

Corporate Clothing

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**IN A WORLD THAT DEMANDS DURABILITY,
ONE FABRIC NEVER BACKS DOWN.**

CORDURA
FABRIC

THE DURABILITY EXPERIENCE

SEE IT NOW AT CORDURA.COM/WORKER

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The Value of Inner Strength

Innovation must offer value if it is to succeed in today's global textile market - and fibre manufacturer **INVISTA** believes its **CORDURA®** brand fabrics may be the answer for the workwear and military apparel markets



CORDURA® Baselayer knit fabrics offer 'No Melt No Drip' performance for combat soldiers in environments where flash fire explosions are a regular threat

Everyone would like a uniform that looks good, feels great and is fit for purpose but, if you want style, comfort and optimum performance, you have to be prepared to spend. The growth of fashionable and highly technical workwear indicates that more and more people are prepared to do so - but on one condition.

"To command that higher price, the garment has to offer real value for money, and durability is one way that a garment can do this," EMEA

CORDURA® brand manager **Susannah Rayfield** says. CORDURA® fabrics have played a key role in the rise of functional, stylish workwear for over 15 years because this is precisely what the fabrics do: by reinforcing a garment or by using a very durable base fabric and providing resistance to abrasion, CORDURA® brand fabrics can extend the useful life of a garment.

If a garment is built to last, it can prove less expensive in the long-term than the buying and replacing of a number of cheaper garments. Longer-lasting products can also benefit the environment by reducing the need for replacement and additional manufacturing.

Durability is becoming increasingly important in the PPE market. Advancements in technology are opening up new possibilities for multi-functional protective clothing, but whether people are willing to pay for them is another matter. Again, it will depend on whether they offer long-term value - which is why new CORDURA® fabrics are now being developed specifically for the PPE market.

Built to last

The rise of the CORDURA® fabric brand in Europe is a good indicator of how the workwear and PPE

markets have developed and where they are headed. The CORDURA® brand is owned by INVISTA, which was acquired by Koch Industries from DuPont in 2004. Over its 33-year history, the brand has come to be identified primarily with military equipment, footwear, motorcycle clothing, workwear, travel, and outdoor equipment.

What all these markets have in common is the need for fabrics that are exceptionally durable, versatile and reliable,

which is exactly what CORDURA® fabrics offer. All the fabrics in the CORDURA® brand portfolio have an optimal strength-to-weight ratio.

The key ingredients are the high-tenacity yarns from INVISTA. The versatility - the potential to engineer CORDURA® brand fabrics to meet a wide range of performance requirements through yarn selection, fabric construction and coating technologies - means that the brand is constantly evolving and finding new markets for its products.

To command that higher price, the garment has to offer real value for money, and durability is one way that a garment can do this

CORDURA® fabrics were initially introduced into the luggage market in 1977 as a lightweight but hardwearing alternative to leather, vinyl-coated fabrics and cotton canvas. Nine years later, CORDURA® fabrics were adopted by the military to replace their heavy canvas backpacks and to make reinforcement patches for knees and elbows on uniforms. Since then, CORDURA® fabrics have continued to influence the global military market by developing lightweight fabrics for desert uniforms.

This has led to great innovations within the industry, including solution-dyed nylon yarns with enhanced infrared signature reduction and camouflage technology. CORDURA® Baselayer knit fabrics have also been introduced to the U.S. military segment, offering 'No Melt No Drip' performance for combat soldiers in environments where flash fire explosions are a regular threat.

