Business Week

25th April 05 – 1st April 05

Geox celebrates its 10th anniversary and opens new store

25 April 2005

It seems Italian footwear producer Geox has quite a lot to celebrate at the moment. Not only is the company celebrating its 10th anniversary, it has also announced the opening of a new store on Madison Avenue, New York.

The new outlet, that is scheduled to open in autumn, will be the company's first in the USA. The 6,000 square foot boutique will be the company's largest store in the world, featuring men's, women's and children's shoes as well as a selection of apparel, another first in the United States.

Geox, founded in 1995 by Mario Moretti Polegato, is probably best known for its "shoe that breathes"- a patented technology.

Foot Locker donates 68,500 pairs of athletics footwear to Aceh

25 April 2005

New York-based athletic retailer, Foot Locker Inc, is providing 68,500 pairs of athletic footwear to the Save the Children relief effort in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. The product was shipped via P&O Nedlloyd, who donated the ocean transportation in support of this worthy cause.

"We were clearly shocked and saddened by the tsunami disaster that has severely impacted so many people, particularly in the coastal areas of the Indian Ocean," stated Matthew D. Serra, chief executive officer and chairman of Foot Locker.

"Our company recognises its ongoing sense of responsibility of providing assistance, as needed, in the communities where we operate around the world. I am pleased that Rick Mina, president and CEO of Foot Locker, Inc. - U.S.A., and his team were able to arrange this partnership with Save the Children and P&O Nedlloyd to assist with these relief efforts."

Wolverine appoints new chairman

25 April 2005

The board of directors at Wolverine World Wide, Inc. has elected Timothy J. O'Donovan to the office of chairman of the board of directors. O'Donovan succeeds Geoffrey B. Bloom.

"In his 36 years of service to the company, Tim has proven himself as a leader and Tim's vision is the driving force behind Wolverine's continued growth and success," stated Geoffrey B. Bloom. "Since Tim became CEO in 2000, the company has grown sales and earnings significantly as evidenced by the company's strong earnings announcement and increased 2005 estimates released yesterday. This success demonstrates Tim's keen understanding of the footwear industry and strategic insight. I am proud to pass the Chairmanship to Tim and look forward to his continued leadership."

Indian minister: Textiles industry should increase export efforts

25 April 2005

India's Minister of Textiles, Shri Shankersinh Vaghela has said that the textiles industry needs to intensify efforts towards gaining a firmer foothold in traditional and non-traditional potential markets.

While chairing the Parliamentary Consultative Committee Meeting in New Delhi he called for diversifying product portfolio, building brand image, entry into niche markets, reducing transaction and other input costs. The Textile Export Promotion Councils have already stepped up their export promotional activities, including participation in fairs/exhibitions abroad and organising Buyer-Seller Meets in important markets. Co-coordinated promotional events are also planned under the Focus LAC, Focus CIS and Focus Africa programmes, to boost textile exports, but the minister stated that there was a need for firmer action.

Shri Vaghela said his Ministry is ready to provide the industry with adequate infrastructure facilities for which two major schemes have been announced, namely the “Apparel Park for Exports” for imparting focused thrust for the setting up of apparel manufacturing units and the “Textiles Centres Infrastructure Development Scheme (TCIDC)” – for modernising existing infrastructure facilities in major textile centres of the country.

Lacoste signs Andy Roddick

25 April 2005

Lacoste has signed a five-year partnership with tennis superstar Andy Roddick. Beginning May 1st Roddick will join the Lacoste tennis team among the ranks of promising stars such as Tatiana Golovin and Richard Gasquet.

Roddick had been sponsored by Reebok for five years, until the company decided not to renew his contract last week.

Olga launches Smooth Benefits daywear collection

25 April 2005

Olga, a Warnaco Group, Inc brand, has launched a new collection of intimate apparel with its new line Smooth Benefits with Lycra Body Care. This new daywear collection is not only said to be a light and comfortable layer under clothing but it also uses microencapsulated moisture bead technology that allows skin to maintain its natural moisture balance.

"The Smooth Benefits collection is an important step for Olga," said Martha Olson, president of core brands at Warnaco Intimate Apparel. "We are always looking for new ways to keep Olga at the forefront of innovation, and incorporating Lycra Body Care technology achieves this by combining beauty and benefits."

Lycra Body Care moisturising technology was developed by Invista in 2003, which has invisible micro-beads built into its fibres. The Lycra elastane enables the fabric to stretch, and this releases the aloe vera from the micro-beads as the garment moves with the body. The garment contains as many as one million microscopic capsules per square centimetre of fabric, allowing the time-released moisture properties to last up to six months of wash and wear by following the recommended care instructions.

Olga Smooth Benefits silhouettes include a camisole, bikini, thong, and hipster.

