A NEW PRODUCTION BUSINESS &
RETAIL MODEL FAS.P.ONSITE A
SERVICE DESIGN PROJECT FOR A
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Visit to Shima Seiki and partners

The visit at the textile district of Carpi, one of the most important in the north of Italy, was an important occasion to make us aware about limits and possibilities of Fas.P.onSite project so as to use them as a start point for a future planning.

The two visits in Carpi show us that the Shima Seiki machineries are more flexible that what we expected, but underlines also some technical problems that we have not consider.

Problems:

First of all **the post production treatments**: the machines could work with a lot of different materials, basically all the ones that could be produced as thread (also new synthetic materials with high performances, as Kevlar), but a lot of them need at least to be washed after the production because hot water shrink them. This technical problems could be solved in two different ways: the first one is introducing also this phase in the process, extending the production time (in our opinion at least a few days to be economically convenient); second possibility is using only fibres that have not this problem, basically all the synthetic ones.
Other problems are the ones correlated to the product, which have to be controlled with specific techniques (as bright table) to detect possible design fault and must be refined adding buttons, zip, collar ecc. This phase could be not skipped and must be schedule.

Second problem is **the fineness**: each machine could work only with one or two (with particular devices) fineness. This implies that we need at least four machines to cover all the range of fineness, from the biggest one (number 3), to the thinnest one (number 18). This problem could be solved choosing a specific kind of product, for example only cashmere jumpers. Obviously the number of machines that we need is directly correlated to the production productivity that we want to reach. Considering that a normal product requires more or less one hour, we want to suggest two machines for each fineness that we want to realize.

Third problem is **the prototype's need**: the complexity of programming the machines requires at least two prototypes to obtain a final product without design faults; after that the production process is not sensible to the environment factor, as temperature or humidity, and it is possible to continue with a mass production. In our contest this technical necessity could be a big problem, because it is impossible to realise two prototypes for each customer. However we could skip this phase if we develop a customization process that doesn't require any on demand prototypes (one example could be a colours customization of standard models).

Another problem is **the software complexity**: Shima Seiki provides both the machine and the software to programme it, which is very flexible and with a big library of standard products that could modified. On the other hand, the software complexity doesn't allow users to self-made their product and, for that reason, we need a "genius" that supports the client in their creations. Finding these qualified

people in very difficult (there are just a few specialist available on the market) and train them require at least six months.

To conclude, we would like to underline **the noise of the machinery**: during the production each machine make a lot of noise and this imply that it is not possible to put it in the middle of our fashion lab.

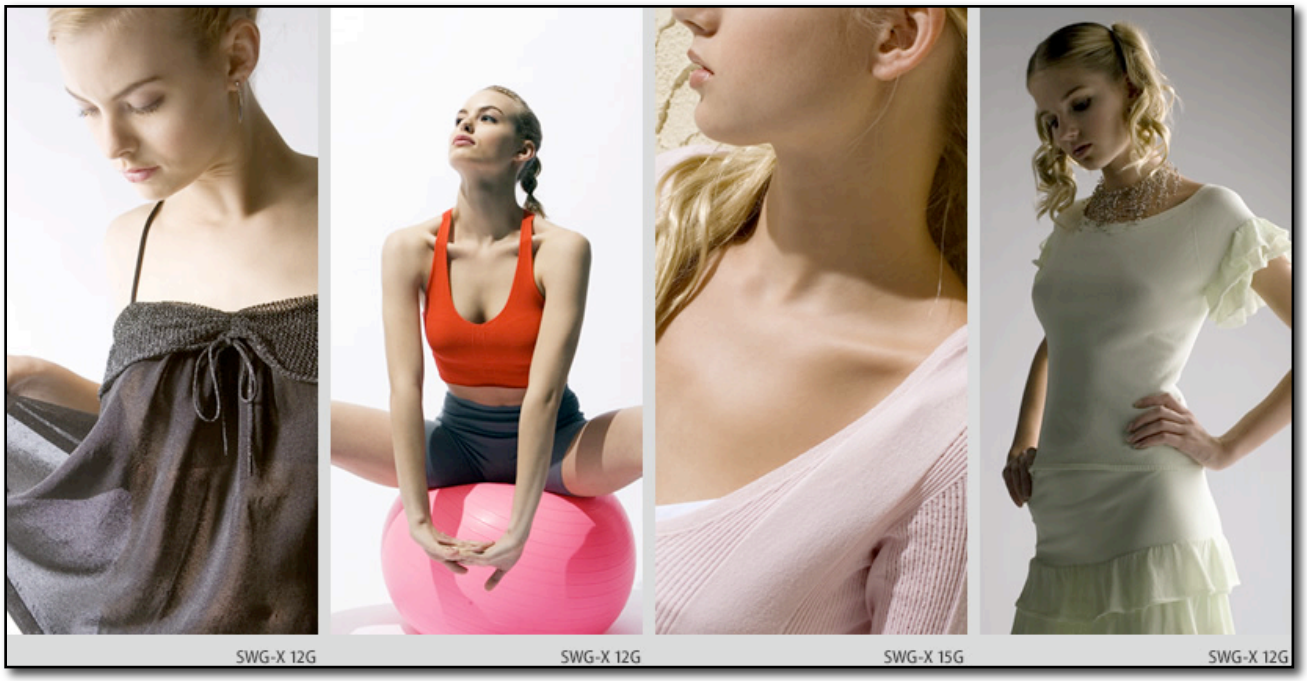
Positive aspects:

There are also some positive aspects that surprise us; fist of all **the facility to change the yarn**. Change materials or colour is so simple and quickly that in our schedule we could not consider the set-up time. In addiction to that, there are also some machines with an automatic magazine of threads.

