnessing our technologies to match supply and demand we will be able to eliminate issues with overstocking and reduce retailer returns.”

meepl’s smartphone-enabled 3D body scanning technology uses body reconstruction algorithms to produce an almost 100 per cent accurate body image from just two pictures, instantly obtaining up to 100 measurements.

“The platform automatically adjusts the knitting pattern based on the body measurements being provided making it possible to knit tailored garments in a very short time without any manual intervention,” Stoll said.

India boost from Japan deal

New Delhi - The Indian government has approved a Memorandum of Understanding with Japan that will see textile trade between the two countries increase whilst also boosting cooperation such as improving the quality and testing of Indian knitwear destined for the Japanese market.

The approval of the MoU follows the recent signing of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement between the two countries which will allow Japan to import textile products from India at zero duty.

India and Japan have a longstanding trade relationship in knitted textiles. However, back in 2014 the Japan Textiles Exporters Association noted that although Japan was keen to source more from India, the high rejection rate, in some cases up to 40 per cent, had become a matter of concern.

At the time, Japan imported around 1 per cent of its knitted fabrics and garments from India but indicated that it would like to increase this figure to more than 3 per cent if there was sufficient investment in new knitting machine technology and a subsequent rise in quality.

Addressing quality issues through the MoU is now expected to lead to more export orders from Japan which is seeking to replace some of its imports from China with supplies from other countries.

“MOU approved today will facilitate Indian exports to meet the requirements of Japanese importers as per technical regulation imposed by Japan,” India’s textile minister Smriti Irani said.

“This will help exporters expand their market in Japan and boost Indian Textiles & Apparel exports including Technical Textiles to Japan.”

The MoU will also see Japan’s renowned testing organisation, the Nissenken Quality Evaluation Centre, work with Indian companies to improve the quality and testing of knitwear destined for the Japanese market.

Hosiery International

Gildan publishes ESG Report

Montreal - Gildan Activewear has released its 16th Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) report, prepared in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standards.

The report illustrates Gildan's approach and commitment to ESG, including highlights of the company's 2019 results, key priorities, and future commitments towards achieving its vision of 'Making Apparel Better'.

In 2019, the company says it continued to focus on making progress towards fulfilling its 2020 goals centered around three Genuine Responsibility pillars: Caring for People, Conserving the Environment, and Creating Stronger Communities.

In July 2019, Gildan's Social Compliance Program was re-accredited by the Fair Labor Association (FLA) for the second time after becoming the first basic activewear and hosiery manufacturer to receive this accreditation in 2007. The re-accreditation comes after an extensive two-year review of the Company's practices and policies that are in place to ensure fair labour practices across its global supply chain.

On the environmental front, Gildan says it undertook and made further progress across a range of initiatives this past year, and it achieved two of its 2020 targets early related to water intensity and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which represented an 11.2% and 13.0% reduction from their 2015 baseline, respectively.

Wolford eyeing new opportunities

Bregenz - Luxury hosiery manufacturer Wolford is confident that its target to reduce its time to market by 50 per cent will provide the perfect filip as it looks to rebound from the impact of the coronavirus.

The Time to Market strategy, initiated by the new management team, Silvia Azzali and Andrew Thorndike, will see Wolford bring its next spring/summer collection to its customers in a significantly shortened time frame. Both are also confident that lessons learned from the impact of the pandemic will enable the company to expand its business into new segments.

The latest report shows that Wolford generated revenues of €118.5 million in 2019/20, registering a fell in revenue of 13.6 per cent compared to the previous year figures of €137.2 million. Lockdown measures and the restrictions imposed on travel due to the global pandemic had a decisive impact on all luxury sales particularly in the months of March and April 2020, when Wolford s revenue fell by around 60 per cent.

The new Board, which took up their roles in the fall of 2019, has promptly reacted by implementing a crisis response to include short-time working plans, as well as, since the end of March 2020, the conversion of part of their facilities to accommodate Care Masks' production, a move that cushioned fall in other revenues.

The socio-economic developments have clearly left their mark on the company's earnings. Operating earnings (EBIT) fell from €-9 million in the previous year to €-28.7 million. The loss after taxes amounted to €-27.42 million (2018/19: €-11.10 million).

In the first weeks of their activity, Azzali and Thorndike, embarked on a program to reshape the business, through the 'Program for Immediate Top and Bottom Line Impact' that includes the international store portfolio rightsizing, reducing rental payments, optimizing purchasing and procurement, and consistently enhancing efficiency in production and logistics.

The increased digitalization during the mandatory lockdown has also provided Wolford with new opportunities to enhance its efficiency, the company says. By the end of April 2020 the company s online sales exceeded a like for like growth of 41 per cent while the June revenues were at 54 per cent compared to last year.

Bespoke washing for hosiery

Birmingham - Industrial Washing Machines (IWM), a manufacturer of industrial wash systems, has developed a bespoke washing machine for hosiery applications.

The order was for Northern Irish hosiery firm Adria 2, which was looking for a special machine to rinse, silicon coat and dry new designs of ladies' seamless tights.

"Adria 2 wanted to shorten production times, automate production and improve the look and feel of the tights," said Paul Thurston, Sales Engineer at IWM. "Conventionally, tights are made in large batches and are then dyed and washed in one operation in a very large vat. Adria 2 wanted to complete the process without the use of a dye vat, which would allow them to process smaller quantities and eliminate the need for them to rely on outside services."

Adria 2 believes that their seamless tights are stronger, more environmentally friendly in manufacture, and more comfortable to wear. The key requirement for the IWM team was to create a carousel washer/drier for these products. In response to the challenge, the IWM design team developed a three-tank machine with a dryer and a carousel chain conveyor.

IWM team encountered some challenges during the design of the new washing machine. As the tights are made of fine gauge fabric, the water jetting which is normally at the heart of the washing process could not be used, as there was a risk that it would ladder or damage the tights. The design team solved this problem by using a mist function rather than jets to carry out the washing.

Kenneth Cole perfect fit

New York - Kenneth Cole and Kane have announced the launch of a collaboration of perfect fitting no-show socks in individual shoe sizes.

The socks come in seven exact sizes – 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 & 13. The partnership was established to highlight the brands' common goal of combining innovation, style and comfort.

Kane 11 is described as the fastest growing sock company in America and has revolutionized socks by initiating a new standard of fit by creating socks in exact shoe sizes.

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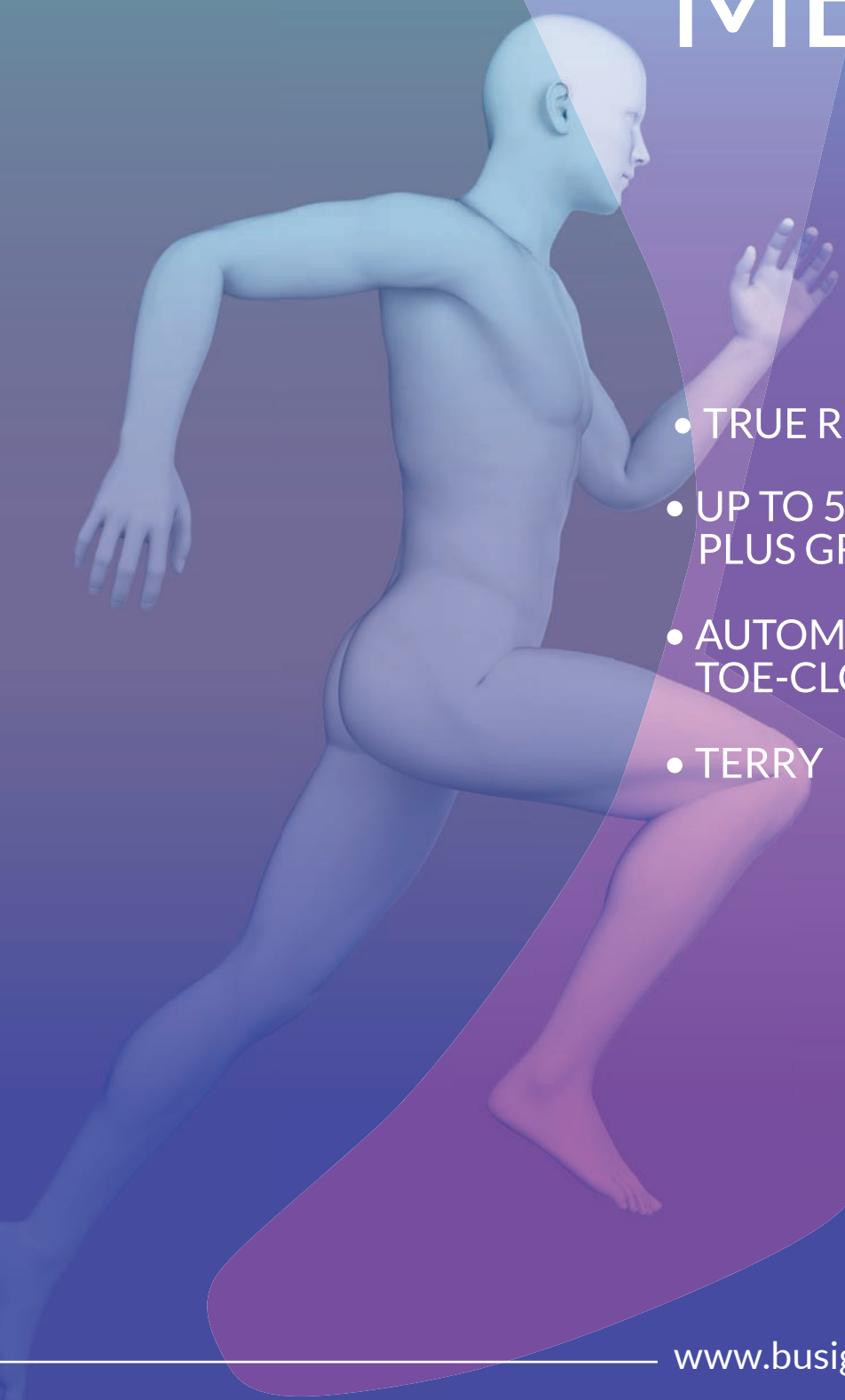

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Trans-technology partnership

The completion of the Karl Mayer and Stoll deal has created a new force in the world of warp and weft knitting.

Warp knitting machine builder Karl Mayer has completed its acquisition of Stoll, officially creating a trans-technology global player that can offer the industry the latest in both warp and weft knitting expertise.

With the completion of the deal, Karl Mayer says it is now a major provider of solutions for the two most important stitch-forming processes, flat knitting and warp knitting, with this expertise along with technical textiles, warp preparation for weaving and digital solutions now housed under one roof.

The deal has also prompted a rebrand. Starting from the 12 August, Karl Mayer Textilmaschinenfabrik GmbH will operate under the name of Karl Mayer Stoll Textilmaschinenfabrik GmbH, and Karl Mayer R&D GmbH will be trading as Karl Mayer Stoll R&D GmbH.

Under the terms of the deal, the financial details of which were not disclosed, Stoll will continue its activities within the Karl Mayer Group as an autonomous business unit with brand carrying on independently.

Karl Mayer will also rely on Stoll's proven management with previous CEO, Andreas Schellhammer, becoming president of the Stoll business unit within the Karl Mayer Group.

Welcoming the deal, Karl Mayer Arno Gärtner said that with Stoll's excellent know-how and committed staff, the companies would build on a good basis for further joint developments. "Stoll and Karl Mayer complement each other perfectly in terms of technology, they consistently rely on the proximity to their markets, and they are the innovation leaders in their sectors," he said. "The merger offers the basis for new machine-based solutions, textile products and digital offerings, which will make a major contribution to strengthening our customers in their business environment."

In the area of machine development, Karl Mayer said it was now possible for both companies to have access to each others technological principles whilst in the development of new textiles, customers would now be able to rely on a broader, cross-sector expertise. "(Customers) can benefit from the Group's entire textile-technological know-how in the fields of warp knitting and flat knitting with an increased application-oriented focus," Karl Mayer said, adding that the customers' contact persons will remain the same.

A further benefit of the acquisition will be seen in the production process where Karl Mayer says there will be an increase in added value for more know-how protection, increased flexibility and delivery times. For example, components from the production line will be used group-wide, if possible, and the manufacture of the Stoll machines in China will be integrated into Karl Mayer's location in Changzhou. With a surface area of 90,000 m² and modern factory halls, the Chinese plant offers the perfect conditions for continuing Stoll's high-quality production in the region.

As Andreas Schellhammer noted, the integration project has been running smoothly, despite the added complexities of the coronavirus pandemic. "The teams from Stoll and Karl Mayer are full on schedule," he said. "They cooperate closely and being extremely dedicated, they complement each other's strengths, and successfully live the merger."

The companies also highlighted how customers in China will remain with their usual contact partners and be able to rely on the resources and organization of Karl Mayer (China) for service and spare parts. Manufactured in-house, the spare parts are stored in larger quantities in China and are dispatched directly, ensuring short delivery times.

In terms of digitalization, the merger will also raise expectations for innovation leaps with advantages for both Stoll and Karl Mayer customers. Karl Mayer's KM.ON system is a highly agile software start-up that uses the potential of cloud-based concepts and of artificial intelligence to develop new digital solutions while Stoll also offers many years of experience in the software sector. "Together it will be possible to accelerate digital product developments enormously," Karl Mayer said. "When it comes to the manufacture of products for warp knitting, warp preparation for weaving and the areas of technical textiles, Karl Mayer is the innovative market leader with more than 2,300 employees worldwide. Stoll, with roughly 1,000 employees, stands for progressive tools and services for tomorrow's knitting." KTJ

Honduras firm plans new knitting facility

Central America's knitting industry is benefiting from a scheme that aims to unlock financing and market access for companies owned or led by women.

Elcatex, one of Honduras's largest circular knitters, has received a US$96 million loan from IDB Invest, a member of the Inter American Development Bank, to construct and equip a new manufacturing plant.

The new knitting mill, known as the San Juan Textiles plant, will be located in the San Juan Innovation Park, an Export Processing Zone in the city of Choloma.

The new plant will enable Elcatex and San Juan Textiles to increase production capacity of cotton fabrics for export as well as allowing it to diversify with a new synthetic fabric production line.

Around 3,200 jobs will be created with a specific focus on increasing opportunities for women as well as boosting the number of women-owned SMEs in the value chain around the new plant.

Honduras is a key market in the American continent for textile exports to the United States. The implementation of a strategy of strengthening, innovation and sustainability has made the textile industry one of the main economic activities in the country. During 2019, it represented 84 per cent of exports of goods for transformation and employs more than 150,000 workers in direct and indirect positions.

According to the IDB, this investment represents the first operation in Latin America and the Caribbean that is part of the We-Fi initiative, an alliance that aims to unlock financing and market access for companies owned or led by women.

"IDB Invest's advisory services, with funds from the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi) program, will work with Elcatex to identify opportunities to increase access by women providers to the value chain," La Tribuna reports. "The action plan includes

training for senior management and the procurement team, to disaggregate the supplier recruitment and monitoring system, and measures to improve the process of incorporating new SMEs."

The operation with Elcatex and San Juan Textiles is also part of IDB Invest's response to the crisis generated by Covid-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean and supports the wider manufacturing sector in Central America.

Since the start of the pandemic, Elcatex is said to have demonstrated exceptional flexibility, initially adjusting biosafety protocols to protect its associates and subsequently adapting its production, cutting and clothing lines to produce personal protective equipment such as face masks and sanitary gowns.

"Long-term financing allows the growth of the client's operations, reinforces the country's foreign trade and slows down the destruction of employment in a context of health and economic crisis," IDB said.

Elcatex began operations in 1984 and currently operates a 500,000 square feet textile mill producing up to two million pounds of knitted fabric per week including rib, striper, jersey and fleece.

The customers' base includes highly recognized companies such as JC Penney, SanMar, Nordstrom, Dickies and HBI, and the variety of products includes basic T-shirts, underwear programs, fleece sweatshirt with hood and zipper, polo pique shirts for men, women and children.

As part of its strategy for the region, IDB Invest says it is committed to reinforcing those sectors that incorporate innovation and added value to production. Despite the effects of the health emergency caused by Covid-19, the Honduran textile industry has proven to be an economic pillar for the country, with the capacity to generate quality employment and promote sustainable growth.

The scheme also potentially contributes to six of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): End of poverty (SDG 1), Gender Equality (SDG 5), Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), Industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9), Reducing inequalities (SDG 10) and Partnerships to achieve the goals (SDG 17).

We-Fi is an international program made up of 14 governments and six multilateral development banks as implementing partners, in addition to other actors from the public and private sectors around the world. KTJ

Knitwear in the digital age

The design software evolution at Shima Seiki was the subject of an exclusive industry webinar.

Flat knitting solutions provider Shima Seiki of Wakayama, Japan, held a global webinar recently, introducing its new design software and web services which, says the company will aid the sustainable and digital transformation of the fashion industry.

A key focus of the online event, watched exclusively by Shima Seiki customers and other guests, was virtual sampling. The webinar began by outlining the capabilities of Shima Seiki's renowned SDS ONE APEX series design system which supports all stages of the product supply chain from planning and design to fabric simulation, 3D virtual sampling, production and even sales promotion.

Introducing the webinar: "Transforming Fashion in the Digital Age", company president Mr Mitsuhiro Shima said that with the current confusion and uncertainty in the industry in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, Shima Seiki had taken the time to think carefully about how the fashion and textile industries can survive under these unprecedented conditions.

