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**UCMTF: Energy savings continue to be focus**

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by Kelvin Yau

To promote the leading edge of French textile technology to Asian manufacturers, the French Textile Machinery Manufacturers' Association (UCMTF) seeks to make its members known through participating in major trade shows and organizing seminars. Evelyne Cholet, UCMTF's Secretary General, spoke to *ATA Journal* and *AdsaleATA.com* on the association's latest developments and shared her views on the outlook of the industry.



Evelyne Cholet, Secretary General of UCMTF

**ATA: ATA Journal and AdsaleATA.com**  
**Mrs Cholet: Evelyne Cholet, Secretary General of UCMTF**

**ATA: What are UCMTF's key missions? Could you tell us your association's latest developments?**

**Mrs Cholet:** Our main goals are to help our members promote their expertise by organizing French pavilions at the major machinery shows and technical seminars in the countries we target, and represent our industry in national, European and international authorities.

In 2010, we actively promoted our members' presence at many international machinery shows, particularly ITMA ASIA + CITME in Shanghai last June. We also organized technical seminars in India (Bombay and Ludhiana), Syria (Aleppo) and Turkey (Gaziantep).

We also organized an industry awareness program to help our members promote their energy-saving developments as it is the responsibility of the textile industry to fight for sustainable development and a major cost-cutting opportunity for our customers, the textile producers.

**ATA: Could you share with us some of UCMTF's recent major projects?**

**Mrs Cholet:** In 2011, we are going to devote most of our time to promoting our members' presence at ITMA in Barcelona this September. We will work closely with the trade press, particularly *ATA Journal*, giving you information on our members' technological breakthroughs and latest developments.

We will continue to explain the energy savings the new machines can achieve through different solutions: fine tuning the machine to fit exactly the energy profile of the production process, finding new low-energy processes for individual machines and optimizing the energy consumption of a whole production line. But these approaches are not exclusive one from the other - they can be combined. In many examples, the energy saving is in the 30-40% range, same or even more for the water consumption in dyeing and finishing.

Another priority is to fight against counterfeiting. We are optimistic on this matter as we have seen improvements. For example, we have seen senior Chinese officials pledge to better crack down on violations of intellectual property rights (copyrights, trademarks, patents and so on) as part of the commercial agreements. We can also rely on the French organization UNIFAB (The French Association for the Fight Against Counterfeiting) which helps our members through its international network and its offices in Tokyo and Beijing.

**ATA: In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges facing French machinery industry? How is UCMTF helping French machinery makers cope with them?**

**Mrs Cholet:** As the markets were moving toward Asia, and as the French machinery manufacturers were mostly family-owned companies, they could not compete for the big mass markets. They had to adopt niche market strategies and implement them to be the leader or one of the world leaders on these markets. I can now say they have done it. They are SMEs, but world leaders or among the world leaders on niche markets and specific applications. These markets are complex and limited in size. They do not attract the new and large machinery manufacturers from such countries as China or India.

Through the French pavilions and the technical seminars, we encourage a very close relationship between our members and their customers. This is particularly important for the technical textile applications which require real partnerships to design specific technologies to produce new marketable end products.

In China, for example, in September 2008, the government announced a series of measures to encourage investment and consumption. One of the projects concerns doubling the investment in rail networks. It will need millions of square meters of geotextiles which increasingly evolve in the direction of nonwovens solutions. The French machinery manufacturers are very well positioned for such investments.

**ATA: Looking ahead, what's your industry outlook for 2011?**

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**Mrs Cholet:** Clearly, we have seen warmer prospects since the end of 2009. Orders for new machines come in and many new projects are under discussion. By region, Asian countries like China and India have already recovered, while the US seems to emerge from the slum and Europe also even if it is a bit slower. By application sectors, technical textiles, particularly the ones associated with infrastructure projects, the protection of the environment or energy savings, are doing better than textiles for apparel and the home market.

As the French textile manufacturers operate closer to full capacity, they have become progressively more confident about their future and as financing improves, investments start to pick up again. Another very important incentive to invest is the development of new products which will need new production technologies.

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