

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS RESHAPING EFFICIENCY, QUALITY & SUSTAINABILITY IN TEXTILE MANUFACTURING

KK is a seasoned business professional with over three decades of experience in the textile manufacturing industry. Prior to joining Indo Count, he held the role of President at both Bombay Dyeing and Welspun India. In a recent conversation with Thirumathan T K (Correspondent, Industry Outlook), KK shared his insights on the current textiles manufacturing in India, recent tech advancements and many other interesting aspects. Below are a few key extracts from the exclusive interview –

Share your thoughts on the current textile industry in India.

The textile industry is one of the core sectors in India due to the huge population our country is home to and the ever-increasing demand for textiles and apparel. It has also provided us massive opportunities to export our products worldwide. Over the last few decades, India has invested a lot in state-of-the-art equipment by importing cutting-edge technology, and the technology fund established by the government has helped the industry immensely to upgrade its technologies and build capacity at par with global levels. As a result, many companies in the industry have achieved exceptional growth and transformed into global leaders in terms of both importing global technology and building a value chain for exports. Since they had the dual opportunity to service both the local and export markets, companies were able to grow on a larger scale through the effective utilization of modern equipment that they had in place. Due to such a positive atmosphere, India will no doubt play a vital role, as it is one of Asia's major countries in both producing and exporting textiles.



Indian textile industry is enabling the sector to stay aligned with global trends and grab a larger market share with innovation and product development

Throw some light on the availability of raw materials for textile production and its impact on the products' quality and design variety.

India has been fortunate enough to build the entire value chain on both natural and man-made fibers in terms of raw materials. As a result, the availability of raw materials is very flexible, world-class, and in ample quantity to meet the demands of



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textile producers in India and abroad. The world-class facilities that are set up in India are delivering raw materials without any hiccups. Also, the innovation and product development that are happening in the Indian textile industry are enabling the sector to stay aligned with global trends and grab a larger market share.

Briefly explain a few major tech advancements that are disrupting the textile industry and helping businesses in terms of process efficiency and quality.

There have been constant technological advancements in both manufacturing and product development areas in the textile industry. On the manufacturing side, some of the

latest tech developments are in the form of digital printing, dyes and chemicals, packaging, fibers, coating, technical textiles, garmenting, and many others, which are helping the manufacturer bring about constant changes in the product range and explore more possibilities of capturing both the domestic and export markets. As a result, it is safe to say that a lot of innovative ideas are being deployed to see how we can excel at innovation in terms of technology in order to maintain a competitive edge in the market.

Briefly explain how textile companies can ensure to stay operational even during crises such as the COVID pandemic.

The COVID pandemic made the textile industry realize the importance of the supply chain to succeed across both domestic and foreign textile trade. Companies now need to plan well in advance for their raw material requirements so that no unforeseen disturbances in the supply chain will cause a setback to their daily functioning. Also, having an uninterrupted supply chain of inputs will enable textile companies to keep up with their commitments to various stakeholders.



What are some of the major challenges the Indian textile sector is currently facing in terms of international trade policies?

One of the major challenges that companies in the textile space are currently facing is that we are not on a level playing field in terms of import tariffs in the EU since those countries have special relationships and pacts with Pakistan and Bangladesh for duty-free imports of goods originating from these nations. Once there are proper FTAs between India and the EU, there is no doubt that there will be a huge improvement in our competitiveness. However, India is positioned as a country in the mid to high-range segment, whereas Pakistan and



Bangladesh are positioned in the lower segment. Thus, we have higher-value exports, and those nations tend to concentrate on the lower end of the exports. Thus, it is paramount for Indian textiles to develop cost competitiveness in order to capture the lower-value market as well.



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How do you expect the textile manufacturing industry in India to evolve in the coming years?

Currently, India is in a very advantageous position in the global textile trade, where it has the complete value chain right from fibers to the end product stage, along with an abundant supply of skilled labor. Since the demand for textile products is increasing globally with each passing day, manufacturers need to accordingly formulate strategies to reap maximum benefits by catering to both domestic and foreign requirements. Also, companies need to realize the importance of implementing sustainable manufacturing practices going forward due to consumers increasingly opting for sustainably produced goods. **IN**