PROCESSING

AEI reaps the benefits of all-electric new Monforts range



Pictured at the new installation are Monforts Area Sales Manager Manfred Havenith and Christophe Monel of Monel Industrie Services.

The impact of the rising cost of energy on the textile industry has been well documented, with some European countries paying up to seven times more to run their manufacturing operations than in other regions of the world.

In France, however, powering plants with electricity offers particular advantages, since the national energy system is already structured around low-carbon generation. With a large share of electricity produced from nuclear power alongside growing renewable capacity, French industry can also operate with a significantly lower emissions profile than in many other countries.

Seeking to benefit as much as possible from this situation, AEI – Ateliers d'Ennoblissement d'Irigny – has recently installed a new six-chamber MONTEX stenter line from Monforts which is 100% electrically powered.

Bespoke configuration

With a working width of 3.2 metres, the new MONTEX line has a bespoke configuration with extended inlet arms, enabling the processing of fabrics in widths from 70 centimetres and weights ranging from 15 to 1,000gsm. It replaces a machine originally installed in the 1980s and represents a significant step forward in both efficiency and sustainability.

In addition to being fully electrically heated, the new stenter is equipped with an integrated heat recovery system, forming part of a long-term energy efficiency plan that has also included the installation of an electric transformer to replace the previously gas-powered system.

"We continue to monitor our consumption through targeted management and this new MONTEX stenter will significantly reduce our carbon emissions thanks to 100% electric power and the energy recovery system," says general manager Céline de Montigny. "In addition, it allows for safe operation for our operators, with carefully designed ergonomics to minimise handling strain, while ensuring more consistent quality in chemical and mechanical finishes across our wide range of textiles."



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Created in 2012 following the merger of two long-established textile finishing companies in the Lyon region of France, AEI is part of a well-known group of nine specialised workshops that collectively cover the full textile value chain for well-known luxury brands.

This structure supports a strategy of complete vertical integration and rigorous quality control, with all nine operations and more than 800 employees based in France, largely within the historic textile hub of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region.

Longevity

AEI processes both natural fibres – including silk, cashmere, cotton and linen – and synthetics such as polyamide and viscose, with capabilities spanning preparation, dyeing and finishing.

Such capabilities are increasingly being outsourced to Asia, but by retaining these processes within France, the group preserves industrial savoir faire, ensures full traceability and supports the regional textile ecosystem that has historically been centred on Lyon.

"The pursuit of quality is ingrained in our company's culture and has built our reputation, strength and longevity," says Céline de Montigny. "In France, electrification is not just an environmental choice but a practical and competitive one. It builds on existing strengths in the energy system while supporting a more resilient, efficient and future-focused industrial base."

"Quality and the preservation of invaluable expertise, combined with the very latest technologies such as the new resource-efficient MONTEX stenter, guarantee exceptional textile processing at AEI," adds Christophe Monel of Monel Industrie Services, the long-standing Monforts representative in France. "Projects like this underline the continued strength, value and future of French-made textiles and advanced German engineering."

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