Committee of Home Textiles Producers

Meeting in Frankfurt/Germany, on January 12, 2013

MINUTES

Participants

Austria

Danijela CAFUTA (Lenzing AG)

China

Qin Yi (China Home Textile Association)

Germany

Thomas G. GRIES (Institut für Textiltechnik der RWTH Aachen)
Olaf SCHMIDT (Messe Frankfurt Exhibition GmbH)

India

Anish DOSHI (Textrade International Ltd.)
Updeep SINGH (Consortium Textiles)
K.V. SRINIVASAN (Premier Mills Pvt. Ltd.)

Pakistan

Jawed TABBA (LUCKY Textile Mills Ltd.)

Press

Robin ANSON (Textiles Intelligence Ltd.)

Turkey

Attila BULUT (Turkish Home Textile Association)
Hasim BÜYÜKBALCI (Turkish Home Textile Association)
Kutsal DURAÇE (Turkish Home Textile Association)

USA

Sean CALLANAN (Cotton Council International)
Bart KENNEDY (Lenzing Fibers Inc.)
Marc A. LEWKOWITZ (Supima)
Jonathan R. SIMON (1888 Mills, LLC)
Allen A. TERHAAR (Cotton Council International)

ITMF

Christian P. SCHINDLER

In the Chair

K.V. Srinivasan
Opening Remarks
The meeting was chaired by Dr. K.V. Srinivasan, member of the ITMF Board, who welcomed the participants of the meeting. He especially thanked the two presenters for sharing their expertise and knowledge with the members of the Committee. He also thanked Messe Frankfurt for hosting the meeting during “Heimtextil 2013”.

„Heimtextil Management Report“ 2013 by Messe Frankfurt
Mr. Olaf Schmidt, Vice President, Messe Frankfurt, presented the results of the “Heimtextil Management Report 2013 – Female Shift” by Messe Frankfurt in cooperation with the Zukunftsinstitut (the report can be downloaded [here](#)). According to Mr. Schmidt the main objective of this year’s report was to “offer a valuable impetus to the manufacturing industry and the retail sector and to give answers to questions which companies must address if they wish to continue to meet the wishes and needs of customers in future”. Mr. Schmidt pointed out that the results of the report is based on research and interviews conducted in Germany and thus reflects mainly the situation of an industrialized country in Europe. Nevertheless, since the results represent general trends that can be observed in many industrialized countries around the world they are relevant also for emerging countries.

The report discusses among others the following questions: What do women and men expect from their home furnishings? What influence does the “Female Shift” megatrend have on consumer goods markets? How can manufacturers and retailers respond to these developments innovatively and in line with current trends?

The following trends have been identified:

**Increasing influence of women is changing living environments:**
Individual needs are more important than price.

**The home as control centre for a switch in roles:**
High quality awareness goes together with functionality and flexibility.

**More time for living wanted:**
Specialist support and purchasing advice is increasingly sought – particularly by men.

**The home as a hyper-privatized space:**
Places of retreat and textile cocooning form a counterpoint to the stress of everyday living.

**Made by woman:**
Female designers create successful products for both sexes.

**The new man:**
A feel for good design and style increases attractiveness.

Following the presentation of Mr. Schmidt the participants of the meeting discussed how they perceive the described trends. The participants found the results interesting and valuable. The question was discussed to what extent these trends are relevant to the majority of consumers? It was stated that in today’s environment it seems that price is still the first and most important criteria in a purchasing decision. In this context it was pointed out that there is often a disconnection between promotion and marketing at the manufacturing level on the one hand and the retail level on the other. While one can see all sorts of promotion and marketing at exhibitions like Heimtextil, the end-consumers are not educated/informed about properties and benefits of products at the retail level. Irrespective of this disconnection between manufacturing and retail level manufacturers today have many possibilities to inform and educate the end-consumers by using the tools and instruments that social media offer. Interested customers/end-consumers are actually looking for product information as well as for feedback from other consumers on any given product. Therefore, it can be important/relevant for manufacturers to provide prospective customers with reliable, relevant and updated information on their products and services.
Home Textiles – A Source of Information

Mr. Robin Anson, Managing and Editorial Director of Textiles Intelligence, gave a presentation on how Textiles Intelligence’s latest publication – “Home Textiles Update” – is helping to keep executives informed about product and business developments in the international home textiles industry (see attached document no. 1a, document no. 1b and document no. 1c).

