



# 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

**Y**ou 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

build a project team. Putting the right people on the team is challenging for all involved, particularly when they have many responsibilities, but the right people can make or break the process."

The Blasmans stress that making sure the team has the breadth of business and systems knowledge, regardless of company size, is important. However, making sure the members can commit the time necessary is also a major factor.

"The third step might not be available with all vendors," Blasman Sr. said, "but this is when we do a conference room pilot." He went on to explain that the pilot is the process of matching individual business needs with the software products, and decisions are made regarding necessary scope and functionality. In the end, a project implementation plan is created.

"Once the pilot is complete, we have a real handle on the expectations of the project," said President John A. Blasman Jr. "The fourth step is setting up the project implementation and focusing on a priority-based execution. With this in mind, we use the JOMAR hosting facilities to allow the team a broad selection of platforms. This allows the team to use the solutions they are interested in prior to execution." This fifth step gives team members flexibility in verifying the choices made as well as the fit with priority-based execution, he added.

"The sixth step involves testing and preparing the switch to new systems," Blasman Sr. said. "If a client and vendor have worked well together, this is the moment of truth."

"We don't want to oversimplify the process," Blasman Jr. added. "Each of these steps is necessary and takes hard work. But the reality is that the solutions available today and the experience level that is available with very specific system solutions make this much more approachable than early solutions for the textile industry. We really have come a great distance with that."

### Refine And Improve

The final step at the completion of the project, according to the Blasmans, 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." **TW**

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## Orsa Installs Second Monforts Tenter

Orsa S.r.l., Italy, a manufacturer of spunlaced 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 Airlaid Business To Germany

Germany-based Oerlikon Neumag has relocated its M&J Fibretech airlaid 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 airlaid 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 prof-

## Freudenberg, TRC Launch Bicomfiber Joint Venture

Two Argentina-based companies, Freudenberg Telas Sin Tejer S.A. — a subsidiary of Germany-based Freudenberg Nonwovens — and Tel Rad Cuyo (TRC) S.A., have entered into an agreement to launch Bicomfiber S.A., a joint venture for bicomponent fiber production. The new plant, to be located near Buenos Aires, will have an annual capacity of more than 10,000 tons.

TRC, a leading producer of polypropylene fibers for the hygiene market in Latin America, is the main shareholder in the joint venture. "We are proud of the new venture, which enlarges our involvement within the market in Latin America," said Guillermo Kraves, president, TRC.

"With this new venture, we will be able to offer a complete package of different materials for the markets where we are presently active, being better prepared for the new challenges to come," said Juan Carlos Borchardt, president, Freudenberg Nonwovens Latin America.

itable," 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 thermo-molding properties; and UrbanWood™, made from shipping pallets and other materials. **TW**