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Apparel Quality
- 2  **Apparel Quality**
 - Extent to which a garment meets expectations
 - A Quality-Conscious Company produces products that meet the wants and needs of the consumers.
 - Satisfied customers make repeat buyers
 - From raw materials forward
 - Quality knowledge enables management & employees to deliver products & meet wants/needs of customers
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- 3  **Apparel Quality**
 - Something Different
 - Something Cheaper
 - Something Better
 - Often a combo of at least 2
 - 1st 2 more common
 - Quality determines long-term satisfaction
- 4  **Quality Features**
 - Physical Features (what the garment IS)
 - Determine its performance
 - Performance Features (what the garment DOES)
- 5  **Physical Features**
 - Provide tangible form
 - Design
 - Style, shape
 - Materials
 - Fabrics, components
 - Construction
 - Methods for assembly
 - Finish
 - Dye? Stonewashed? Wrinkle-resistant finish?
 - These are INTRINSIC Attributes. They cannot be changed w/o changing the product itself
- 6  **Performance Features**
 - Determine the standards the garment meets & how it benefits the consumer
 - Aesthetic Performance (attractiveness)
 - Do design, materials, & construction fulfill appearance expectations?
 - Does the appearance fulfill the wearer's emotional needs
- 7  **Performance Features Cont.**
 - Functional Performance
 - Performance features other than appearance
 - Garment's utility & durability
 - Does it function appropriately for the intended use?
 - Comfort
 - Care
 - How well does it retain its appearance
 - Do the seams hold up...
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- 8  **Selling Points**
 - Physical features of a garment that make it desirable
 - Reinforced seat
 - Fully Lined







- Heavy-duty snaps
- Breathable mesh sides
- Ideally interpreted to consumer in terms of Buying Benefits
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- 9  **Buying Benefits**
 - The performance advantages that result from the garment's physical features (WHY the customer wants these things and WHY it makes the product superior)
 - Heavy-duty snaps make opening and closing easier and don't pull out of your child's sweater.
 - Breathable mesh sides on the shoe allow for air circulation around the foot and promote a cooler, drier environment.
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- 10  **EXTRINSIC attributes**
 - Can be changed w/o changing product
 - Price
 - Image & rep of manufacturer
 - Brand name
 - County of Origin
 - Image/rep or retailer
 - Hanger/hangtags/packaging
 - Price is the most important to consumer
- 11  **Price**
 - Major determinant of purchase decisions
 - Perceived as quality cue
 - Determining value (Is it worth the money? How much will I use it?)
 - Whether or not the consumer can afford to purchase the product
- 12  **Price Lines**
 - Clusters of merchandise at various price levels ranked from most expensive to least expensive
 - Use to rank retailers and merchandise, alike
 - Off-price or Discounting
- 13  **Mass-Merchandise Lines**
 - Budget, Moderate & Better
 - Where largest volumes are sold
 - Referred to as Mass-market
 - Better: highest price OF THE THREE. Suggests better quality
 - Moderate: middle ground, average consumer
 - Budget: Lowest price, often lower quality
- 14  **Other Price Lines**
 - Couture/Haute Couture/Bespoke
 - Prêt-à-Porter/Designer
 - Bridge
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 - Note: more complicated when making assortments
- 15  **Price = Quality ???**
 - Price influences consumer's perception of quality
 - Price is visible, performance is not
 - Don't always have knowledge to make informed decision
 - Not accurate assumption about 50% of time
- 16  **Consumer's Perception of Quality**
 - Quality evaluated:

- At Point of Sale
- In Use
- Upon disposal of product
- Have aesthetic & functional performance standards they think the garment should meet
 - Often informal and subconscious
 - Consumers are UNAWARE of how they decide what to buy
- 17  **Determinant Attributes**
 - The feature(s) that have the greatest effect on the consumer's satisfaction
 - Can change over the course of time with the product
 - Certain things can become more important because they are a source of irritation
- 18  **P-O-S Evaluation**
 - Consumers usually make decisions at Point-of-Sale based on aesthetic performance
 - Affected emotionally & psychologically
 - Easiest things to observe
 - Can't evaluate performance accurately at this stage
- 19  **In-Use Evaluation**
 - Performance becomes much more important due to use
 - Aesthetics still a factor, but it is now an established constant (unless performance affects it)
- 20  **Evaluation upon Discarding**
 - Assess ultimate satisfaction
 - Did I like this one?
 - Was it comfortable?
 - Did it hold up?
 - Why is it being removed from service?
- 21  **Lessons for Manufacturer/Retailer**
 - Achieving in-use consumer satisfaction is as important to an apparel manufacturer and/retailer as is delivering satisfaction at the point of sale
 - Adequate aesthetic performance is required to create satisfaction, and adequate functional performance is required to prevent dissatisfaction.
 - In-use satisfaction creates customer loyalty
- 22  **Target Markets**
 - Consist of the consumers in a particular market segment that a manufacturer aims to please w/ a particular product
 - Use MARKET RESEARCH to
 - Find motivations of consumers
 - Determine consumer requirements & expectations
 - Determine consumer's aesthetic preferences
 - Determine quality standard expected of consumers
- 23  **End Use**
 - Intended use of a product
 - Helps determine target market
 - Helps determine a quality standard
 - Used to determine appropriate performance standards
- 24  **Demographics & Psychographics**
 - Used to help determine wants & needs of the consumers in a given target market
 - Demographics – the statistics that describe a population, including, age, race, income, education...
 - Psychographics – characterize people by their lifestyle values: interests, attitudes, & opinions
- 25  **Value**
 - Relationship between quality & price
 - Fair value, overpriced, bargain