Mr. Anson illustrated in his presentation how this new monthly publication with information aimed specifically on home textiles is structured in order to provide easy and fast access to relevant information/news on the global home textiles industry. The publication is divided in two major parts with various sub-sections:

1. Product Developments and Innovations
2. Business Update

Compliance

It was discussed in the meeting whether the Committee could not play a more pro-active role as a voice of the global home textile industry especially vis-à-vis other up- and down-stream sectors. It was suggested for example to discuss and possibly develop within the Committee of Home Textiles Producers a joint position on compliance requirements by retailers. The numerous and diverging requirements from retailers that manufacturers have to comply with are causing more and more expenses for manufacturers. Therefore, home textiles producers under the umbrella of ITMF should consider working out a concept on a minimum compliance-standard. A similar initiative in the apparel segment is the so called “Sustainable Apparel Coalition” (www.apparelcoalition.org). In this context the Committee also asked the ITMF Secretariat to identify in Europe retail organizations – similar to the National Retail Federation (NRF; www.nrf.com) in the USA – with which the Committee could discuss further steps.

Next Meeting

It was proposed to meet again on the occasion of the ITMF Annual Conference 2013 (September 8-10) in Bregenz/Austria.

January 2013
Home Textiles –
A Source of Information
by Robin Anson, Textiles Intelligence

ITMF Committee of Home Textiles Producers, Frankfurt, Germany,
January 12, 2013
Contents

- Product developments and innovations
- Business Update
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Fibres and yarns for home textiles

PurThread Technologies: has developed a new range of high performance fibres and yarns, called Sabiya, which contain silver to provide bed linen, fibre fill, table linen, towels and upholstery with antimicrobial properties.
Environmentally friendly fabrics

- Glen Raven Custom Fabrics: has developed a new awning and shade fabric which is made from 50% post-industrial recycled Sunbrella yarn and 50% virgin Sunbrella yarn.

- Camira Fabrics: developed a new upholstery fabric called Hemp Plus which is made from a blend of 60% wool and 40% hemp fibre.
Bedding and Mattresses

- **Bombay Dyeing:**
  has launched a new range of bed linen which incorporates a mosquito repellent finish

- **Brookstone:**
  has developed a new bedding collection which incorporates AQ Textiles’s patented allergy reducing technology Intellatex, and Design Weave’s Cocona activated carbon technology.

- **Carpenter:**
  has developed a new mattress topper called Isotonic ErgoSmart which incorporates various technologies
Fibre fill

- **Outlast Technologies:**
  has developed a new fibre fill which is made from a temperature regulating polyester fibre containing phase change materials (PCMs).

- **Invista:**
  has launched a new down-alternative fibre fill made from “cluster fibres” with a three-dimensional (3D) shape called Dacron Dreamessence.
Finishing and Dyeing

- **Dow Microbial Control:** has developed a new silver-based antimicrobial treatment for textiles and apparel.

- **ColorZen:** has developed a new technology which enables the use of chemicals to be eliminated and results in a significant reduction in the amount of water, energy and time needed to dye cotton.
Floorcoverings

- **Interface:**
  has produced its first carpet tile made using bio-based nylon, called Fotosfera.

- Scientists at the **University of Manchester** have developed a “magic carpet” containing plastic optical fibres which can immediately detect when a person has fallen over and can also help to predict mobility problems in a person.

- **Forbo Flooring Systems:**
  has launched a new carpet tile manufactured from 100% solution dyed Econyl—a polyamide yarn made from recycled materials.
Contents

- Product developments and innovations
- Business Update
Acquisitions, divestments and mergers

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  a foam mattresses and pillow company has entered into an agreement to acquire Sealy for US$228.6 mn.

- **Burlington Mills:**
  an upholstery fabric maker, has merged with contract fabric maker Bentex Mills.

- **Qatari First Investment Bank:**
  has acquired a 40% stake in the Turkey-based home textile retailer English Home

- **Welspun Group:**
  has completed the merger of two of its home textile divisions, namely Welspun India (WIL) and Welspun Global Brands (WGBL)
Joint ventures, cooperation, licensing and distribution

- **Nautica:** has entered into a licensing agreement with Revman International relating to the manufacture of bedding, bath rugs, bath towels, sheets and beach towels.

