

Present Situation of Czech Sewing Industry and PFAFF's Approach Manufacturing High Value-Added Items in Multi-Kind/Small-Lot Method for Domestic Demand

JSN visited Czech Republic last November and interviewed Mr. Pavel Nemeč, owner & general manager of PFAFF SERVIS Sol, S.R.O. (www.pfaff-servis.cz) about the present situation of Czech sewing industry. The following the gist of this interview.

The situation of Czech apparel makers is very bad at present. So, only 4 or 5 big-scale apparel companies have been carrying out sewing in Czech Republic. "OP Profashion" will further focus on Made-to-Measure business. And, Vyvoj manufacturing apparel for the domestic Czech market invested in equipment in 2008, but did not increase the number of employees, thus remaining in status quo. And, Koutny engaging in the manufacture of items for the domestic market has a policy of aiming to enhance a value added of product by improving quality while maintaining the present production quantity. Automobile seats-related factories were also generally in a bad situation throughout 2009. It is observed that recession of the automobile industry will continue further.

The reasons why the export sewing industry in the Czech is not active are 1) the exchange rate of Czech currency has risen even 30% versus EURO and US\$, 2) wages of operators have risen 10% or more every year and others. For these reasons, European apparel buyers have been shifting the sewing base to other low-wage countries such as Morocco (Casablanca) in North Africa. Therefore, apparel sewing in the Czech now centers on high value-added items to be manufactured in multi-kind/small-lot method for the domestic Czech market and is seeking a way of survival in the field of technical textile.

In such a situation as above, sewing machine supply by PFAFF SERVIS to Czech sewing factories in 2009 was reduced by about 50% in comparison with 2008. On the other hand, although there are many small-scale factories in the Czech, manufacture in the field of technical textile has remained active.

In these circumstances, PFAFF SERVIS has been selling PFAFF welding machine besides sewing machine. Presently, the welding machine is a hopeful item for this company as its sales are growing. Selecting the welding machines (8320, 8310, etc.) and high-function sewing machine POWERLINE as strategic models, PFAFF SERVIS is now promoting sales in the markets of automobile industry, upholstery and furniture industry, and technical textile industry (protective wear manufacturing, geo-textile manufacturing, filter manufacturing, etc.).