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MARIMEKKO TRIPLING THE OUTPUT CAPACITY OF ITS TEXTILE PRINTING FACTORY IN FINLAND

Marimekko is investing in a new printing machine and screen-making equipment at the company's textile printing factory in Helsinki. The value of the investment will be roughly 1.5 million euros. The investment will triple the textile printing factory's output capacity compared to present levels. In 2010, Marimekko's printing factory produced 1.1 million metres of fabric. The new machinery will come online towards the end of the year 2011, and the added capacity will be deployed in stages. The investment will also enable the company to prepare for higher demand in the long term.



Marimekko's textile printing factory in Helsinki

The textile printing factory has been operating at full capacity since summer 2009, when the company's older printing machine was taken out of use. A sizable boost in capacity is needed because of both current order books and the company's longer-term growth targets. The acquisition of the printing machine is intended to secure sufficient capacity for foreseeable demand, to shorten delivery lead times, and to improve manufacturing efficiency. Also, the investment will reduce dependency on a single printing machine and open up opportunities for product development.

Marimekko, established in 1951, is a leading Finnish textile and clothing design company renowned for its original prints and colours. The company designs and manufactures high-quality clothing, interior decoration textiles, bags, and other accessories. Marimekko products are sold in about 40 countries. Products with Marimekko designs are also manufactured under licence in various countries. In 2009, the company's net sales amounted to EUR 72.5 million, of which international sales accounted for 27.3%. The Group employs about 370 people. Marimekko's shares are quoted on NASDAQ OMX Helsinki Ltd.

The new printing machine uses rotary printing technology, which is considerably faster than the flat screen printing method currently used. The flat screen printing machine purchased in 2004 can be used to print larger and more technically demanding patterns. Most of the machinery and equipment used in the textile printing factory were updated during the period 2004–2008.

“It’s very important to us for Marimekko to have profitable in-house manufacturing in Finland today and in the future. The prevailing trend in the sector is totally different but we wanted to go against the tide because we believe that, by investing in print technology and enhancing our specialised expertise, we will strengthen our competitive edge. Printed fabrics and related design expertise have always been the core of Marimekko’s business and brand. New printed fabrics and products made from the fabrics are the result of teamwork by professionals from various fields, and it’s extremely important that the designers are able to do their work close to the manufacturing. We believe that pioneering in print pattern design goes hand in hand with in-house production. We are also already preparing to meet greater demand in the future. And naturally it is easier to get to grips with product quality and manufacturing responsibility in a plant you own,” says President and CEO Mika Ihamuotila.

In addition to the textile printing factory, Marimekko has two production plants of its own in Finland: a sewing factory in Kitee and a bag factory in Sulkava.

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