



Past - Present - Future



TOURISTIC COOPERATION OF THE TEXTILE AND RACING MUSEUM HOHENSTEIN-ERNSTTHAL AND REGIONAL TEXTILE COMPANIES

Implementation

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T2.5.4



RP 5



PP1, District of Zwickau



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1. Project Context

InduCult2.0 defines the idea of living industrial culture in central Europe. It aims to reveal, strengthen and utilize the unique cultural character of industrial regions. This project does not only deal with the preservation and utilization of cultural heritage, but it brings together past, present, future and creative assets in an innovative work package. Thus, museums, schools, companies and creative communities work together to create a successful cooperation. This is the key for living industrial culture as a vivid concept that reflects current transformations of industrial economy and shapes cultural perceptions of the regions.

In order to achieve these objectives, the project has a budget of 3 million euros. The ten participating partners, located in different countries in Central Europe, establish a concept with their stakeholders to realize the full potential of Industrial Culture in their regions.

These participating partners are in eight regions of Europe: Germany, Poland, Belgium, Czech Republic, Austria, Croatia, Slovenia and Italy.

Work Package T2 compiles a range of awareness-raising activities, e.g. industrial tourism combining heritage and present. All T2 activities are laid out to connect industrial heritage and current/upcoming cultural resources. The Partners actively engage a wide range of stakeholders (chambers of commerce, companies, museums, universities, etc.). Thus, InduCult2.0 can build on results of the forerunning CE project SHIFT-X - which focused on the heritage aspect only - and integrate them on a higher level.

In T2.5.4 a touristic action combining industrial history and presence is implemented to increase the cooperation between an industrial museum and regional companies.

2. Introduction

Of the current 16,000 employees in the East German textile and clothing industry, 12,000 work in the Free State of Saxony. This makes the region of Zwickau one of the most important German and European textile regions. Whereas in the past the production of home and household textiles as well as fashion and clothing textiles was dominant, today the production of technical textiles is an essential pillar of the Saxon textile industry. The share of the total turnover of these products already amounts to about 45 % of the total. Textiles have been subject to change for a long time, because they can be more than just clothing. As technical textiles, they have long been one of the high-performance materials.

Saxony's industry concentrated early on this future field of technical textiles. The focus is on protective and functional clothing, functional sportswear, construction and geotextiles, medical textiles and mobile textiles. Today, for example, a mid-range car already contains 25 kilograms of textiles in a wide variety of shapes, and the trend is rising.

In its collection and exhibition concept, the Museum of Textiles and Motorsports Hohenstein-Ernstthal follows two main themes: the history of textiles in the region and the history of the "Sachsenring" racetrack, which was built in 1927 and is the major sporting event in Central Germany with the organisation of the German Motorcycle Grand Prix every year. The museum's concept also includes the establishment of a new collection focusing on up-to-date sports and functional clothing, especially for racing and leisure sports.

In this context, the Museum of Textiles and Motorsports developed a special exhibition on "Technology in Textiles" in the summer of 2017. This was then transferred to the permanent exhibition in the summer of 2018.

3. Objective

The textile industry, which collapsed in the Zwickau region in 1990 - weaving and warp knitting had been equally well represented in Hohenstein-Ernstthal and the surrounding area - is vividly documented in the museum's permanent exhibition by functional textile machines and numerous textile products such as upholstery fabrics, tablecloths and wall hangings as well as stockings, underwear and jerseys. The former VEB Upholstery Fabric and Plush Factory Hohenstein-Ernstthal was also an important manufacturer of car seat cover fabrics and seat covers.

The new exhibition project "Technology in Textiles" aims to highlight the achievements of today's Saxon textile industry, which is strongly characterised by products in the technical textiles and functional clothing segment. These products and developments are still rather unknown to the population. The topic can not only be reduced to the clothing of racing drivers and technical personnel, but is also reflected in the technical areas such as vehicles, tyres and protective helmets or in the road construction of the race track.

