

techtextil texprocess

How digitalisation is driving growth: panel discussion on the future viability of the textile industry with reference to Techtextil and Texprocess 2024

Frankfurt am Main, 11 January 2024. How is digitalisation affecting the textile industry in terms of innovativeness? How can digitalisation be used to meet the challenges currently facing the sector? What are the latest developments? What does the digital future of the textile industry look like? In a panel discussion ahead of this year's editions of Techtextil and Texprocess, experts considered these and other questions and previewed the trade fairs from 23 to 26 April 2024.

Digitalisation has by no means carved out a place for itself in the work processes of many companies. A study conducted by the German Economic Institute in 2022 revealed that, for example, only 31 percent of companies in Germany are able to use data efficiently¹. However, it is essential for companies to improve their digital infrastructure because legal regulations, such as the EU strategy for sustainable and circular textiles and the associated digital product passport, require a corresponding level of digitalisation. At the same time, digitalisation helps to meet the sustainability requirements of customers and partners, for example, by improving supply chain transparency or resource calculation. Thus, companies wanting to remain competitive and produce efficiently and flexibly, can no longer avoid digital technologies. Digitalisation offers solutions to many of the challenges currently facing the industry.

Techtextil and Texprocess support companies on their journey into the digital future. At these leading international trade fairs, over 1,600 exhibitors from around 50 countries are showcasing their latest developments and innovations. There, participants can find the right business partners and digital solutions to suit their individual needs. The extensive programme creates the ideal setting for discussions with the industry and experts.

"The sectors have an enormous potential for innovation, especially in the field of digitalisation. We can only realise this through a joint international exchange of information. The global industry meets at Techtextil and Texprocess. Dialogue, knowledge transfer, unique innovations and multifaceted solutions strengthen companies on their journey into the future", said Olaf Schmidt, Vice President Textiles & Textile Technologies, Messe Frankfurt.

¹ Büchel, Jan / Engels, Barbara, 2022, Many companies are not ready for the data economy, IW short report, no. 96, Cologne

Panel talk: From yarn to smart textiles - how digitalisation is driving growth

In the panel discussion, **Prof. Thomas Gries**, Director of the Institute of Textile Technology (ITA) at RWTH Aachen University, **Elgar Straub**, Managing Director of VDMA Textile Care, Fabric & Leather Technologies, and **Olaf Schmidt**, Vice President Textiles & Textile Technologies of Messe Frankfurt, offered insights into digitalisation in the textile industry from a variety of perspectives. The discussion was chaired by Zackes Brustik.



Photo: Messe Frankfurt / Jean-Luc Valentin

Meeting challenges with digitalisation

Digitalisation helps companies meet the challenges currently facing their industries and remain competitive. Companies can take advantage of digital developments to counter raw material and labour shortages, energy costs or increased sustainability requirements and produce more efficiently, faster, more flexibly, more transparently and more cost-effectively.

"Constantly changing consumer and legislative requirements, as well as labor shortages and more difficult trading conditions due to geopolitical changes, are constantly posing new challenges for garment manufacturers and processors of technical textiles. The manufacturers of machines, systems and processes for processing textile materials offer the necessary solutions. Through digitalisation and automation for increased flexibility, sustainability, quality and increased product potential, we help our customers in their production and at the same time ensure a boost in innovation," explained Elgar Straub.

Research and the industry are promoting innovativeness

Although many companies have already digitalised individual stages in their process chains, it is essential that the entire textile value chain be digitalised and all gaps closed if the industry is to realise its potential to the full.

"Resilient and sustainable value chains are vital for the viability of the textile industry in the future. And the basis for this is the digitalisation of all process stages. To this end, researchers and the industry must work closely together. New forms of cooperation, such as Open Innovation guarantee speed and efficiency", said Prof. Thomas Gries.

Digitalisation opens up new potential

Digitalisation offers numerous new opportunities for technologies and textile products. And the latest developments will be on show at Techtexsil and Texprocess. There, international exhibitors present their latest products. The spectrum ranges from manufacturing technologies, via textile processing machines, fibres, yarns and nonwovens, to functional and smart textiles. The variety of industries in which the products are used is unique. From the medical and mobility sectors to the construction industry, they are used in all areas of application. Moreover, digitalisation is significantly advancing the textile industry: not only can manufacturing and processing procedures be made more efficient, but smart products can also create new added value.

Techtextil and Texprocess 2024: Up-to-date on the subject of digitalisation

The comprehensive programme gives visitors the chance to update their knowledge. For example, the lectures of the Techtexsil and Texprocess Forum spotlight aspects of digitalisation and production technology, as well as intelligent textiles, digital textile printing and delivery chains.

The extraordinary degree of innovativeness is also reflected by the Techtexsil and Texprocess Innovation Awards. The categories of New Technologies and Digitalisation and Digitalisation and AI focus specifically on the latest developments in the field of digitalisation.

The events Techtexsil and Texprocess will be held from 23 to 26 April 2024.



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Texpertise Network:

Information about the international textile industry and Messe Frankfurt's global textile trade fairs can be found at www.texpertisenetwork.messefrankfurt.com.

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