Posing the question, what can Shima Seiki do for the industry, Mr Shima said: "In this chaotic situation, while business has slowed it has given us the chance to think carefully how the fashion industry can survive under these conditions.

"At Shima Seiki, we stand by our Total Fashion System concept which was initially introduced over 25 years ago. It places the importance on what the consumer wants while reducing lead

Mr Mitsuhiro Shima.

times and inventory through the integration of the entire supply chain. That is why, over the years, we have placed as much importance on the design system for virtual samples as we have on producing knitting machines decades before IoT, digitalization and DX even became buzz words."

Mr Shima explained that although the Total Fashion System had not been as widely accepted as the company hoped as, within the fashion business, actual product samples were always considered important in communicating design, recent developments had prompted a shift. "Now," he added, "there is a worldwide interest in sustainability and Sustainable Development Goals and, with the coronavirus, there is a greater emphasis on finding alternatives for sample making and effective ways to reduce inventory."

Mr Shima also noted how new work styles are becoming the 'new normal' in these unprecedented times with more people relying on teleworking and telecommuting . "Now, the industry is ready for a revolutionary change. Now is the time to turn the crisis into opportunity. The new service we are introducing - a digitally enhanced Total Fashion System can provide solutions for even better support of customers during these times. It is the digital transformation and sustainability that we think is essential."

The new range of products and services is intended to aid in the digital transformation of the fashion industry for supporting business in the post-Covid-19 era, in which new work styles and methods are being adopted including the teleworking and telecommuting highlighted by Mr Shima. At the same time, they are geared toward streamlining and improving efficiency to achieve sustainability through reduced waste.

APEXFiz

APEXFiz is the latest addition to Shima Seiki's proven SDS-ONE APEX series design system lineup, but with an unprecedented twist. Whereas previous APEX-series design systems were offered as an all-in-one proprietary hardware/software package, for the first time in its nearly 40-year history of design system development, Shima Seiki has released its new APEXFiz as subscription-based design software that can be installed on customers' individual computers.

Maintaining proven functions that have made the SDS-ONE APEX series so popular with fashion designers, with APEXFiz those strengths are now enhanced with the added versatility to adapt to different work styles and environments of the 'new normal'.

Furthermore, APEXFiz is available in five different options that can be

selected according to the customer's needs including APEXFiz Design Pro, APEXFiz Design Weave, APEXFiz Design Knit, APEXFiz Design Standard and APEXFiz Design Jr.

APEXFiz software has been designed to support the creative side of fashion from planning and design to colorway evaluation, realistic fabric simulation and 3D virtual sampling.

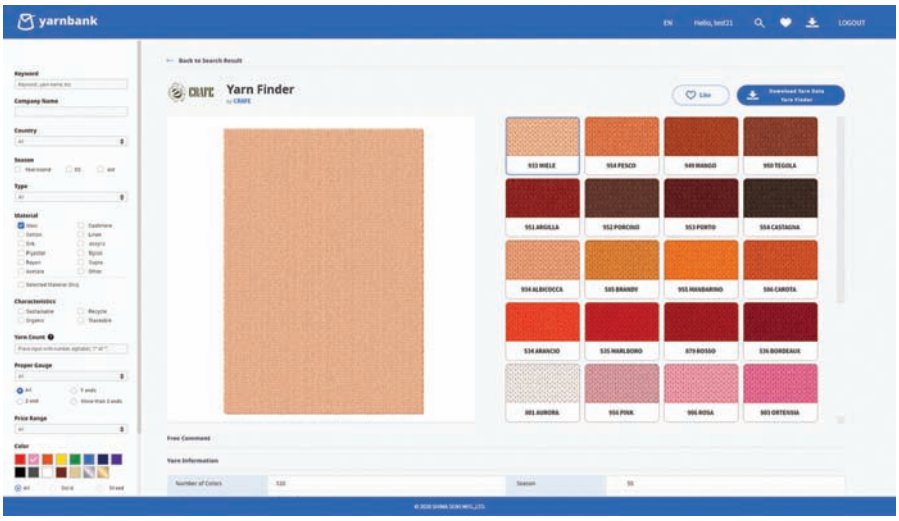
Virtual sampling on APEXFiz and other APEX series is a communication tool that is not only an accurate representation of the product, but it also digitally bridges the gap between the studio and the factory. By sending data to the knit manufacturer it can be converted to machine programming data, shortening lead times and allowing the production of items faithful to their design as originally intended by the designer. That accuracy allows virtual samples by Shima Seiki to be used effectively as prototypes, replacing sampling and consequently reducing time, cost and material that otherwise goes to waste. APEXFiz thereby fulfills its role as a spearhead for realizing sustainability in fashion.

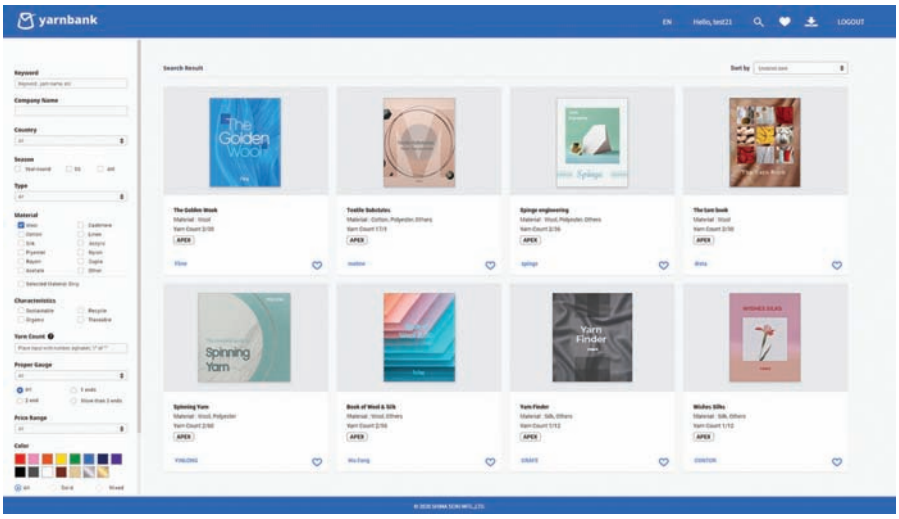
yarnbank

Shima Seiki has also now officially launched yarnbank, which is described as the world's first online web service for searching and viewing the latest yarns, developed with cooperation from yarn companies from around the world. Registered users have free access to the yarnbank archive of yarn information and digital yarn data. Users can also download yarn data for free, for use in fabric simulation and virtual sampling on SDS-ONE APEX4 design system as well as APEXFiz.

Users can thereby avoid the need to scan yarn on their own. By using yarn that is available for actual production, users can further rest assured that their simulations created using yarnbank are not merely realistic images but accurate representations using yarn that can actually be purchased and used in production.

Such clear communication is possible with yarnbank, says Shima Seiki, by bringing together each player in the supply chain - spinner, knit manufacturer





and apparel company - and connecting them digitally to eliminate trial-and-error sample making that is the legacy of obsolete analog fashion production.

With its design system and software, Shima Seiki says it has traditionally promoted design simulation and virtual sampling as an essential part of the Total Fashion System concept wherein virtual samples replace physical samples in an effort to reduce time, cost and materials wasted in the sample making phase, further realizing overall efficiency and reduced waste for a sustainable manufacturing supply chain. Now, with the launch of yarnbank, virtual sampling on Shima Seiki design software provides even more effective digital transformation (DX) for the fashion industry.

Registration is free to APEX users, while yarn companies can choose from different plans for registering their yarn on yarnbank. For yarn companies, yarnbank also serves as a brand-new promotional platform with the opportunity to present their yarns directly to their customers. In that respect, yarn companies can reduce their dependence on traditional sample books as a means to promote their products, saving time, cost and material and doing their part for sustainability.

SHIMANAVI

The third new offering is SHIMANAVI, an e-learning system that allows APEX series users to experience online training when and where it is convenient, and at their own pace, supporting new work styles and environments such as teleworking and telecommuting.

URLs for the new systems are:
https://www.shimaseiki.com/fiz
https://yarnbank.shimaseiki.com/
https://online-services.shimaseiki.com/en/ (coming soon)

Smartest foot forward

Footfalls & Heartbeats uppers.

A UK firm is using the latest Santoni technology to knit shoe uppers with sensor technology.

Footfalls & Heartbeats, the UK-based smart textiles manufacturer has developed a new shoe which, created on the latest Santoni X machine, uses knitted textile sensors to measure movements such as gait and footfall.

Knitted in under 12 minutes per shoe and without using embedded electronics, the sneakers measure pressure, whilst both running and walking, and then relay the information on body movement to a user interface of choice.

Footfalls & Heartbeats has developed a number of series of proprietary processes for manufacturing smart knitted fabrics to measure, in real-time, compressive and tensile force. The technology combines mathematically determined textile structures using electrically conductive yarn to form a repeatable and robust sensor network. The technology uses the three-dimensional complexity of a textile structure, including interactions of fibres within the yarn itself, to control the electrical resistance characteristics of the sensor structure.

These textile sensor structures, says the company, are capable of registering external environmental stimuli in the form of electrical signals. Therefore, unlike its competitors' products, in which solid-state sensing systems are embedded within their fabrics, FHL offers a solution whereby the textile is the sensor. The signals obtained from the textile can be filtered, amplified, analysed or stored in real-time to produce multiple data sets relating to physiological output. This heralds the emergence of the next generation of smart textiles where sensor functionality is integrated into the fabric structure for real-time monitoring whilst ensuring comfort, personal privacy, wearability and durability.

Mapping

The innovative X Machine from Santoni proved ideal for the latest project. This model offers the possibility of knitting infinite intarsia items to produce seamless uppers and allows the mapping of different areas according to the types, and various combinations, of yarn used, to produce a final product that only needs application of the sole, the last manufacturing stage of the shoe.

The X machine from Santoni.

The X machine is capable of knitting a range of different yarns, including recycled yarns, into one-piece uppers, complete with eyelets ready for immediate attachment to the sole. There are further sustainable benefits with the variable fabric panel permitting a limited and controlled level of wastage. The ability to blend different technical yarns and a specific mapping of various areas of with dedicated meshes also guarantee both breathability and high performance.

Interestingly, Santoni also highlights how, as a result of the 20G version of the X machine ensures a light and breathable knitting structure, which offers improved stretch, so giving a feel-good experience just like wearing a sock.

From Footfalls & Heartbeats perspective, there is an increasing demand in sports, medical and automobile industries for intelligent fabrics to sense and monitor changes in their environments. Applications within each of these fields are diverse and may include, but are not restricted to, wound care, compression garment systems, monitoring of athlete performance and remote monitoring of health and physiological symptoms for those in high risk environments, such as first responders and defence personnel.

The knitted textile sensors allows ease of manufacture and allows customization of design to meet the needs of each commercial partner's end use. KTJ

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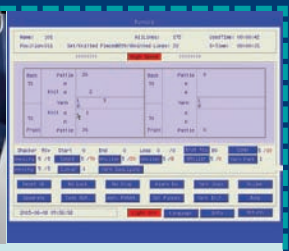

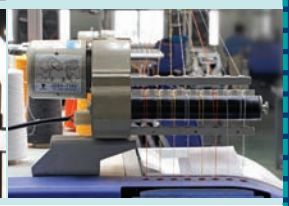
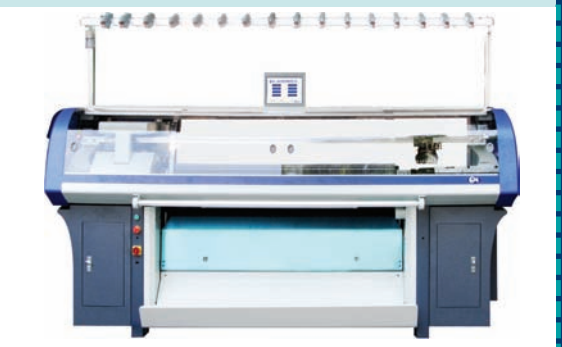

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Sock specialist eyes export growth

OSC, regarded as one of Thailand's leading sock manufacturers, is continuing to invest in new equipment as its looks to grow its global export business.

Thai hosiery giant OSC Socks has added a bank of new sock knitting machines equipped with the latest toe-closing system from Italy's Lonati. Further investments in the latest double cylinder technology, the company told *Knitting Trade Journal*, are planned by end of the year.

The new machines are from Lonati's Goal range and include the renowned SbyS (Stitch-by-Stitch) automatic toe-closing device.

The 16 machine investment includes a number of different models from Lonati's single cylinder, sock knitting portfolio including the GK516DF, GK616DF3 and the GK616DF.

These machines are single feed machines that are the bestsellers from the Goal Line as, thanks to their versatility, they can produce several different items, from the very simple to the most complex, without compromising on quality and efficiency, the company says.

The GK models are available in different diameters and range of needle numbers with the automatic linking with SBYS performing a 'real linking' technique. The advantages are said to be superior quality sock finishing and more comfort and resistance compared to socks made using conventional systems. The latest generation electronics also provide control and execution of all machine commands while drawings and articles are created and managed by the Digraph 3 Plus software package, which contains a full collection of styles which the operator can combine in different ways to obtain the desired results.

OSC told *Knitting Trade Journal* that it was also planning to buy a number of double cylinder DC88HX machines by the end of this year.

The DC88HX is a double cylinder, 2 feed machine for the production of men's, women's and children's socks in ribs, plain knit and links.

This model offers needle-needle, single-magnet selection for several rib and links patterns as well as a tuck knitting option on the first feed of the lower cylinder. The DC88HX series also operates with a brushless motor incorporated in the column with variable heel and toe reciprocating motion. With two selection points instead of pickers and needle droppers, it also has electronic size control with an automatic adjustment of the stitch.

The DC88HX is available in 3 1/2 ins, 3 3/4 ins and 4 ins diameters and gauges ranging from 7 to 22G. It also

Sock finishing at OSC.

OSC Socks has capacity of more than 10 million pairs of socks per year.

Sock samoles from OSC.

comes with SbyS linking with different needle thicknesses according to the machine gauge.

"The highest technology of modern socks manufacturing has just arrived at OSC's doorstep and already start production," OSC said. "We now have the ability to cram this highest tech into our products, improving the fit and enhancing durability of a sock far beyond what you could ever imagine."

OSC, also known as Overseas Rayon Industrial Co., Ltd. was established in 1972 as one of Thailand's first hosiery manufacturers to specialize in sock manufacturing.

Since then, the company has grown to become a leading local and global supplier of high quality sports, casual and dress socks with a capacity of more than 10 million pairs of socks per year from its 22,400 square metre plant, produced in accordance with Thai Labor Standard TLS 8001-2010. The standard composition of OSC socks are 80 per cent cotton 17 per cent polyamide and 3 per cent elastane although other blends are available on request.

The company is particularly renowned for its sports socks, supplying clients such as Diadora, Fila, Football Thailand FBT, Kappa, Kool Sport, Lotto, Pan, SF, Svolme, Umbro and Yonex.

Currently, approximately 20 per cent of the company's finished goods go overseas, while 80 per cent are destined for the local market. The target, over the next few years, is to increase the ration of exports signifincatly.

Behind this push, are the new machine investments as well as new product developments including the production of calf sleeve socks which come with compression properties.

To support this planned growth, the company has also recently invested in new sock boarding machines from Italy's Tecnopea, which is also part of the Lonati Group.

The investment includes boarding machines such as the Ghibli HS which is described as low energy consumption, automatic steam boarding machines with high productivity.

Suitable for men, women and children socks, this model enables the direct loading of products on boarding forms by 1 or 2 operators allowing the processing of a very wide range of styles with very high productivity.

The machine has a stripping device with clamps driven by a "brushless" motor and with a programmable stacking system that allows the simultaneous stripping of 2 socks. It comes with 28 boarding forms with patented profile and made up of special aluminum which enables the machine to process any type of fibre.

The machine cycle provides the movement of 2 forms at a time with a longer processing time and a considerable quality improvement of products, Tecnopea says. The drying tunnel is insulated and contains 10 forms and is heated by means of a steam radiator with low energy consumption.

A long drying time also assures high quality boarding and a very high productivity of 1,200 pairs/hour.

The Scirocco HS, meanwhile is a boarding machine for socks and knee-highs with a clamp stripping system and a programmable stacking system with straight or footshape forms with a 45 degree maximum angle.

The Scirocco HS is equipped with 16 boarding forms with a quick release system to allow a very easy forms change. It also operates one form per cycle, reducing the floor space and improving the flexibility.

The modular concept also allows sock finishing mills to assemble a unit in accordance to their end-user needs, choosing between the following options:

- Water nebulizer;
- Welt positioner;
- No steam;
- Low pressure steaming (complete with a small generator);
- Scirocco HS 3 version with steam chamber up to 3 bar;
- Touch-screen display for the machine setting with the possibility to store working recipes;
- Electronic self-diagnosis with errors or malfunctions visual messages;
- Pneumatic device for a quick forms replacement;
- Steam chamber with quick locking/unlocking system;
- Drying tunnel with hot air circulation
- Clamp stripping device. KTJ

Warp knit specialist targets greater productivity

In these times of coronavirus-induced travel and contact restrictions, the advantages of innovative digital solutions are becoming apparent.

German warp knitter Georg+Otto Friedrich has installed Karl Mayer's KM.ON digital software solution as it looks to enhance the production performance of its machines regardless of time and place.

Georg + Otto Friedrich GmbH is a leading manufacturer of technical textile solutions for digital printing. The portfolio also includes technical textiles for the automotive and medical industries.

