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TEXTILE & APPAREL TECHNOLOGY SPECIAL JANUARY 12 · 2015 CIOREVIEW.COM

## 20 Most Promising Textile & Apparel Technology Solution Providers

With advancements in technology, the textile & apparel industry is witnessing a gradual shift in its work model. Now, a garment maker cannot underestimate the power of IT. Personalization of apparels, cost of designing and shipping of the customized products, including high return rates due to fitting issues are some of the challenges that can be overcome by proper utilization of technology.

There are technology firms that help the industry in many ways—providing products which will enhance the productivity of the apparel industry, furnishing a cheaper yet effective alternative to ERP, and promising an increase in ROI. Moreover, the technological advances are expertly leveraged to perform forecasting based on historical records and statistics. This enables textile & apparel industry to plan and perform targeted campaigning to attract more customers. Further, automating back office operations enable updating real time

inventory details that help companies keep a track of the stock in hand. The following pages contain “20 Most Promising Textile & Apparel Technology Solutions Providers,” featuring the best solution and consulting providers offering technology and services to the textile industry. A distinguished panel of CEOs, CIOs, CMOs, VCs, analysts, and the CIO Review editorial board has selected top players from over three hundred companies.

In our selection, we looked at vendor’s capabilities to fulfill the needs of textile & apparel industry. The listing provide a look into how these solutions work in the real world, so that you can gain a comprehensive understanding of what technologies are available, which are right for you, and how they shape up against the competition.

We present to you CIOReview’s Most Promising Textile & Apparel Technology Solutions Providers of 2014.



**Company:**  
Softrol

**Description:**  
Provides process controls and management information solutions for automation of the textile rental and manufacturing industries

**Key Person:**  
Chad Keith,  
CEO

**Website:**  
[www.softrol.com](http://www.softrol.com)

## Softrol Elevating Plant Performance from Soil Sort to Shipping

With a singular mission of providing software and process controls for advanced automation of the textile rental and manufacturing industries, Softrol has evolved notably since opening its doors in 1987. “Often, the customers have a slower technological acceptance for some of our solutions,” comments Chad Keith, CEO, Softrol. To empower customers with the new technologies, the company extensively automates its solutions and makes it easier to deploy, ensuring that customers see tangible performance benefits. Right from the receiving dock at textile rental or manufacturing facilities, to the shipping dock, Softrol deploys innovative solutions that automate processes and improve operational efficiency.

Softrol’s Total Plant Management is the focal point of Softrol’s innovative systems. It is a line of advanced solutions that include chemical, rail, management, sortation, and control systems. Inherently, the company’s products are focused on increasing productivity across all facets of laundry operation, and providing bottom line results. An integral component of Total Plant Management is Softrol’s PulseNet Productivity System (PPS) which measures, monitors, and manages people to reduce labor cost. Utilizing the company’s touchscreen SmartStations, PPS provides real-time feedback and reports, making it easy for management staff to ascertain the labor or perform equipment adjustments to ensure efficient production. This allows management to identify problems sooner and determine the production rate versus capacity in real-time. Furthermore, “SmartStations offer user-friendly, customizable

touchpad screen controls,” states Keith. Bottom line, Softrol is all about ensuring that every aspect of a plant is improved—increasing productivity and lowering the operating costs.

Softrol is uniquely positioned in the market today. They are completely vertical in both their electronic hardware and software. “We develop hardware and create software at the chip level and incorporate those components together into a control system,” explains Keith. To make it user-friendly for the end-users who might be intimidated by the idea of using a microprocessor-level software, Softrol deploys a Windows-based software so that the combination of the control systems is more intelligible to users. This level of vertical nature is not very common, and is a key competitive

“Softrol is all about ensuring that every aspect of a plant is improved—increasing productivity and lowering the operating costs”

strength of Softrol. “We do not have to go outside for any new feature we want in order to replicate the automation process; we create it in-house,” emphasizes Keith.

Over the course of their 25 years in business, Softrol has brought significant improvements to client bottom lines in the textile industry. A particular success story that needs to be highlighted involves the uniform rental segment of the textile industry and the company’s SoftSort—an automation system for the garment sortation. Even today, the garment sorting



processes require time consuming manual processes, which by today’s standards, is unacceptable.

For one particular client, Aramark Uniform Services, Softrol deployed a Softsort system that automatically sorts a staggering 40,000 garments per day, at a rate of 3,800 garments per hour and reduces the workforce by 70 percent. Softsort effectively reduced the client’s sorting labor from ten employees to two, while utilizing standard hangers without the need for mother hooks and taking advantage of pre and post-sort buffering conveyors for labor-free garment transportation. On numerous occasions, Softrol has leveraged technologies like RFID and barcodes to automate and streamline sorting—increasing accuracy and considerably reducing the workforce.

Looking to the future, Keith reveals that a long-term plan is in place for Softrol to enter other industries such as food manufacturing. In addition, the company will also be expanding internationally in 2015 by establishing itself not only in Europe, but also in South America. CR