

EDITORIAL

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Navigating a Strategic Course - Innovation, Network Orchestration and Marketing!

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Welcome to this issue of the Journal of Textile and Apparel Technology and Management (JTATM). As we enter our ninth year of existence, we are continuing to update and change our Journal to respond to the large global audience of readership. One recent innovation to the Journal is the appointment of a new JTATM Managing Editor – Prof. Moon Suh. A noted global scholar, Dr. Suh will provide continued leadership to JTATM as we provide timely research and information of value to our global readership. A second innovation is the additional of an online automated process for article submission – to assist with timely submission and review. Please share this Journal with others and invite them to be part of our efforts to expand our global networking among industry, government and academic communities.

A recent article in the Harvard Business Review (“Tapping the World’s Innovation Hot Spots”) addresses the fact that as innovation capability continues to globalize, networks are becoming increasingly important. Fung, Fung and Wind in their 2008 publication (“Competing in a Flat World”) stress the importance of network orchestration in this ever changing global textile complex. Yet another article stresses the importance of innovation and marketing. These two together form a potent package in good times but must be used as the power tools in tough times!

Can the academic community be insulated from these key issues that are impacting the global economy and marketplace? Absolutely Not! In the academic world, we also should be proactively involved in network orchestration with various people and organizations globally. But, how do we do this?

Let me illustrate with a few (of the many) ways that we are addressing these issues in the Department of Textile and Apparel Technology and Management Department, College of Textiles:

- We link our many talents – faculty, undergraduates and graduates. By combining our knowledge of textile products, design and development, marketing and management with the use of diverse technologies, we spearhead to creatively develop new products and services by working closely with our partners. One such example is NCTextileConnect.com <http://www.textileconnect.com> – a resource that is a collaborative effort between our College, North Carolina Department of Commerce, and the North Carolina textile complex. The information on industry, products, trade, and markets provided in this site assists the industries within the State of North Carolina and beyond:
- Market the North Carolina textile complex and its capabilities,

- Disseminate, on line, the timely information on R&D, education and global marketplace for industry and government.
- We innovate! – with our products and programs via education, research, and outreach.
- The possibilities in new product innovations are almost endless. New materials, emerging technologies, global market intelligence, digital design and printing, 3-D weaving and knitting, body scanning and mass customization, etc. provide multiple dimensions for solving exciting problems for our faculty and students!
- Our creative new approach to educational programming equipped our students with management decision tools and hand-on experiences. Our commitment to globalization took our faculty and students outside of the classroom into the real-world environment. Our most recent efforts in DR-CAFTA let our student delegates to meet the industry and government executives in El Salvador and Honduras along with U.S. executives, broadening their cultural, business and social perspectives for these important trading partners.
- Curriculum development has been our point of emphasis for the future. In the Department of Textile and Apparel Technology and Management (TATM), there have been two program focus areas: Fashion and Textile Management and Textile Design, culminating to a newly proposed program in Fashion and Textile Design. Our strategic development of these two programs, with inputs from our “customers” (potential students, potential employers in industry and government), has positioned these programs at a new height with a large and growing enrollment for the College at both the undergraduate and graduate levels!
- Creative programming with industry remains a key priority. Working closely with our partners in TexED <http://www.tx.ncsu.edu/departments/texed/>, we are planning to organize seminars and workshops for industry and government personnel. The new resources, including the new web-based Textile Fundamentals courses http://www.tx.ncsu.edu/departments/texed/inplant_overview.cfm, are already available!
- Our research programs will extend to the boundaries of innovative product and market possibilities! They will include new materials, management decision support tools, creative product designs and development for the U.S. military and the industries in North Carolina and the U.S. to enhance their global competitiveness.
- We maximize our world-class College facilities! We are building new Textile Management Sciences Laboratory (targeted to be the icon for market and product intelligence research for the industry), and we are upgrading and renovating our Digital Design Center and Fashion Studio with a new “look”. Our partnership with LECTRA remains strong, as we are one of three universities in the U.S. partnering closely with this global organization.
- We seek new ways to recruit students to our programs and encourage visitors to come and witness the changes! We continuously try to find creative marketing approaches to “tell our story” to the global community with much success!

Innovation, network orchestration, and marketing are the imperatives in today’s challenging economic times – and is “alive” in our academic environment. We believe that these three

cornerstones hold the key for building the future for our students as leaders as well as for our partnering with industry and government. We hope that you will view this issue of JTATM and find our College as an “Innovation Hotspots” and visit us (either electronically or physically!) soon!