- **Aerin:** has entered into three separate licensing agreements relating to the manufacture and distribution of Aerin branded fabric, rugs, furniture and lighting with Lee Jofa, EJ Victor, and Visual Comfort & Co.

- **Ibena Shanghai, Luolai Home Textile Co and Hunan Mine Home Technology Co:** have joined the Cotton USA licensing programme.
Manufacturing Facilities

- **Glen Raven Custom Fabrics:**
  will establish a new yarn plant in Burlington, North Carolina, USA, in response to growing demand for its Sunbrella awning fabrics woven with speciality yarn colours and constructions.

- **SK Textile:**
  has opened a new manufacturing facility in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA, for the hospitality industry.
International Trade Policy

- The **Indian government** has approved a bill which allows 51% foreign ownership in multi-brand retailing.

- The **European Parliament** has granted emergency trade preferences relating to 75 types of goods imported from Pakistan.

- The **European Parliament** has finalised changes to the EU’s Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) scheme. 20 high and middle income countries will no longer benefit
Investments

- **Ikea:**
  
  will increase the number of stores it opens per year as part of its expansion plans.
  
  - The investment will help to increase Ikea’s presence in the USA and capture a greater market presence in emerging markets such as China.
  
  - It will open its first stores in Croatia and Serbia in 2013, as well as South Korea by 2015.
Markets

US Imports in the first nine months of 2012:

- Cotton bed sheets:
  - Up by 0.4% in value but fell by 0.1% in volume

- Cotton bedspreads and quilts:
  - Down by 14.8% in value and by 13.7% in volume

- Cotton terry towels and other pile towels:
  - Up by 1.7% in value and by 3.5% in volume

- Man-made fibre floorcoverings:
  - Up by 10.0% in value and by 9.6% in volume
Thank you!
Home Textiles Update  
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Business and market analysis for the world’s fibre, textile and apparel industries

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Home Textiles UPDATE

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Inside this update:

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENTS AND INNOVATIONS
- Colour trends
- Fibres and yarns for home textiles
- Luminous home textile products
- Mattress toppers

BUSINESS UPDATE
- Acquisitions, divestments and mergers
- Financial results
- Joint ventures, cooperation, licensing and distribution
- New stores
Home Textiles Update

No 12
December 2012

CONTENTS

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENTS AND INNOVATIONS

Colour trends
Pantone has selected Emerald as its Color of the Year for 2013

Fibres and yarns for home textiles
PurThread Technologies has developed a new range of high performance fibres and yarns called Sabiya
Researchers at the University of Texas at Dallas (UT Dallas) have developed an artificial muscle made from carbon nanotube yarns

Luminous home textile products
Lumigram has developed a range of home textile products which are made from a luminous fabric

Mattress toppers
Carpenter has developed a new mattress topper called Isotonic ErgoSmart

BUSINESS UPDATE

Acquisitions, divestments and mergers
Qatar First Investment Bank (QFIB) has acquired a 40% stake in English Home
Welspan Group has completed the merger of Welspan India (WIL) and Welspan Global Brands (WGBL)

Financial results
Alok Industries: net sales and net income increased in the first half of 2012/13
Springs Global: total revenues increased by 35.2% in the third quarter of 2012

Joint ventures, cooperation, licensing and distribution
Ibena Shanghai, Luolai Home Textile Co and Hunan Mine Home Technology Co have joined the Cotton USA licensing programme

New stores
Muji USA has opened its first store in the West Coast region of the USA
Williams-Sonoma has opened its first store in Kuwait

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Home Textiles Update

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All tons are metric tons unless otherwise stated

n/a = not available or not applicable

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It is our commitment, through four regular titles, Global Apparel Markets, Performance Apparel Markets, Technical Textile Markets and Textile Outlook International, to supply you with the highest quality business information about the international fibres, textiles and clothing industries.

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Product developments and innovations

COLOUR TRENDS

PANTONE HAS SELECTED EMERALD AS ITS COLOR OF THE YEAR FOR 2013
Pantone, a USA-based colour specialist, has chosen Emerald (Pantone: 17-5641) as its Color of the Year for 2013. Emerald will replace Tangerine Tango (Pantone: 17-1463) which was the Color of the Year for 2012.