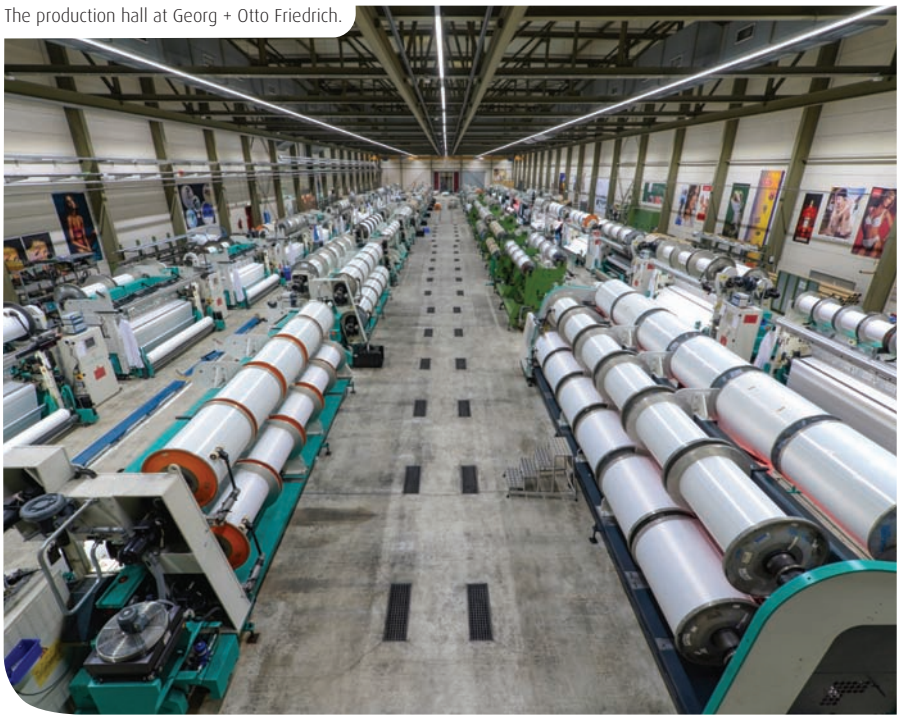
The company operates a portfolio of high-performance tricot machines at its headquarters in Gross-Zimmern, Hesse, and in Limbach- Oberfrohna, Saxony. At the end of last year, following the installation of KM.ON's software, it began to use the k.ey option to network its machines at these two sites with the KM.ON cloud so that staff could access an overview of the factory halls via mobile phone or tablet.

Following its success, Georg+Otto Friedrich began to trial k.management from January 2020. "We are now saving a lot of time and have real-time information to assist with our planning and decision-making," said Kai Trippel, who is responsible for production, of his initial experience with the technology. Previously, added Trippel, it was impossible to get an overall impression of the production situation without daily tours of factory headquarters and inconvenient phone calls with the extremely busy shift managers at the plant in Saxony.

Georg+Otto Friedrich is now acting as KM.ON's development partner for the k.management project, continuing a long-running tradition. This warp knitted fabric specialist, which produces around 650 tons of warp knitted fabric per month, has had a long standing with Karl Mayer, KM.ON's parent company with the two companies relationship dating back to the 1950s.

The pair will now be working together to tackle the challenge of digitalization.

The production hall at Georg + Otto Friedrich.



Partnership

In order to optimise k.management for customers, several weekly user workshops were held between March and May 2020. The online video conferences brought Product Manager Marcel Wenzel and UX/UI Designer Pia Keller from KM.ON together with Kai Trippel and those responsible for purchasing, production and technology at Georg+Otto Friedrich.

The participants were able to use the details they shared on their production practices to draw up important requirements for preparing and presenting performance data. "We were able to quickly prioritise and work out issues such as which key figures are needed in which order at the first click, and which data should lead to deeper menu hierarchies," explained Wenzel.

On the customer side, Trippel welcomed the opportunity to clear up his questions directly and provide suggestions for improvement effectively. "Things are now being fleshed out, and the software solution is getting its final touch before it's ready for practical use," he explained.

Following the workshop phase, the requirements laid out during the dialogue with Georg+Otto Friedrich will be examined to determine their general

validity for the market, and solutions for meeting these requirements will be worked out step by step. "We are taking an interactive and agile approach to the optimization work," Wenzel added.

Trippel is already looking forward to the next test version, which software developers Hristiyan Petrov and Martin Dederer are currently hard at work on.

Real-time

The digital k.management solution delivers a well thought-out dashboard with key figures on the machines used in production. The data ensures that processes are transparent, provides a basis for well-founded decisions, and can be called up easily at any time and from any location.

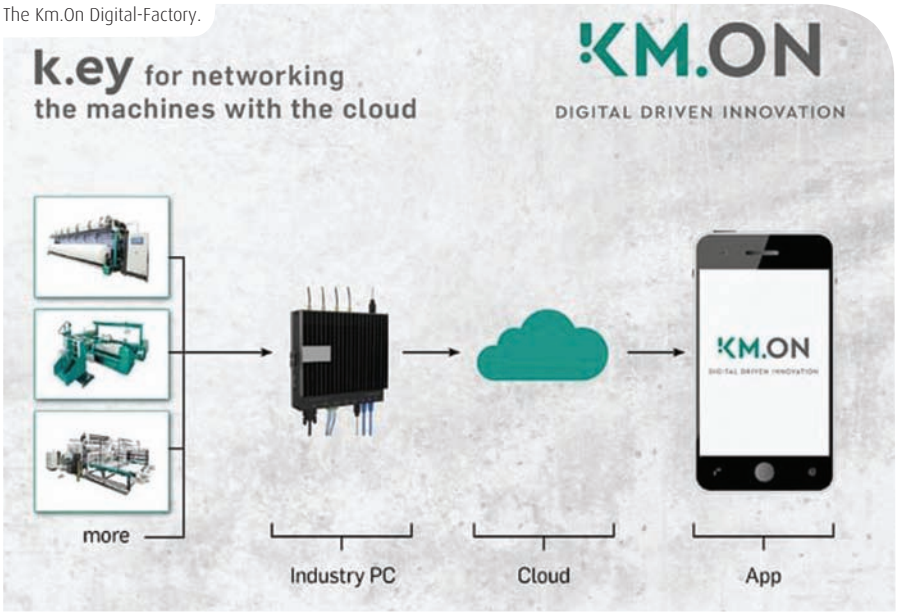
Users are able to simply open the KM.ON homepage and log into the personal area using unique login information. All the machines that are networked via k.ey are listed in this area. The first menu level provides an overview of all the machines. It provides key information on each machine, such as speed, effectiveness and the next upcoming beam change, summarised in a button-like display area. Clicking on this machine item displays more detailed data on the selected machine.

In addition to this, the detailed view shows information such as speed and stop time curves with a choice of monitoring intervals, availability, and the processing status of orders in relation to the planned production time and production duration.

In addition to k.management, KM.ON's customers have also employed the web-based design tool, k.innovation, which has been particularly in the age of corona. This design software for warp knitting helps to shorten the time to market and, to this end, connects all those involved in the design process with appropriate access rights during the development and design of new products.

Customers benefit from efficient teamwork and communication – without needing to travel – throughout the online creative process, from brainstorming to the finished fabric. Pattern data is transferred directly from the software to the machine, which saves time and prevents errors. KTJ

The Km.On Digital-Factory.



The demand for textile solutions for large-format textile printing applications continues to grow. Above all, trade fair construction, event decoration (e.g. concerts) and outdoor applications require fabrics for seamless print motifs in impeccable, consistent quality. In order to meet this demand, Georg+Otto Friedrich, is massively expanding its portfolio. "As soon as the bestsellers StandardFlag KFL, DecoTex GFS, Midnight and BlackbackStretch were available in a width of 5 metres, customers asked for additional extra-wide fabrics with special equipment for specific applications. We are working hard to expand our product range to meet this demand. In the meantime, we supply five-metre textiles in almost all product categories: Lightbox, Mesh, Flag, Blockout and Banner," explained Lothar Vorbeck, managing director of Georg+Otto Friedrich GmbH.
Currently, Friedrich has added three additional fabrics in the width of 500+ cm - Knit-Voile, FreeMesh and Microlux Heavy. These three fabrics have a special finishing for different applications.

- Knit-Voile KFL 4035KFL is a lightweight, transparent textile, similar to a voile but easier to process, ideal for trade fair construction and 3D applications.
- FreeMesh GFS 2582GFS is a PVC-free mesh, with high air permeability and high tear resistance. It is very suitable for outdoor use, guarantees easy installation and is recyclable.
- Microlux Heavy GFS| 8179WGFS is a lightbox article without diffusion layer, extra dense, soft and wrinkle-sensitive.
- Brush GFS 7818GFS - an innovative Lightbox fabric, without white and black fracture, high elasticity, directly printable, also printable on the velour side.

Georg + Otto Friedrich GmbH is a leading manufacturer of technical textile solutions for digital printing.

Productive partnerships

Technology partnerships are flourishing at Santoni's Materials Centre.

The Santoni Materials Experience Center (MEC) in Shanghai is now regarded as a centre of excellence for research and development into the company's extensive portfolio of seamless knitting machinery whilst also offering a glimpse of the effectiveness of the Italian's firm's close relationship with fellow technology suppliers such as Groz Beckert.

The MEC was presented during the Shanghaitex 2019 exhibition with the Italian knitting machine builder not only offering a place for carrying out tests and developments, but primarily as a meeting point where specialists from different areas of industry can push an idea forward together by viewing a topic from different perspectives.

The key goals of the MEC are therefore: inspiration, ideation, implementation and knowledge sharing with the paramount objective of helping to create a better networked and smarter textile industry.

The application fields of the MEC are varied ranging from manufacturing and yarn recommendations to design and development, which helps make each project started in cooperation with the MEC unique.

Even in the design of the rooms, the concept is focused on optimally promoting cooperation and innovative product development. Instead of a laboratory character, the rooms in the centre are tasteful and both friendly and ultra-modern. They are intended to invite people to spend time, promote communication and lively exchanges, thus offering the best conditions for developing new ideas together.

The latest products and projects created in the MEC not only make a fitting decoration for this special environment, but are also intended to provide inspiration.

To ensure that the ideas can also be turned into results, the relevant technical facilities are also in place: As to be expected from a machine builder, knitting machines from Santoni and Lonati enable prototypes to be produced directly on-site. Digital displays provide information and enable simulations.

Elsewhere, a sample archive with over 2,000 samples offers a tangible example for practically any application. Anyone who wants to can access it online. But the highlight on-site is the connected robot. With its help, it is easy to navigate between the numerous models so that you're holding the desired sample in your hands as quickly as possible.

If customers prefer testing in their own company, the samples are also available to borrow. An additional yarn and material database for internal and external use is currently being set up while the in-house yarn store contains a large number of different yarns.

Testing

At the start of a project, telephone contact and meetings usually take place to identify the direction and goal of the journey. The test phase then follows: from the problem to the solution, starting with a rough concept, which is gradually refined. As early as the initial concept phase, aspects such as the supply chain, subsequent marketing of the end product and market acceptance are included to ensure that the right partners are brought on board from the beginning. The relevant contacts are then provided by the MEC.

The potential here can be seen in the following examples of projects that have already been realized in the MEC such as the Woolmark seamless merino yoga collection, the Tencel 6 To 6 Collection, and Vimeo - the beauty of making.

The service is now used by Santoni customers interested in machine technology and its application, brand owners and companies working on technological innovations, outfitters, training institutes, designers and by technology partners such as Germany's Groz-Beckert.

With its own Technology and Development Center (TEZ), Groz Beckert also aims to make its own contribution to new solutions on needle, system part and cylinder level, whether in the form of joint new developments or by providing machines and specialist knowledge. In the internal TEZ laboratory, textiles can also be tested and analyzed both in the preliminary analysis and post assessment. KTJ

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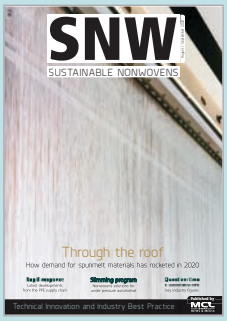

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Robust response from the PPE supply chain

The knitting and related industries are continuing in their global response to the coronavirus pandemic with a number of innovations for the personal and protective equipment sector.

The VDMA, the German textile machinery association, has presented a series of webinars recently with companies outlining the roles they have played in the response to the global coronavirus pandemic.

Topics of the first two Textile Machinery Webtalks were *Technologies for the production of melt-blown nonwovens for respiratory protection masks (FFP masks and surgical masks)*, and *Technologies for the production of respiratory protection masks (FFP masks and surgical masks)* with around 180 people from 30 countries attending.

The third session was entitled *Technology Solutions To Produce Fully-Fashioned Community Face Masks* and included experts from Karl Mayer, Stoll By Karl Mayer and Jakob Müller who presented their technologies for producing everyday textile masks to an international expert audience.

For surgical masks, FFP2 respirators and social distancing masks (community masks), a wide variety of other materials and combinations of materials are used (nonwovens, woven fabrics, knitted or warp knitted fabrics and laminates).

The Karl Mayer Group offers textile production technologies for knitted and warp knitted mouth and nose masks. The masks can be produced in a single step without the need for sewing and include an integrated pocket for a nonwoven filter.

Gabriela Schellner, from Karl Mayer, explained that the company has developed two different types of mask using warp knitting technology; face masks with a 3D shape and face masks with a nonwoven inlay.

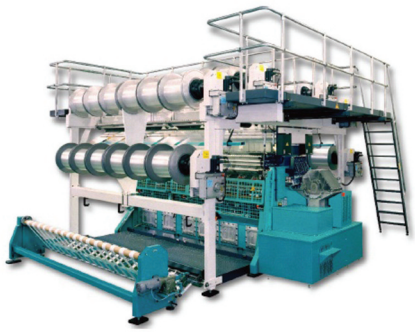
The first type are produced in 3D form by unfolding the double layer with a reinforced vertical middle line while a tunnel can be integrated in the middle line of the mask to reinforce the fabric using wire. These are described as enhancing breathability and comfort by offering a wide and stable breathing space.

Customization, says Schellner, is also possible with flexible sizes and a free-cut for better fit to individual faces. Adjustable ear bands also offer a stress-free experience for the wearer.

For one sample, Schellner showed a mask knitted in gauge E24 using a polyamide texture yarn in 50 den and 80 den, providing a soft hand feeling and natural stretch in the final product.

Highlighting productivity, Schellner noted that Karl Mayer's DJ 6/2 EL

Karl Mayer RDPJ machine for mask production



RDPJ machine

Working width	138"
Gauge	E24, E28
Max. speed	RDPJ 6/2 EL : 500 cpm RDPJ 4/2 : 600 cpm

- Wide working width
- Mass production
- Both EL drive and non-EL drive are available
- capacity up to 520.000 pieces per month (24/7)

Karl Mayer DJ machine for mask production

DJ machine

Working width	44"
Gauge	E24, E28, E32
Max. speed (E24)	DJ 6/2 EL : 800 cpm DJ 4/2 EL : 850 cpm

- Fine gauge, E32
- Small machine and high speed
- Both EL drive and non-EL drive are available
- Capacity up to 200.000 pieces per month (24/7)

machine can produce around 200 pcs/h while the RDPJ 6/2 EL can produce up to 450 pcs/h.

The face masks with nonwoven inlay are a rectangular mask shape that come out of the machine directly, she said. These masks offer environmental benefits by reducing the number of steps in the production chain with the masks requiring minimal post production steps. They can also be used multiple times with the nonwoven sheet inserted to help protect from virus. It is also possible to insert a wire hold the shape of the mask around the nose. On the same gauge machines and using the same textured yarns, production rates for these types of face masks are 280 pcs/h on the DJ 6/2 EL and 720 pcs/h on the RDPJ 6/2 EL. Benefits of these types of mask also include mesh structure on the nose and mouth sections which allows for more comfortable breathing as well as a soft hand feeling and natural stretch from the use of the textured yarns.

Customization and patterning are also possible with Schellner outlining a number of other benefits. "In terms of functionality the benefits of the seamless technology means no sewing process is required," she said. "Breathability through the adjustable Jacquard mesh structure is also improved while their are environmental benefits including less waste from multiple usage. In terms of comfort, these types of masks offer a soft touch and feeling on the skin, an elastic fabric helps fit the face shape, a 3D form for stable breathing space, and less stress on ears when the masks are in long time use."

Schellner also highlighted future developments including a 3D mask with an integrated inner layer in which an additional filter can be set, and a mask for the summer season which uses a Coolmax yarn offering high levels of stretch from using core yarn (PU+PA).