The "Sachsenring" racetrack celebrated its 90th anniversary in 2017. The exhibition project "Technology in Textiles" was initially planned as a special exhibition from July to October 2017. Subsequently, a small permanent exhibition was developed, which is permanently shown in a separate room on the floor of the permanent exhibition "Legends of the Ring".

In a second level of the special exhibition, the technical textiles of the companies presented were to be processed into textile-artistic wall objects. In doing so, they create a link to our special textile focus on industrially manufactured tapestries. Exhibitions from the current patchwork and quilt art scene in Germany have been part of the museum's programme for several years. For the members of the Patchwork Gilde Deutschland e. V., Region Saxony, Thuringia and Saxony-Anhalt, the museum has already become a permanent exhibition and communication point.

This level strengthens the technical textiles and the connection to racing with an artistic approach. It also leads visitors from this area of interest into the exhibition. The direct relationship between textiles and racing is to be broadened to include general social issues such as speed, mobility and road traffic. For this part of the exhibition project there was a close cooperation with the association "Quilt Art" e. V.

4. Applied Approach

31.05.2016 Visit of the "MTex - Fair for Technical Textiles" in Chemnitz

The museum director Mrs Marina Palm had already taken part in conferences of the local textile industry in recent years. In 2016 she visited the relevant textile trade fair for technical textiles in Chemnitz. There she established contacts with potential companies. She was supported by a textile expert from the industry whom she has known for years. This expert also personally approached the managing directors of the companies in question about the exhibition project, so that the response was often positive. However, there were also companies that refused to participate, or cancelled their cooperation during the last weeks of preparation.

01.-06.2017

Planning the special exhibition "Technology in Textiles"

The exhibition was divided into two large areas: history and the present. The two large GDR textile companies of the region were presented, and those of their products on which some of today's companies could build (e.g. Wattana GmbH and Malimotechnologie). For the companies operating today, it was very important to the museum that visitors could also touch the technical textiles themselves in order to feel the specific properties haptically (this is not possible with the historical exhibits). Also very important was the presentation of the cooperation with science and research (Saxon Textile Research Institute e. V. STFI, University of Technology Chemnitz and West Saxon University of Applied Sciences Zwickau) and also the outlook for the future (basalt fibres).

20.-22.01.2017

Workshop at Fürsteneck Castle (Hesse)

14 textiles artists participated in a workshop under the motto "Texture - Textiles meet Racing" to prepare the artistic part of the project.

27.06.2017

Opening of the special exhibition "Technology in Textiles"



(author: Gina Zimmermann).

07.-10.2017

Special Exhibition "Technology in Textiles"

11.2017-05.2018 Planning of the transfer of the special exhibition to the permanent exhibition

The themes and exhibits remained the same. However, the exhibits had to be reduced, as the space available now in the permanent exhibition was only half as large as in the special exhibition. The topics that were directly concerned with racing such as racing clothing, safety and racing cars were integrated into the already existing permanent exhibition "Legends of the Ring". For this purpose, some other themes in that part of the exhibition had to be relocated and condensed. In an adjoining separate room (20 m²) the main part of the new section is accommodated: of the original 13 companies the museum concentrated on 8, and it addressed the two historical companies as well as a view into the future.

29./30.05 2018 The textile artistic exhibition "Texture - Textiles meet Racing" participates at the "MTex - Fair for Technical Textiles" in Chemnitz

05.-06.2018 Transfer into the permanent exhibition

29.06.2018 Opening of the new section "Technology in Textiles" of the permanent exhibition



(author: Museum of Textiles and Motorsports Hohenstein-Ernstthal).

5. Implementation

The cooperation with the companies in planning the special exhibition "Technology in Textiles" was very diverse: family-run, smaller companies were very quick and constructive to support the project. They were very pleased to find their own company and family history in the museum. They often came by personally during the construction phase of the exhibition. With the larger companies, it was sometimes difficult at first to find the right contact person, and the delivery of the exhibits or textiles had to be requested more often. Here, the communication channels are longer and more impersonal. Nevertheless, in general the cooperation with the companies was very positive. However, a long lead time has to be planned.