- Perceived Value
- Cost Per Wear
 - Cost of garment divided by # times worn
- Other factors influence purchase besides perceived value
- 26  **Apparel Life Expectancy**
 - [Fair Claims Guide for Consumer Textile Products issued by the Drycleaning & Laundry Institute](#)
 - Used in arbitration
- 27  **Quality Processes**
 - Must 1st determine wants & needs of consumers to establish appropriate quality standards
 - Aesthetic expectations easier to understand than functional ones
 - Companies that pursue & acquire understanding of functional performance expectations have clear advantage in ensuring that they provide the level of in-use performance that consumers want
- 28  **Quality Processes Cont.**
 - Quality Assurance or Quality Control depts.
 - Build quality principle INTO manufacturing process
 - Instill commitment to quality from corporate through to factory floor
 - Establish performance standards and perform quality tests
 - Send materials to testing labs
- 29  **Standards & Specs**
 - Standards: General guidelines to reflect the overall quality level of products
 - Specifications (Specs): Define specifically how a particular style of garment or item will be made.
 - Both must balance the required levels of aesthetic and functional performance with the cost limitations of the price line on the design, materials, construction, and finish
- 30  **Standards**
 - Conduct research on similar products in market
 - Consult industry standards
 - Analyze input from consumers, buyers, designers, production engineers, etc.
 - Make realistic and appropriate for target market
 - More often written
 - Update regularly
- 31  **Standards Cont.**
 - Written for:
 - Fabric and Findings (raw materials)
 - Garment or Products
 - Both types must be strictly enforced
 - Written as overriding guidelines for everything or groups of items
 - All jeans we make must have...
 - All denim we buy must...
 - All plastic buttons we buy must withstand...
- 32  **Fabric & Finding Standards**
 - Used to communicate w/ suppliers about the performance of the raw materials to be purchased
 - Includes thread, zippers, buttons, etc.
 - Materials are tested to see if they meet the standards
- 33  **Garment (Product) Standards**
 - Communicate correct diagnostic tool for measuring the quality of assembled products
 - Defect Guides
 - Aid in monitoring and maintenance of quality levels
 - Major defect

- Minor defect

- 34  **Specs**
- Fabric & Findings Specs
 - Garment or Product Specs
 - Allows product to be conceptualized on one side of the globe and produced on the other side exactly as designed – if accurately written
 - More reliance on diagrams and multi-lingual software for global situations
- 35  **Fabric & Finding Specs**
- Used primarily when making a “buy”
 - Best if written and concise
 - Also used during production as reference and to monitor consistency of large lots
- 36  **Garment (Product) Specs**
- Notes EVERY operation used in making a garment in sequential order
 - Involves many types of sub-specs
 - Notes stitch and seam types, sometimes even machine types
- 37  **Tolerances**
- Difference between the allowable minimum and maximum of a spec or standard
 - Plus or minus system
 - Specs/standards too type unreasonable and expensive for production
 - EX: Inseam: 34" \pm 1/2"
- 38  **Testing**
- To determine or confirm that the appropriate product quality level is maintained
 - Tests chosen vary depending on concerns of particular manufacturer or retailer
 - Can be performed on the raw materials or on the finished product
 - Problems with products not only affect consumer, but retailer, manufacturer, and contractor
 - Sometimes also test competitor’s products for comparison.
- 39  **Testing Cont.**
- Fabric tests:
 - Often a 1 – 2 yd piece sent to lab to run series of tests
 - Some manufacturers and mills have in-house labs to speed process
 - Done before production and sometimes also during production
 - Uses standardized testing methods (ASTM & AATCC)
- 40  **Testing Cont.**
- On garments:
 - Not done as often
 - Usually for sports, utility, protective, or other high-performance items
 - Sometimes as simple as wear tests – more often for items that are super-mass produced (like jeans)
 - Laundry tests common
 - Others far more extensive to test durability, performance, and safety issues
- 41  **Inspection**
- Careful examination of fabric, garment parts, and completed garments at varying stages in the production cycle
 - Fabric inspection:
 - At mill and again immediately after arrival at factory
 - Notes/marks defects in terms of majors and minors
 - Accept or reject
- 42  **Inspection**
- Garment Inspection:
 - During or after the assembly process
 - Traditionally not part of assembly process (old piece system of pay)
 - Management re-working rates to allow for inspection at station/graduated scale for

- quality levels
 - Prevent defects at their source
- 43  **Inspection Cont.**
 - Documentation at all levels help locate source of problems and then fix
 - Retailers that inspect and document can adjust buying accordingly
- 44  **Inspection Systems**
 - In-Line:
 - Takes place During Production
 - Inspects sections of garments as the work is being done
 - Uses RANDOM SAMPLING
 - Helps prevent troubles before they get too far
 - Sends mistakes back for re-work
- 45  **Inspection Systems Cont.**
 - Trim and Inspect:
 - At end of line
 - 100% inspection
 - Takes place as threads are being trimmed
 - Defects sent back for rework
- 46  **Inspection Systems Cont.**
 - Final Audit:
 - Last stage in manufacturing or first stage in retail
 - Based on Random/Statistical Sampling
 - Production lots are either accepted or rejected based on the # of defects in the lot and severity of the defects (acceptable quality level)
 - Number of types of inspections vary according to manufacturer and often money
- 47  **Analysis of Returns**
 - Many defective products never returned by consumers
 - Therefore every return taken seriously and analyzed
 - Return to Vendor:
 - Defective garments returned by retailer to manufacturer
 - Often use Chargeback system (subtracts money owed to retailer for return from next purchase)
- 48  **ISO 9000 Certification**
 - International Organization for Standardization (isos=equal)
 - Certification basically means that you have established quality standards and that you adhere to them strictly. Not that it is good or bad quality, but consistent.
 - Required in Europe
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