



alvanon
The Apparel Fit Expert.



Pressreview

Alvanon and MODINT fit & sizing seminar press review

Successful brands reaping rewards of 3D body data and consistent fit strategies

Brands and retailers who apply the latest 3D body shape data and consistent fit strategies to their product development practices are reaping the rewards of repeat business, reduced returns, higher prices and full-price sell-throughs. This was the clear message given by speakers to an international audience of fashion executives at MODINT's fit & sizing seminar organised in collaboration with apparel fit specialist Alvanon. Held at MODINT's headquarters at Zeist in the Netherlands, speakers from Alvanon, MODINT and NIKE, united in urging delegates to use 3D shape research data analysis to define the shape of their target consumer and then apply this data to developing their grade rules, pattern blocks and fit forms. Speakers also insisted that once a fit standard is established it must be communicated, executed and maintained consistently across the supply chain.

The seminar opened with a welcome from **Matthijs Crietee, deputy director fashion at MODINT**, followed by **Nienke Steen, consultant quality manager & corporate responsibility, MODINT** who set the scene by demonstrating the positive impact a long term apparel fit strategy can have on profitability. Her presentation appropriately entitled 'Pro Fit!' highlighted the importance of using the right 3D body shape data to identify and define a brand's target consumer shape. She recommended delegates consult Nedscan – a recent Dutch body shape survey, Alvanon's 300,000 shape database or Assyst Bullmer's online global shape database – iSize. She went on to advise delegates to move away from linear grading because: "different parts of the body do not grow bigger or smaller in set ratios." She also insisted: "It is fundamental to create the right pattern blocks for your brand fit; it is not your supplier that should do this. Your supplier will be pleased to receive clear and consistent information on sizing."

Absolutely agreed **Ed Gribbin, president of apparel fit expert Alvanon**: "...consistency is king" when it comes to implementing a successful fit strategy. In the first of three presentations Ed Gribbin gave delegates an overview of how fashion companies are performing in the difficult economic climate. While most struggle there are those who continue to post impressive growth and profit figures. Common to those who are succeeding: "They all seem to have a strong commitment to fit, have a clear idea of who their target customer is and develop processes that enable them to develop and execute fit consistently." These successful brands he says are using 3D body shape research to refine, update and drive their product development, grade rules, fit forms and pattern blocks. Furthermore they are using global data to refine their fits to enter new global markets. As a result: "They are successfully increasing their market share and competitive advantage in their domestic markets and abroad."

A case in point is global sports and leisure wear brand Nike. **Monique Broeke, sr tech design at NIKE** explained: "We revisited Nike's fit standards in a bid to drive our growth and profitability through a 'fit excellence' strategy." Recognising that body shape has changed significantly over the past 50 years Nike consulted Alvanon and MODINT to analyse body shape data of Nike's target adult and child consumers in the US, Europe and Asia. From the data it was able to generate its base sizes and define the intervals between sizes to create a logical size range from infant to adults. The body shape data was then analysed by Nike's technical experts to create a new grading standard. After exhaustive 'wearer' testing the new core grading standard was communicated in a grading manual. Nike then had new technical fit forms manufactured to their body dimensions and distributed these across its global supply chain so product development was consistent. Crucial to the success of the fit strategy was communicating the new fit, sizing and grading standards throughout Nike and its supply base through a programme of controlled internal and external roll out and training. She concluded: "It has taken a lot of time, expertise and investment. To set the standard is a challenge but maintaining it all is even a bigger challenge. Fit, sizing and blocks need maintenance!"

Jörg Thesing, director northern Europe, Alvanon Deutschland GmbH went on to elaborate on the role of pattern blocks and technical fit forms. He explained that technical fit forms give measurements meaning, are balanced and symmetrical, consistent and can be replicated in multiple locations. Fit problems often arise because companies have one fit model in the design office, another type in the sourcing office and another one in the production plant – add to that different training practices and language differences: "Suppliers have no real chance to meet consistent fit requirements and specifications." He demonstrated how life like and accurate fit forms can be generated from initial 3D

body scans representing a target consumer group, through to shape blending between the sizes, anatomical sculpting of the base shapes through to mass production. He went on to show how the shape data and customized technical fit forms are the platform from which standardized and consistent pattern blocks are generated: “They ensure the right garment fit...wherever it is manufactured because it implements clear standard fit criteria into your supply chain and removes subjectivity.”

Ed Gribbin, president, Alvanon Inc returned to the podium to give a double presentation on grading and process management. He identified: “Grading as the one area where almost any business can improve sales and profitability by creating a better qualitative fit for their smaller and larger customers. Just look at the sale rack in any shop; you never see some of every size! It is all the small sizes, all the large ones or maybe both!” He advised delegates to apply modern grading theories based on real consumer shape data at every size. He also urged them to: “Test new grades and to check that design intent and sewability are maintained when changing grading...to train vendors on how to use the new grades and to implement checks to ensure that vendors are applying the grades as intended.”

Ed Gribbin concluded that by looking at a brand’s existing platforms, practices, calendar and people and then comparing and modifying these in line with applicable ‘best practices’ in the wider industry, Alvanon can, without exception, help brands: “...shorten product times...reduce physical samples, product and people costs... get people aligned with current information and ensure more accurate and consistent execution of product.”

In the final session **Michel Wettstein, freelance sizing expert, MODINT** imparted invaluable advice as to how delegates can revise their fit strategies. This included examining products and processes as if it was: “Your first day at the company...checking that the DNA of your products are up to date..always using your standard fit...measure, check, calculate and fit any improvements...do not make changes without testing thoroughly and when in doubt keep things as they are now. Your customers know your products even though some things are not as you would like them to be.”

In short, when it comes to apparel fit, it is as Ed Gribbin states: “Better to be consistently wrong than inconsistently right!”

...ends/



Delegates at MODINT fit & sizing seminar



Matthijs Crietee
Deputy Director
Fashion, MODINT



Nienke Steen
Consultant Quality
Manager, MODINT



Ed Gribbin
President,
Alvanon Inc



Monique Broeke
Senior Technical
Design, Nike



Joerg Thesing
Director Northern
Europe, Alvanon

NOTES TO EDITORS:

With over 800 members, MODINT, based in Zeist, is Netherland's foremost trade association for companies operating in the clothing, fashion accessories and interior textile sectors. MODINT member companies generate a combined annual turnover of EUR 9 billion in the Netherlands and EUR 2.5 billion on export markets. Its members' products vary widely, and include women's, men's and children's clothing, swimwear and beachwear, underwear and nightwear, leatherwear, bridal fashion, workwear and image clothing, sportswear, textiles, fashion accessories (e.g. ties, scarves, gloves, bags and belts) and interior textiles (including carpets, curtains, decorative cushions and bedding). MODINT aims to strengthen the competitive power of the members and sectors it represents by providing a wide-ranging package of promotions and services. It comprises a number of active member groups, sections and working groups. Most of MODINT's business services are incorporated into MODINT BV, in which consultancy and credit management activities play a major role.

Founded in 2001, the Alvanon Group of companies is the global leader in providing full service, integrated fit solutions for the apparel industry. From its head office in New York, operations centre in Hong Kong and operating offices in the UK and Germany, Alvanon provides customised fit strategies and product development tools to the world's leading fashion brands, retailers, lingerie, swimwear, sportswear, mail order and corporate clothing suppliers. Alvanon's fit offer combines the world's largest database of 300,000 body scans with the unparalleled expertise, products and services provided by a team of over 70 dedicated sizing and body shape professionals.

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