Esjot group announces new appointements

26 April 2005

ESJOT, a manufacturer and supplier of metallic safety components to the footwear industry, has recently appointed Giampaolo Civatti as global sales director and John Sprague as technical sales manager for the Americas region.

Giampaolo Civatti has worked at Texon, Esjot Group’s parent company, for many years and brings a wealth of footwear industry expertise and sales management experience to the Esjot Group. John Sprague joins the Esjot Group, after many years in the safety boot market, to strengthen the existing Texon and Esjot sales force in Canada, USA. and South America. He will also provide valuable support to the American and Asia brand sales teams.

INDA announces new leadership for its International Trade Advisory Board

26 April 2005

INDA, the internationally-recognised trade association of the nonwoven fabrics industry, has announced new leadership of its International Trade Advisory Board (ITAB). Serving as co-chairs for the ITAB will be Gonzalo Castro of Cardinal Health and David Ford of BBA Fiberweb.

By selecting one chair from INDA members who produce nonwoven roll goods and another from INDA members who convert nonwoven roll goods into finished products, it is hoped that the ITAB leadership will represent a broader spectrum of the nonwovens industry.

In announcing this change, INDA President Rory Holmes said: “From experience we know it can be difficult to ensure that all of our members’ interests are represented when action is required. By choosing co-Chairs who represent two distinct areas of the nonwovens value chain, we believe any actions taken by the Advisory Board will be more reflective of the entire industry.”

Reebok reports first quarter 2005 earnings

26 April 2005

Reebok International Ltd. has reported an increase of about 5% in first-quarter earnings year-over-year, and an 11% rise in global sales. Net income rose to $43 million from the $41 million reported for the same period last year.

Net sales for the 2005 first quarter were $925 million, an increase of 11% from 2004's first quarter net sales of $832 million. The acquisition of The Hockey Company, effective on June 30, 2004, was said to have had a favourable impact on sales. The company's international sales of Reebok branded products amounted to $397 million in the quarter, an increase of 17% over 2004's first quarter sales.

Sales for the company's other brands - Rockport, The Greg Norman Collection and Ralph Lauren Footwear - were $142 million in the first quarter of 2005 compared with 2004's first quarter sales of $135 million, an increase of 5%.

Caron van der Brink appointed at Brunotti Europe

26 April 2005

Caron van den Brink has joined the marketing and communications department of Brunotti Europe, the Netherlands-based surfing and lifestyle brand. She will be responsible for acquiring sponsorship for riders and events. With this new job title Brunotti will emphasise its ‘Back to the Beach’ marketing strategy.

Van den Brink has been part of the Brunotti Company for many years. Since the late nineties she has been involved in the management of Brunotti Boards in Scheveningen.

New online skateboarding shoe store launches

26 April 2005

An internet skate shoe store has just opened its virtual doors to online shoppers.
"We created this shop to serve the skateboarding community. I couldn't believe how many times skaters would go to a store looking for a specific shoe only for it to be out of stock or didn't have their size. Our goal is to have the latest styles of shoes and the biggest selection" said Ron Harrahs, the founder of the online store.

The Skate Shoes Store is part of a new revolution of sites known as "Virtual" companies, which only exist on paper and have no factory or plant. Skate Shoes acts as a middle-man between the large distributors and customers. It works by locating the best possible price for skateboarders while matching them with the appropriate distributor who has the shoe stocked and ready to be shipped.

Puma announces slow growth in 2005

26 April 2005

Puma AG, the German-based sporting-goods maker, said first-quarter profit climbed 14% and reiterated that growth in 2005 will be the slowest in seven years.

During the quarter, net income rose to €90.9 million from €80.1 million a year earlier, which exceeded the anticipated figure of €89 million. Sales rose 12% to €496.5 million.

Sales in the largest segment, footwear, were up 10.6% to €338 million and apparel by 11.2% to €124 million. Accessories realised the strongest growth rate with 30.1% and sales climbed to €35 million.

AATCC upgrades corporate membership offering

26 April 2005

AATCC, the international association for the textile design, processing, and testing industry, has completely restructured the benefits it offers corporate members in the association.

“We wanted to simplify our dues structure, provide more benefits for dues paid, and offer an entry level corporate membership that would allow more companies to become corporate members” said John Y. Daniels, AATCC executive director. “This new plan accomplishes all those goals, and gives added recognition to our corporate member companies.”

Linz Textil to launch new viscose yarn

27 April 2005

Linz Textil has announced that it is to launch a new viscose yarn under the brand name Viscoblend in May. The new yarn has been developed in cooperation with fibre producer Lenzing AG and spinning machinery manufacturer Rieter AG.

