



EVOLVING STRATEGIES, STRUCTURES AND RELATIONSHIPS IN
COMPLEX AND TURBULENT BUSINESS ENVIRONMENTS:
THE TEXTILE AND APPAREL INDUSTRIES OF THE NEW MILLENIUM

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ABSTRACT

Over the past four decades the textile and apparel industries have witnessed rapid technological change, global integration and shifting demand requirements. Consequently, many of today's firms look radically different, compared to forty years ago, in terms of their capital and technical intensity, their manufacturing and business process capabilities, and their business scope, structure and relationships. As the business environment in which textile and apparel manufacturers operate continues to become more dynamic, diverse, complex and hostile, the process of transformation will continue. New strategies and organisational forms are emerging with a trend towards de-integration, involving a focus on core competencies and the separation of the physical processing functions from the creative 'brain functions' within the supply chain. In some ways, this represents a return to the pre-industrial system of manufacture where physical production was in the hands of commission manufacturers, while the creative design and marketing functions were performed by merchants.

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