Stoll

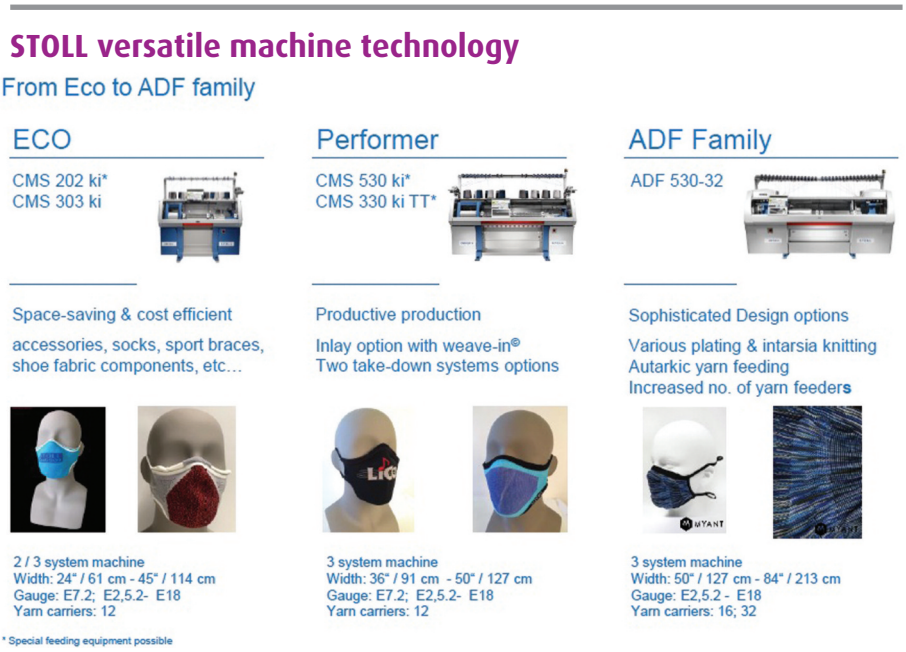
Also now part of the Karl Mayer Group, the latest developments from Stoll were presented by Alexander Behm, product manager, Technical Textiles, who outlined how the flat knitting machine builder offers both versatility and sustainability when it comes to seamless, flat knitted face masks production.

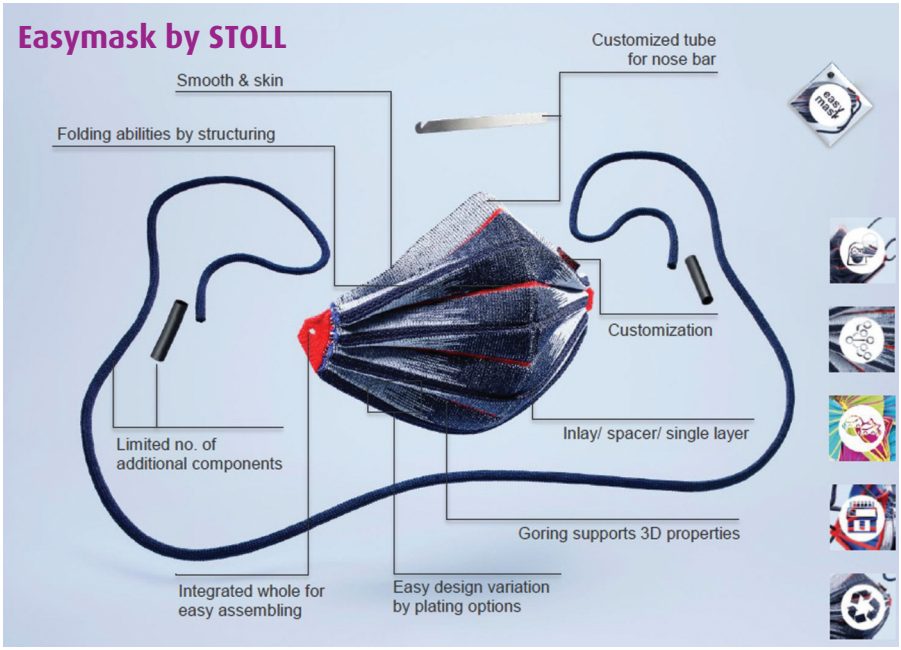
Flat knitted fully-fashion masks, he said, offer a number of characteristics with the use of Stoll's versatile machine technology leading to the production of 'Easymask by Stoll'.

The company, he said, has responded to the megatrends currently sweeping through the industry such as lead-time reduction, individualization, sustainability, automation and the growing call for on-demand production.

Stoll's research and development, he noted, has led to the production of fully fashioned knitted facemasks are with a range of benefits. With possibilities across a range of gauges, from E 7.2 multi gauge to a fine gauge E18, Stoll masks can be designed with plating variations and/or jacquard with varying knit structures such as the use of inlay of high elastic yarns or cables and the use of spacer fabrics with technical yarns. Features of the masks can include:

- The integration of filter system
- Double layer structure, E 18
- Integrated ear strap
- 2 side opening for filter integration; and Stiffened knit in cheek area.





A thin layer jacquard type including:
- a 3 colour jacquard design, gauge E18
- Lateral opening for strap insertion
- 3D shape by goring technique.

A spacer fabrics which consists of:
- 3D shaped spacer fabric
- multi-material mask gauge E18
- tube structure for nose bar;
- and an integrated ear strap.

Behm also demonstrated the variations possible on Stoll technology by highlighting samples of masks from a number of the company's different customers. The companies have developed masks on several machine types including CMS 202 ki, CMS 303 ki, CMS 530 ki, CMS 330 ki TT and the ADF 530-32.

Looking at companies using these technologies for facemask production, Myant, for example has produced a 3D double layer knit construction inclduing:
- Material mix: nylon, polyester, copper, silver
- Filter integration possible
- Nose clip integration possible

Bilio's masks include:
- a recycled polyester yarn blend
- Knit-to-shape with zero waste and no post-processing
- Integrated elastic ear loops
- Antimicrobial SilverKiss technology powered by XSTATIC

Red flag offers:
- Integration of filters
- Stability of filter system by compressive 3D knit
- Elastic edge structure for closure all around mouth area
- Breathability by net structure in mouth area and filter insertion
- 100% Polyamide;

A further key benefit for Stoll customers is the ability to 'Control the Design-to-Manufacturing process' using software such as knitelligence solutions. Here, customers have the entire process at their fingertips range from design and grading to production planning and automated pattern creation and knitting. Available services include:
- M1plus – Knit Programming
- STOLL-artwork
- STOLL-autocreate
- PPS – Production Planning and Control System
- APM – Auto Production Mode
- GKS – Grading for Knitting System

Summing up the webinar series and the presentations, the VDMA said: "Members of the VDMA Textile Machinery Association have reacted to the new market requirements in a very short time and developed new technologies for knitted, warp knitted as well as woven mouth and nose masks that can be produced without the need for sewing. Whether masks, surgical gowns or disinfecting wipes, the production of the textile starting material is the first step in a multi-stage production process. Members of the VDMA are at the beginning of this technological chain."

Harry Lucas

Harry Lucas, which develops specialist knitting machines for a number of different technical textile applications, is offering machines for the production of ear loops for face masks.

The company has a number of its different models available - high speed circular knitting machines with up to 20 heads with a diameter of 1 ins - including its R-K1-1s-4K with 4 knitting heads, R-K1-1s-12K with 12 knitting heads and the R-K1-1s-20K with 20 knitting heads. All of these machines come equipped with a fixed cylinder and rotating cambox for fabrics from 1/12" up to 1 ins diameter.

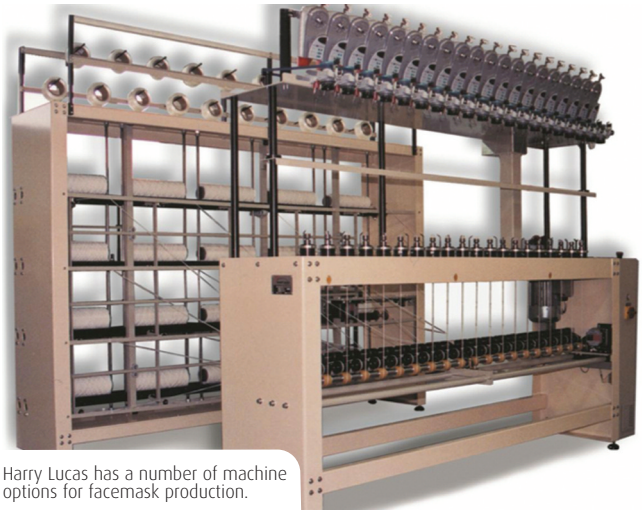
Also available are the R-K2-1s-8K with 8 knitting heads and the R-K3-1s-16K model with 16 knitting heads, both of which also have a fixed cylinder and rotating cambox for fabrics from 1/12" up to 1 ins diameter.

According to Harry Lucas, the fabrics produced in these machines can be used for a very wide variety of applications, such as plain tubes (including bandaging), cords and tapes (possament and knitting effect yarns).

The machines offer a variety of speeds ranging from 2,000 to 4,000 rpm depending on the gauge required, cylinder head diameter, yarn type and the kind of bobbin while the knitting heads are also easily exchangeable.

Optional extras for these models include enhanced yarn tension control, a different machine frame for bigger knitting-heads on request, an electro-magnetic brake that ensures the fast suppressing of the machine heads and a programmable length counter which means that revolutions of the knitting heads can be programmed to stop the machine in advance.

A range of different gauges and head diameters are also available on request.



Harry Lucas has a number of machine options for facemask production.

Hanesbrands

Activewear giant HanesBrands has completed production and distribution of more than 450 million all-cotton cloth face coverings and more than 20 million medical gowns supplied to the U.S. government for use during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The company has also introduced various all-cotton, nylon, and polyester blend face masks for consumers under its Hanes and Champion brands that are available online, in leading retail stores, and in company outlet stores. The company's business-to-business operations are also supplying large quantity orders to organizations.

"We are proud of the commitment of our employees and our ability to quickly pivot

to large-scale production of face coverings and face masks to meet important needs during the Covid-19 pandemic," said Michael E. Faircloth, group president, global operations, American casualwear and e-commerce. "In just three months, we were able to go from never having produced face masks to making more than 450 million government face coverings, designing and developing branded programs of high-quality comfortable nonmedical face masks for consumers, and safely and responsibly reopening operations to support our core innerwear and activewear businesses. We have been able to keep tens of thousands of employees in the United States and across our global supply chain gainfully employed, productive and safe during a crippling pandemic."

Hanes has introduced 3-ply all-cotton face masks for consumers in 5-count and 10-count packages available at leading mass merchandise, dollar store, grocery, drug, and home improvement retailers. The comfort features of the reusable and washable face masks include breathable wicking soft cotton fabric and adjustable nosepieces.

Also available are Hanes lightweight 2-ply seamless face masks. The washable and reusable face masks feature seamless stretch-to-fit construction with comfort ear loops and breathable and wicking nylon-spandex-polyester blend fabric. The face masks manufactured in the company's Arkansas hosiery production plant are available in several colors, including aluminum, royal blue, and blossom, come in 6-count and 60-count pack sizes.

Champion has introduced a lightweight 1-ply polyester-spandex blend face mask and also plans to introduce two additional face mask styles this summer.

In mid-July, Champion introduced a 2-ply all-cotton face mask featuring X-Temp cooling and wicking fabric and in August introduced a 2-ply cotton-polyester blend face mask featuring adjustable nose piece and X-Temp cooling and wicking fabric.

HanesBrands produced reusable face coverings and gowns in accordance with efforts by the U.S. government to supplement supplies of nonsurgical personal protection for use during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to the more than 450 million cloth face coverings, the company designed, developed and produced more than 20 million washable and reusable long-sleeve medical gowns distributed to hospitals and healthcare facilities in need during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued an emergency use authorization for face masks, including cloth face coverings, in response to concerns about insufficient supply and availability for use by members of the general public and healthcare personnel for source control.

Face masks, including cloth face coverings, when used as source control, may help in preventing or slowing the spread of Covid-19. These face masks are not authorized to be personal protective equipment. They are not a substitute for filtering face piece respirators or for surgical face masks.

Sandonini

Sandonini, the Italian manufacturer of hosiery, seamless and circular knitting machines says it is seeing an increased demand for its converted machines for the the production of single piece facemasks.

The Italian firm is now producing its refurbished, updated machines to produce the new masks, which can be produced on single cylinder, four feed machines, which are available with full electronic controls.

The machines have a 4 ins diameter with between 200 and 400 needles and produce the single face mask in 32G.

According to Sandonini, with the machine running at between 900 and 1,000rpm, the production time for each mask which can be in any size or style, is just 45 seconds.

Sandonini is now producing its refurbished, updated machines to produce new masks.

"Sandonini wants to help fight the virus by making its textile technology available for the prevention and protection against of Covid-19," Fiorenzo Sandonini said, explaining that the masks are soft for more sensitive and delicate skin and have an elasticized band for an improved fit.

Possible features for the masks include plain fabric, run proof, micromesh, net, reinforced band, reinforced & floated patterns. The masks also contain a tubular pocket where you can insert a filter or additional fabric for better prevention.

The technology includes a sinker cap with stepping motor, a motorized dial arm with vertical movement through stepping motor for unlimited height positions, programmable and variable stitch cams and a system on the yarn fingers for plating control.

Steiger

Flat knitting machine builder Steiger has released a new knitting program for the production of 3D seamless protection masks.

The two knitting programs are for knitting in gauges E14 and E12 and can be used on the company's Libra technology - one of its best-selling machine types - to produce facemasks, which are almost ready to use, straight off the machine.

"Due to the Covid-19-crisis, we decided to modify our machines and knit finished products for the first time in our history, namely protective masks," the company said. "The masks are produced on a new machine type able to knit fabrics in 3 dimensions. This high-tech, zero waste mask exits the machine almost wearable."

Making use of the Libra's design capabilities, Steiger says that it was able to insert the required elastic seamlessly during the knitting process.

This enables manufacturers to skip one production step while also increasing the comfort levels of the final mask.

With a range of designs possible, Steiger is also offering a service for the production of corporate logos.

"These ecological masks knit with an antibacterial yarn are an effective way to protect yourself," Steiger said, adding that the masks were designed according to the AFNOR standards for 'Barrier masks', adopted by the French Government as an immediate measure. The filtration efficiency of the 3 micron particles must be 90% for category 1 (protection of professionals) and 70% for category 2 (consumer protection).

With a filtration capacity of 99%, the Steiger masks greatly exceed the limit, which allows category 1 masks recommended for professionals in contact with the general public. However, they are not intended for caregivers or sick people.

Sri Lanka

Two of Sri Lanka's leading circular knitters are using their technological and expertise to help the fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

South Asia Textiles, which specialises in producing high quality weft knitted fabric for leading brands across the globe has been working with Switzerland's HeiQ Materials to produce a specially treated fabric to be used for masks exported to the USA.

South Asia Textiles' knitted jersey fabric combined with HeiQ's recently launched anti-viral and anti-microbial agent, HeiQ Viroblock NPJ03 was commissioned by a high-quality US brand working in close collaboration with partners in the US.

Announcing the partnership, Mr Prithiv Dorai, managing director/chief executive Officer, South Asia Textiles Limited said: "We are excited about the partnership with HeiQ and are hopeful that we can positively contribute towards the need of the situation. Our versatility and the ability to manufacture new technology enabled material within a short span of time is our key strength. The fact that we were nominated and selected for this project is a testament to consistency and superior quality standards that we maintain at South Asia Textiles."

Viroblock NPJ03 is an antiviral and antimicrobial textile treatment which has tested effective against human coronavirus when used in face masks.

The tests proved the treatment significantly improves the antiviral log reduction of 2.90 for untreated face masks to 4.48 – an over 99.99% reduction of virus infectivity (a log reduction of 2 is equivalent to 100 times the effectiveness).

HeiQ Viroblock NPJ03 is a unique combination of vesicle and silver technologies designed to inhibit the growth and persistence of bacteria and viruses. The HeiQ vesicle technology targets lipid-enveloped viruses, such as coronavirus, providing rapid virus deactivation, while the HeiQ silver technology inhibits the replication of both bacteria and viruses.

HeiQ Viroblock NPJ03 can be applied to a wide spectrum of textile surfaces including face masks, air filters, medical gowns, curtains, drapes etc.

Both 229E and Covid-19 are two of seven types of human coronaviruses. Besides testing on human coronavirus (229E), HeiQ Viroblock NPJ03 also demonstrates dramatically improved reduction of virus infectivity against influenza types H1N1, H5N1, H7N9, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

Elsewhere, Ocean Lanka, Sri Lanka's largest weft knitted fabric manufacturer has donated Rs.1 million to the country's Itukama Covid-19 Healthcare and Social Security Fund.

The company has also donated 5,000 yards of protective face mask material and 9,000 yards of single jersey fabric material to the Presidential Task Force, to help provide 100,000+ protective face masks and other clothing to the members of the tri-forces, the police and election staff.

''Covid-19 has presented Sri Lanka and the world with unprecedented challenges. While the government fights to contain the prevailing pandemic situation, we felt that it is important and necessary for Ocean Lanka's response to be unprecedented too," said Ocean Lanka managing director, Dr. Austin Au.

Ocean Lanka recently commenced full-scale operations and says it has successfully commercialised protective face mask material to be used in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic.

The company is now looking to expand its fabric manufacturing for use in PPE, including 100% all natural, recycled cotton face masks with natural antimicrobial properties.

Duvaltex

US flat knitter Duvaltex has launched a new range of non-medical, protective face masks, produced on the latest Stoll flat knitting technology.

The vertically integrated textile specialist says it has made significant investments at its facility in Michigan to produce millions of masks using 3D technology for optimal comfort.

Duvaltex, which specialises in the development and production of medical and technical textiles, says the new X7 mask provides maximum comfort while minimizing the risk of contamination and transmission of viruses, such as Covid-19. It contributes to sustainability by being machine washable and reusable, and is made entirely at its high-tech facility in Grand Rapids.

"We are continuing to leverage our extensive experience in the development and production of medical and technical textiles for the healthcare industry to help protect people and limit the spread of viruses, such as COVID-19," said Alain Duval, chief executive officer of Duvaltex. "We have made significant investments in new equipment at our plant in Michigan, developed special anti-microbial textiles, and used unique 3D-knit technology to bring these innovative

Duvaltex has developed flat knitted facemasks.

masks to market in record time. All of our employees are proud to be contributing to the protection of Americans in today's new reality by preventing the spread of viruses."