The yarn is said to guarantee optimum processing properties. In particular, it is said to offer improved strength and elongation parameters which have beneficial effects in downstream production stages. Increased evenness and reduced imperfections are also said to ensure a uniform final appearance and the first-class look of the finished product.

According to the company, in combination with the OE rotor spinning technology, Viscoblend “soft”, Viscoblend “medio” and Viscoblend “special” will open up a broad range of design possibilities for new end products. In addition to this, the fine spinning of OE rotor yarns up to a yarn count of Nm80/1 (Ne47/1) and provides the technical basis for an interesting expansion of the spinning range.

A$575 million to revive Australia’s textile, clothing & footwear sector

27 April 2005

The Australian government has approved the Post-2005 Strategic Investment Program Scheme (SIP) for the revival of textile, clothing and footwear industry worth A$575 million ($447.5 million). The non-competitive grant scheme will focus on promoting investment in new TCF plant or equipment and innovation in Australia and will replace the current scheme which expires on 30 June 2005.

The scheme is complemented by the $50 million ($38.9 million) Structural Adjustment Program and the $50 million ($38.9 million) Product Diversification Scheme. The government’s total $747 million ($581 million) package also includes a $27 million ($21 million) extension to the Expanded Overseas Assembly Provisions Scheme, the $25 million ($19.4 million) Small Business Program and the $20 million ($15.6 million) Supply Chain Program, which commences in 2010.

The Structural Adjustment Program will help workers find other jobs in parts of the country where the textile industry is ailing. The Product Diversification Scheme will aid business in sourcing material overseas and growing product ranges.

Ian Macfarlane, minister for Industry, Tourism and Resources, said: "Australia's $9 billion ($& billion) textile, clothing and footwear manufacturing industries can now apply for investment and R&D assistance under the package which has been closely and extensively negotiated with industry players."

Millet applies Vibram GriptionTex to free-climbing shoes

27 April 2005

Millet, a French mountaineering equipment specialist, has used Vibram GriptionTex technology in its climbing shoe model Okto. The solution has previously been tested on Ferrino backpacks, making it the first venture into climbing footwear. The Okto model is preferred by Daniel Du lac, professional climber and Millet's technical adviser.

Vibram GriptionTex, R&D's product, is a "total rubber" solution for both the sole and the upper that combines the advantages of rubber (grip, abrasion resistance) and textile (light weight, flexibility). The rubber, easily identifiable with its star design, covers the shoe so grip surface and level of performance are significantly enhanced. The modern, narrow design reinforces the shoe's precision.

The fabric base of Vibram GriptionTex is a heavy-duty polyester fibre studded with rubber inserts. A light, low-bulk solution, the process can be effectively applied to climbing-shoe uppers. Highly flexible and supple, it ensures a high degree of comfort and protection for the foot. The numerous rubber inserts mean that the upper, generally made of leather, becomes the natural extension of the sole and takes on a grip function making it easier for rock climbers to make the ultimate move.

Daniel Du Lac, sportsman and personality among the world climber community, recorded a historical triple victory in Bouldering: French Champion in May 2004 at Apt (France), the European Champion in June 2004 at Lecco (Italy) and was winner of the World Cup in September 26th 2004 at Huzou (China).

Advanced radiation protective apparel to be launched under Maxpro name

27 April 2005

Maxant Technologies, Inc. has signed a joint venture agreement with Pro-Tech X-Ray, Inc., forming the new corporation Maxpro, LLC, which will manufacture a premium line of radiation protective apparel and accessories.

The line includes a proprietary design called Cool-Tech which is said to offer a unique, mesh-back design that fits the natural contour of the body and reduces the amount of weight carried on the shoulders, while allowing unrestricted airflow across the back. Maxant will actively market and sell this line of aprons as well as other radiation protective eyewear and accessories.

Established in 1997, Pro-Tech X-Ray was determined to offer the market a new and innovative product that set a higher standard in radiation protective wear. The invention of the now patented Cool-Tech apron, with its unique mesh-back design, was the solution. The company also offers an entire line of protective apparel including aprons with tie, Velcro and buckle closures, skirts and vests, wrap-around aprons and accessory items.

Maxant Technologies Inc., an ISO 9002 company, is a manufacturer of x-ray illuminators. Founded in 1984, it is located in Niles, IL, where it manufactures three lines of standard viewers: premium, value and economy to address customers' medical needs. The company also produces specialty mammography, orthopaedic, chiropractic and podiatry viewers. In addition to x-ray viewers, the company is a supplier of radiation protective apparel and eyewear to the diagnostic imaging marketplace.

New Zealand opts out of global wool marketing campaign

27 April 2005

New Zealand will not join an international apparel marketing pilot programme due to the opposition of its farmers, who have rejected to contribute financially during the

International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO) Congress in Hobart.

