

## **REPORT OF THE FOCUS GROUP DEVELOPED BY "ATOK"**

### **EURMODA project**

***September 25, 2012***

#### **THE ACTION PLANNING OF THE FOCUS GROUP:**

##### **Outcomes**

The specific outcomes that should be reached with our focus group were the specific opinions, suggestions of the participants, in order to elaborate final versions of Competence Maps.

The Focus Group was divided into three relatively independent parts. The first was aimed on a common attitudes to a fashion design in companies, the second was devoted to a fashion design and third part to a controlling in fashion industry.

##### **Time devoted:**

- The focus group had a duration estimated of three hours and a half, which was the time expected for the development of the focus group.
- **Previous, during and post- Organization:**
  - o Contacting of potential participants of the Focus Group (it was contacted 48 companies, it took approximately 24 hours)
  - o Translation of the documents for the Focus Group, (24 hours)
  - o Preparation of the support documentation for the participants of the Focus Group.
  - o Logistics of the meeting room: The Focus Group took place in a meeting room of ATOK, preparation of audiovisuals, refreshments for participants;

##### **The recruitment plan of the participants:**

ATOK wanted to have the participation of specific entities related with the Textile Sector. The ways of contact used were:

- Telephone callings.
- Sending of information about the Project and the Focus Group by email.
- Information on personal meetings on the occasion of the Fashion Fair "STYL" which took place in Brno (Czech Republic) in August 19 – 21, 2012.

### Issues of the Focus Group:

**The issues explained and discussed in the Focus Group were the following:**

1. The role of fashion design and controlling in clothing companies;
2. The process of a fashion design creation and competencies of designers in clothing companies (in relations with the competence map);
3. Elaboration of technical design schemes and sketches of clothing, footwear and leatherwork;
4. Planning the elaboration of the prototype of clothing, footwear and leatherwork products;
5. Elaboration of prototypes samples and/catalogues for clothing, footwear and leatherwork products;
6. The control process and competencies of controllers in clothing companies (in relations with the competence map);

### **Shedule of structured questions for the focus group:**

The base for the questionnaire was the maps of competences, which were translated into the Czech language. The whole focus group was divided into three basic parts. First introducing one was devoted to common problems concerning of using fashion design and controlling in Czech clothing companies. The second part concerned issues of a fashion design in companies. The questions were following:

1. Which way do you ensure the development and further elaboration of fashion proposals in your company?
2. Do you have a separate profession of a fashion designer or somebody who this job description exercise in your company?
3. What concretely is in charge?
4. Which knowledge is needing for this profession in your company?
5. As concerns fashion design and your experience, what do you consider as an essential or key in this area? What especially the fashion designer should provide in your company?
6. When we know the key process, which other activities are related to it?
7. What these activities includes?
8. As concerns subprocesses, what concretely includes elaboration of technical design schemes and sketches of clothing?
9. Can you this subprocess divide into individual steps?
10. What concretely should include these steps and which knowledge should have employee to be able to do its?

11. As concerns subprocesses, what concretely includes planning the elaboration of the prototype of clothing?
12. Can you this subprocess divide into individual steps?
13. What concretely should include these steps and which knowledge should have employee to be able to do it?
14. As concerns subprocesses, what concretely includes elaboration of prototypes samples and catalogues for clothing?
15. Can you this subprocess divide into individual steps?
16. What concretely should include these steps and which knowledge should have employee to be able to do it?

The third part of questionnaire was devoted to a control process in companies. This part included following questions:

1. Which way do you ensure a control of clothing production in your company?
2. Do you have a separate profession of a controller somebody who this job description exercises in your company?
3. What concretely is in charge?
4. Which knowledge needs for this profession in your company?
5. As concerns control of clothing production and your experience, what do you consider as an essential or key in this area? What especially the controller should provide in your company?
6. When we know the key process, which other activities are related to it?
7. What these activities includes and which knowledge needs?

**Actors involved and types:**

Entity	Position /Role in the entity
ALTREVA spol. S r.o.	Designer
TEXSR, s.r.o.	Director
DITA, výrobní družstvo invalidů	2 persons: Director, Manager of Textile Section,
OTAVAN Třeboň, a.s.	Director general
TONAK, a.s.	2 persons: Head of Marketing, Head of Development
Technical Univerzity of Liberec, Faculty of Textile	University lecturer (Department of Clothing Technology)
ATOK	president

**DESCRIPTION OF COLLECTED DATA:**

**1. CONCLUSIONS:**

QUESTION	ANSWERS
<p><b>1. Innovations that could generate the adoption of the process based model?.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- unification size scales</li> <li>- unification color scales</li> <li>- teaching fashion accessories</li> <li>- implementation CRM Systems</li> <li>- teaching computer engineering programs on a basic level (for example AutoCAD)</li> <li>- establishment of an international discussion forum for sharing experience</li> <li>- teaching of basic knowledge on copyright protection</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Priority of the options chosen (in question 1) to raise the quality of training process.</b></p>	<p>Respondents had several suggestions on how to improve training process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- establishment of an international discussion forum for sharing experience;</li> <li>- to prepare overview of color and color scales;</li> <li>- to prepare overview of materials, processing cuts (2D and 3D) positioning, construction cuts, seams, fasteners etc. (to use video);</li> <li>- basic information on pricing;</li> <li>- presentation skills and alignment of product presentation and method of packaging;</li> <li>- methods of maintenance;</li> <li>- logistics (organization of material purchases etc.);</li> <li>- proportions, drawing on the figure, unrolling of the body surface;</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Aspects of importance that have not been sufficiently analyzed in the process/es presented.</b></p>	<p>There were mentioned only marginal aspects, like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- differences in size scales</li> <li>- unification color scales</li> <li>- properties of materials</li> <li>- symbols maintenance and knowledge how</li> </ul>