The Color of the Year, which Pantone started in 2000, is expected to be seen in products across several industries—including fashion, beauty, interiors, plastics and packaging, print and graphic design—over the next 12 months.

Emerald is a lively and radiant shade of green. It is most often associated with precious gemstones, and the colour is perceived to be sophisticated and luxurious. Emerald has long been associated as the colour of beauty and new life in many cultures and religions. It is also the colour of growth, renewal and prosperity, and represents healing and unity. The colour is said to promote a sense of balance and harmony.
In order to determine the Color of the Year, Pantone scours the world looking for influences on colour trends. These include films, art, artists, travel, socio-economic conditions, technology, sports events, and the availability of new textures and effects.

Website: www.pantone.com

FIBRES AND YARNS FOR HOME TEXTILES

PURTHREAD TECHNOLOGIES HAS DEVELOPED A NEW RANGE OF HIGH PERFORMANCE FIBRES AND YARNS CALLED SABIYA

PurThread Technologies has developed a new range of high performance fibres and yarns, called Sabiya, which have antimicrobial properties.

The range comprises polyamide yarns made from Sabiya fibres and polyester yarns made from Sabiya fibres. The yarns are available in fine deniers and are exceptionally strong.

Sabiya fibres incorporate silver elements which provide them with antimicrobial properties. Silver inhibits the growth of bacteria which are responsible for the build-up of odour, mould, mildew and fungus.

The silver elements are integrated at the raw material stage before the fibres are spun into yarns. This provides an even distribution of the silver, and it does not wash out or wear off from the yarn.

Yarns made from the fibres can be used to manufacture fabrics for use in a number of home textiles applications, including bed linen, fibre fill, table linen, towels and upholstery.

Fabrics made from the yarn meet the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists (AATCC) 100 standard—a quantitative measure of how well a fabric inhibits the growth of bacteria which causes odour over a 24-hour time period.

The yarns are also available in solution-dyed form in a wide range of colours, including a light ivory colour which can, in turn, be dyed and printed.

In order to spin the fibres into Sabiya yarns, PurThread Technologies will work with two USA-based yarn manufacturers, namely Pharr Yarns and Beal Manufacturing. The Sabiya yarns will be sold through these two companies.

PurThread Technologies is a USA-based medical textile company which develops a range of textiles that help to reduce the level of “bio-burden”.

Website: www.purthread.com

1 Bio-burden is a term used to describe the number of contaminated microbes living on the surface of a material before it is sterilised.
RESEARCHERS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS (UT DALLAS) HAVE DEVELOPED AN ARTIFICIAL MUSCLE MADE FROM CARBON NANOTUBE YARNS

Researchers at the University of Texas at Dallas (UT Dallas), led by Dr Ray Baughman, have developed an artificial muscle made from yarn which is constructed from carbon nanotubes.

The yarn can be twisted, woven, sewn, braided and knotted. This means that it is suitable for use in a variety of potential applications in smart materials and textiles.

For example, it could be used to detect changes in environmental temperature or the presence of chemical agents, in order to provide thermal comfort or chemical protection. Also, it could be used to make textiles whose porosity can be changed.

Furthermore, it could be used to regulate a flow valve when chemicals are detected, or adjust window blind openings in response to temperature changes.

The yarn is infused with paraffin wax and twisted until a coil forms along its length and a helical structure is created. When heat is applied to the yarn—either electrically or by a pulse of light—it causes the wax to expand. As a result, the volume of the yarn increases and this causes the length of the yarn to decrease, or contract.

The artificial muscle can provide large, ultra-fast contractions which are capable of lifting weights up to 200 times heavier than those that a natural muscle of the same size can lift.

Also, the artificial muscle can lift more than 100,000 times its own weight and generate 85 times more mechanical power than a natural muscle of the same size.

The researchers found that the subsequent heating and cooling of the yarn can rotate a paddle attached to the yarn at an average speed of 11,500 revolutions per minute for more than 2 mn reversible cycles.

The torque generated, weight-for-weight, is slightly higher than that generated by large electric motors.

The researchers also found that actuation—the contraction of the yarn—was ultra-fast in that it took only 25 thousandths of a second.

The yarn has a contractile power density of 4.2 kW/kg, which is four times the power-to-weight ratio of common internal combustion engines.