The fund, which would have been accrued through Meat and Wool New Zealand contribution, did not find any support from sheep farmers who do not currently support levies being invested in wool promotion.

Earlier, the Australian Wool Innovation had offered US$5m for this international marketing pilot programme, provided it was matched by international wool and textile businesses.

BASF to exhibit at Techtextil

27 April 2005

BASF is to exhibit for the first time at Techtextil in Frankfurt on 7-9 June 2005. Occupying booth B 79 in Hall 3.0, it will focus on solutions for the Clothtech, Hometech, Mobiltech and Sporttech sectors.

Among solutions showcased will be BASF's new system for colouring and coating polyolefin textiles with high fastness and flexibility properties, Lurotex TX products designed to repel water, oil and dirt, foam substitute for car seat-covers which improves the microclimate of the seat and textile coatings for functionalities such as heat regulation, moisture protection and elasticity.

BASF will also feature its regular performance chemicals for weaving, pre-treatment, optical brightening, analogue and digital printing, coating and finishing and dying auxiliaries.

Cotton Incorporated restructures product marketing management

27 April 2005

Cotton Incorporated has restructured two positions in its global product marketing department in order to expand the company's global reach in the textile industry. Mike Tyndall is now senior director, Latin America and Europe, and Mark Kametches has been promoted to associate director, North American marketing.

Tyndall has a BS in Textile Chemistry from North Carolina State University, and his expertise has been featured in many technical journals. In addition, he is a long-time member of the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists (AATCC). Kametches has a degree in industrial engineering and operations research. He also has an MS in Textile Technology from ITT and an MBA from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Both will report to Dean Turner, senior vice president, global product marketing, who will assume direct oversight of the company's Asian operations. These changes have come as a result of the retirement of Dean Pelczar, senior director, global product marketing, after more than 25 years of service with the company.

Dean Turner commented, "The early retirement of Dean Pelczar represents a loss to Cotton Incorporated, but with change comes opportunity. Specifically, it means we are repositioning the Global Product Marketing team as we face a world where exports of raw cotton and imports of cotton products dominate."

Royal Ten Cate reports significant sales increase in Q1

27 April 2005

Netherlands-based technical textile and technical component producer, Royal Ten Cate posted a substantial increase in sales for the first quarter of 2005, reporting a 33% rise to €174 million.

Net profit for the first quarter remained unchanged at €3.8 million, which was attributed to the rise in the costs of raw materials (plastic granulate) and increasing shortages on the artificial fibre market.

DuPont to raise prices of polyvinyl alcohol

27 April 2005

DuPont Packaging & Industrial Polymers has announced a price increase of $0.07/lb on off-list prices for all grades of DuPont Elvanol polyvinyl alcohol (PVA/PVOH), effective from June 1, 2005 or as contracts permit.

DuPont cites unprecedented and sustained increases in energy, and petrochemical feedstock and freight costs as significant reasons for this increase. DuPont Elvanol polyvinyl alcohol is used in a variety of industries including textiles, paper and adhesives.

Meanwhile, DuPont Co., announced that first-quarter earnings grew sharply compared with the same period in 2004. Net income rose to $967 million for the quarter ended March 31 from $668 million in 2004. However, total revenue fell to $7.83 billion from $8.21 billion in the first quarter of 2004.

Despite the increase in earnings, the results still fell short of analyst forecasts.

First quarter sales at VF experience a 9% rise

27 April 2005

Branded apparel company, VF Corporation, has announced record results for its first quarter ended April 2, 2005. First quarter sales rose 9% to $1,563.6 million from $1,432.7 million in the prior year's first quarter. Net income increased 18% to $122.9 million from $103.9 million.

The company’s Outdoor businesses, which include The North Face, Vans, JanSport, Eastpak, Napapijri and Kipling brands, jumped 127% in the quarter to $282 million from $125 million, while sales of the Sportswear businesses, including the Nautica and John Varvatos brands as well as Kipling brand sales in North America, rose 7% in the quarter to $152 million from $142 million.

Mackey J. McDonald, chairman and chief executive officer, said: "Our Outdoor, Imagewear and Sportswear businesses each delivered outstanding results during the quarter, with strong increases in both sales and profits. We are gratified to see our aggressive pursuit of new growth brands benefiting both our top and bottom lines."

Univar launches substitute for nonylphenol ethoxylates

27 April 2005

In response to the European Union’s ban on nonylphenol ethoxylates (NPEs) and its intermediate, nonylphenol (NP), Univar N.V. has begun distributing its Caflon brand of substitutes for NPE surfactants and NP-free intermediates throughout Europe.