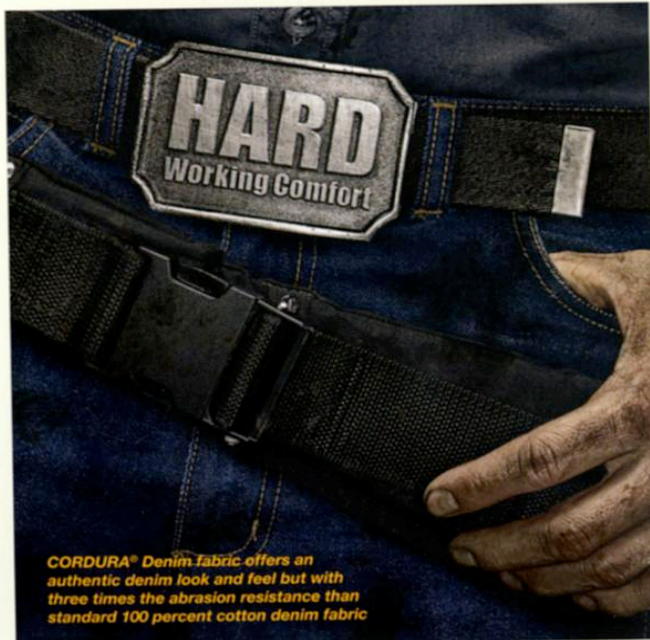
Entering workwear

The introduction of CORDURA® brand fabric into the workwear market began in the early 1990s when Scandinavian workwear manufacturers, Kwintet Fristads and Snickers, looked at ways of making existing garments more durable by reinforcing them with CORDURA® fabric. In 2005, the workwear market for CORDURA® fabric really started to take off.

"The Scandinavian companies that were using CORDURA® fabrics in their stylish, functional workwear garments started to look much more at export business models rather than just serving their local markets," Susannah says. "This drove demand for workwear featuring CORDURA® brand fabrics outside of Scandinavia as end-users preferred the more fashionable, durable styles."

"At the same time, companies revised their sourcing behaviour, looking at Asia as a key supply region, and were able to offer increasing volumes of stylish workwear with CORDURA® fabric reinforcements to a growing audience."

Today, more and more manufacturers of premium



CORDURA® Denim fabric offers an authentic denim look and feel but with three times the abrasion resistance than standard 100 percent cotton denim fabric

Award Sponsors

Platinum sponsor

INVISTA's CORDURA® brand is the registered trademark of INVISTA for durable fabrics. Known for its resistance to abrasions, tears and scuffs, CORDURA® fabric is used in a wide range of products, including luggage, backpacks, boots, military wear, industrial workwear and footwear.



All fabrics branded as CORDURA® fabric have been tested and approved to ensure they meet the durability and quality standards of CORDURA® fabric. INVISTA works closely with its worldwide authorized mills and converters to ensure consistency of fabric quality over time. CORDURA® brand fabrics can be engineered to meet a wide range of performance requirements through yarn selection, fabric construction and coating technologies.

INVISTA is one of the world's largest integrated producers of polymers and fibres, primarily for nylon, spandex and polyester applications. With a presence in over 20 countries, INVISTA's global businesses deliver exceptional value for their customers through technology innovations, market insights and a powerful portfolio of global trademarks.

Gold sponsor

Dickies is the biggest workwear company in the world. Formed in 1922 and based in Fort Worth, Texas, workwear bearing the distinctive Dickies logo is worn by workers from almost every industry and in many of the world's harshest working environments.



Today, Dickies is one of the UK's leading workwear manufacturers, supplying coveralls, work shirts and trousers, jackets, bodywarmers, foul weather protection, high visibility garments and a comprehensive range of safety footwear. Employing the best of traditional and new materials, designs and construction techniques, Dickies' extensive product range combines performance, comfort and value for money. At the company's UK headquarters, there is a manufacturing facility and an 80,000 sq ft distribution centre that manages two million products each year. Dickies workwear is available at over 4,000 outlets throughout the UK and Ireland, with others now expanding into Europe and the Middle East.

Wine sponsor

Lion Apparel Inc. is a 111-year-old, family-owned global company based in Dayton, Ohio, USA. Through offices in the US, Canada, UK, Germany, France, Australia and Spain, Lion serves the uniform and personal protective equipment and logistics requirements of police and fire departments, civilian government agencies, emergency services and military organisations around the world.



