



Referring to the overall concept matrix of three cornerstones (Design - Technology - Business & Management) of the Swedish School of Textiles, this means that all aspects of managing this very complex value chain that stretches from “concept to satisfied customer” should be addressed in future development concerning R&D and top notch education programmes. It applies not only to the necessary “core” profession-based skills but also to such related items as fashion communication, graphic design, logistics and demand chain management, fashion curation, etc.

Fashion & Clothing – perspectives of the fashion value chain

Fashion & Clothing will address an overall view of the value chain that consists of all the elements between the anticipated customers’ known or unknown needs for textile related products and the ability of the business concept creators to realize this in the most cost-effective way.

Traditionally, *fashion* is often defined as “the prevailing style or custom, utilizing clothing, accessories and hair to show or hide something about oneself”, but this definition has expanded to make statements about lifestyle, political opinions, class, etc. and is often symbol-intensive. Fashion is an ability to integrate different interests, needs and expectations into textile expressions based on aesthetics, function and economy.

Fashion is deeply integrated into other areas, like home textiles. Walk through any home furnishings floor and you will see some of the greatest names in fashion, such as Calvin Klein, Ralph Lauren, Donna Karan, Zara, Tommy Hilfiger and many more. Cross-concepts between sports and fashion as well as fashion and workwear are rather rule than exception today. *Fashion and function* (-ality) are inseparable, when we talk about this totally globalized industry today and tomorrow.

Fashion and retailing are now integrated from the large chains and brands like H&M and Zara with “flagship stores” to the mutual dependency of retailers and brands, including private brands. *Fashion and distribution* also include development, where distance selling, including traditional mail order as well as web commerce and concepts such as “long tail”, provides examples of cross-disciplinary fields of fashion, distribution and sale.

With *Fashion & Clothing* we intend to participate and influence the future from several textile and fashion aspects, led by the keywords respect, humility and understanding in a sustainable society. Fashion & clothing will combine knowledge and insight into hard values – from the design, artistic and creation perspectives to the customer and business perspectives - and soft values in the form of a sustainable society taking account of health, wellbeing and the environment.

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Fashion & Clothing – a key profile at the Swedish School of Textiles

Fashion companies in Sweden were already in the late sixties among the first in the world to start the globalized build-up of fashion value chains. Taking advantage of this vast experience Swedish fashion companies are among the leading international brands today in the various fields of fashion, sportswear and workwear, with many important players in all categories, including branded manufacturers, branded market actors, branded retailers and distance-selling companies.

What characterizes the development is a high degree of innovation and entrepreneurship, combined with the outcome of a modern infrastructure and vision of fashion. From the knowledge of out-sourcing of production and integration upstream and downstream in the value chain to new forms of distribution and sales, an industry has been created, where the understanding of the whole is necessary, and where both hard and soft values are included. Taking the described background into account, a cross-disciplinary environment has developed at the Swedish School of Textiles at the University of Borås, with the textile value chain as its base. The School has the ambition to be a part of the development of the textile and fashion sector, in collaboration with business, society, institutions and academia, both nationally and internationally. Through its research profiles, Smart Textiles and Fashion Perspectives, the foundation has been laid for shaping the future in a textile and fashion perspective,

honouring *respect*, **humility and understanding** in a **sustainable society**. The Smart Textiles programme was presented in the special edition of the Nordic Textile Journal in 2008. With this issue of the Nordic Textile Journal, we wish to provide an insight into the exciting field of fashion and its value chain and inspire future collaboration in these areas.



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