



FIBER MANAGEMENT



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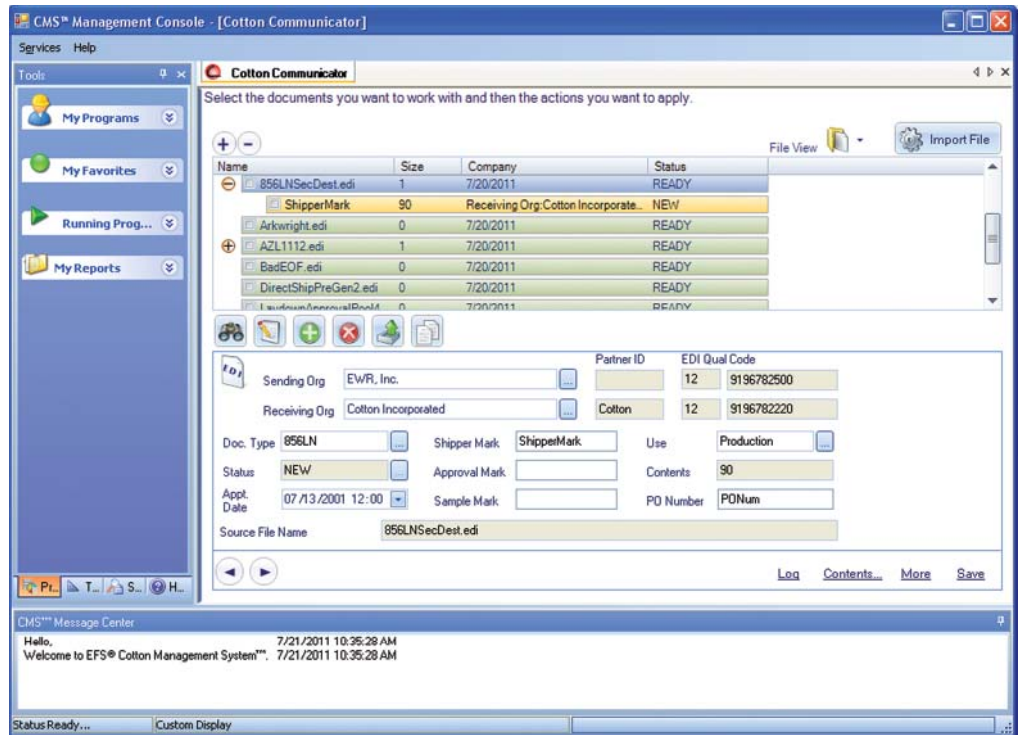
No. 5

Cotton Communicator™ software is ready to go

The latest innovation in Cotton Incorporated software is designed to facilitate moving USDA HVI® data electronically between merchants and mills. *Cotton Communicator* software, which will replace QRNet32™ software, supports the industry standard electronic data interchange (EDI) document formats.

Cotton Communicator software enables a user to create and manage both 856 (Notice of Loading) and 863 (Approval List) documents in accordance with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). While *Cotton Communicator* software is designed to run as a standalone package, it can be integrated with *Cotton Management System*™ (CMS) software.

Kirk Andrews, Associate Director of Program Development at Cotton Incorporated, describes *Cotton Communicator* software as “easier to use, lighter weight, and more flexible” than QRNet32 software. The new program, with its streamlined emphasis on EDI documents, can run on both desktop or laptop computers in a network environment and can be scaled in relation to the size of the business.



Cotton Communicator software running in the Cotton Management System™ software

The long-term vision in the development of *Cotton Communicator* software includes support for EWR documents, as well as ASCII and other flat file documents used by the cotton industry.

Merchants needed for beta test

The beta version of the program is now available for release.

Cotton merchants are needed to assist with testing and evaluating the beta version. If you are a cotton merchant interested in evaluating *Cotton Communicator* software by using a “live” version of the program during beta testing, contact EFS® System Customer Service by telephone at 919-678-2508, or by e-mail: efssystem@cottoninc.com. §

Women's wear is focus of textile research

Category	% Containing Cotton	% Containing No Cotton
Dress Pants	30%	70%
Dresses	38%	62%
Skirts	45%	55%
Knit Blouses	48%	52%

Four categories of women's clothing in which there are opportunities to increase the presence of cotton are dress pants, dresses, skirts, and knit blouses.

A new initiative is under way at Cotton Incorporated to increase the standing of cotton in the women's wear market. Corporate Strategy and Program Metrics is currently working with Finishing Research to focus on increasing the amount of cotton in women's apparel by improving the wear while reducing the needed care of cotton fabrics.

The 2010 Cotton Incorporated *Retail Monitor*[™] survey*, which is managed by Corporate Strategy and Program Metrics, revealed that 68 percent of women's clothing contains cotton. In contrast, 85 percent of men's clothing is made from cotton.