The X7 protective mask was developed by Duvaltex's Knit Innovations center of excellence in Grand Rapids. Designed for all-day use, its air-chamber 3D-knit design ensures it fits the face perfectly and allows air to circulate freely, making it easy to breathe and limiting condensation. The mask features specifically engineered yarns that resist odour and combat microbe-causing bacteria for an additional level of protection. The yarns also allow the mask to be washed with a bleaching solution while preserving its color and shape.

Duvaltex says it has made substantial investments in new 3D knitting equipment at its Grand Rapids facility to provide it with the capacity to produce millions of X7 masks. It also bolstered the facility's 3D knitting technology capabilities with a view to producing advanced products for a range of other applications, both medical and otherwise.

"In keeping with our commitment to sustainability, the technology allows us to eliminate waste in the production process and ensures our products are reusable, protecting our planet for future generations," noted Mr. Duval, adding that with the promising growth prospects supported by 3D-knit technology and the unique expertise of its Grand Rapids knit team, Duvaltex is confident about bringing more innovative products to market.

Duvaltex's new X7 protective mask complies with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations regarding face coverings and masks. It comes in different sizes for optimal face contouring and all adult face shapes. The mask is available in bulk quantities for large businesses as well as the retail, hospitality, and service sectors, or individually.

HeiQ

Viroblock NPJ03 is one of the first textile coating technologies in the world to have proven effective against SARS-CoV-2 in the laboratory, achieving a 99.99% reduction of the virus.

The treatment for industrial use has been developed by HeiQ of Switzerland and designed to provide textiles and nonwovens with antiviral and antibacterial properties. Its combination of silver antimicrobial technology and vesicle technology rapidly destroys enveloped viruses including coronaviruses. It has previously been tested against coronavirus 229E, another strain of virus in the coronavirus family.

The latest testing with SARS-CoV-2 virus was conducted by researchers at the Doherty Institute, a joint venture between the University of Melbourne and The Royal Melbourne Hospital, an internationally renowned institution combining research, teaching, public health and reference laboratory services, diagnostic services and clinical care into infectious diseases and immunity.

The research project involved a disinfection test protocol that simulated the real-life interaction of small aerosol droplets contaminating clothing. A known concentration of SARS-CoV-2 virus was contacted with the sample fabric for 30 minutes followed by measurement of remaining infectious SARS-CoV-2 viruses.

The fabric sample treated with HeiQ Viroblock NPJ03 had no infective viruses left after 30 minutes. The result indicated a SARS-CoV-2 virus reduction of 99.99% relative to the inoculum control.

Carlo Centonze, Swiss co-founder and CEO of HeiQ Group, commented: "The confirmation of antiviral activity of HeiQ Viroblock against SARS-CoV-2 is an important milestone. This data forms part of our ongoing efforts to help provide textiles with greater levels of protection against viruses and contribute to efforts towards mitigation of the global pandemic."

"HeiQ appreciates the work of the Doherty Institute in conducting these tests and the tremendous efforts of their researchers in contributing to the global understanding of the COVID-19 pandemic," added Australian Dr Murray Height, co-founder and chief science officer of HeiQ Group.

Buckeye

Ohio-based Stitches USA and Buckeye Mask Co. have partnered to produce high-quality, cotton face masks on a large scale, bolstering domestic personal protective equipment (PPE) manufacturing capacity during the Covid-19 pandemic. Using first-of-its-kind automation in the United States, the combined efforts of both companies can produce over 1.5 million masks a month for civil use.

"The partnership between Buckeye Mask and Stitches USA demonstrates how Ohio manufacturers are stepping up to meet the challenges presented by Covid-19," said Governor Mike DeWine. "At the beginning of this crisis, I said that we would work to bring PPE manufacturing back to Ohio and the United States to reduce our reliance on foreign markets. This partnership is part of that effort and a great win for Ohio."

"We saw an acute need in Ohio for efficient production of PPE and stepped up to the challenge," said Carla Macklin, president of startup Buckeye Mask Co. in Cleveland. "The speed at which this project came together has been incredible and was made possible by the efforts and foresight of so many across the State."

Stitches USA, headquartered in Sugarcreek, and Buckeye Mask, based in Cleveland, were connected through the Ohio Manufacturing Alliance, a partnership among the Ohio Manufacturers Association, Ohio Development Services Agency, JobsOhio and its network, and the Ohio Hospital Association.

The Manufacturing Advocacy and Growth Network (MAGNET) is providing engineering capabilities and technical support to make PPE. Normally competitors, the companies combined efforts to reduce costs, increase efficiency and make the greatest impact at a critical time.

Stitches USA will receive a $500,000 grant from the Ohio PPE Retooling and Reshoring Grant Program and a $1.2 million loan from JobsOhio. Buckeye Mask will receive a $30,000 grant from the Ohio PPE Retooling and Reshoring Grant Program and a $1.8 million loan from JobsOhio. The funding will help purchase advanced machinery to mass produce multi-ply antimicrobial cotton masks. Stitches USA and Buckeye Mask operate six and nine machines respectively. KTJ

Knitting digital connections at Pitti Filati

Angela Cavalca takes a trip to Pitti Connect, the new Pitti Filati digital platform where she finds this season's new yarn collections are focused on light and soft, comfortable materials that convey a minimalist but exceptionally timeless mood.

After the decision to postpone all the summer fairs, Pitti Immagine officially launched its digital platform, Pitti Connect in July. The show will be online until the end of October with a selection of exhibitors presenting their new products.

The Italian textile-clothing industry has been severely affected by the strict limitations of the lockdown, with the dramatic slowdown in production and drop in consumption. Facing the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, trade shows and the industry have turned to new and different strategies to respond to the uncertain future.

Agostino Poletto, general manager of Pitti Immagine declared: "We were looking for solutions to the emergency, but we also found opportunities for tomorrow. Pitti Connect has impressed a strong technological acceleration on our trade shows and represents the element of continuity that will take us towards January 2021, when physical and virtual trade shows will integrate with each other."

Together with the digital edition of Pitti Filati presenting the new Autumn/Winter 2021-22 knitwear yarn collections, the companies planned single or small collective initiatives as well as international roadshows according to the personal agenda and connections. During the lockdown, the mills could

Lineapiuitalia Road-show.

organize the new collections and their future strategies, with a gradual replacement of physical methods that have also been considered an environmentally sustainable choice.

Among other initiatives, in order to support sales and exports of its members, the Tuscan consortium Consorzio Promozione Filati, created the platform, "Feel the Yarn Digital Showroom" and has developed a series of services aimed to highlight products and news of each company. A monthly newsletter, storytelling dedicated to the yarns through the main social networks and the online version of the event "Feel the Yarn".

This year the contest, which aims to find new talents in the knitwear sector, putting them in contact with the Italian spinning mills, chose Facebook as its channel for dissemination. A registered community will declare the winner.

Brands

Among the brands on the Pitti Connect platform are: Alpes Filati, Biella Yarn, Botto Giuseppe, Capelli Gilberto Maglieria, Cariaggi Fine Yarns, Chori Co., Consinee Group, E. Miroglio, Ecafil Best, Filatura Lagopolane, Filitaly Lab, Filivi, Fil.Pa 1974, Gente di Mare, Hasegawa Corporation, IAFIL Industria Italiana Filati, HF Filati, Ilaria, Knoll, Kyototex, Lanecardate, Lanificio dell'Olivo, Marchi & Fildi, Michell, New Mill, Perino by Woolyarns, Shepley Yarns, Sato Seni, Shima Seiki, Tollegno 1900, Top Line, Woolmark, Z. Hinchliffe & Sons, Zegna Baruffa - Lane Borgosesia, Zero1.

"Out of the Blue" is the new theme of the summer trade shows, which interprets this unprecedented historical moment through the most evocative and symbolic of colors. The theme underlines the desire to imagine an open and unconstrained season, inclined to exchanges and new contacts. Freely inspired by the sky, the sea, the summer night stars, blue tells the symbolic value of a mystical and reconciling color, which predisposes to listening and dialoguing with others.

The colour transcends time and space, as an immersive experience that connects us to nature and the universe.

The trends that are usually displayed at the Spazio Ricerca have an online space giving visitors the chance to download the colour card, curated by Angelo Figus and Nicola Miller. The main theme "Ray of Light" and the sub-themes Pineal Eye, Ora et Labora, Canticum, Gloria, Mistery Box and Surya Namaskara underline the uncertainties of this era and the impossibility to predict how long something will last. There is the urgency to send a message of hope through a creative vision that motivates new reflections and renewals, a message of light and warmth to what is the darkest time of the year, the winter.

Humankind has always shown a need to come out of the dark through tools of physical and spiritual enlightenment. Art is certainly a means of enlightenment and inner and outer beauty. The trends offer a visionary overview of the history of sacred and modern art that looks back on the lives and works of spiritual figures, who have indicated the right path towards light during their lives. Colours are a vital element. The bright hues are inspired by the images of Indian culture. The greyish ranges go from an almost blackish-blue towards a light blue, passing from warm to cold grey

Olivo Dream Box.

Zegna Baruffa Lane Borgosesia.

Monticolor BIO LIGHT.

tones, from warm natural to orange tones, dark red, peach and burnished yellow. The colour card is completed with warm gold and greenish gold.

Collections

The season's new collections focus on light, soft and comfortable materials, that convey a minimalist but exceptionally timeless mood. The products highlight woolen types and interchangeable colours play an important role. The implementation of sustainable materials and processes is increasingly at the forefront of the industry goals.

The cashmere specialist Cariaggi presented the collection with new yarn ideas and a video has been created to present the season's mood, yarn and colours. Under the title Bliss, the collection is focused on less and better, minimal but exceptional. The finest cashmere yarns are enriched by iridescence of mother-of-pearl or crystalline sequins. Mouliné effects will be sturdy and blurred, creating new humble Shetland colours designed for wellbeing. The evolution of the boulclés family highlights furry as well as brushed or crinkly aspects. New born is the yarn Camel Hair and the Organic cashmere still remain important as well as the Systema Natvrae colour ranges with precious dyes made by infusion of herbs, berries and roots.

Tollegno 1900 has created the new "Collection Box", an exclusive Merino Wool collection celebrating 120 years of the company history, making it the beginning of a new phase of its journey centred on tradition, innovation and sustainability. Nine cards grouped into families, which represent the world that they interpret, are contained in a sustainable box made of entirely recycled cardboard. All the 100% Wool yarns or natural blends, that are also certified RWS or Nativa Precious fibre, can be dyed on request with the natural dyeing, GZ! - Green Zone formula, using dyes of vegetable or mineral origin.

After the success of the Cashmere and Natural Cottons collections, Todd & Duncan has launched the new range of natural wool yarns in the Naturals, created with a special super fine, natural, undyed lamb's wool from certified Australian farms. The new proposals are Lamaine Natural and Corrie Natural, available in undyed white, and the structured yarns Lomond Natural e Glen Lyon Naturals. Among these are a new and more targeted range of coloured cashmere "Top-Up" ranges while the new Mélange Signature Cashmere and the new twists Winter Cashmere Marls palette complete the digital presentation available on the mill's website.

Super-fine wool and cashmere materials are the undisputed stars of the season at Botto Giuseppe. With a special focus on sustainability, the fully sustainable Naturalis Fibra collection is enhanced with new proposals of cashmere, wool and alpaca that have been combined with sustainable silk. The collection has been enriched with traditional mouliné colours ideal for knitted patterns and jacquards, while lightweight yarns with large weaves are perfect for fake furs. To the Naturalis Fibra collection belong the new yarns Arkaba, Fairsilk and New Born Alpaca. Among the Classics the new proposals are Reve Light, Reve Bouclè, Nuvola and Harpy.

Cariaggi Collezione Bliss FW21-22.

Cristiana Cariaggi Virtual Press Day.

According to Filpucci, the global trend is also leaning towards neo-traditional canons in fashion choices. The mill planned open-air meetings with the Italian agents in July in Italy and the same will be repeated abroad in a couple of European locations.

The first moves in the international area are expected to start in September, and, Covid permitting, the mill is planning to attend SpinExpo. Wool and cashmere yarns and their hybrids have always been excellent interpreters of winter fashions, but now among the best standard-bearers of today's highest sustainability values. The new sustainable entries are: Matcha, Nepal, Marble, Babylon, Greenwood, Magma and Norway. The Re.Verso system, focused on sourcing from pre-consumer wool and cashmere pre-cuts converted to fibre, kicks off the Re.VerSo TAKE BACK program, an alternative sustainable and traceable sourcing novelty that re-converts disused valuable garments into fibre, starting a new vital circuit of the raw material.

After the lockdown, Lineapiù committed to a structured and constant recovery and continued in August all the company's productive than commercial, activities, presenting the new collections with a road show in the fashion districts. The theme of resilience and the eternal present is expressed in yarns such as Nadir, a gauzed cotton in combination with the yak yarn, for new generation sweatshirts. Moby is a maxi empty yarn with a minimalist appearance for voluminous and soft knits. New gauzed wool felts, compact and essential, are presented as if they were immersed in the fog. Like Dalmatian, a buttoned yarn, suitable for knits with a three-dimensional surface evoking suggestive snowy landscapes or Alpaca yarns for sartorial looks, among them the thin gauze Amelia Mélange, in a range of vibrant and luminous colors of nostalgic 70s inspiration.

Zegna Baruffa Lane Borogsesia presented new fancy products that refer to blur images and felted looks, faux fur, voluminous yarns and vintage tweed. Equiibrium and Heritage are the interpretation of ultrafine wool and precious blends. With a view to circular economy, the mill added some new sustainable products with recycled wool and branded GRS (Global Recycle Standard) like Brest, Challenge, Norway and Thank. Moreover, the stock service for Cashwool and the other yarns coordinated with it plus the hyper-performing H2Dry can be supplied in a short time.

Monticolor created the new Phygital Collection Book, with a multifaceted range of images, hues and suggestions on future trends, integrated with all the references of the new "Winter Lounge Collection". Each yarn corresponds to a digital QR code, that can be downloaded directly from the site with the related technical data sheet, the colour card and the stock availability in real time for samples.

Visitors to Pitti Connect can also discover news from Shima Seiki Italia through the digital exhibition space. A new way to have a look at virtual collections, fashion sketches, simulations realized with the SDS-ONE APEX machine, information about the used yarns and the possibility to utilize an agenda function to organize digital meetings and video conferences. KTJ

Tollegno 1900 Harmony 4.0.

Botto Giuseppe Green Cashmere.

Coats to integrate HeiQ Viroblock in new threads

Uxbridge – Coats, the manufacturer of industrial threads widely used in knitting applications, has partnered with HeiQ to integrate its Viroblock antibacterial treatment into new engineered yarns.

The resultant sewing threads will be developed at Coats' Innovation Hub in North Carolina, and has been tipped for widespread applications including within healthcare.

Ronan Cox, performance materials, Coats, said: "The combination of HeiQ Viroblock technology with our specialist expertise in threads and yarns creates a unique and powerful textile solution for the challenges we see today."

Since the inception of HeiQ's Viroblock – which is 99 per cent effective against SARS-CoV-2 – it's been the subject of broad interest as the likes of denim manufacturer Raymond UCO, bedding manufacturer Serta Simmons and fashion conglomerate Donear Group have quickly forged ties with HeiQ to use the solution.

Coats is the latest name added to this list, as a new partnership will give Coats "exclusive global access" to the technology for use in sewing threads. Coats, which responded swiftly to growing demand for PPE by joining the Gerber Task Force as a coalition partner, is keen to further its efforts by producing inherently antibacterial sewing threads that can be the make-up of a plethora of textile-based products.

HeiQ Viroblock merges microsilver technology to attract virus particles which then combine with vesicle technology to break down the viral membrane within seconds. The microsilver technology uses recycled silver to enhance its sustainable offering, while the vesicle technology is bio-based.

Cox commented: "The innovation infrastructure we have built at Coats continues to deliver exciting industry changing concepts that have real large scale commercial potential."

At its North Carolina Innovation Hub, Coats will begin production of its promising new solution. HeiQ co-founder, Carlo Centonze, said: "We are certainly very delighted that Coats, the world's leading threads and yarns producer is adapting HeiQ Viroblock. This technology can be applied to any fabric to add an antiviral efficacy to them. Now with Coats threads and yarns, it is even possible for every stitch holding the fabric together to deliver the same effect, leaving no chance for harmful microorganisms."

Recycled Meryl gaining ground in athleisure market

Blanes - Nylstar has added a certified recycled option to its family of Meryl yarns, its polyamide 6.6 range of products, which, available in particularly fine counts, are finding increasing applications across the athleisure sector.

Nylstar has introduced Meryl Recycled yarn which, made from Invista recycled nylon 6.6 polymer, has been accredited with Global Recycled Standard (GRS) Certification.

According to Nylstar, though containing 50 per cent or more recycled content, the yarn will retain the quality for which Meryl is known.

Invista sources post-industrial nylon 6.6 material from its plant in Kingston, Canada, where fibres for airbags and carpets are produced.

Through its proprietary process, Invista then converts the post-industrial fibre waste to pellet form and supplies it to Nylstar for spinning, enabling some of the world's top fashion houses to deliver sustainable garments to the market.

"We, through our Research Center for Advanced Recycled Materials, are the first to commercialize these recycled materials for use in fine denier yarns for the athleisure market," said Alfonso Cirera, CEO and president of Nylstar, adding that the recycled Meryl yarns are available with additional sustainability solutions, including dope-dye colours, solvent and silicone-free, zero microplastic pollution, and natural stretch without elastane.