Regarding the planning of the new section of the permanent exhibition the cooperation with the companies was very pleasant and accommodating. Now, it was mainly about the promise to be able to exhibit the loans permanently in the museum.

The resonance of the special exhibition "Technology in Textiles" was positive: The number of individual visitors has not increased significantly compared to previous special exhibitions. Newly added are tour registrations from the participating companies or trade visitors from the textile industry, who had not previously been familiar with the Museum of Textiles and Motorsports Hohenstein-Ernstthal. These groups of visitors are interested in the special exhibition - but were also very impressed afterwards by the two historical textile exhibitions and the functional textile machines of the permanent exhibitions.

The fact that the subject has now been permanently anchored in the museum has been received positively throughout. With the public resonated the most that the museum has made a very up to date reference to the regional textile industry and thus also wants to appeal to a younger public. Especially the aspect of “living industrial culture” as promoted by InduCult2.0 is an important factor for the attractiveness of the museums in order to attract new target groups.

Some impressions of the new section of the permanent exhibition (author: Museum of Textiles and Motorsports Hohenstein-Ernstthal):







6. Evaluation

Regarding the special exhibition "Technology in Textiles", the responses of the individual visitors were always very good. They were surprised to find a current topic - a leap in time from the past into the present - in the museum and to be confronted with current developments and research results in the textile industry. The participating companies and their employees, who came to visit the special exhibition, were delighted to find their company history and historical and contemporary products in a museum context.

The implementation of both of the projects - the special exhibition and its transfer into the permanent exhibition - went well and absolutely according to the museum's expectations. The embedding in InduCult2.0 was perceived as a great asset. Most interesting to the museum proved the aspect of establishing a regional identity based on industrial culture because the Zwickau region has a rich industrial heritage to preserve. This industrial heritage can be used attractively for the present and the future.

The museum regards the exhibition projects as a challenge to convey a positive image to the visitors - above all also to pupils of the region. It wants thus to provide an option for the pupil's future personal professional career. Through the exhibitions it should also be possible to restore a certain pride in the work done by the older generations, who had abruptly lost their professional environment as a result of the political change after the Wall came down and the subsequent winding up of countless VEB companies.

Thanks to the financial support of the exhibition projects by InduCult2.0, the graphic design of the permanent exhibition was of high quality.

Regarding the textile artistic exhibition "Texture - Textiles meet Racing" participating at the "MTex - Fair for Technical Textiles" in Chemnitz: Taking part in a trade fair as a museum was new and surprising for both the museum and the exhibiting companies. A certain curiosity often attracted visitors to the stand, as the exhibits - textile art objects - were somewhat out of the ordinary. It was only at second glance and through the staff's explanations that the visitors were able to see the connection to the trade fair. One company, which manufactures the machines with which some of the technical textiles used in the exhibits are produced, had even asked to take an art object from the exhibition to a trade fair in Asia. For customs reasons this has not yet happened, but the company is still interested.

7. Outlook and sustainability

For the Museum of Textiles and Motorsports Hohenstein-Ernstthal, as well as the participating companies, it was an exciting collaboration and a careful approach to previously unknown terrain. It is important to the museum to inform the future visitors about the current situation with regard to textiles and racing and to show them the historical context.

It will be a great task and challenge in the coming years to interest younger audiences with current themes in museums. This is why the museum developed the museum educational programme "Textiles thought differently. Science slam in the museum", which was also financed by InduCult2.0 (activity T3.3.2). This programme focuses on the collaboration with grammar schools and secondary schools (especially 9th and 10th grade) as well as vocational training schools. In addition to imparting facts and knowledge, the aspect of job orientation is an important part of the offer. Therefore the cooperation with some companies is to be extended in the context of a co-operation:

After visiting the museum, the aim is to take the pupils to a manufacturing company in the field of technical textiles and to give them an insight into an example of current production.

The resulting contacts could also enable the museum to be close to the latest technical developments and integrate these findings into the permanent exhibition.