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2 An artificial muscle is a material which changes size or shape when it is activated by a stimulus.
3 Carbon nanotubes are seamless, hollow cylinders made from layers of graphite. An individual nanotube is 10,000 times smaller than the diameter of a human hair and yet, weight-for-weight, it is one hundred times stronger than steel.
4 Torque is a measure of how much a force acting on an object causes the object to rotate about an axis.
In addition, the researchers found that a contraction of more than 7% was achievable when lifting heavy loads by heating the yarn from room temperature (around 20°C) to about 2,500°C.

A video which explains and demonstrates how the artificial muscle works can be found by visiting: www.youtube.com/watch?v=vAbcuDH1w3Q&list=UL.

Website: www.utdallas.edu

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**LUMINOUS HOME TEXTILE PRODUCTS**

**LUMIGRAM HAS DEVELOPED A RANGE OF HOME TEXTILE PRODUCTS WHICH ARE MADE FROM A LUMINOUS FABRIC**

Lumigram—a France-based company which specialises in high tech fashion, decoration and design—has developed a range of home textile products which are made from a luminous fabric called Luminex.

The range of products includes bed covers, bed spreads, cushion covers, chair covers, wall panels, ceiling covers, table linen and curtains.

Luminex is made by weaving synthetic yarns with ultra-thin optical fibres. The optical fibres are then connected to ultra-bright light emitting diodes (LEDs) which are embedded in borders along the edge of the fabric.

The optical fibres are specially processed so that light is emitted along the full length of the fibres. The LEDs, in conjunction with the optical fibres, help to inject light into the fabric and make it luminous.

The LEDs can be powered by either batteries or a low voltage current from an AC adaptor. The products incorporate an on/off switch which lets a person control when the items are lit up or turned off.

As the fabric is powered by a low voltage current, it does not heat up when it is lit and there is no risk of shock or electrocution.

The products can be gently hand washed with soap and water at temperatures of up to 50°C (120°F). However, the fabric can not be folded perpendicular to the optical fibres as this may damage or break them, and it can not be ironed.

Luminex is a patented material which was developed by an interdisciplinary joint venture between three companies, namely Costruzioni Apparecchiature Elettroniche Nucleari (Caen), Fabbrica Italiana Tessuti (FIT) and Stabio Textil.
Figure 2
Images showing cushion covers, chair cover, table cloth, bed spread and curtains made from Luminex fabric

Source: Lumigram
Website: www.lumigram.com

MATTRESS TOPPERS

CARPENTER HAS DEVELOPED A NEW MATTRESS TOPPER CALLED ISOTONIC ERGOSMART
Carpenter—a USA-based company which manufactures a wide variety of products made from polyurethane foam and polyester fibre—has developed a new mattress topper called Isotonic ErgoSmart.
The mattress topper was developed at Reinhart Technical Center, the company’s research and development laboratory which is based in Richmond, Virginia.

The mattress topper is made from a visco-elastic foam which has an open cell structure. As a result, the mattress topper recovers better from the weight of a person resting or sleeping on it and airflow within the mattress topper is increased. This makes the mattress topper more breathable and helps to disperse heat from the body to keep it cool.

In addition, the surface of the mattress topper is covered in foam nodules which can move in four directions in order to provide support and comfort to a person when he or she is sleeping. The nodules also adjust to the individual contours of the body to reduce pressure on sensitive areas. This reduces the need for the person to toss and turn when sleeping and therefore provides comfortable sleep.

In addition, the foam incorporates a technology called IsoFresh which helps to neutralise odours.

The mattress topper will available in stores from January 2013.

Website: www.carpenter.com
Business update

ACQUISITIONS, DIVESTMENTS AND MERGERS

QATAR FIRST INVESTMENT BANK (QFIB) HAS ACQUIRED A 40% STAKE IN ENGLISH HOME

Qatar First Investment Bank (QFIB) has acquired a 40% stake in English Home—a Turkey-based retailer which specialises in home textile products. Financial details of the transaction have not been disclosed.

The acquisition marks QFIB’s first venture into the retail sector and its second venture in the Turkish retail market.

The acquisition will help English Home to expand the brand both domestically and internationally. The company hopes to benefit from QFIB’s expertise and its international presence.