While 75 percent of men's clothing is 100-percent cotton, only 40 percent of women's clothing is all cotton. However, 60 percent of women's clothing contains a cotton blend. The survey helped Cotton Incorporated to recognize a seasonal variability in the amount of cotton in women's clothing, ranging from a high content of nearly 75 percent in summer wear to a low content of 60 percent in winter wear.

The results of the *Retail Monitor* survey enabled Cotton Incorporated to identify four categories of women's clothing in which there are opportunities to increase the presence of cotton: dress pants, dresses, skirts, and knit blouses. Currently, the cotton content in

those categories ranges from 30 to nearly 50 percent. Kim Kitchings, Senior Director of Corporate Strategy and Program Metrics at Cotton Incorporated, noted that 14 million bales of fiber were consumed in the manufacture of women's wear in 2010. While cotton is the dominant fiber, other fibers compete in the key categories identified. In all four categories, high percentages of non-cotton apparel are currently made from synthetic blends—mostly Polyester, Spandex, and Rayon.

To increase the market share for cotton in women's wear, Cotton Incorporated is developing performance technology that will result in knit garments having drape (the way a fabric hangs) and hand (the way a fabric feels when touched) comparable to silk while being truly wrinkle-free. Other factors being considered in the research phase of the initiative are fabric luster and opacity. Bill Rearick, Director of Finishing Research at Cotton Incorporated, noted that the focus on knits is more practical. "More cotton is going into knits than wovens in women's wear, and knit samples can be made here at Cotton Incorporated," he said.

Finishing Research is currently concentrating its efforts in performance technology for knits on dresses and skirts—two segments where cotton has the lowest share of the market. While a long-standing initiative of Cotton Incorporated has been the development of wrinkle resistance technologies, Rearick said that the current focus integrates the emphases of both fashion and science. §

* The Cotton Incorporated *Retail Monitor*[™] survey is an ongoing retail audit of over 160,000 clothing products at 26 different U.S. mass, chain, department, and specialty retailers conducted four times per year. Information collected in the retail audits includes product category, brand, fiber, fabrication, price, country of origin, and product features.

New testing equipment in use in fiber research

New yarn and fabric testing equipment is now up and running in the Product Evaluation Laboratory (PEL) at Cotton Incorporated.

A new Martindale tester, which runs automated sequences for both fabric resistance to abrasion and pilling, replaces a similar machine. However, the new machine is larger than the previous unit used in the PEL, allowing up to nine specimens to be tested simultaneously. In both the abrasion and pilling tests, three specimens are tested for each fabric by ASTM International standards.

In the abrasion resistance test, a fabric sample is mounted under a weighted control arm and abraded in preset linear and elliptical motions against a wool cloth secured to the flat surface of the round abrader head. The test is complete when the tester observes two or more thread breaks on a woven sample or a hole in a knitted sample.

The pilling resistance test is similar to the abrasion test, with the exception that the abradant fabric is the same as the fabric sample being tested. The pilling test consists of 100 cycles of preset linear and elliptical motions. The amount of pilling on the test sample is determined by comparison with standardized photographs of pilled fabric under controlled lighting.

Most of the testing conducted by the PEL on the Martindale tester is for Finishing Research at Cotton Incorporated and is for the purpose of comparing the results of abrasion and pilling on



Tara Smith, Laboratory Assistant in the PEL at Cotton Incorporated, conducts abrasion resistance tests on multiple specimens simultaneously on the new Martindale tester.

samples with varying percentages of applied finishes.

A new evenness tester, which is able to provide a count of thick and thin variances and neps in a yarn sample, is also in use in the PEL. The new tester is automated to test 1,000 meters of yarn per package and can test up to 24 packages in one run. The majority of testing conducted by the PEL on the evenness tester is for Fiber Processing at Cotton Incorporated.

A new feature on the new tester is a fabric simulator that displays representations of how the tested yarn might appear in various weaves. The new machine also provides measurements for diameter, shape, and trash.

The information produced by the evenness tester is valuable for making yarn selection for the end product. While evenness is desirable in woven fabrics for products such as T-shirts, knit shirts, and khaki pants, an uneven yarn is acceptable, and even desirable, in woven fabrics for products such as drapes or the upholstery of sofas and chairs.

In-house testing at Cotton Incorporated is expected to keep the new testers humming. “Women’s wear is a huge initiative right now for the textile researchers,” said Vikki Martin, Director, Quality Research and Product Evaluation. “This project makes up a significant amount of our testing for now and the foreseeable future.” §

Newest EFS[®] licensee is in Vietnam

The presence of EFS System software has been extended into Vietnam with the recent agreement signed between Cotton Incorporated and Shanghai-based Texhong. Installation will be completed in November 2011.

Mike Watson, Vice President, Fiber Competition at Cotton Incorporated, expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to expand the relationship with Texhong, whose Chinese operations are current EFS System licensees. Watson noted that Vietnam is perhaps the most important emerging market in Asia. "This agreement provides Texhong with the premier cotton inventory and utilization system in the world and will improve their productivity and profitability in a difficult market," he said.

