Press release

When the auditor's visit is actually welcome…

How USTERIZED® mills can look forward to business advantages

Business needs auditors, to monitor and check finances and administration – but it has to be said that a visit from them is not always greeted with eager anticipation! In fact, there is often a degree of nervousness at the likelihood of difficult questions and high expectations. However, it's a different story when USTER sends its experts to carry out periodic audits at USTERIZED® certified mills. Here, the mill management and staff can expect an extremely positive experience, with nothing but good advice for future business progress. All conducted and delivered in a spirit of friendly and helpful cooperation that everyone welcomes.

An insight into the working life of an USTERIZED® auditor is instructive. Muraliganesh K. is one of 11 auditors. Specialists like him from the company's Textile Technology department execute around 60 audits each year to re-certify USTERIZED® members or to carry out initial audits of spinning mills wishing to acquire the USTERIZED® quality label. Murali works for the USTER subsidiary in India, and visits every year an average of 18 customers mainly in India and South East Asia. "I spend about 24 days, or close to one month per year, travelling, and I miss my wife and kids of course – but I really love my job," says Murali.

The USTERIZED® program aims to conduct a one-day audit every year or a two-day audit every second year for its members. Regular audits are essential to ensure that USTERIZED® mills continue to be the reliable partners yarn buyers expect, knowing they can trust in their quality management excellence.

Audit process

The need for the audits is clear, but it would be wrong to misinterpret this as a kind of examination. Murali and his colleagues make critical checks on equipment and how it's maintained, as well as measuring other factors such as how climatic conditions in the laboratory are maintained. They also take a close look at all relevant parameters in each process step and recommend actions in case of outliers. The auditors will also carry out a walkthrough of the spinning mill, to identify improvement areas. Finally, they review sample plans and discuss how yarn quality profiles are used with customers. This process is a must: the audit requires evidence of consistent quality in the material being produced, as well as a continuous improvement program in the spinning mill.

"I love my job as an auditor because the customers are always happy to see me. They look forward to my visit and they are always well-prepared with a list of questions," says Murali. Staff in certified mills are typically keen on further development of their quality management skills and look for solutions towards better results in terms of yarn quality, process efficiency and customer satisfaction. Audits are also a good chance to conduct trials and gain deeper insights into quality management issues from the knowledgeable and experienced auditors. "I also love about my job, that I can help to make it a better world for some spinning mills and of course it makes me happy to hear that the suggested settings resulted in better yarn performance and improvements on fabric appearance at the customer's end," says Murali.

Press release

Customers the winners

Feedback from certified mills shows they appreciate the regular audits, especially for the multiple benefits they gain from the USTER specialists casting an expert eye over every step of their production. And the ultimate advantage is seen on the yarn buyers' side. Customers of USTERIZED® mills know that they follow state-of-the-art quality management disciplines, not only at the time of initial certification but continuously for long as they are certified. "USTERIZED® doesn't mean just keeping a high quality standard in processes and products. It's about continuously raising the bar," says Andreas Birsner, Head of USTERIZED at Uster Technologies. "Therefore USTERIZED® spinners are, and will always be, recommended as preferred suppliers for yarn consumers."

Guaranteed high standards make USTERIZED® spinning mills dependable partners for weavers, knitters, retailers and garment makers. USTERIZED® mills are always customer-oriented, with a better understanding of application requirements and end-uses. They stand for production of yarns with consistent quality, from batch to batch. Their commitment to continuous reduction or elimination of complaints in downstream processes and the value chain is another typical characteristic.

Quality data for improvement

During an audit visit in 2018, Murali sat with the mill quality managers to check various reports. The data showed that the quality had actually deteriorated compared to the 2017 audit. The change wasn't significant and there was no risk of complaints. Yet, for Murali and the USTERIZED® member, the situation was definitely not acceptable, since it was against their understanding of continuous improvement in quality management.

The causes of the quality fall-off were identified by Murali during his tour through the mill. "Some reasons were more obvious, such as inappropriate materials handling, incorrect channelization and other expert findings from the maintenance and settings of the roving and spinning machine," says Murali. When these issues were remedied, the quality came back to the required level and the mill personnel was made aware of the causes during the production processes. The result formed the basis for further improvements in yarn quality.

USTER is committed to working on further development of quality management, to the benefit of its USTERIZED® members (see www.uster.com/usterizedmembers for the complete member list), as well as for yarn buyers, creating all-round trust in this USTER quality seal for spinning mills. "To comply with all responsibilities, USTER must request that the mills obtain reproducible quality data continuously, reliably and accurately, which is also compared to the USTER® S*TATISTICS*," says Birsner.