

Exhibitors connect with hundreds of Chinese fashion brands at Intertextile Shanghai & Shenzhen's Japan Pavilions

“Made in Japan” is a popular selling point across many consumer goods categories in China – cosmetics, stationery and homeware to name a few – and this demand also extends to the apparel textile industry. The Japan Pavilion is now well established at both Intertextile Pavilion Shenzhen – the next edition of which takes place from 4 to 6 July – and Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics, and continues to draw large crowds at every edition of both fairs. This prompts a key question: every textile producing country has its specialties, but what can be learnt from the phenomenal success of Japanese exhibitors at Intertextile?



The most recent Japan Pavilion drew large crowds at Intertextile Shanghai

“In this edition, we’ve met a good number of Chinese fashion brands,” noted Mr Rio Okabe, General Manager of Toyoshima’s Global Operations Department at the 2019 Spring Edition of Intertextile Shanghai. “There’s big potential in this show, and every time, we can meet more than 500 visitors here. No matter what, people and opportunities are still coming to Intertextile. The demand is still really strong here.”

Mr Iwashita Yuichi, Director of the Shanghai branch of the daily textile newspaper Sen-i-News, shared a few reasons for the popularity of Japanese textile suppliers in China: upgraded consumption habits from Chinese consumers, as well as recognition of craftsmanship, flexible order services and reliability.

Upgraded consumption habits

Chinese ladies wear and designer brands are keen to source unique fabrics that differentiate their products in the saturated market. Chinese brands often move towards Italian and Japanese fabrics to achieve this.

At Intertextile Pavilion Shenzhen 2018, Mr Ken Kanatani, Fabric Division Manager of STYLEM Intl (HK), observed, “In Shenzhen and Guangzhou there are many new brands looking for Japanese products, and this fair is one of the most important in the industry so these brands will attend. In the last four years, the Chinese market has changed. Buyers don’t just want mainstream products – they want trendy and unique items, and they want them quickly so they can stay ahead of the trends.”

High quality craftsmanship and exclusive fibres

The advantages of Japanese printing, dyeing and special processing are not based on equipment, but on the spirit of traditional craftsmanship that is passed down through generations, creating fabrics that are truly unique to Japan – a major selling point in China. As well as this, certain fibres are distinctively Japanese. Triacetate is exclusively produced by Mitsubishi Chemical as their Soalon™ brand, and cupro fibre is exclusively produced by Asahikasei as their Bemberg™ brand. In the past, these two companies have used Intertextile as a platform to promote their fibre brands in China. Fabrics made using these unique fibres are extremely popular amongst high-end Chinese brands, especially ladies wear in Shenzhen.

“We’ve been to this fair for around eight years now, and keep coming back as this is a good platform to meet Chinese companies. There are so many based in Shenzhen,” said Mr Hiroshi Kawabata, Sales Manager at Sunwell, at Intertextile Pavilion Shenzhen 2018. “Our triacetate products in particular have been in demand here as triacetate is only made in Japan.”

Product-in-stock services

Japanese suppliers specialise in handling quick delivery, small quantity orders and product-in-stock services. This suits large Chinese brands with stocking pressures, who tend to display smaller collections in stores and only mass-produce more popular items, as well as smaller designers who use less fabric to start with.

At Intertextile Pavilion Shenzhen 2017, Mr Suetaka Yasuda, President of STYLEM

summarised, “There are around 6,000 designer brands in China, including start-up brands who understand quality, but can only afford small-quantity orders to start with. Many are located in Shenzhen. However, they have strong potential to grow into bigger enterprises in the future and will be able to buy more from us then. Therefore, being at this fair is a valuable investment.”

Reliability and responsibility

Japanese customer service is recognised by Chinese brands as being trustworthy. Production timelines are reliably met without delay, while Japanese companies will also take responsibility for any problems with products and make a strong effort to find solutions.

At Intertextile Pavilion Shenzhen 2018, both domestic and overseas buyers noted their need for smaller, faster orders in today’s fashion industry. “In the past, we used to source all the fabrics we need in the beginning of the season, but now, we have divided the seasons so that we are more responsive to the market trends. Therefore, we often look for suppliers that accept small quantity orders. We have been sourcing more from the Japanese companies,” explained Ms Anne Chou, Creative Director of Design Esta Studio, Macau.

More crowds are expected at the next edition of Intertextile Pavilion Shenzhen, a prime platform for Japanese exhibitors looking to meet high-end Chinese fashion brands, as well as high quality overseas trade buyers. Highlighted exhibitors in the Japan Pavilion include Kokka, Sojitz, Stylem, Sun Fashion, Sunwell, Uni Textile and Yonezawa.

Intertextile Pavilion Shenzhen will take place from 4 – 6 July 2019. The fair is organised by Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd; the Sub-Council of Textile Industry, CCPIT; the China Textile Information Centre; and the Shenzhen Garment Industry Association. The 25th Autumn Edition of Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics will be held from 25 – 27 September 2019, at the National Exhibition and Convention Center (Shanghai). Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics is co-organised by Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd; the Sub-Council of Textile Industry, CCPIT; and the China Textile Information Centre.

For more details on the fairs, please visit: www.intertextileapparel.com. To find out more about all Messe Frankfurt textile fairs worldwide, please visit: www.texpertise-network.com.