The Caflon range is said to provide an across-the-board substitute for NP and NPE and includes ethoxylated nonionic, alcohol ethoxylate and alcohol alkoxylate surfactants which can be used as wetting agents, surfactants and intermediates for a broad range of industries, such as textiles, in paint and coatings, for scouring and speciality cleansers or as emulsifiers or as wetting agents in liquid detergents.

"Univar undertook the formulation and distribution of Caflon proactively to aid customers facing the regulatory ban against NPEs," said Henri Marc Perrin, European business manager performance products, Univar Europe. "The Caflon product initiative reflects Univar's aim to provide comprehensive answers to challenges, not simply with the traditional tools of distribution, warehousing and logistics, but with new solutions."

Basell develops new Moplen PP resin

27 April 2005

Netherlands-based polypropylene and advanced polyolefin producer, Basell, has developed a new high fluidity polypropylene grade that can address customer requests for more demanding resin performance in melt blown textile applications.

The resin, Moplen HF1005, is a very narrow molecular weight homopolymer with a melt flow rate (MFR) of 1500 and is the latest addition to Basell's comprehensive nonwovens grade range.

According to Franco Sartori, technical manager for nonwovens and textiles at Basell, the resin can offer particular advantages in the production of ultra-thin meltblown fibres. "The new Moplen material is spherical in form," he said, "and test results show that it can increase fluidity in compounding operations. This is enabling converters to achieve processing cost-savings compared to standard 800 MFR resins."

"It also has improved barrier properties such as hydrohead that can be achieved at much lower processing temperatures with significant cost saving in the melt blown process compared to standard high fluidity resins," said Sartori. "The lower processing temperature is expected to be beneficial during the production of colored melt blown nonwovens, as it can minimize organic pigment degradation and improve processability."

He added, "We have found that Moplen HF1005 can produce very thin fibres to achieve a comfortable, soft-touch feel. Some customers using spun melt mutli-layer nonwovens for filters and protective medical garments often require this high level of performance."

NanoHorizons, ARC Outdoors/ArcticShield launch development programne

27 April 2005

NanoHorizons, Inc. and ARC Outdoors/ArcticShield(R) today announce the launch of a joint technology development programme aimed at bringing nanotechnology innovations to textile markets.

ARC Outdoors/ArcticShield is known for its innovative, technologically advanced outdoor apparel, sold under the ArcticShield and X Scent brands. NanoHorizons, a North American nanotechnology innovator, creates nanotechnology solutions for scientific and consumer applications ranging from pharmaceutical research to retail clothing. Together the companies will jointly develop a range of nanotechnology products and applications for textiles.

The companies plan to announce new technologies and products resulting from their partnership over the next few months.

Wellman reports record sales

28 April 2005

Wellman, Inc., US-based manufacturer and marketer of PermaClear brand PET (polyethylene terephthalate) packaging resin and Fortrel brand polyester staple fibres, has reported net earnings for the quarter ended March 31, 2005 of $11.0 million. This compares with a net loss of $28.2 million for the same period in 2004.
The company also reported record quarterly sales of $386.3 million for the first quarter 2005, which was $92.5 million or 31% higher than the same period a year ago. This increase in sales was due to higher selling prices.

Tom Duff, Wellman's chairman and CEO, stated, "Wellman is pleased to report its highest quarterly earnings from continuing operations since the second quarter of 2002 and its second consecutive quarter of record sales. These improved results are attributable to higher raw material margins and our ongoing cost reduction programmes."

Joules remains sponsor of the National Women's Polo Tournament

28 April 2005

Joules Clothing will be teaming up with The International Women's Polo Association and Ascot Park Polo Club again this year, as title sponsors of The National Women's Polo Tournament. The championships will be held on 30th and 31st July at The Ascot Park Polo Club.

The equestrian casual-wear brand, well known for its ever-evolving array of colourful polo shirts, stepped up as title sponsors of the event last year in a move to support women's polo. "Women's polo is rapidly growing in popularity," says Joules Managing Director, Tom Joule. "This event offers all-woman teams the chance to compete with teams of the same standard from all over the UK."

Last year's event saw 26 teams battling it out for the title which eventually went to the Joules team, led by Heart to Heart actress, Stephanie Powers. The Joules' Nationals is the biggest event of its kind in the UK, attracting polo's leading women players from around the world.

INDA elects new board of directors

28 April 2005

INDA (Association of the Nonwovens Fabrics Industry) has elected a new board of directors for a three-year term during the association's annual meeting in Orlando, Florida.

The following appointments have been made:Chairperson: Steve Ogle (V.P. – R&D, Leggett & Platt), Vice Chairperson – Planning: Marvin Mitchell (Global Business Leader, Johns Manville Corporation) and Vice Chairperson – Finance: Bill Vogel (President, Atlantic Mills, Inc.). Members: Janet Devine (President, Sonobond Ultrasonics, Inc.), Dennis J. Durkin (V.P. – Sales, Cleaver Associates, Inc.), Daniel M. Feroe (North American Sales Manager), Rieter Greensboro (Perfojet Div.), Walter Schwarz (President/CEO, Freudenberg Nonwovens NA), Lisette Swenson (Brand Manager U.S. Barrier Products, Molnlycke Health Care, Inc.).

