

Press Release:

Ismaning, February 16, 2023

PERFORMANCE DAYS © functional fabrics fair
produced by Design & Development GmbH Textile Consult
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In step 3 of the roadmap, PERFORMANCE DAYS continues to pursue its focus topic “On the Journey to CO₂ Neutrality“

Comparable data: Concrete values on CO₂ emissions allow for more transparency in terms of fabrics and fibers

The PERFORMANCE DAYS team looks forward to welcoming exhibitors and visitors once again to the Messe München exhibition center in Hall A1 on March 15-16, 2023. As an integral part of the spring edition of the fair, the industry has the opportunity to exchange information at an early stage in terms of innovations, highlights and trends for the upcoming spring/summer 2025 season. Now for the third time, the event organizers continue to place major importance on the focus topic “On the Journey to CO₂ Neutrality”. With the next milestone towards the final phase, the fair is on the lookout for fabrics and fibers that demonstrate solutions for producing and reprocessing materials in a climate-neutral manner in a challenging future. In order to ensure for greater transparency in the “fabric jungle”, manufacturers must offer aid in indicating concrete values on CO₂ savings. This data is intended to support industry representatives in making ecologically sound decisions when it comes to material selection.

From its topic’s infancy at the spring 2022 trade show, the PERFORMANCE DAYS team has been accompanying exhibitors on their way to carbon neutrality throughout three fair shows in line with the focus topic “On the Journey to CO₂ Neutrality”. Now, at the upcoming spring 2023 event, the fair is entering its final phase of the scheduled 3-step plan. And what exactly does that mean? Regarding the “Focus Topic” category, as was the case in winter, only fabric innovations that can provide concrete data on CO₂ reduction will be considered among the submitted fiber innovations. With initial values relating to the CO₂ footprint, the aim is to support the industry in making a better assessment in the future in terms of the CO₂ footprint when selecting the fibers and materials used. The next step is to develop an index that allows the CO₂ footprint to be comparable, ideally taking into account the category and fabric strength. Moreover, the question needs to be addressed of how values of natural fibers such as wool or Tencel™ can be compared with those of recycled polyester, bio-based nylon or recycled wool. Additionally, the various qualities and various fabric categories, along with various strengths, must be indicated respectively and accordingly in order to ensure transparency in the evaluation. The road towards CO₂ neutrality is still a long one, which is why the PERFORMANCE DAYS team wishes to generate new approaches and proposed solutions with phase 3. The team is nevertheless aware that it is difficult to obtain corresponding data from manufacturers and to present it graphically in such a way that it can be compared with one another. “The last three fairs, in which we highlighted the focus topic “The Journey to CO₂ Neutrality“ as a roadmap, clearly show that now in spring, we are still on a journey. We are aware of how extensive and complicated it is to compare and juxtapose values and concrete data for documenting the CO₂ neutrality of fibers and fabrics on an equal footing. However, we have in fact succeeded in taking a first step. Now, in close cooperation with manufacturers, the aim is to support a generally valid index that takes into account the

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various properties of a material. The goal of this index is to make materials comparable among one another. This is the only way that allows visitors to make the best decision in terms of fabric selection,“ explains Marco Weichert, CEO of PERFORMANCE DAYS.

Low CO2 emissions: Focus Topic defines 3 focus categories for more transparency

Climate change is one of the most significant challenges of the 21st century. It is becoming increasingly important to minimize and offset CO2 emissions - and notably in many areas. However, the difficulty still lies in the fact that manufacturers do not document CO2 values appropriately in order to provide concrete reference points for the industry, along the lines of the Higg Index.

When it comes to fibers and materials, what counts first and foremost is biodegradability, as well as recycling, and ultimately also the CO2 neutral production thereof. That is why the PERFORMANCE DAYS team has been accompanying fabric manufacturers intensively on their way to CO2 neutrality over the previous year. Nevertheless, the event organizers still have some hurdles to overcome in the implementation, and especially in the evaluation of the data. Even after a year of intensive collaboration with manufacturers, and in discussions with experts, our team still faces significant challenges in terms of documentation on how CO2-neutral a material was ultimately produced. How transparent is an evaluation of materials of different strengths and categories? In any case, manufacturers must also state the weight of the material, including its composition, in addition to its CO2 value. The Higg Index serves as an instrument for measuring the sustainability of companies, brands and products in the textile industry. This entails documenting and evaluating environmental aspects and social issues along the entire value chain. On this basis, a company's carbon footprint can be ascertained. The holistic approach of the Higg-Index is intended to encourage companies to improve their environmental performance and the working conditions of their factory workers. The Higg Index is currently the primary and only tool available to the textile industry to establish common criteria for life cycle assessments in. A life cycle assessment (LCA) evaluates the potential environmental impacts throughout the complete life cycle of a product (productions, distribution, use and end-of-Life phases) or of a service. The evaluation of the impact of the life cycle (LCIA) comprises all relevant input from the environment (e.g. ores and crude oil, water, land usage), as well as emissions released in the air, waterways and soil (e.g. carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxides). But similar obstacles are faced here, with concrete LCA data often lacking when it comes to yarns, fabrics and fibers. The desire to find a meaningful solution for documenting the CO2 value will be further pursued at PERFORMANCE DAYS again in phase 3 of the focus topic.

In general, this year's focus topic distinguishes between three separate categories in order to obtain a differentiated overview of CO2 emissions and thereby increase transparency and comparability:

Category 1: Synthetic fibers

These include variants from recycled polyester, recycled polyamide and polypropylene, which save up to 30-40 percent in CO2 emissions.

Category 2: Fibers made from cellulose

These include Tencel™, hemp, organic cotton, Naia-spun fibers or their recycled versions.

Category 3: Fibers derived from animals

These include, among others, wool and recycled wool.

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For all the above-mentioned categories, values are collected and compared accordingly, making them then comparable with one another.

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