"These yarn technologies were born from Nylstar's commitment to reduce or eliminate the use of water, energy, and chemicals while promoting 100% recyclability in garment production."

Nylstar is also currently working with retailers to rapidly develop collection and processing infrastructure to promote post-consumer recycling of garments made with Meryl yarns.

Mark Delaplane, vice president of Product Line Strategy at Invista added: "Nylstar has the knowledge and technology to convert recycled polymer into speciality yarns. This is an exciting example of a win-win solution and preferred customer relationship that promotes environmental stewardship while delivering high quality products to the fashion industry. Thanks to our work with Invista, we can now offer our brand partners a new way to transition to closed-loop solutions without compromising the performance, hand-feel and durability consumers expect from Meryl yarns."

Bacteria 'could make nylon production sustainable'

Edinburgh - Scientists say that nylon manufacture could be made more sustainable by the discovery that bacteria can make a key chemical involved in the process without emitting harmful greenhouse gases, *writes Simon Glover*.

Researchers at the University of Edinburgh say they have developed a sustainable method of making one of the most valuable industrial chemicals in the world - adipic acid - which is a key component of nylon.

Industrial production of adipic acid currently relies on fossil fuels and produces large amounts of nitrous oxide - a greenhouse gas 300 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

The University of Edinburgh team altered the genetic code of the common bacteria E.coli in the lab in a bid to find a more sustainable production method.

The modified cells were grown in liquid solutions containing a naturally occurring chemical, called guaiacol, which is the main component of a compound that gives plants their shape.

Following a 24-hour incubation period, the modified bacteria transformed the guaiacol into adipic acid, without producing nitrous oxide.

The researchers say that the same approach could be used on an industrial scale with sufficient financial backing.

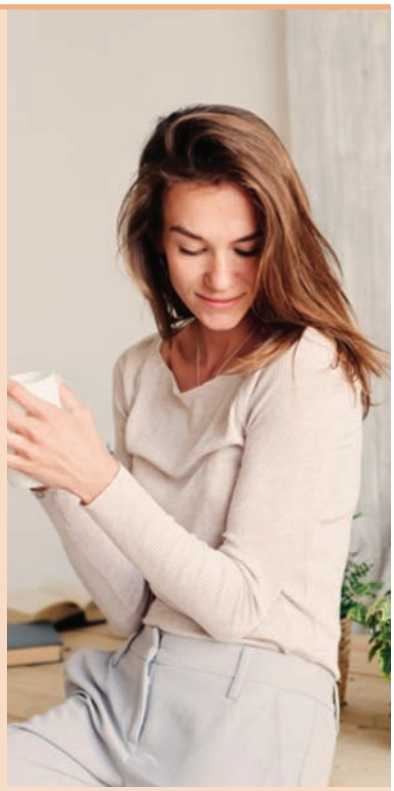
Lead author Jack Suitor, a PhD student in the University of Edinburgh's School of Biological Sciences, said: "I am really excited by these results. "It is the first time adipic acid has been made directly from guaiacol, which is one of the largest untapped renewable resources on the planet. This could entirely change how nylon is made."

More than two million tonnes of nylon - which is used to make clothing, furniture and parachutes - with a market value of around US$6.5 billion is produced globally each year.

Dr Stephen Wallace, Principle Investigator of the study, said microbes could help solve many other problems facing society.

He said: "If bacteria can be programmed to help make nylon from plant waste - something that cannot be achieved using traditional chemical methods - we must ask ourselves what else they could do, and where the limits lie."

Hyosung sustainable solutions at Outdoor Retailer



Seoul - Hyosung has expanded its 100 per cent recycled multi-function fibre offering, which it presented at the Outdoor Retailer Online show in July.

Hyosung says its focus on recycled performance materials follows a demand from consumers seeking comfort and security from their daily surroundings

that range from the home where we are living in and working from, to the clothes they wear. The coronavirus pandemic, says Hyosung, has accelerated the desire for comfortable, versatile, and sustainable apparel that can be worn for multiple uses, that is made to last, and is in synch with their individual style.

Materials play a key role in the comfort, performance and sustainable features consumers crave in these crossover garments. "At Hyosung, our objective is to reduce waste," said Mike Simko, Hyosung Global Marketing Director.

"Whether it's our spandex or nylon or polyester, it's all made with 100% reclaimed waste so that we're maximizing the positive impact."

In addition to Hyosung's new GRS 100% recycled creora regen spandex collection, the company highlighted the following new recycled polyester and nylon yarns (among others) with added performance features during Outdoor Retailer Online.

Keep Cool with Comfort - A balance between comfort and function - Hyosung's 100 per cent recycled regen askin polyester with cooling technology offers cool touch, UV protection and rapid drying features created for those who like to play hard in the sun.

For a Better Future - With every ton of 100% reclaimed waste Hyosung uses to produce its GRS certified creora regen spandex, consumers will be happy to know it is saving approximately 2 tons of non-renewable raw material being extracted from the earth.

Recycled. Robust. Resilient - Hyosung's Mipan regen robic is the first GRS certified recycled high-tenacity nylon made from 100 per cent reclaimed waste developed for eco-conscious enthusiasts who rely on their gear wherever the adventure takes them.

Due to the coronavirus, many trade shows around the world have pivoted from live to digital events. To stay better connected with its customers, Hyosung has increased its digital marketing initiatives to participate in virtual trade shows and events such as Outdoor Retailer Online and the recent Kingpins24 and Performance Days online shows.

The company is also developing new Hyosung Performance Textiles social platforms to include a forthcoming blog along with LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube pages, which will go live in August 2020. You can link to the social pages by visiting the company's blog at: blog.hyosungtnc.com.

Hoka opts for Polartec knits for first performance apparel line

Hoka One One has teamed up with knit fabric specialist Polartec to develop its first range of sustainable, high performance athletic apparel.

Hoka One One, which is known for its innovative, bold performance footwear said it looked at extensive consumer feedback to design its first apparel collection of running and fitness staples. With nearly 4,000 surveyed responses, Hoka found consumers desired apparel that was simultaneously high-performing and accommodating of every type of athlete: runners, walkers, fitness-seekers and outdoor adventurers of all levels.

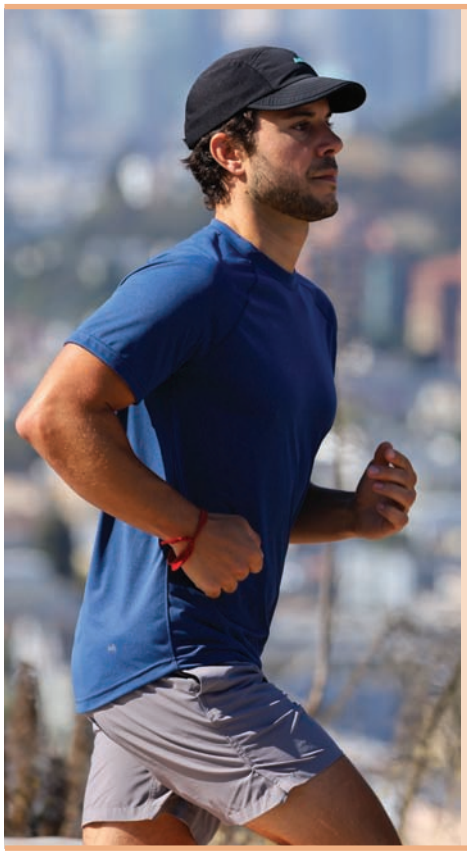
For the initial collection, Hoka turned to Polartec to be their premium next-to-skin solutions provider, choosing Polartec Power Dry for their premium performance apparel due to its lightweight feel and sweat-wicking, fast-drying properties.

As Polartec's most advanced next-to-skin moisture management fabric, Power Dry has a bi-component knit that maintains high breathability while pulling moisture away from the body and transferring it to the outer surface for fast evaporation during activity, keeping the user dry and comfortable at all times for the life of the garment.

Using two versions of Polartec Power Dry across nine hybrid designs for men's and women's Performance Shirts, each shirt is gossamer light, has distinguished visual interest, and floats on the skin. Additionally, each shirt is made primarily of recycled content (at least 50% content from post-consumer recycled PET) and treated with Polygiene for permanent odour resistance to wear more and wash less, furthering Hoka's progress on their journey toward sustainability.

"Our mission at Hoka is to empower

athletes of all types to feel like they can fly, and that mission frequently leads us to break new ground in creating products that will out-perform the competition," said Wendy Yang, President of Hoka One One. "Our new apparel line includes previously unseen designs meant to meet the unique needs of the Hoka consumer. Equally important, we believe no athlete should have to choose between technology designed for high-level performance and a comfortable fit and feel. This new collection provides both, so everyone can feel ready to take on the world – or fly over it."



Power Dry for new workoutwear

San Francisco - Athletic apparel brand, Myles has launched its Momentum Tee embodying its tagline: "The world's most comfortable workout tee is back and better than ever." Collaborating with fabric developer Polartec to create a new and improved version of Polartec Power Dry moisture management technology, the Tee features a combination of technical performance and casual look and comfort, bridging the gap between traditional workout tee and everyday cotton tee.

Historically, performance fabrics have looked and felt technical. This particular version has the aesthetic and hand feel of cotton, though, thanks to its brushed matte finish and overdye heather appearance, imparting more sophistication than traditional athletic shirting.

At its core is Polartec's proprietary Power Dry construction, employing a bi-component knit which provides mechanical wicking action and high breathability for fast-drying performance that lasts the lifetime of the garment.

The Polartec Power Dry technology pulls any moisture away from the body and transfers it to the outer surface for fast evaporation during activity, so the garment maintains a dry feel even during the toughest workouts. It's treated with Polygiene to inhibit the growth of odor-causing bacteria, allowing users to focus on making moves versus doing laundry.

The product is made in the USA, cut and sewn right close to the Myles headquarters. Complete with a refined fit and raglan sleeves with flatlock seams for greater range of motion, a shaped hem, and a minimalistic tonal reflective logo, the Myles Momentum Tee is described as "the most versatile, easy-wearing and long-lasting shirt for a modern active lifestyle".

Insulating raschel knits from Teijin Frontier

Tokyo - Teijin Frontier has developed a new heat insulating, knitted fabric structure that integrates the firm's highly modified hollow-core Octa fibre.
Said to provide both sweat absorption and quick drying properties for warmer climates and an insulating functionality for "brushed-finish intermediate wear, or middler, [worn between the inner and outer] layers", the fabric composition has been tipped for applications in sportswear, casualwear and uniforms.
With its new double raschel fabric, which has middle nodes made from Octa fibre, Teijin is targeting annual sales of one million metres of fabric by 2025.
The fabric, boasting a unique composition, also leverages what the company describes a "distinct dyeing technology" to maximise Octa's crimping function. "Unprecedented comfort is enhanced with heat insulation and yarn tips on the skin side that evenly absorb sweat and dry quickly," the Japanese outfit says.
With its diverse scope for application, Teijin's latest creation could be utilized in both lighter weight or heavy duty garments, with the former offering assurances that it can fundamentally provide comfort in both hot weather and cold. "Until now, however, it has not been possible to combine middler and inner functions because uneven surface caused by brushing yarn decreases sweat-absorption and quick-drying function," the company says.
In recent months, Teijin has made strides both with regards to sustainable and technological developments. First, at the start of June the company partnered with material innovator Murata Manufacturing Co. Ltd to develop what they say is the world's first piezoelectric fabric, capable of converting motion into electrical energy.
Later that month, Teijin Frontier launched the latest iteration of its Solotex conjugated performance fibre, which is produced by pairing a partly plant-derived polytrimethylene terephthalate polymer with chemically recycled PET plastic.

Multibar raschel technology for hybrid bodysuits

Obertshausen - Warp knitting builder Karl Mayer has been exploring the capabilities of its latest raschel technology to develop a lace fashion hybrid garment that can be worn universally and is also extremely efficient to produce.

Half bodysuit, half swimsuit, the fabric for this street & beachwear was produced on an ML 41 in E 28. For this purpose, the multibar raschel machine produces fabric lines of seamlessly lined up transparent and opaque striped areas, from which – following a 90° turn – the back and front of the bodysuit can be separated easily and without much waste.

The pattern guide bars allow for incorporation of the necessary cutting marks, as well as effective designs.

"Multibar technology opens the door to interesting possibilities in terms of design," says Karl Mayer. "In particular transparent striped sections on the base of sporty Powernet within a closed ground construction can be adorned with a feminine lace touch to great effect. "

The width of the transparent and opaque areas can be changed when necessary using the threading on the ML 41. The 134" machine produces up to three such pre-made-up fabric lines simultaneously and incorporates draw threads between them for easy separation by hand. All that needs to be done to finish the garment is to stitch the side seams at the front and back together. There is no need for hems at the leg openings, says Karl Mayer, because the technology used for warp knitted textiles offers high edge stability.

Intertextile keen to help restore industry confidence

Shanghai - The Autumn edition of Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics will return from 23 – 25 September with organisers keen for the exhibition to play its part in the much-anticipated industry recovery.

After the fair celebrated its 25th anniversary last autumn – welcoming more than 4,400 exhibitors and over 89,000 buyers – this year Intertextile will continue to support the industry with a diverse product offering from China, Asia and around the world, and a platform that reconnects the industry, encourages interaction, inspires innovation and stimulates market recovery.

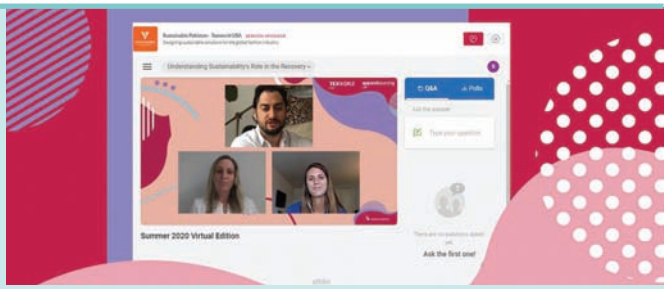
"To date, 2020 has been incredibly challenging for the textile industry, and our thoughts go out to all those individuals and businesses affected," said Ms Wendy Wen, Senior General Manager of Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd. "It is our hope that by September the recovery of the sector is well underway, and Intertextile can act as a much-needed meeting place to reboot the industry as we look to make up lost ground in the second half of the year.

"We believe that there is no substitute for face-to-face interaction when it comes to doing business – even more so in the textile industry where product selection cannot be so easily done online. Furthermore, many of our exhibitors and buyers are SMEs who rely on our global platform as their main marketing and sourcing experience of the year, so we are determined to host a successful and safe Autumn Edition of Intertextile for their sake."

International opportunities are key to why Intertextile Apparel is one of the industry's biggest events and a trusted platform that attracts leading suppliers and buyers each year according to past exhibitors. "This is the best platform to access the Chinese market, but it's also a very international fair. Many companies exhibit here, so it brings the global industry together," added Mr Kiichiro Kobayashi, Manager of Fibres & Textiles Marketing Department at Asahi Kasei Corporation, Japan.

"Our exhibitors have had an enthusiastic response to joining Intertextile in September. We understand though that international travel is still

Texworld USA offers virtual platform



New York - The first ever virtual editions of Texworld USA and Apparel Sourcing USA, welcomed more then 4,000 attendees for its 2020 summer edition.

Traditionally held at the Jacob K. Javits Center in New York City, the Sourcing Event of the Summer was open to a larger than usual audience for three days of sourcing, education and networking.

"The industry was searching for an alternative solution to reach global suppliers during these challenging times. As evidenced by the tremendous support from participating companies, exhibitors and attendees alike, Texworld USA is that solution. We have always been dedicated to providing a platform for the textile sourcing community and we are excited to continue to do so now until we are able to meet again face-to face." stated Jennifer Bacon, Show Director, Fashion and Apparel, Messe Frankfurt North America.

As the East Coast's largest sourcing event, Texworld USA represents the industry's most important marketplace where international mills and manufacturers can showcase the next material innovation. With thousands of professionals, from fabric buyers, product R&D specialists, designers and others, the premier of the virtual event draws from every corner of the United States and interest from brands worldwide.

More than 450 exhibiting companies from 16 countries, including Italy, Canada, Pakistan, Peru, China, Taiwan, India, Turkey, the United States and others were on hand with their high-quality apparel fabrics, trims and accessories.

Together, Texworld USA and Apparel Sourcing USA covered nearly 40 different product categories. All of which were represented on the virtual platform with more than 20,000 product listings.

Visitors were able to take advantage of the AI-powered matchmaking capabilities to get a list of recommended textile suppliers, set up video meetings and chat to cultivate stronger business relationships.

Amidst a virtual connection to more than 450 textile manufacturers, 12 compelling educational sessions covering a host of globally relevant topics were streamed during the three day live event. Led by a list of highly regarded brands and experts in various textile and apparel fields, the program offered access to case studies and solutions to several of today's unprecedented challenges.

uncertain at the moment, so we are working closely with overseas companies in the hope that restrictions will be lifted soon, to ensure a comprehensive range of products is available to buyers at the fair," said Ms Wen.