Other members on the Board of Directors include: Gary Abyad (President, Clopay Plastic Products Co.), Jon Behm (Director R&D, CardinalHealth), Don Brown (Director – Sales/Marketing, Colbond Nonwovens), Val Hollingsworth (President/CEO, Hollingsworth & Vose Company), C. Dru Kefalos (Marketing Communications Manager, ExxonMobil Chemical), Paul L. Latten (V.P. – Nonwoven & Textile Fibers, Invista), John Michaud (GM Wipes – The Americas, Ahlstrom), Robert E. Pine (Executive V.P., Elk Performance Nonwoven Fabrics), and Jim Schaeffer (CEO, PGI Nonwovens).

Rory Holmes, President of INDA, said, "The nominating committee, headed by Lee Sullivan of Freudenberg, has done an outstanding job finding great people to be a part of the INDA Board of Directors and Executive Committee. A tremendous effort was made to represent the entire value chain from raw materials to finished goods as well as selecting new members from small, medium and large companies."

World Outlook for Fabricated Textiles Products published by Research and Markets

28 April 2005

Research and Markets has added "2006-2011 World Outlook for Fabricated Textiles Products" available from http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20040820/RESEARCH. The study covers the world outlook for fabricated textile products across more than 200 countries.

Using econometric models which project fundamental economic dynamics within each country and across countries, latent demand estimates are created. This report does not discuss the specific players in the market serving the latent demand, nor specific details at the product level. Nor does it consider short-term cyclicalities that might affect realised sales. It has a strategic nature, taking an aggregate and long-run view, irrespective of the players or products involved.

The study gives estimates for the worldwide latent demand, or the P.I.E. for fabricated textile products. It also shows how the P.I.E. is divided across the world's regional and national markets. For each country, estimates are shown of how the P.I.E. grows over time (positive or negative growth). In order to make these estimates, a multi-stage methodology was employed that is often taught in courses on international strategic planning at graduate schools of business.

The report is broken down into areas defining latent demand and the P.I.E., the methodology, summary of findings, the worldwide market potential and the regions of Africa, Asia, Europe & the Middle East, Latin America, North America & the Caribbean and Oceana. The methodology area looks at product definition and data collection, filtering and smoothing, filling in missing values, varying parameter, non-linear estimation, fixed-parameter linear estimation, aggregation and benchmarking and latent demand density: allocating across cities.

WTO urges EU and China to solve textile matter

28 April 2005

The World Trade Organization has urged the European Union and China to talk through their dispute over booming Chinese textiles exports to prevent an outright clash. This comes days after the EU has decided to launch an investigation with the aim to curb the imports.

The EU says Chinese textile imports have soared by as much as 534% for some garments. France is pressing Brussels for swifter action to hold back Chinese clothing. Under the WTO's rulebook, the EU must first prove claims of material injury to its own producers before it can levy temporary trade barriers on some products. With the US also conducting a review of Chinese textile imports, the WTO is likely to end up arbitrating between trade titans if China formally objects to any safeguard measures.

WTO spokesman Keith Rockwell says "Two months of data are not sufficient to make a true assessment," referring to the need to quantify China's exports to the EU. "This is bigger than just textiles," said John Weekes, a trade consultant and former Canadian ambassador to the WTO.
The issue is clouded by the complex provisions of the accession agreement struck by trading nations with China after 15 years of negotiations Trade specialists shied away from giving a full reading of the different elements, one of them dubbing it a "perilous" exercise amid the spat over textiles. China can challenge the EU in the WTO's disputes settlement body if it feels unfairly treated.

Ceri Jones Joins Jacobson Group's PR & Marketing Team

28 April 2005

Jacobson Group recently appointed Ceri Jones as PR & marketing executive. Ceri will be working on a cross section of brands within Jacobson's portfolio, including the ladies footwear range PERtu, together with Gola Sport and Jacobson Group business to business activity.

Ceri has joined Jacobson Group from Gold Medal Travel Group, where she held the position of marketing executive. During her time at Gold Medal she worked across many marketing media including direct mail, advertising, E-marketing and PR to both trade and consumer.

Ceri brings with her to Jacobson Group four years' marketing experience and a keen interest in fashion having graduated with a BA Combined (hons) in Fashion Promotions with Management.

Sinterama introduces new polyester continuous filament

28 April 2005

Italian company Sinterama has launched a 100% polyester continuous filament yarn that unites bacteriostatic and flame retardancy properties, GuardYarn.

