



WHEN LEADING SUPPLIER CARMEL CLOTHING OPTS FOR 3D TECHNOLOGY

carmel

AT A GLANCE

COMPANY: CARMEL CLOTHING LTD
LOCATION: LONDON, UK
WWW.CARMELCLOTHINGUK.COM

Carmel Clothing is a leading London-based women's and children's wear design and sourcing operation. It oversees international offices in Vietnam, China and Romania with divisions across the entire product lifecycle. Carmel's customers include Dorothy Perkins, Primark, Next, New Look, Topshop, and Sainsbury, among others.

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Carmel Clothing, the London-based women's and children's wear design and sourcing operation, can pride itself from reporting an average annual increase of 20-30% over the last 10 years. Given the difficult economic and trading conditions that have challenged the fashion retail sector, this is certainly pretty impressive.

Including high profile customers in its portfolio such as Dorothy Perkins, Primark, Next, New Look, Topshop, and Sainsbury to name a few, the UK based manufacturer to key retailers claims to be "leading the way in commercial fashion" adding that its "success has been achieved through innovation and efficiency".

Carmel Clothing employs over 250 staff in worldwide offices in London, Vietnam, China and Romania with divisions across the entire product lifecycle: from design and development, to production, merchandising and sales. The Company's approach is about offering a complete sourcing and supply solution with high-level customer service and enhanced specialization in five product areas including outerwear, smartwear, softs, jersey and kids.

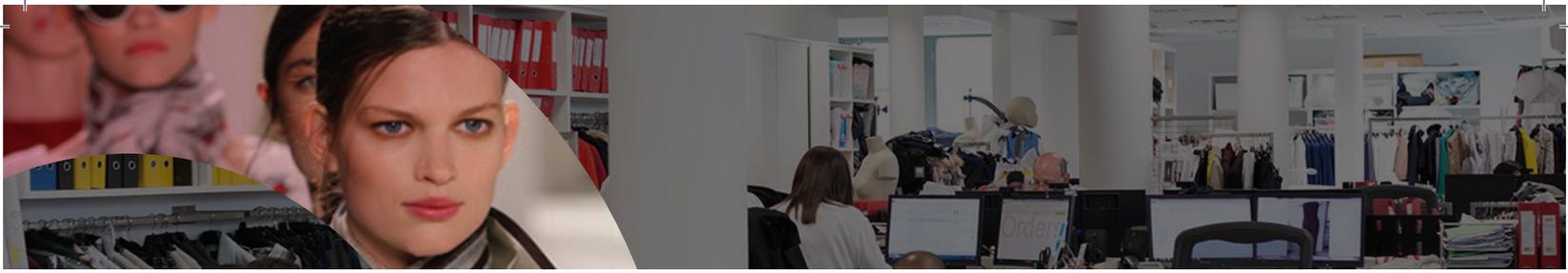
For Carmel, delivering year on year growth is first and foremost about having an acute understanding of the retail sector and the changes it is undergoing, while facing the many challenges and seizing the opportunities this presents, with technology identified as a central key role "to be ahead of the game". "We are always looking ahead at what is going on in the market and the solutions to help improve the efficiency", says Darren Jacobs, Operations Director at Carmel Clothing Ltd.

The London-based manufacturer does not minimize its ambitions, declaring "aiming at supplying any retailer in the market, including the ones with high volume, low margin or looking for high fashion products". And for Carmel Clothing, 2D & 3D technology does have an integral part in this vision, a reasoning which led the Company enquire about 2D & 3D CAD/CAM solutions in the market before choosing Optitex in September 2016.

3D TECHNOLOGY FOR DELIVERING KEY FASHION TRENDS WITH SPEED TO MARKET AT LESS COSTS

With collections evolving constantly including more and more seasonless items, Carmel intends to bring the latest fashion trends to the market with speed and efficiency while continuing to ensure the utmost quality of its products.

For a company that produced over 13 million garments in 2016, the notion of "efficiency" clearly takes on its full significance. When Carmel decided to move to using 3D technology in the last quarter of 2016, its first objective was to reduce the number of physical samples produced which proved to be very costly. A challenge that Carmel and its competitors would be facing with full force.



In this context, the choice for incorporating 3D technology into development and production workflows appears as finding the right business recipe integrating production, quality, efficiency and profitability. An interesting point, especially when, according to the Operations Director at Carmel Clothing, many of their competitors wouldn't be using 3D for its full utilization or at all.

Not only reducing the costs, decreasing the samples produced thanks to 3D digital technology inherently results in a shorter time to market with the number of physical samples being typically cut in half. The market "is pushing for quick turnaround" and time to market will thus make the whole difference. Darren foresees that 3D technology will have a significant impact on Carmel Clothing in 2017 and onwards by further improving its speed to market.

3D AT CARMEL CLOTHING

Carmel already had a very large office in Vietnam which was using some CAD/CAM digital solutions before it decided on integrating 3D technology at a company level. Carmel introduced Optitex as they found its 3D solutions offering more options and better suiting their needs and strategy. Also, it took the path of one of its leading customers, which was already using the Optitex software, and said to be very satisfied with its solutions and customer service.

The office was enlarged in Vietnam and so was the London-based head office with a new design facility and more showrooms created in 2016. Darren sees the recent incorporation of the 2D/3D integrated platform serving two different stages:

- a. On the development stage with 3D meant to reduce the number of physical samples in the design initial phase with virtual 3D catwalks.
- b. On the technical (production) stage with 3D meant to reduce "buyers' changes" and numerous alterations resulting in lots of back and forth and time lost.



On that second point, 3D comes as a further added value as, per Carmel's Operation Director, "some buyers may be less experienced or just need something more real to make decisions". Giving them only a flat image or 2D CAD would make it hard for them to grasp how the garment will look like in reality, a gap that the chosen 3D solutions can perfectly fill with digital garments being shown in photorealistic true-to-life quality.

On a more general level, Darren believes that, if a company is to remain a key player in the market, fashion cannot be dissociated anymore from technology. In a world where "everybody is moving to be cheaper and the world becoming smaller, technology will have to play a bigger role", he mentions. "Companies will have to become more efficient, and technology will have to play that key role in helping them achieve that".

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