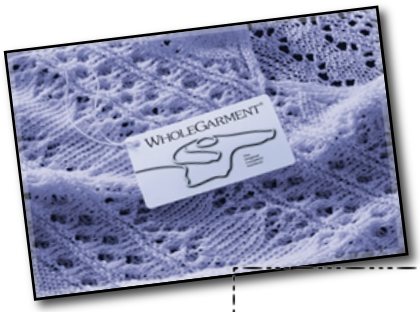
Other important aspect is **the safety of the production**: the Shima Seiki machines are furnished with some error-detector that could automatically stop the production if something is wrong. When the problem is solved the production will continue automatically, without any fault for the item that was processing. However, it is not possible to solve the problem with remote controls, so we need at least one supervisor.

Also **the maintenance** was a surprise: basically the only maintenance that is necessary is a periodic cleaning of the machine. The frequency of that operation in strictly correlated to which finesses and which materials we want to use.

Other important aspect is **the interaction software/hardware**: it is internet based and that means that it is not necessary to produce where we design and programme the machines. That also means that we could realise a network of labs that cooperate with the same software expert, a good solutions to decrease the number of people that must be trained.



The Process

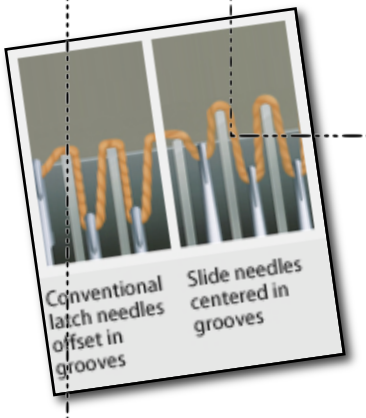


Technical Designer (Genius)

Consumer co-designer

Product Choice

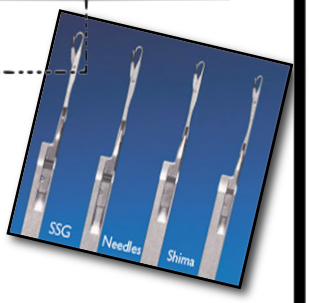
Material Choice



Machine Programming

Stock Materials

Setup



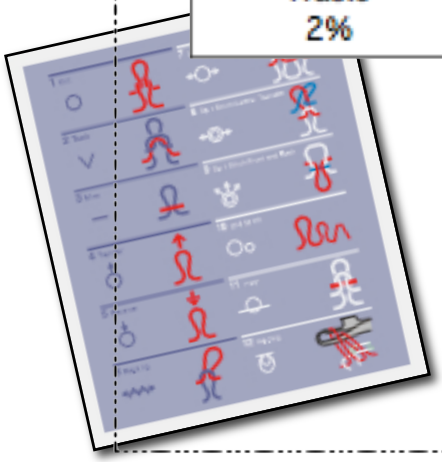
Production

Total quality controll

Waste 2%

Repaired Product 15%

Refining 83% + 15%



Post production Treatment (painting, ironing, washing)

Packaging

Sale

T-0
5'
20'
25'
30'
1h30'
1h40'
2h
2h30'
2h35'
T

Visit at BasicNet

BasicNet is a company that manages several brands, like Robe di Kappa, Superga, K-Way. This company was interesting for our project because of its business model: they own 'only' a collection of brands but the whole production activity is outsourced and also the most relevant part of the retail activity is done by licensee partners.

Although this kind of business is not exactly what we will to do, the interview was worth because we had some information on how they run their business and what is the situation in the fashion market, focusing more on the peculiar business model of BasicNet form which we may borrow some ideas.

BasicNet is a very flexible company: its headquarters are in Turin, but the most of the work related to the products of the brands owned by the company is outsourced to other companies that makes the network.

In Turin the network is monitored and coordinated, but the actual production is not under the direct control of BasicNet. Selected manufacturers that have an agreement with BasicNet do all the work.
The same thing happens for the retail activities: the most important part of that is done by licensee that just buys the goods produced by the manufacturers and sell them to the public.
In this process BasicNet has the important role to create the links to connect the manufacturers with the licensee.
BasicNet has also a role in the retail activity, but this role is limited to some experimentation (as in their store in Turin) and to activities to avoid that too much clothes stays in the warehouses (with outlet stores).

With this licensing business model it is possible to ensure high quality products having just a little risk. If a single manufacturer or a retailer does not behave as expected there are the others that will guarantee revenues to the company.

An important idea about the FasPonSite project is that it would be better to have a well-known firm to support us, at least in the very beginning.
That would keep away the efforts to create a strong branding, allowing us to concentrate our efforts in the development of and innovative and competitive production process.