The new filament is said to be suitable for any end-use, from furnishing fabrics to apparel, from automotive to technical applications, in which high protective characteristics are required.

The range of yarn counts, from 78 to 1330 dtex in the usual versions, multi and microfilaments, allows the product to satisfy varied demands in the market. It is also available in both raw white and package dyed versions.

Lectra Q1 sales hit by end of textile quotas

29 April 2005

France-based global supplier and developer of software and hardware dedicated to industrial users of textiles, leather, and other soft materials, Lectra, has reported that results for the first quarter saw the company's sales close to break even as it stated that sales of new systems were especially hard-hit by the abolition of textile quotas as of January 1, 2005.

Orders for new software licenses and equipment had decreased by 30% compared with the same period in 2004. There was a growth in orders for new systems from China (up 55% like-for-like), and from Japan (up 64%). Asia-Pacific accounted for 36% of orders, compared with 19% in the first quarter of 2004. All the other regions, with a handful of exceptions, were down (Europe accounted for 40% of orders, versus 52% last year). However, it was not all bad news, revenues from software evolution contracts and recurring services contracts showed a 12% rise.

Lectra is present across a broad array of major markets, including fashion and apparel; luggage & leather goods; footwear; furniture & furnishings; and the automotive, aerospace, and marine industries. With a staff of 1,600 worldwide, Lectra serves more than 17,000 customers in over 100 countries.

ITGLWF: Collapse of Bangladesh factory throws doubt on codes of conduct

29 April 2005

According to the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation (ITGLWF), the negligence of retailers sourcing from Spectrum Fashions, a nine-storey factory in Bangladesh which collapsed ten days ago killing more than 100 workers, calls into question the whole meaning of so-called codes of conduct and how they are implemented.

Neil Kearney, general secretary of the Brussels-based ITGLWF, said that irresponsible European retailers and brands are putting the lives of garment workers at risk.

"The collapse of the nine-storey building which housed the Spectrum Sweater Industries and Shahriyar Fabrics Industries is a tragic example of the appalling negligence of European retailers and brands.

"The manufacturer broke every rule in the book. Health and safety was appalling. One worker is reported to have died three days before the collapse due to burns sustained from hot water from the factory boiler, and another has been in hospital for three months after being electrocuted when her clothing became entangled in wires.
"The most shocking allegation is that workers detected serious cracks in the building's supporting columns in the early hours of April 11, about sixteen hours before the building caved in. When they reported the matter to management, they were told to continue production to meet an export deadline."

According to Kearney, the factory had been built on a swamp without proper foundations. Originally a four-story building, five additional floors were added when the company expanded to accommodate a huge order from Europe. The company did not get planning permission, with media reports suggesting the owners were able to flout regulations because they were influential people.

The retailers involved are some of the top names from many European countries, including Zara, which is part of Spanish fashion distributor Inditex, Karstadt Quelle of Germany, Carrefour of France and Cotton Group of Belgium.

BASF reports 11% sales increase in Q1

29 April 2005

German specialties chemical company, BASF, has reported an 11% increase in sales compared with the strong first quarter of 2004 to over €10 billion. Growth was said

to be primarily due to price increases. Sales volumes were higher than in the first quarter of 2004, in particular in the Chemicals and Plastics segments.

The Performance Products segment increased earnings despite the divestiture of the printing systems business. Further reductions in fixed costs are said to have contributed to the positive earnings trend throughout the chemical businesses. Compared with the first quarter of 2004, net income climbed 66% to €861 million.

“We are constantly improving our portfolio according to the motto ‘Building strengths and eliminating weaknesses.’ This creates the conditions that are needed to ensure that we will continue to earn a premium on our cost of capital in the future,” said Dr. Jürgen Hambrecht, chairman of the board of executive directors.

Bayer reports strong increase in earnings in Q1

29 April 2005

German specialties chemical company, the Bayer Group, achieved a strong increase in sales and earnings in the first quarter of 2005. According to preliminary figures, sales from continuing operations grew by 15.7% to €6,704 million compared with €5,792 million for the same period in 2004. Currency- and portfolio-adjusted sales expanded by 9.3%.

"The results for the first three months of this year are very pleasing," said management board chairman Werner Wenning. "We have therefore gotten off to a very good start in 2005, and that confirms our optimistic forecast for the full year."
The company stated that all subgroups of the company contributed to the first-quarter performance - particularly MaterialScience, where currency- and portfolio-adjusted sales advanced by 34%.

For 2005 Bayer is targeting an increase of more than 5% in currency- and portfolio-adjusted sales from continuing operations, to over €25 billion.

