

Why blue jeans are going green

As consumers become ever more concerned about environmental and ethical issues, pioneers in the global denim industry are cleaning up its act.

Blackhorse Lane Ateliers, which describes itself as a "craft jeans maker", has an open-door policy.

- 5 "Anybody can walk in here, even without an appointment," says Han Ates, the founder of the London-based small business. "Through that we create transparency."

Transparency has become a buzzword in fashion of late, with labels keen to show their best practice, both in terms of how well they treat staff and how environmentally friendly they are.

- 10 By opening up its doors, Blackhorse Lane Ateliers is able to show potential customers that its factory is clean, the 20 employees are happy, and that the jeans are worth keeping - rather than throwing away at the end of each season.

Visitors to the workshop can even get a bite to eat, as it is home to a pop-up restaurant at weekends. "When you are connected to your local community, then you become accountable," adds Mr Ates.

- 15 More importantly, Mr Ates says that his company sources all its rolls of denim from mills in Japan, Italy and Turkey that he has personally visited to ensure their commitment to environmental and social responsibility. This is vital for any jeans company that wishes to be ethical, because the manufacture of denim can be heavily polluting.

- 20 Textile industry consultant and expert Andrew Olah says that making jeans can carry a steep environmental toll, because the dye used to give them their usual blue shade - indigo - does not easily stick to the raw cotton.

"To get the dye on, we have to dye the fabric multiple times," he says. "And by dying it multiple times, obviously we need to use more water and more energy." (...)

- 25 In many denim mills and jeans factories the used water - which contains the dye, plus bleach and other chemicals - is simply released as waste water. Thankfully a growing number of producers are now eliminating waste water altogether.

Saitex International, a jeans manufacturer based in Vietnam, is one such business. Its factory, located 30km (19 miles) outside of Ho Chi Minh City, now recycles 98% of the water it uses. For the remaining 2% it has an evaporation system, making it a zero discharge facility.

- 30 Owner Sanjeev Bahl says that before setting up the factory in 2010 he "started looking at sanitation, or inadequate sanitation, globally, and the lack of clean drinking water".

"Morally it pushed us to start looking at water as a very valuable resource."

- 35 With 5,000 employees, Saitex makes denim clothing lines for brands including J Crew, G-Star Raw and Everlane. Mr Bahl says it took the company just six years to earn back the money it invested in the water recycling technology.

"What we realised is that it's not just mission orientated," he says. "If you do it right, it can be financially beneficial as well." (...)

- 40 Richard Lim, chief executive of UK-based consultancy Retail Economics, questions what percentage of shoppers are currently happy to pay the higher price tag that more ethically sourced jeans often carry. At Blackhorse Lane Ateliers, for example, its most expensive jeans cost £260.

"With some of the research that we've done, when you ask consumers about what their primary motivations are for purchasing in apparel, then it's about price, it's about convenience, it's about range, quality of product," says Mr Lim.

- 45 "And actually, sustainability - and ethical sourcing - doesn't necessarily sit within the top three of what's important for consumers when thinking about purchasing for apparel goods."

But he says that the situation is changing, with rising demand for more ethical clothing being led by young people. They've become a lot more focused about the societal impact that they're having, whether that's on the environment, the economy, and other areas as well," he says.

Adapted from BBC News, 4 July 2019

I- COMPRÉHENSION DE L'ÉCRIT (20 points)

Après une lecture attentive du texte, vous en ferez un compte rendu en **français** et vous ferez apparaître les idées essentielles en 220 mots (+/- 10%). Indiquez précisément le nombre de mots.

II- EXPRESSION ÉCRITE (20 points)

Répondez en **anglais** à la question suivante en 300 mots (+/- 10%). Indiquez précisément le nombre de mots.

Why are some companies turning to environmental and ethical standards? Explain how they can implement such choices.

III- INTERACTION ÉCRITE (20 points)

Lettre commerciale à élaborer et à rédiger en **anglais** selon l'usage commercial courant.

Lettre en date du 13 mai 2020

Expéditeur : Greta Van Dick, PDG, The Jeans Factory B.V., Noorddijk 41, 1521 PD Vormerveer, Pays-Bas

Destinataire : Dilara Ozdilek, directrice des ventes, Rotatex, 1 Sanayi Bolgesi, 44900 Yesilyurt, Malatya, Turquie

Objet : demande de renseignements

Corps de la lettre :

- vous présentez votre entreprise : fabricant de vêtements en jean, exportateur dans toute l'Europe ;
- vous recherchez un fournisseur de tissus en coton bio pour répondre à une demande croissante de vos clients qui réclament des produits respectueux de l'environnement et sans traitement chimique ;
- vous avez visité le stand Rotatex lors du salon de Dubai en novembre 2019 et leur méthodes de traitement des tissus et de teinture vous intéressent car elles répondent à de nouvelles normes environnementales en Europe ;
- vous demandez l'envoi de quelques échantillons, une liste de prix, leurs conditions de vente et les délais de livraison pour les Pays-Bas ;
- vous précisez que vous êtes prêt à passer une commande rapidement si leurs offres sont en adéquation avec vos attentes.

