

Textiles Information

“Adding more fibre to our fabric”

The textile industry can often be deemed as on the periphery of the fashion industry, however it is far more expansive than just the supply of fabrics for fashion. Whilst there is a tendency to group both the fashion and textile industries as one, textile being recognized as synonymous of the fashion industry, the former appears to have fared better when assessing and training staff requirements. Many of the existing skills within the fashion industry are also highly prized within textiles.

Local production for the domestic market within the NZ fashion and textile industries is becoming increasingly limited due to the introduction of low-cost product imports. The majority of fabrics used by apparel designers and manufacturers in NZ are imported. However, NZ continues to produce domestic yarns for natural garments and outdoor clothing. Conversely the export market continues to increase.

As the domestic industry faces escalating international competition, the Kiwi propensity towards innovation and enterprise intensifies resulting in an efficient response to market demands, which has led to considerable restructuring within the industry sector.

The economic hardship experienced by the New Zealand industry through import deregulation and increased competition has initiated many productivity improvements.

Many of these productivity gains, within the manufacturing sector, have been achieved in the ancillary production areas of cutting, grading and handling of raw materials, the same areas in which large automation gains have been made internationally.

In response NZ designers, manufacturers and retailers in both fashion and textiles, have taken advantage of core competencies in production and design, enabling them to produce smaller production runs and be highly flexible in an ever changing highly competitive market.

With the manufacturing sector changing direction, close working relationships and industry co-operation have needed to be developed between domestic manufacturers and retailers to ensure fast response times between the industry and end-users in order to remain competitive. Emerging market opportunities include Internet commerce, direct mail catalogues and strategic partnerships.

The global and local market economies affect all internal business strategies and the decision making processes. Company Managers/Directors more than ever need to be fully aware of the market influences, from planning and analysing human resources, product development to marketing strategies.

In this ever changing market there's no question employers need to look at the development of highly skilled personnel from all areas of the industry. Many of the qualifications, skills and training courses provided by the fashion sector can be readily “cross credited” to textiles, thus expanding the pool of candidates.

Rag trade Recruitment has seen incredible changes in the technical requirements of employers due to market changes and has encouraged and supported candidates in their career paths. We are seeing amazing candidates coming through from the technical institutes and universities who have majored in wool, textiles, dying techniques and fibre composition ready to get in there and role up their sleeves and not one of them has an aspiration towards becoming a “fashion designer”.

The future looks bright for a textile industry that has evolved and changed its focus to innovative fibre mixes, quality design and product development. Utilizing and building on the diverse skills within the industry will secure the successes achieved in this changing market and launch the textile industry to the next phase.