Columbia reports record Q1 results

29 April 2005

US-based Columbia Sportswear Company, a producer of active outdoor apparel and footwear, has reported record first quarter net sales of $245.7 million for the quarter ended March 31, 2005, an increase of 18.9% over net sales of $206.7 million for the same period of 2004. Net income reached $21.3 million, a 6.5% increase over the same period in the prior year.

Compared with the first quarter of 2004, US sales increased 18.2% to $136.3 million, Other International sales increased 41.4% to $36.9 million, European sales increased 8.6% to $46.6 million, and Canadian sales rose 15.6% to $25.9 million.

Sportswear sales increased 13.0% to $132.2 million, footwear sales increased 29.7% to $49.8 million, outerwear sales rose 26.7% to $51.2 million, accessories sales increased 11.0% to $9.1 million, and equipment sales increased 25.9% to $3.4 million compared with the first quarter of 2004.

Tim Boyle, Columbia's president and chief executive officer, commented,
"Our first quarter results reflect the continued strong momentum in our spring related sportswear and footwear product categories. Net sales increased in every geographic region in which we operate and in each of our product categories, with particular strength in the US market, which accounted for the majority of our overall sales growth during the quarter. We are pleased with the continued strength of our spring business."

WWF lists 20 Chemicals to be added to POPs Treaty

29 April 2005

As delegates prepare for the first Conference of Parties of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), to be held next week in Uruguay, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has released

a list of 20 chemicals that it recommends be added to the treaty.

WWF's list of chemicals to be included for phase out includes several brominated flame retardants, and perfluorinated compounds known as PFOS and PFOA. Perfluorinated compounds are used in the production of textiles, food packaging and non-stick coatings, while brominated flame retardants are used in fabrics, and other products. Seven pesticides have also been suggested.

"Many of these chemicals are used in everyday products such as packaging and furniture and they all are contaminating our environment. The sooner they are phased out, the safer we will all be," said Clifton Curtis, Director of WWF's Global Toxics Programme.

The Stockholm Convention is an international treaty that eliminates or severely restricts production and use of 12 of the world's most hazardous industrial chemicals including DDT, mirex, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and dioxins.

The Stockholm Convention entered into force in May 2004 and has been ratified by 97 countries. The first Conference of Parties will be held from May 2-6 in Punta del Este, Uruguay, at which more than 120 governments and about 600 delegates will be in attendance.

Technical textiles seminar held in India

29 April 2005

The Federation of All India Textile Manufacturers' Association (FAITMA) and the Office of the Textile Commissioner jointly organised a one-day seminar on technical textiles. The Seminar, called "Germany Meets India on Technical Textiles", was held in Mumbai on April 25, 2005.

Mr. Subodh Kumar, India's Textile Commissioner, addressed the delegates with "Current Trends and Opportunites in Technical Textiles in India". Mr. Josef Albert Beckmann, Board Member Messe Frankfurt GmbH and president of Confederation of the German Textile and Fashion Industry, presented a survey on current issues of textile research and development. Mr. Michael Jaenecke, director, TECHTEXTIL/ Avantex Worldwide Messe Frankfurt Exhibition GmbH made a presentation on trends and markets for technical textiles worldwide. Dr. B.V.S. Viswanadham, Associate Professor, Department of Engineering, IIT Powai, Mumbai spoke on "Geo-synthetics for Infra-structural Development in India".

Mr. Subodh Kumar, Textile Commissioner, Government of India in his presentation said: "Government has appointed an Expert Committee on Technical Textiles (ECTT) to assess the market size and potential of technical textiles, prepare project profiles for potential items and formulate an action plan to promote the growth of technical textiles. The committee has carried out the detailed survey and the observations made are based on the survey conducted by the committee. The ECTT assessed the segment market size and potential of different items considering production, import and exports."

Russell Corporation set new sales record for Q1

29 April 2005

Russell Corporation has reported fiscal 2005 first quarter net sales of $313.2 million, a 24% increase over the comparable period last year, which also sets a new sales record for the first quarter. The company reported first quarter earnings of $2.2 million. Sales for the quarter ended April 3, 2005, reflect a 3% increase in the company's ongoing businesses, in addition to $54 million of incremental sales for acquisitions owned for less than a year. Excluding the impact of the revenue associated with the Major League Baseball contract, which expired in 2004, company-wide organic sales were up 5% over a year ago.

Jack Ward, chairman and CEO, said: "We continue to see positive results from our expansion in all three categories of the sporting goods business: sports apparel, sporting goods equipment and performance

footwear. As we continue to develop new opportunities and expand programs within our core brands, we believe our strategy to maximize our presence in the sporting goods industry will drive continued sales and earnings increases beyond 2005. Our current sales outlook remains positive due to these efforts, and we are confident that expected synergies from our acquisitions will lead to improved levels of profitability longer term."