With exhibitors covering the entire product spectrum, buyers can source from distinct country & region pavilions and product zones according to their needs and diversify their supply chains, including:

- SalonEurope: catch up with European exhibitors and their high-end products, including pavilions from Germany and
- Milano Unica from Italy
- Asian country & region pavilions / zones: presenting Asian-made fabrics from Hong Kong, Japan, Korea and Taiwan
- Product zones: Accessories Vision, All About Sustainability Zone, Beyond Denim, Digital Printing Zone, Functional Lab, Premium Wool Zone and Verve for Design
- Group pavilions: featuring market leaders DuPont, Hyosung, Lenzing, Lycra and OEKO-TEX
- Chinese exhibitors: grouped by product-end use including accessories, casual wear, denim, ladieswear, lingerie, suiting, shirting, swimwear, functional and sportswear

Value-adding fringe programme

Exhibitors and visitors can benefit from Intertextile Apparel's fringe programme events that will offer the latest market trends. The Intertextile Directions Trend Forum and the Fabrics China Trend Forum will present international and domestic Autumn / Winter 2021-22 apparel fabric trends, while product presentations, seminars and panel discussions will allow industry players to share their expertise while providing networking opportunities to devise new solutions for the industry to recover together.

Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics – Autumn Edition 2020 will be held concurrently with Yarn Expo Autumn, CHIC and PH Value to create sourcing synergy. The fair is co-organised by Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd; the Sub-Council of Textile Industry, CCPIT; and the China Textile Information Centre.

ISPO Shanghai heralds successful restart of business

Shanghai - More than 17,000 visitors descended on July's ISPO Shanghai 2020 exhibition to learn about future development and to experience new products in sportswear, activewear and other outdoor wear.

Representing a 14% increase in the number of visitors and keeping the momentum for the third year in a row, visitors flocked to the exhibition, demonstrating, organisers said, ISPO as a key starting point for the sporting goods industry to recover from the pandemic.

The show hosted 350 brands as well as more than 50 industry forums and events. Klaus Dittrich, chairman & CEO of Messe München commented: "We are very pleased to see ISPO Shanghai coming back stronger with an increase in the visitor number and even better experience. It also marks the restart of the outdoor and sporting goods industry in China and breaths the confidence to the whole industry globally that the sports lifestyle is returning and will be valued even ›

Curve New York replaced by virtual exhibition

New York - Eurovet Americas has announced the cancellation of the upcoming Curve New York show, which was scheduled to run from September 21-23.

"It is with deep sadness & a heavy heart that we are officially cancelling the Curve New York September 2020 show," organisers said. "We know this is an enormous disappointment to the retailers, brands/exhibitors and the lingerie community at large. This was a very difficult decision to make, however the safety & health of our community comes first. The uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic remains unclear, and with border restrictions & possible quarantine requirements, we have an ethical responsibility to cancel the Curve NY show."

Despite the cancellation, buyers will still have access to the latest collections with the Curve Connect virtual trade show, which will run from September 13-25.

"We understand how important it is to stay connected & help each other through these recent market challenges. Although we can't see you "live" in New York City, we remain committed to provide you the best digital experience though Curve Connect, our new Virtual show," organisers added. "Our focus will be to provide a platform where brand representatives and specialty stores owners can meet, offer a place to preview an international mix of the best lingerie collections, and provide daily webinars and panels about the intimate apparel industry. We are embracing the new technology available & look forward to introducing you to this exciting new way to discover & shop collections."

more after the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Due to Covid-19, many outdoor and winter sports brands either cancelled or delayed their plans at the beginning of the year and came all the way to ISPO Shanghai to complete their long-awaited launching plans. This also helped ISPO Shanghai to expand its segments of the exhibition this year. In addition, ISPO Shanghai 2020 partnered with IWF Shanghai 2020 and co-located with each other to showcase synergies in the cross-field sports industry."

The exhibition also offered dedicated areas that allowed different sportswear and outfits to be presented in a rather intuitive way to the visitors. The Outdoor Lifestyle Village, ISPO Sports Fashion Zone, and Tracker's Show gave both professionals and enthusiasts chances to take a closer look at products in different scenarios.

The ISPO Outdoor Lifestyle Village showed a variety of fashion outfits which can be used in different occasions, giving sports lovers more choices for outdoor activities. Brands gathered in the ISPO Sports Fashion Zone showcased their most dazzling products featuring both athleisure and sporting performance. The Tracker's Show presented marathon outfits as well as trail running wear. In addition, it launched an online running challenge with 100,161 runners that finished the program.

Elsewhere, the ISPO Retail Forum shared hands-on topics such as digital retail, private domain traffic, community operations, short video marketing, and live streaming operations; ISPO Trends Forum interpreted colour trends for spring/summer 2022 and focused on the sustainable development path of the sports market.

The ISPO Award area displayed selected award-winning products in 2020, including launches that haven't released to the market yet. In addition, ISPO Textrends showcased the latest compositions and innovative concepts of fabrics, as well as other highlights.

In addition to forecast new trends, the business matchmaking event was dedicated to build channels for brands, distributors and sports designers to communicate with each other. During the exhibition, there were more than 160 on-site matches. E-commerce platforms, marketing platforms, online and offline retailers, distributors, product managers, and designers were invited to exchange their needs for sporting products.

The next stop of "restart", is ISPO Beijing 2021, will be held at the China International Exhibition Center (new venue) from 14 to 16 January.

Texworld goes digital for September edition

Paris - With Messe Frankfurt France's September shows postponed, Texworld Paris and its sister shows will provide a digital platform from September 2020 to support its visitors and exhibitors.

The digital platform will cover each of the The Fairyland for Fashion fairs: Apparel Sourcing, Avantex, Leatherworld, Shawls&Scarves, Texworld and Texworld Denim Paris.

"A survey conducted amongst loyal textile and clothing buyers indicates that most of them are not yet ready to travel," Frédéric Bougeard, president of Messe Frankfurt France, said in a statement. "Serious consideration of all these issues and the lack of guarantees that this major event can be organised under good conditions has forced us to take this decision. A difficult decision, but one that is responsible to our visitors, exhibitors and partners."

The platform will enable exhibitors from Messe Frankfurt France tradeshows - textile and clothing manufacturers, brands, accessory manufacturers, etc. - to present their collections and their know-how to international buyers through a complete digital networking solution: virtual showroom, matchmaking, definition of needs, etc. Buyers will also profit from a specific section to define their requests and build their collection based on selection criteria designed for the textile world: country, minimum quantities, type of service, certificates, etc.

"With this new partnership, Messe Frankfurt France is giving priority to textile expertise and quality contacts. These new access points will help to maximize opportunities between buyers and exhibitors at the next edition of our textile trade shows," Bougeard added.

With 15,000 visitors of Messe Frankfurt France tradeshows and the 15,000 professionals already registered on the online sourcing platform, organisers said that nearly 30,000 textile and clothing professionals will be able to benefit from this tool. Available from 1st September on the respective trade fair websites, the platform will be offered for a renewable period of 6 months to exhibitors at the February edition (1-4 February 2021) of the Paris trade fairs.

It will also help to maintain a working relationship between buyers and manufacturers and support them in their projects between two editions of the Messe Frankfurt France trade fairs.

The next shows are scheduled from 1st to 4th February 2021.

Fabric Days exhibition makes September debut

Munich - As a long-standing partner of the industry, the Munich Fabric Start Exhibitions GmbH team took up the challenge to offer a creative environment for fabric development and inspiration in a season experiencing significant disruption from the coronavirus pandemic.

The Fabric Days event took place from 1 - 3 September 2020 at the MOC in Munich. In the four fully booked halls on the ground floor of the MOC, around 300 German and European exhibitors presented their new developments across five segments for Autumn/Winter 21/22 in around 700 new collections.

Among the list of international exhibitors were many high quality premium suppliers, who showcased a broad product range. With established partnerships with leading textile agencies such as Berner & Sohn, Max Muller, LOOMseven and Puttmann, many collections from European manufacturers were shown exclusively at the show.

"The Fabric Days event is an important sign for our industry," said Christof Hornung, Agentur Hornung GmbH. "There were quality exhibitors – and I was able to show complete collections from my Italian suppliers. The response from our customers to Fabric Days and the date has also been very good. The last few weeks have shown that offline fabric handling and presentations are crucial to launch articles with new qualities and drapes. For this reason, I see digitalization as more of a tool for collection archiving and developing established fabrics as so-called digital twins. We are therefore looking forward to what has always been the essence of a fabric trade fair: personal exchanges with our customers and good conversations - for this season especially, about the awareness and sensitivity of new topics."

Participating fabric manufacturers included Lisa, Yunsa, Henitex and Davaris. In the Additionals area, Peter Budel, Shindo and Varcotex presented their latest developments while Lica Design Studio, Circleline and Design Studio Fluxus were in the Design Studios. Lagoon, United 3 Fashion and Dimis Fashion Group were part of the Sourcing area while trend setting innovations were presented by Blue RenTec.one, House of U and Smart Fiber.

Fabric Days also offered a trend forum following the seasonal theme of "Hopetimism".

Exhibition circuit restarts with Shenzen yarn show

Shenzhen - Physical trade fairs returned to the textile industry recently as Messe Frankfurt successfully hosted the debut edition of Yarn Expo Shenzhen. Alongside Intertextile Shenzhen Apparel Fabrics, the two fairs were the company's first in-person events since February.

In total, 125 exhibitors participated in Yarn Expo, while there were over 42,000 visits recorded at the four concurrent fairs, which also included Intertextile Shenzhen Apparel Fabrics, CHIC and PH Value. The fairs were held at the brand-new Shenzhen World Exhibition & Convention Center, with Yarn Expo covering 10,000 sqm.

Yarn Expo Shenzhen is an expansion of the original fair which has been held for the last 16 years, first in Beijing before it relocated to Shanghai. Ms Wendy Wen, Senior General Manager of Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd explained: "The Yarn Expo Spring & Autumn editions in Shanghai have proved extremely popular in recent years, with strong increases in both the exhibitor and visitor numbers. This gave us the confidence to expand the fair to the south of China where we could utilise the brand-new venue, and provide another platform for suppliers to capture the growing potential in this region of the country as well as further afield in Asia."

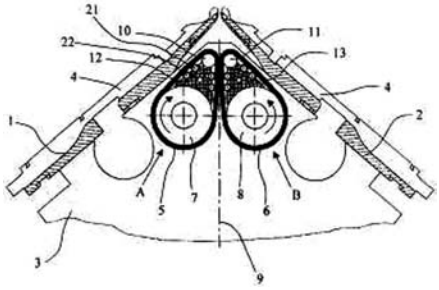
"Our cooperation with the organisers of CHIC and PH Value to bring these fairs to Shenzhen added to the success of this debut edition," Ms Wen continued. "By replicating the Shanghai concept with the four fairs held together, we are bringing the full textile supply chain together under one roof which has proved beneficial for exhibitors and visitors.

"Given all the challenges facing the industry at present, we are extremely pleased with the results of the last three days, and are glad that we can play our part in assisting the industry's recovery through the resumption of our fairs. The overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants shows that the decision to expand the fair, as well as proceed with it on the scheduled dates, was the right one. It is clear that there is demand for another Yarn Expo fair in China, in this region and at this time of the year."

To ensure the wellbeing of all participants at the fair, Messe Frankfurt strictly followed the guidelines of the local health authorities concerning large-scale events. These guidelines include real-name authentication during registration and to enter the fairground, body temperature checks, the requirement for face masks to be worn to enter the fairground, crowd control and distancing measures throughout the whole exhibition period, public areas sterilised regularly, specific areas allocated for dining, and the requirement for hand sanitiser and medical service points to be available throughout the fairground.

Continuous pulling

Applicant(s): Atelier De Construction Steiger
Patent number(s): FR20000016503



This patent covers a continuous puller for a straight row knitting machine with one or more sections (1, 2) consists of two elastic belts (5, 6) rotated in opposite directions by two horizontal shafts (7, 8) driven by two-way motors and passing over return members (10, 11) located close to the stitchforming zone. The belts are fitted with an internal mechanism (21, 22) which allows the shape of their outer surfaces to be modified, varying the pulling effort applied to the knitted material. The belt shape modification mechanism consists of pressure elements inside the belts which vary the area of the contact surface between at least one belt and the knitting. The pressure elements are in the shape of elongated bodies such as rollers moved by a system of endless screws, and the belts have outer surface grooves lying parallel to the axes of the drive shafts or in helical lines.

Hosiery yarn feeding

Applicant(s): Lonati SPA
Patent no: IT20170057890

This patent from sock knitting specialist Lonati is for a device for feeding yarn or yarns for knitting machines for hosiery or the like, comprising a supporting structure (2) which supports at least one yarn finger (3) having an elongated shape and being pivoted, at an intermediate portion thereof, to the supporting structure (2) about a corresponding rotation axis (4) and having, proximate to a longitudinal end thereof, a passage (5) for the yarn or yarns to be fed to the needles of the knitting forming machine, the device for feeding yarn or yarns comprising an electromagnetically actuated device (7) which acts on command on the at least one yarn finger (3) for its rotation, with respect to the supporting structure (2), about the corresponding rotation axis (4), from an inactive position to at least one active position, which is angularly spaced with respect to the inactive position about the rotation axis (4), or vice versa, the electro-magnetically actuated device comprising at least one magnet (8) which is fixed to the at least one yarn finger (3) and at least one electric coil (9a, 9b) which is laterally adjacent to the at least one yarn finger (3) and is connected to the supporting structure (2). The at least one electric coil (9a, 9b) is able to be supplied electrically to generate a magnetic field that interacts with the at least one magnet (8) to actuate the rotation of the at least one yarn finger (3) about the corresponding rotation axis (4) with respect to the supporting structure (2).

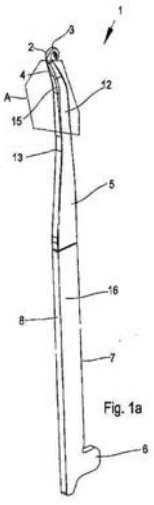
Knitting machine needle

Applicant(s): Sipra Patententwicklungs
Patent no: DE20001018897

Patent application for a latch needle for a knitting machine has a hook (5) at one end of the shaft (2), with at least one dividing edge (15) at its inner side (11) to form two yarn holding zones (16,17). The knitting machine latch needle has its dividing edge closer to the needle point (8) than the shaft, or it is at the center of the needle hook. The needle hook can be fitted with two dividing edges, to give three yarn holding zones. The yarn holding zones are offset from each other by at least one longitudinal step. Or they can be over each other without a longitudinal offset. The dividing edges are rounded.

Compound needle for a warp knitting machine

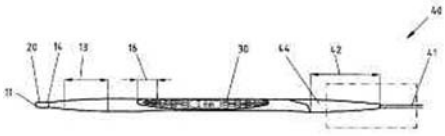
Applicant(s): Karl Mayer R&D Gmbh
Application number: TW20190128759



This a patent for a compound needle (1) for a warp knitting machine is specified with a needle head (2), which has a hook (3), with a transition region (4) which adjoins the hook (3) and the cross section of which increases in a direction away from the needle head (2), and with a stem (5). It is possible to be able to reliably operate a warp knitting machine even with threads which are difficult to process. For this purpose, it is provided that the transition region (4) has an edge profiling (14, 15) which changes continuously between the hook (3) and the stem (5).

Circular knitting needle

Applicant(s): Prym William Gmbh
Application number: HK20180107468

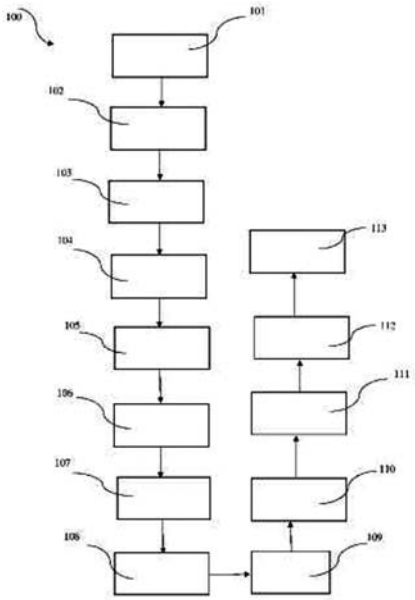


The invention relates to an improved knitting needle (10) having at least one needle tip (11) and a shank (12) on which the knitting can be at least regionally arranged. Also provided is a gripping region (13) which is arranged on the shank (12) in the vicinity of the needle tip (11) and which has a round cross section, wherein the gripping region (13) can be gripped by a user during knitting. The knitting needle (10) itself narrows along its length (15) from the shank (12) in the direction of the needle tip (11). The invention proposes that the needle tip (11) itself be designed in a rounded manner and that a droplet-shaped thickening, namely a retrieval droplet (20), be attached thereto, the latter having a smaller diameter than the shank (12). The transition between the shank (12) and the narrowed portion (14) and between the narrowed portion (14) and the retrieval droplet (20) is formed without edges and with little frictional resistance. The invention also relates to a method for producing such a knitting needle (10). In said method, the knitting needle (10) is designed as a circular knitting needle (40), wherein, during the production of the circular knitting needle (40), the cord (41) is overmoulded with the material of the shank (12).

Velvet fabric knitting method

Applicant(s): Sanko Tekstil
Application number: CA20173085008

This invention relates to a method of producing (pile) velveteen (plush) knitted fabric which is produced in circular knitting



machines by terry-cloth fabric technique and which is then processed to appear like velvet.

In the state of the art applications, the light effects and surface patterns are obtained in some nylon velvet fabrics, although rare; however they are provided to some extent with a synthetic material (nylon, etc.). Artificial textile fibers are required to achieve such an effect. Processes of patterning and creating effects in velvet fabrics cannot be achieved by using single yarn in plain circular knitting machines. However in the state of the art applications, jacquard terry-cloth machines are used to produce patterns on velvet fabric and the colors obtained in this production method cannot reflect light from different angles.