In the UK, Lion Apparel is a leading designer and manufacturer of PPE for the emergency services. It was the first to develop a managed service for PPE with the introduction of its TotalCare® system in 1998 for the London Fire Brigade. In addition to the option of a complete managed service, Lion supplies PPE equipment to the UK's fire, police, and ambulance services on a direct sale basis.

Show sponsor

JAL Group® is a global enterprise, founded in 2005 as the result of a merger between two leading European companies in the safety footwear market: the Italian group Almar® (Almont® and Almar® brands) and the French group Jallatte® (Jallatte®, Lupos®, Auda® and Impact® brands).



A market leader for the production and sale of professional safety shoes, JAL Group offers a range of products that are able to meet the requirements of the entire sector of safety and work shoes.

Present throughout the world, the group is the market leader in Europe, thanks to its extensive footprint with branches in France, Italy, United Kingdom, Germany and Spain and sales organisations in Scandinavia, Albania, Greece, North Africa and the Middle East.

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Close-up of CORDURA® fabric

quality workwear are using CORDURA® fabrics for reinforcing areas subject to the most strain and rigour: knees, pockets, hems, trouser seats, elbows and shoulders. It is even being used by some to add value to safety footwear, gloves, vests and tool belts.

In 2008, INVISTA's CORDURA® brand team took their role in the workwear market to the next level after seeing that the trend for stylish and high-quality workwear was continuing to grow at the expense of more basic garments.

After identifying a demand for a more comfortable, durable CORDURA® brand product that could be used in trousers, coveralls and jackets, the team worked with Klopman International to launch Vantage fabric - a CORDURA® NYCO brand fabric - for use as a full garment. This was followed a year later with CORDURA® Denim fabric, which offers an on-trend casual authentic denim look and feel but with three times the abrasion resistance than standard 100 percent cotton denim fabric.

With the workwear rental sector predicted to outstrip direct sales by 2012, the next step will be to introduce fabrics that respond to this demand. "We see opportunities for more CORDURA® fabrics use in garments that go through rental laundry routes because durable garments can offer value to companies that use or purchase via rental laundry routes," Susannah says.

Increasing protection

In the meantime, the PPE market beckons for the CORDURA® brand, having successfully launched its first CORDURA® NYCO FR protective clothing fabric last year - ULTIMATE fabric featuring CORDURA® fabric technology from Lauffenmühle. As well as offering excellent durability, the multifunctional fabrics can be produced with several different types of protection against heat and flame, molten metal splash, anti-static and electric arc.

"As industry demands that garments protect against multiple types of risk, fabrics must become increasingly multi-functional, and that tends to

mean more expensive. The need for those garments to last longer also increases because of the high initial investment," Susannah continues.

"The potential of having one garment that can be worn for a broad range of tasks also means that the garment will be subject to heavy wear."

Provided that durability is offered, Susannah believes that the potential for multi-functional fabrics in this market is huge considering that more attention is now being paid to wearer comfort and mobility.

"How well the person can do the job when they're wearing the PPE is growing in importance and that's something we've taken onboard with Lauffenmühle by providing a lightweight fabric that can still offer a greater level of protection against the EN norms."

Strong values

The ability to innovate is an important part of the success of INVISTA's CORDURA® brand in the workwear market. Investing heavily in the brand and having a strong vision has also been essential.

"Many of our competitors in the fibre industry don't share our strong focus on individual markets," Susannah says, "whereas we have a very clear focus on where we want to take the brand and which markets have the most value for durability."

True to form, INVISTA's CORDURA® brand business plans to consolidate its new presence in the PPE market by promptly following up on 2009's ULTIMATE fabric from Lauffenmühle with another protective fabric later this year.

Meanwhile, as the European workwear market becomes saturated, the need for premium workwear manufacturers to distinguish themselves from the competition and justify their prices will only increase. Thanks to INVISTA's CORDURA® brand, durability seems to be one way in which everyone ends up a winner. ■

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Klopman Vantage fabric featuring CORDURA® brand technology brings comfort and durability to workwear

