

PROVENCE PROMOTION

Interview with Annie Carrai



Avant-garde of the textile industry

Avant-garde? Yes, the services and logistics platform dedicated to the textile and clothing industry is just that! It originated from a highly skilled expertise of the textile activity and a forward looking prospective analysis of tomorrow's economy, and is setting up a complete range of services perfectly integrated into the value chain of the business. It is an opportunity to make textile and clothing manufacturers more competitive in this sector suffering from the effects of globalisation. The overall story with Annie Carrai, general delegate, SPL (Local Productive System) mission leader.



Annie Carrai, General Delegate SPL
(Local Productive System)
Mission Leader.

> Where did this idea of an industrial services platform specifically dedicated to the textile and clothing industry come from?

Annie Carrai : Faced with internationalisation of the economy, the increasing complexity of the business resulting from the industrial process being broken down into many separate operations, the speed at which markets change, the textile and clothing industry has found necessary to change so as to adapt to an increasingly competitive environment. The "Marseille Fashion Businesses" SPL label has successfully harnessed the experience of a network of about 40 entrepreneurs so as to revitalise the economy of the sector, and has been able to maintain their motivation in the project. Starting in September 2003, the SPL team began to get in contact with the companies concerned to better determine their needs. The services and logistics platform gradually emerged as an appropriate response, offering a genuine added value to enterprises in terms of reactivity and competitiveness.

For further information:

The Fashion Businesses site
<http://www.professionmode.com>

What is an SPL?
http://www.professionmode.com/a_spl1.php

> What exactly are the advantages of this platform?

Annie Carrai : Its first advantage is that enterprises can use it to concentrate on their core activity, and specifically on creativity and the product, and specifically their efforts on pre-production (creation, design of models, etc.) and post-production (distribution in France and in other countries). Manufacturers will only keep their high added value functions. In this configuration, the objective of the platform is to offer all services specific to the textile and clothing industry, increasing productivity gains through the organization of an industrial cluster. The second advantage is Marseille's strong image. The Phocian City of Marseille is a fashionable and creative town, and a trading port through which large volumes of goods from the Mediterranean and Asia pass. Obviously the third advantage of this project is support by the public authorities, which is a real advantage for a new industrial installation.

> How will the platform be organized?

Annie Carrai : the platform that will start up in 2007 will initially include three services awarded to three different service providers:
- the design office controlled by the Viro workshop: the objective is to offer companies whatever technological means they need to make an irrefragable design of prototypes for better follow up in other countries. This guarantees optimum production of their products for manufacturers;
- "fashioning" and logistics done by the Berry Services company. This company will set up in Marseille and provide companies with all necessary pre-distribution services such as ironing, labelling, placement of anti-theft devices, addition of hangers, etc. At the moment, this activity only exists in a fragmented and dispersed manner;
These three services represent about fifty potential jobs.

> What points are still outstanding before operation can start?

Annie Carrai : For logistics, the audit with all manufacturers in the PACA region still needs to be finalised. We will use the results of this study to estimate needs of manufacturers and thus determine the optimum area required for the logistics service installation in terms of cost savings and efficiency. With these estimates, it will be possible to decide upon the location of this platform. At the same time, Provence Promotion is responsible for identifying the different available sites. Obviously, this new activity will be fully justified if the project goes ahead in the Phocian City. This industrial development is intended firstly to create jobs in Marseille, and secondly to revitalize an activity in the urban area. Finally, in terms of the organization, a study has been initiated to determine the legal form in which this group of entrepreneurs could be represented.

> What are the longer term ambitions?

Annie Carrai : to develop all possible services related to the "Textile Clothing" activity, based on all specific features including graphics, digital printout, embroidery workshop, reference workshop for specific know how, etc. The role of SPL is to coordinate and organize this set of industrial services while respecting the ambitions and needs of everyone. This is the context in which we need to work closely with all service providers in this field, to inform them about this early pioneering operation.... and to promote this emerging site specially to help them develop their know how.