The object of the present invention is to provide a method of producing velvet fabric having a mixture of materials and reflection effect by performing a different shearing method on the roving (roving of velvet/terry-cloth fabric instead of terry- cloth) without making changes in the construction of the fabric. In order to do this, two different yams are required to be knitted in terry-cloth construction in a double plated circular knitting machine. Following a terry-cloth knitting process carried out by different yams, the surface is converted to velvet fabric by shearing process. By means of the present invention, light effects and episodic patterning are achieved without applying any printing process and/or using jacquard circular knitting machines. The said progress is achieved by producing ring-spun yam from different material mixtures and using them as pile yam in production of velvet fabric.

In order to obtain the yarn with nep effects used in pile yarn, the neppy fibers are mixed with the main fiber and made into slivers by being processed in the carding machine and the nep carding slivers of the yam with nep effects with the staple fibers in the draw frame.

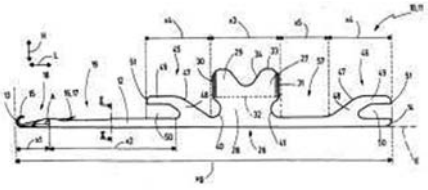
The draw frame is used for eliminating roughness of the slivers coming from the carding machine and splicing the sliver cotton pieces leaving the carding machine transversely with the sliver neps and mixing them into the main material (102). The neps are mixed into the main material as injection or double material feed during the yam process, nep carding process, draw frame process or yarn spinning process.

The roving frame is activated for thinning the draw frame sliver cotton and nep mixture coming from the draw frame and subjecting it to twisting process (103). After the draw frame process, the cotton and nep mixture is given its thinnest sliver form in the roving machine. These thin slivers are spun in the ring machine. The said ring machine is activated to obtain yarn by thinning the cords coming from the cotton and nep mixture from the roving machine via drawing and to wind the yam onto the cops (104). Thus the main material is subjected to carding process and the process of mixing with the neppy sliver is performed in the draw frame. The mixing is enabled during the drawing process.

Machine-knitting tool

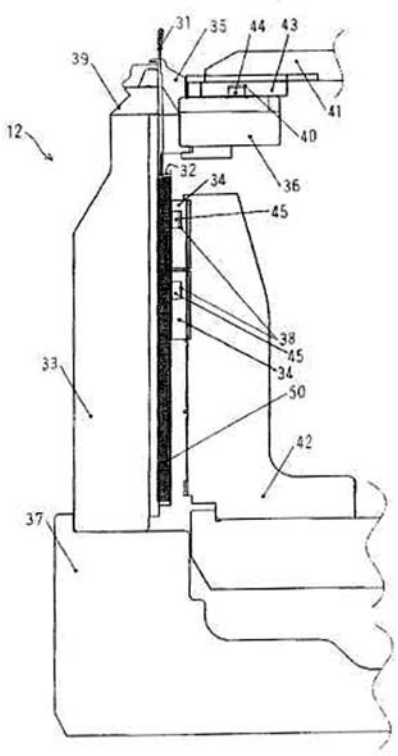
Applicant(s): Groz Beckert
Application number:
TW20190123744

The invention refers to a machine-knitting tool (10) and particularly to a machine-knitting needle (11) with a shank part extending in a length direction (L) that comprises a contact surface (20) at the lower side. Outside an end section (18) configured for loop formation the contact surface (20) extends continuously in a plane (E) to the transition to the back end (14) of the shank part (12) opposite the front end section (18). Between a front guide section (45) and a back guide section (46) a butt section (26) with a butt (27) is present. In each guide section a guide cantilever (47) is present that extends away from the shank part (12) in height direction (H) and limits a gap (50) between a cantilever leg (49) of the guide cantilever (47) and a section of the shank part (12) that is arranged below.



Needle bed

Applicant: Precision Fukuhara Works
Application number:
TW20190127111



This patent provides a needle bed for a circular knitting machine in which, without greatly changing the structures of a knitting tool and an insert piece for forming a groove for slidably storing the knitting tool, the contact area between the knitting tool and the insert piece is reduced. A needle bed which is mountable to the circular knitting machine is configured to slidably store a knitting tool in a groove of which both side surfaces are formed by opposed plate surfaces of adjacent insert pieces 50 having a rectangular plate shape, wherein each insert piece 50 has a plurality of dimples 53 formed in a short-side direction X and a long-side direction Y on the plate surfaces.

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Business News

Delta Galil swoops for Bare Necessities

Tel Aviv - Delta Galil, the global manufacturer and marketer of branded and private label apparel products, is adding to its online portfolio with the acquisition of intimates retailer, Bare Necessities from Walmart, Inc.

The transaction is expected to close in the next few weeks and be accretive to earnings next year. Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

Announcing the deal, Isaac Dabah, CEO of Delta Galil said the transaction reflected the company's strategic growth objective to diversify its distribution channels. "As the digital space currently represents the fastest growing segment in our industry, we are very pleased to acquire such an authority in online intimates," he said. "Bare Necessities can significantly enhance Delta Galil's presence in the digital world, as we continue to pursue growth online. I look forward to partnering with the senior leadership of Bare Necessities to achieve strong, profitable growth."

Established in 1998, with headquarters outside New York City, Bare Necessities offers more than 160 brands and 6,400 styles in intimates, women's swimwear, shapewear, lingerie, sleepwear, and hosiery, among others. Renowned for its expertise in fit and its wide range in sizes, Bare Necessities' product offering spans Wacoal, Chantelle, SPANX, Calvin Klein and Miraclesuit, with exclusive collections including Birdsong and Camio Mio. Following the deal, the site will offer Delta Galil's own brands as well.

Expansion on track as Culp looks to rebound

High Point - US circular knitter Culp Inc is confident that barring additional shutdowns as a result of the coronavirus, business will continue its solid return through the first and second quarters of fiscal 2021, with the company expecting to benefit from pent-up demand and increased consumer attention to the home environment.

Reporting a 29.3 per cent drop in fourth quarter net sales to $47.4 million, with mattress fabric sales down 38.5 per cent and upholstery fabric sales down 17.3 per cent compared with last year, Culp said it was likely that the Covid-19 pandemic would continue to have an impact on its business through at least the first half of fiscal 2021.

The net loss for the fourth quarter of fiscal 2020 was $27.8 million, which included a loss of $8.7 from a discontinued operation million associated with eLuxury, compared to a net loss of $1.5 million in the fourth quarter of fiscal 2019.

Commenting on the results, Iv Culp, chief executive officer of Culp, Inc., said: "The measures we have taken in recent weeks, combined with our team's agility, innovation, and resilience, give me confidence in our ability to navigate the environment we are facing, to increase our market share, and to emerge stronger as business conditions improve, which we are already experiencing.

"We entered this period with a sound balance sheet and acted swiftly and decisively to adjust our plans and enhance our cash position, including the strategic sale of our ownership interest in eLuxury. Simultaneously, we have continued to execute our product-driven strategy and focused on innovation and design creativity in both of our business segments, despite the challenging conditions."

Culp also said that the mattress fabrics segment had seen better-than-expected increases in orders, shipments and output for the first eight weeks of fiscal 2021 while the building expansion at its plant in Haiti will be completed during the second quarter, which will provide additional capacity and enhance Culp's ability to produce sewn covers.

Sandy Brown, president of Culp's mattress fabrics division, added: "The unprecedented disruption from the COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected our results for the fourth quarter and fiscal 2020. Despite these challenges, we quickly pivoted to repurpose our available operations to produce face masks, bedding covers, and fabrics for healthcare operations and consumer health. This allowed us to support much-needed relief efforts as an essential business and keep as many workers as possible employed.

ELG investment provides platform for growth

Stockholm - The European Lingerie Group invested more than €3 million in new knitting machines and other manufacturing equipment in 2019 as the company looked to grow sales in Europe while integrating a number of new acquisitions.

ELG is a fully vertically integrated, intimate apparel and lingerie group headquartered in Stockholm, Sweden, encompassing the entire value chain from product design and sourcing of raw materials to producing fabrics and lace, moulding and dyeing, manufacturing and distributing finished products.

ELG business consists of three segments – Lauma Fabrics, which produces and supplies fabrics, laces and narrow bands for the lingerie industry as well as own branded medical textiles; Felina, which designs, manufactures and distributes premium lingerie; and Dessus-Dessous, which serves as the main online sales channel of the Group. Felina's main brands are Felina and Conturelle, both having established a strong position in the market over the decades, with a loyal and stable customer base.

In its recently released annual report, Indrek Rahumaa, CEO and Board member of the Group said the Group had invested in property plant and equipment and intangible assets totaling more than €3 million throughout 2019.

The main investments related to several pieces of production equipment acquired by LSEZ Lauma Fabrics SIA and investments for the Magento upgrade project from the Dessus-Dessous brand.

In order to expand operations and add capacity for both private label and Senselle by Felina production, ELG also acquired Yustyna Ltd (subsequently renamed to Senselle OOO), a lingerie manufacturer based in in Belarus.

The company also continued to invest in its new sewing plant in Belarus, where it significantly increased its number of sewing machines and developed a new material cutting facility. In May 2019, Senselle OOO obtained the Business Social Compliance Initiative A grade certificate, making it the first lingerie producer to obtain BSCI A grade certificate in the region.

Over the course of the year, total sales amounted to €77.6 million, an increase of 0.1 per cent compared to 2018 while net profit was €0.1 million, down from €0.2 million in 2018.

ELG's main operating markets are Germany, Spain, France, Poland, Benelux countries, Baltic countries, Russia, Belarus and Ukraine.

The largest growth in sales in 2019 was in Russia, Spain and Belarus with these markets growing by 26.2 per cent, 12.9 per cent and 10.5 per cent respectively.

Gildan slumps to a net loss amid coronavirus slowdown

Montreal - Sales at Gildan Activewear plunged in the second quarter as the company swung to a net loss, reflecting the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and the widespread closures and led to a pause in economic activity for a good part of the second quarter.

Not surprisingly, sales in the quarter of $230 million were down 71% compared to last year with the company also incurring substantial Covid-related costs and charges. The net loss was $249.7 million, down from a net profit of $99.7 in the same period last year.

"Despite the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, we maintained a strong focus on our key priorities, including the health and safety of our employees and the long term positioning of our business," said Glenn J. Chamandy, President and CEO of Gildan Activewear. "Against the challenging backdrop of the pandemic and the difficult but necessary actions we have taken, we have accelerated efforts under our Back to Basics strategy to further simplify our product portfolios, remove complexity and cost from our business, better support our customers and drive long term market share growth."

While results for the second quarter were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, Gildan said it was encouraged by certain signs of recovery, particularly as point of sales (POS) trends during the quarter performed better than it expected across all channels. By the end of the second quarter, essentially all imprintables distributor customer warehouses and the majority of retailer brick and mortar store locations had re-opened in the U.S., although many with reduced operating hours.

POS related to certain categories in the US imprintables channel, including fleece and fashion basics, started to turn positive in the month of June, Chamandy said. In international markets, although POS were down on a year-over year basis, demand declines decelerated with POS in Europe and Latin America performing better than anticipated for the quarter.

In the retail channel, while sales were down overall, certain categories held up better during the quarter and total sales of men's underwear products were up 23.5% compared to last year.

Gildan said it kept the majority of its production facilities idle or operating at low levels of capacity during the second quarter.

In order to further lower its cost structure, Gildan also reduced its overall manufacturing workforce by an additional 6,000 employees, adjusting to the current demand environment and announced the closure of a smaller speciality yarn-spinning operation in the U.S. during the quarter.

Sales in the hosiery and underwear category of $98.1 million were down 27.9% in the quarter compared to last year. The decrease in sales in the hosiery and underwear category was also tied to retail store closures during the quarter which impacted the sock business.

PPE sales lift Hanesbrands in second quarter

Winston-Salem - Activewear and sock giant HanesBrands says that revenue from PPE and facemasks have compensated for the slowdown in sales elsewhere in the business, giving it double-digit growth in diluted earnings per share for its second quarter, despite market disruption from the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to Hanes, its earnings growth resulted from the company's ability to pivot to production and sales of personal protective garments (face masks and medical gowns) combined with relatively strong apparel performance in pandemic conditions, including 68 per cent sales growth in the online channel.

The company sold US$752 million in personal protection garments globally to governments, large organizations, consumers and business-to-business customers. The sales of the face masks and medical gowns significantly exceeded initial expectations for the new business lines. As part of the protective-garment sales in the quarter, the company delivered more than 450 million cloth face coverings and more than 20 million medical gowns to the U.S. government.

It is now selling face masks to consumers under its leading brands globally, including Hanes, Champion, Bonds and Dim, and protective garments represent an ongoing business opportunity. Excluding the potential for additional government contracts, the company estimates that it could sell more than $150 million of protective garments in the second half of 2020.

Apparel performance, excluding protective garments, exceeded the company's base-case scenario with strong online sales growth and strong point-of-sale trends after closed stores began to reopen. Excluding protective garment sales, Apparel segment revenue declined 44 per cent. Overall, net sales for the second quarter ended June 27, 2020, were US$1.74 billion compared with $1.76 billion a year ago.

All dates listed below were correct at the time of writing. As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, all dates are subject to change at short notice. Please check with individual organisers for confirmation.

September 2020

15-17
Premiere Vision
Online web event
Web: https://www.premierevision.com/en/

21-23
Interfiliere New York
Javits Centre
New York City
Web: https://interfilierenewyork.com

23-25
Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics
Shanghai, China
Web: https://intertextile-shanghai-apparel-fabricsautumn.hk.messefrankfurt.com/shanghai/en.html

23-25
Yarn Expo Autumn
Shanghai, China
Web: https://yarn-expoautumn.hk.messefrankfurt.com/shanghai/en.html

October 2020

1-3
Techtextil North America
Raleigh
North Carolina
Web: www.techtextilna.com

7-9
LA Textile Show
Online event
Web: www.californiamarketcenter.com/latextile

28-29
Performance Days
Munich, Germany
Web: https://www.performancedays.com

January 2021

12-15
Heimtextil
Frankfurt am Main
Frankfurt
Germany
Web: https://heimtextil.messefrankfurt.com/frankfurt/en.html

23-25
Interfiliere
Lingerie fabrics
Paris
France
Web: www.interfiliere.com

27-29
Pitti Filati
Florence, Italy
Web:
https://www.pittimmagine.com/en/corporate/fairs/filati.html

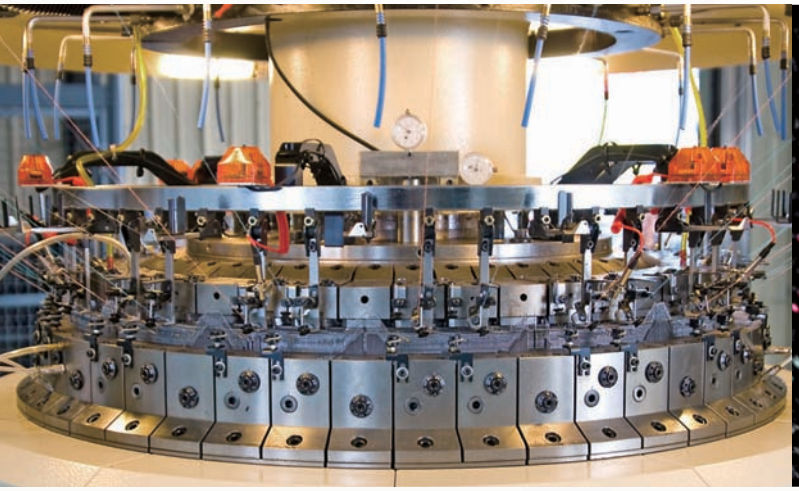
26-28
Munich Fabric Start
Munich
Germany
https://www.munichfabricstart.com/welcome.html

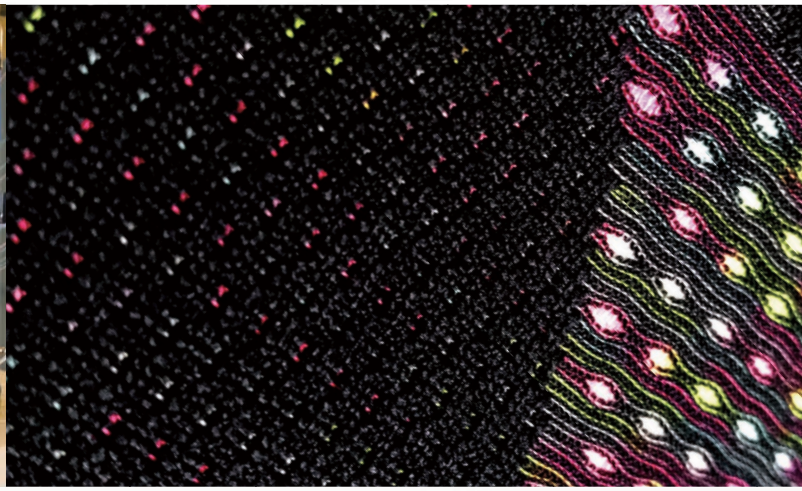
February 2021

1-4
Texworld
Le Bourget, Paris
Web: https://texworldparis.fr.messefrankfurt.com/paris/en.html

Although every care is taken over the compilation of this diary to ensure accuracy of the dates, these can sometimes be changed due to local circumstances. It is therefore advisable to check with the appropriate organisers before travel arrangements are made.

Sun Da
Circular Knitting Machines





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