Company profile

Fabric survivor

California is not a US state normally associated with the textile industry, however, one knitted fabric manufacturer based there is going from strength to strength. Kathlyn Swantko reports

Operating a successful fashion-driven domestic knitting operation in the US is a tough business, and competition is vigorous. But doing it in a state where government over-regulation reduces the already low chance of long-term survival is even more challenging.

Despite the odds, Texollini has survived and thrived, establishing itself as one of the most successful textile mills in the US. Based in Long Beach, California, the 250,000sq ft facility has achieved this notoriety and its prominent reputation by successfully integrating fashion and technology into all its textile products and adjusting its production capabilities to changes in the market.

“When we started our business in 1989, we were at the right time, in the right place, with the right product,” says Daniel Kadisha, president of Texollini. “Back then, we were one of the first mills to print on Lycra fabrics, while other mills were still making basic products. We have advanced that tradition by continuing to develop fashion-forward technical products.”

Today, Texollini offers over 7,000 yarn and fabric combinations, with or without spandex. The company’s fashionable European knit fabrics of Superfino and Ultrafino, which use ultra-fine yarns, are two of the most talked-about fabrics in the apparel industry. Texollini’s state-of-the-art computerised circular knitting machines operate 24-7, enabling the company to produce knitted fabrics in a variety of stitches and gauges, all in a timely fashion.

Knitting fabrics with stretch yarns requires a particular expertise, including specialised technology and equipment, explains Mr Kadisha. “The diversity of our mill requires that we use a variety of machines from the major knitting machine suppliers, along with the newest technologies and knitting capabilities available in the market.”

Texollini has the capability to knit constructions ranging from the finest gauges, for its intimate apparel clients, to more rugged fabrics for its industrial and military customers.

The company manufactures activewear, ready-to-wear, intimate apparel, swimwear, industrial, medical and military textiles on behalf of some of the leading fabric buyers in the business. Texollini also works with smaller fashion brands and start-ups. Its sophisticated knitting capabilities have made it the recognised ‘Made in America’ expert for Lycra spandex, and other performance stretch fabrics. Fibres and yarns from such notable suppliers as Buhler, Cordura, DuPont, Invista, Lenzing, Nilit, Noble Biomaterials, Outlast, Tuscarora, and Unifi are used by Texollini to create its broad range of innovative fabrics. Additionally, all of the company’s textile manufacturing equipment can be customised to meet its exact standards, as well as its clients’ tight specifications and high expectations.

Dyeing to produce the most reliable colour quality and colorfastness is a sensitive, sophisticated process. The incorporation of stretch fabrics only increases the level of sophistication required. Texollini’s dyed fabrics
must pass various testing procedures designed by its technicians and chemists to ensure that every lot achieves colour match and consistency. Colour-fastness is also tested, specifically in response to laundering, and exposure to light, salt water and chlorine.

Excelling at both general textile printing, as well as novelty print techniques such as burn-out, dye-gain and dye-resist, Texollini’s excellence in pigment rotary printing and heat transfer printing is achieved through its creative design studio, top quality colour-matching laboratory and highly experienced print professionals. The company’s printing success also relies on its ability to select and apply the right finishing techniques to printed fabrics. Quality control and inspection ensure the highest quality standards.

Finishing is one of the most important aspects in the final performance of any fabric, and Texollini has developed several highly effective finishing techniques, based upon scientific methods and the company’s extensive experience in both textile production and its specialised niche of stretch fabrics.

Creating new fabrics is a comprehensive process requiring a highly skilled product development team with a thorough understanding of the intricacies involved in knitting, dyeing, printing and finishing.

Texollini’s vision for the future is to forge its partner-client relationships through its innovative fabrics and fresh designs. The company works closely with its customers, offering high quality services in product development and excellent production capabilities and is proud that its supply chain partners continually use its expertise and facilities for their new developments.

Historically, California has not been a particular friend of business owners, because of the regulation and restrictions imposed on businesses in the state. The Small Business Survival Index, which considers a state’s public policies and their impact on small businesses, has ranked California as 49th, in terms of business friendliness. Many companies have either left the state, or have chosen other more business-friendly states to open new businesses, because of concerns about doing business in California. However, Texollini is facing these challenges head-on.

“Even though one of our constant challenges is dealing with government regulations and over-regulation, which are more strict in California than in any other state, we are approaching some of these challenges by being more competitive, and producing higher quality fabrics in very sustainable ways,” says Mr Kadisha.

On the production side, while he admits that it is challenging to stay on top of all new developments in technology, fibre, yarn, and finishing techniques, the company is determined to maintain its position as a leader in the development of technical fabrics. Mr Kadisha believes that by staying on top of market changes, the company will continue to grow.

“We are one of the most competitive and efficient textile mills in the US and we have a very solid infrastructure. But, we have found that operating a successful textile mill is all about balance.”

Mr Kadisha views the future with optimism. He sees some positive signs in the market, which are encouraging.

“Many of our customers want to bring production back to the US, following the lead of companies like J.C. Penney and Lands End, who are promoting the ‘Made in America’ campaign. The economy has stabilised, and is growing again. We are putting more emphasis on fashion and technical fabrics in all of our target markets.”

Texollini manufactures a diverse array of knitted fabrics