Textile-Focused Software Solutions

The selection process and implementation of manufacturing software solutions are key to success in textile operations.

By Jim Borneman, Editor in Chief

You don’t have to look hard to find a textile professional who has a horror story to tell about a software solution gone wrong in a textile company. Planning gone awry, product tracking off-track, dealing with roll goods, a round peg in a square hole in some programs, non-textile language for basic textile processes, the never-ending implementation — and the list goes on. Some of the pitfalls arise from the technology, while others arise from the process — what is needed, who has the right solutions, and how can they be implemented without putting your company out of business?

By the same token, Textile World has observed many companies that view their systems from a variety of vendors as a major part of their success — often linking basic manufacturing information seamlessly across a global supply chain. One past TW Innovation Award winner even confided that the company had decided to support its global operation from its stateside headquarters because of the level of confidence it had achieved with its systems.

Seven Steps

To understand how any textile company could hedge its bets for a successful implementation, TW met with John Blasman Sr. and John Blasman Jr., two members of the family team behind Cambridge, Ontario-based JOMAR SOFTCORP International Inc., for some hints based on JOMAR’s textile experiences. The team also includes Software Development Manager Mark J. Blasman; and Marianne K. Blasman and Paul E. Blasman, both heavily involved with project management. JOMAR provides a broad range of scalable solutions for small companies to global enterprises and has experience in traditional textile manufacturing, apparel applications, floor covering, polymer formulation, performance yarn and fabrics, and more, drilling down to the process level for tasks such as formulation and recipe management.

“JOMAR uses a seven-step process to effect a positive outcome, but realistically, most of these steps would benefit any company considering enterprise or e-business solutions,” said JOMAR CEO John C. Blasman Sr. “Initially, the company must assess its priorities. This step is the jumping-off point and sets the groundwork for looking for and evaluating appropriate solutions, whether it is enterprise, e-business or traditional manufacturing solutions. It also establishes where it is with current systems. Will these need to be integrated or replaced?”

“Secondly, the company needs to allocate knowledgeable people and
Refine And Improve

The final step at the completion of the project, according to the Blasman group, is a post-audit of the implementation and systems in order to improve and refine the software solutions. "The relationship of the client and vendor really doesn't end there," Blasman Jr. said. "Manufacturers should make sure they feel comfortable with the relationship. The vendor must stay abreast of changes in the products and technologies as well as the changing needs of the clients. The technology is just part of the story. A good solutions provider needs to be willing to understand the client's business and the challenges they face to be successful."
Nonwovens / Technical Textiles

Orsa Installs Second Monforts Tenter
Orsa S.r.l., Italy, a manufacturer of spunlace nonwovens for a range of niche markets, recently installed its second tenter from Germany-based A. Monforts Textilmaschinen GmbH & Co. KG. Ordered through Sacconaghi Monaco S.r.l., Monforts’ local representative, the Montex tenter features seven chambers and a working width of 3.2 meters.
Orsa installed its first Monforts tenter in 2000 to use for special finishing processes. It is using the new Montex tenter to dry printed and dyed products and to ensure uniform color.
According to Valter Gatti, head of Orsa’s overall strategic planning, the new tenter improves the hand of Orsa’s nonwovens and imparts uniform visual aspects. “[Tentering] is the only way to guarantee the required qualities and we have stayed with Monforts because of both the quality and productivity of their machines,” he said.

PGI Expanding Spunbond Capacity In The Americas
Charlotte-based nonwovens producer Polymer Group Inc. (PGI) plans to install a spunbond line at one of its three locations in North America in order to meet growing demand from customers in the United States and Mexico. The line will be used to manufacture lightweight, strong fabrics used in fine-denier top sheet and other materials used in diapers and other personal hygiene products.
The new installation, which will increase PGI’s nonwovens capacity by 15,000 metric tons, is scheduled to start commercial production towards the end of 2008.
PGI is also installing a spunbond line in Argentina to meet similar growing demand in the Mercosur trading region. The new line will more than double the capacity of Dominion Nonwovens Sudamericana S.A., PGI’s joint venture facility. That installation will be complete by the end of this year.
Both installations will create additional jobs — the number will depend on each site’s requirements, according to Dennis Norman, vice president, strategic planning and communication, PGI.

Oerlikon Neumag Moves Airland Business To Germany
Germany-based Oerlikon Neumag has relocated its M&J Fibretech airland business from Denmark to its headquarters in Neumünster, Germany, in order to better link its nonwoven segments and to give M&J access to a development department. Oerlikon states the move also will optimize consulting, purchasing, engineering and project management, as well as plant erection and commissioning.
Oerlikon will maintain its airland laboratory in Horsens, Denmark, for customer trials.

Dow Reichhold, SSI Enter Partnership
Research Triangle Park, N.C.-based Dow Reichhold Specialty Latex LLC has teamed with Sustainable Solutions Inc. (SSI), Wagoner, Okla., to develop and market products that use regenerated leather and other post-industrial waste.
The partnership involves SSI’s SmartStreams™ system that processes manufacturing waste for use in such applications as furniture upholstery and automotive seating; and Dow Reichhold’s refinement of the process through advanced latex binder chemistry and its access to development resources.
“SSI, with our support, is showing manufacturers that good environmental stewardship can be very profitable,” said Galen Hatfield, vice president, development, Dow Reichhold. “Together, we are developing products from post-industrial waste streams that are of the same — or better — quality as those produced via traditional processes.”
The companies already have produced three branded products: Dilusso™, a leather-like composite rollgood produced from sustainable materials and regenerated leather; Thermold™, a nonwoven with thermomolding properties; and UrbanWood™, made from shipping pallets and other materials.