	<p>to maintain product</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- basic presentation skills (to be able to persuade colleagues on his/her proposal)</li> <li>- basic knowledge on Copyright</li> </ul>
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**GENERAL COMMENTS BY “ATOK” ABOUT THE FOCUS GROUP**

ATOK implement the Focus Group in September 25, 2012 and it had nine participants. The discussion were recorded on a dictaphone and it was divided into three parts, first was about common problems of a fashion industry, the second part was devoted to a fashion design in companies and the third part concerned a control process in companies.

In case of the profession Technical Fashion Designer, the participants agreed that there are two basic problems:

- 1) Communication between external and internal designers (modelers);
- 2) “Professional blindness” of older internal designers, this means a small willingness to accept new novel solutions;

As concerns communication between external and internal designers, this has two levels: i) inadequate communication skills (assertiveness, empathy, ability to work in an international team or to work with external specialists and to focus on a common goal); ii) technical problems, like size scale, color scale, characteristics of textile materials etc.

As concerns “professional blindness”, participants of the Focus Group commonly suggest to be implemented into an educational program an international discussing forum to by possible sharing of experience.

Requirements on the profession Technical Fashion Designer are mentioned below.

In case of a Technical Quality Controller, the Focus Group identified following:

- 1) Criteria for a technical control are determined by a technology department and a technical quality controller communicates with this section. In small companies is not special profession of a technical quality controller. Employees perform this role on a case by case basis;
- 2) Skill requirement on this profession are more common because controller communicate with a technologist, who instructs him exactly;

## **COMMENT ABOUT THE SUBPROCES 1.2, 1.3, 1.4**

### **a) Elaboration of technical design schemes and sketches of clothing, footwear and leatherwork**

Elaboration of technical design schemes is similar in all participating companies. A designer and a modeler and their teams hold following competencies in the firms. They communicate with production section, which assesses the fashion designs in terms of production. Knowledge requirements of designers and modelers are following: electronic processing of sketches, to know new fashion trends and techniques in the world, to be able to analyze textile materials (usability, appearance, ductility of the material, shape steadiness, drape etc.), to know computer engineering programs on a basic level (for example AutoCAD), size ranges (Czech, foreign) – to be able to assign size, to know maintenance symbols (knowledge how the product will maintain), assign cuts of sutures, quotation sizes, quality standards, to be able to assign a color range, to know terminology, to know all over a production of basic cut of clothing, to be able to cooperate with external or with foreign experts, basic presentation knowledge (to be able to convince someone on the quality of its proposal).

### **b) Planning the elaboration of the prototype of clothing, footwear and leatherwork products**

Czech companies have two basic approaches: i) stimuli are initiated by marketing or production departments and then these stimuli are discussed in design team, if there are relevant. This approach is a bit haphazard and unsystematic and it is more typical for smaller manufacturing company; ii) A design team of the company monitors world fashion trends, receives domestic and foreign customer requirements and receives requirements from distributors. These three factors influence planning the elaboration of the prototype of clothing. The fashion ideas are discussed with production department, what needs production and if the production department is able to produce suggested fashion designs. There are some problems, in the Czech Republic. The most often, fashion accessories were mentioned. There is not any school focusing on fashion accessories. Companies have a great problem with coping of their models. From this point of view a life of models is one year.

### **c) Elaboration of prototypes samples and/catalogues for clothing, footwear and leatherwork products:**

#### **Elaboration of prototypes samples:**

The attitudes to an elaboration of prototypes samples are threefold:

1. Take-over of the sample from the mother company (*a company takes all or the most documentation*);
2. Preparation of a prototype sample with external designer co-operation (Here are two approaches: i) an external designer (a design studio) elaborates a basic idea (sketch)

and an internal designer elaborates (under the direction of the external designer) proposal in details and elaborate a prototype sample; ii) all process is prepared with cooperation of both an external and an internal designer and modeler and their team;

3. Preparation of a prototype sample by themselves. A company elaborates both, its own proposals and designs according to customers (such as uniforms);

#### **Elaboration of catalogues:**

Participating companies prepare catalogues the most often externally. They present their clothing on the Internet the most often. One company prepares catalogue sheets with references and types of clothes it do. There is not deeper experience with preparing larger catalogues; it is considered an external service.

#### **SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE DRAFT COMPETENCE MAPS**

*Participants commonly agree with the draft of competence maps and there are just a few accessories:*

- *to include basic knowledge on Copyright;*
- *to include methods of product packaging;*
- *include information on fashion accessories;*

#### **ANNEXES:**

- LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
- COPIE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES
- PICTURES OF THE FOCUS GROUP

**ATOK**

**Jiri Cesal (Executive Director)**

**DATE: October 18, 2012**