Présentation et formules d'usage.

**COMMERCE INTERNATIONAL
à référentiel commun européen**

Épreuve écrite E2

U21 - Langue vivante étrangère **A - ANGLAIS****PROPOSITION DE CORRIGÉ
Éléments de réponse****I- COMPRÉHENSION DE L'ÉCRIT (20 points)**

Thème : Évolution de l'industrie textile vers des méthodes de fabrication plus responsables.

1/ Ce document témoigne de changements dans la fabrication de jeans à travers deux exemples d'entreprises qui ont une vision éthique de leur activité et le souci de moins polluer.

- a) Blackhorse Lane Ateliers, PME de 20 employés à Londres :
 - la transparence est le maître mot surtout dans le milieu de la mode ;
 - bonnes conditions de travail ;
 - le créateur de l'entreprise assure personnellement le contrôle de ses fournisseurs situés au Japon, en Turquie... ;
 - il veut garantir des normes éthiques et des tissus éco-responsables car l'industrie du jean peut être très polluante.
- b) Saitex au Vietnam emploie 5000 personnes :
 - travaille pour des marques connues telles que G-Star Raw... ;
 - le propriétaire est attentif à la qualité de l'eau utilisée dans la fabrication ;
 - a beaucoup investi dans les technologies de recyclage de l'eau ;
 - retour sur investissements.

2/ L'avis des experts dans ce secteur :

- a)
 - A. Olah, consultant dans l'industrie textile soulève le problème posé par la teinture des jeans et l'utilisation de l'indigo, nocif pour l'environnement ;
 - en effet pour obtenir une teinture bleue satisfaisante, il faut utiliser beaucoup d'eau et le processus est énergivore ;
 - cette eau contient ensuite beaucoup de produits chimiques qui sont évacués dans les eaux usées.
- b)
 - R.Lim, consultant de Retail Economics évoque la question du prix élevé des jeans éco-responsables ;
 - en matière d'achats de vêtements la priorité du consommateur moyen n'est pas d'acheter des produits durables ou éthiques ;
 - mais cette attitude est en train de changer parmi les jeunes générations qui se préoccupent davantage de l'impact environnemental et social de leurs achats vestimentaires.

II- EXPRESSION ÉCRITE (20 points)

Why are some companies turning to environmental and ethical standards? Explain how they can implement these choices.

More and more companies use environmental and ethical standards because they do not have much choice to do otherwise today.

Indeed, in western countries where people are much concerned with environmental issues, eco-friendly standards are now seriously expected by consumers. Moreover, governments often enforce strict regulations that businesses have to comply with (ex: eco taxes that companies have to pay).

Many sectors are concerned:

- The car industry with lower petrol consuming cars and electric cars;
- the textile sector with organic fabrics and new means of manufacturing that pollute less;
- the food industry with organic farming, local sourcing and fairtrade trends ;
- the cosmetics industry in which many brands choose to use less chemicals ;
- many companies like Starbucks (no plastic straws), Unilever (saving on water use and reducing energy consumption in their plants in Africa), MacDonald's (sourcing better quality food than in the past)... invest amazing sums of money to change their manufacturing processes and their marketing and sales strategies.

These efforts are also made to convey a positive image of the companies involved because eco-friendliness is the trend of the 21st century and these companies know that conveying environmental and ethical values is what consumers demand today.

The goal for these businesses is to attract more customers all over the world and thus they can increase their profits tremendously thanks to global consumption.

These initiatives look ethical but they are mostly based on marketing strategies that have a huge financial impact as they help boost the sales of these companies.

These trends generate skyrocketing amounts of money for the big brands because they can sell the so-called ethical products at much higher prices (cf supermarket chains and agrobusinesses) and the final result is not as ethical as expected because this new business does not prevent corruption and/or greenwashing.

III- INTERACTION ÉCRITE (20 points)

The Jeans Factory B.V.
Noorddijk 41
1521 PD Vormerveer
The Netherlands

13 May 2020

Dilara Ozdilek,
Sales Manager
Rotatex,
1 Sanayi Bolgesi,
44900 Yesilyurt
Malatya,
Turkey

Dear Ms Ozdilek

Organic cotton

We are writing to present our company. The Jeans Factory manufactures jeans apparel exported all over Europe.

We are currently looking for a new supplier of organic cotton because there is a growing demand among our customers for clothes that are more environment-friendly and made without any use of chemicals.

We visited your stand during the textile trade fair in Dubai last November and we are interested in your methods of processing and dying fabrics as they comply with the new environmental standards that are now implemented in Europe.

Could you please send us a few samples, a price list as well as your terms of sale and delivery time for the Netherlands?

We are planning to place an order quickly if your offers meet our requirements.

We are looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

G Van Dick

Greta Van Dick
CEO