According to QFIB, the home textile retail market in Turkey is expected to grow significantly for several reasons, namely: a positive macroeconomic environment; an increase in consumer spending; a large consumer demographic which is young; and a shift in consumer preferences from independent stores towards organised retail chains. English Home expects to benefit from these favourable market dynamics and capitalise on the growing demand for home textiles in Turkey.

When news of the acquisition was announced, the chief executive officer (CEO) of English Home, Erdem Gündüz, said: “English Home has demonstrated a strong performance, and managed to become the leading brand of [the] Turkish home textile market in a short period of time. Considering the high growth potential of the domestic market, we are confident that we will capture an even larger market share.”

English Home was established in 2008. Currently, the company has a total of 115 stores across Turkey and Ukraine, in addition to franchises in Albania, Azerbaijan, Cyprus and Iraq.

QFIB is an investment bank, based in Qatar, which provides services related to investments, asset management and financial advisory.


WELSPUN GROUP HAS COMPLETED THE MERGER OF WELSPUN INDIA (WIL) AND WELSPUN GLOBAL BRANDS (WGBL)

Welspun Group has completed the merger of two of its home textile divisions, namely Welspun India (WIL) and Welspun Global Brands (WGBL). WIL is the home textiles division of Welspun Group while WGBL is the sales and marketing division of WIL.
The merger was approved by the High Court of Gujarat in Ahmedabad, India, on November 26, 2012, and the order was filed with the Registrar of Companies on December 7, 2012.

The merger will bring the two divisions under a single company which will be able to: provide better products and services to its customers; grow its market share in a more profitable way; and reduce administrative and other costs.

The merger between the two companies involved a three-step process, as follows.

* First, when the merger between WIL and WGBL took place, WIL issued fresh equity shares to equity shareholders of WGBL as follows: for every equity share in WGBL, shareholders were given one equity share of WIL. WIL had 89.01 mn outstanding shares and issued 10.47 mn shares, worth Rs10 each (US$0.18), fully-paid, making 99.48 mn outstanding shares in total.

* Second, the marketing business of WGBL was separated from WIL and transferred to Welspun Retail—a subsidiary of WIL—for a consideration of preference shares which are redeemable and equivalent to the value of assets transferred.

* Third, Welspun Retail was renamed Welspun Global Brands in order to retain its marketing identity.

Website: www.welspun.com

FINANCIAL RESULTS

ALOK INDUSTRIES: NET SALES AND NET INCOME INCREASED IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2012/13

Alok Industries—a vertically integrated textile company based in India—has reported its results for second quarter and the first half of its 2012/13 financial year. Both periods ended on September 30, 2012.

Second quarter 2012/13

In the second quarter of 2012/13, net sales increased by 51.3% to Rs33,248 mn (US$603 mn) compared with Rs21,977 mn in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Export sales were worth Rs8,330 mn, which represented an increase of 5.8% from the Rs7,870 mn achieved in the corresponding period of the previous year.

The company’s EBITDA (earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation) increased by 19.4%, from Rs7,446 mn to Rs8,888 mn. Its operating profit increased by 19.2%, from Rs2,916 mn to Rs3,475 mn.

The company achieved a net income of Rs2,896 mn, which represented an increase of 283.0% compared with the Rs756 mn achieved in the corresponding period a year earlier.

**First half of 2012/13**
In the first half of 2012/13, net sales increased by 49.8% to Rs57,475 mn (US$1,054 mn) compared with Rs38,359 mn in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Export sales were worth Rs16,696 mn, which represented an increase of 19.7% from the Rs13,953 mn achieved in the corresponding period of the previous year.

The company’s EBITDA (earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation) increased by 36.3%, from Rs12,090 mn to Rs16,481 mn, while its operating profit increased by 66.2%, from Rs3,401 mn to Rs5,650 mn.

Furthermore, the company achieved a net income of Rs3,197 mn, which represented an increase of 137.6% compared with the Rs1,346 mn achieved in the corresponding period a year earlier.

Website: www.alokind.com

**SPRINGS GLOBAL: TOTAL REVENUES INCREASED BY 35.2% IN THE THIRD QUARTER OF 2012**
Springs Global—a Brazil-based company which manufactures, markets and sells textile and non-textile home furnishings—has reported its results for the third quarter of its 2012 financial year. The quarter ended on September 30, 2012.

Total revenues increased by 35.2% to R462.3 mn (US$227.8 mn) compared with R341.9 mn in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Total revenues from the company’s domestic market—Brazil—were up by 24.0% to R269.1 mn compared with R217.1 mn in the corresponding period a year earlier. Meanwhile, net sales from the company’s foreign markets were up by 54.8% to R193.2 mn compared with R124.8 mn in the corresponding period of the previous year.

The company’s EBITDA (earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation) increased by 8.9%, from R41.6 mn to R45.3 mn.

However, its gross profit fell by 4.2%, from R105.7 mn to R101.3 mn.

Also, the company reported a net loss of R29.9 mn—although this was significantly better than the net loss of R63.6 mn recorded in the third quarter of 2011.

Website: www.springs.com
JOINT VENTURES, COOPERATION, LICENSING AND DISTRIBUTION

IBENA SHANGHAI, LUOLAI HOME TEXTILE CO AND HUNAN MINE HOME TECHNOLOGY CO HAVE JOINED THE COTTON USA LICENSING PROGRAMME

Ibena Shanghai, Luolai Home Textile Co and Hunan Mine Home Technology Co—three home textile companies based in China—have joined the Cotton USA licensing programme.

The programme enables a company to use the Cotton USA trademark on its products, provided that the cotton used in the manufacture of the products is sourced from the USA.

The three companies will source cotton from the USA for use in the manufacture of cotton blankets. In total, the three licences cover the production of 92,550 blankets which is equivalent to around 630 bales (137,166 kg) of cotton. This will result in sales of cotton from the USA worth an estimated US$590,000.

The blankets will be marketed under their individual brand names and will feature labels with the Cotton USA trademark. This will help to promote Cotton USA to customers of the three companies and, as a result, it is expected to help increase demand in China for products made using cotton from the USA.

Furthermore, the three companies will benefit from trade services and support from Cotton Council International (CCI). CCI is a non-profit trade organisation based in Washington, DC, USA, which promotes US cotton and products made using US cotton.

Website: www.cottonusa.org

NEW STORES

MUJI USA HAS OPENED ITS FIRST STORE IN THE WEST COAST REGION OF THE USA

Muji USA—the US division of the Japanese apparel and home furnishings retailer Muji (Ryohin Keikaku Co)—has opened a store in San Francisco, California, USA.

The store, which opened on November 30, 2012, is the company’s first in the West Coast region of the USA.

6 West Coast is a term used to describe the westernmost coastal states of the USA. The West Coast comprises the US states of California, Oregon and Washington.
The store is located in the South of Market (SoMA) district of the city, at 540 9th Street. It covers an area of 7,250 ft² (674 m²), and offers more than 2,000 Muji products—including approximately 1,700 home furnishing products and 300 apparel items.

Muji USA opened its first store in the USA in New York in 2007. Today, the company has five stores in the country—including its new store—as well as an online store.

Website: www.muji.us

WILLIAMS-SONOMA HAS OPENED ITS FIRST STORE IN KUWAIT
Williams-Sonoma, a USA-based home furnishings retailer, has opened its first store in Kuwait.

The store was opened in partnership with MH Alshaya, a Kuwait-based company which specialises in international franchise retailing.

The opening of the store represents Williams-Sonoma’s first store outside North America.

The store covers an area of 11,000 ft² (1,022 m²) and is located at The Avenues shopping centre in Kuwait—one of the largest shopping centres in the Middle East.

It has two floors and sells a variety of home furnishing products, including home cooking utensils, electronic appliances, cookware and cutlery, living room furniture, dining room furniture, bedroom furniture, bedding and bath textiles, and home décor accessories.

When the new store was opened, the brand president of Williams-Sonoma, Richard Harvey, said: “We believe that the relationship with MH Alshaya will prove successful because the Middle East consumer takes great pride in entertaining guests, and the merchandise and services we offer will provide customers with new products and ways to entertain in style”.

Williams-Sonoma has been working with MH Alshaya since 2010 when the two companies launched the first Pottery Barn store in 2010 in Kuwait. Pottery Barn is a USA-based home furnishing store chain which Williams-Sonoma acquired in 1994.

Website: www.williamsonoma.com
Home Textiles Update
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