

# NONWOVENSREPORT

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## Global Directory

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# Strength in numbers

The implementation of Microfiber Corp's new mechanical flapper system will enable a speed, strength and quality like no other, director **Bobby Shokar** tells **Fiona Haran**

**M**icrofiber Corp has spent years modifying its products to develop unique spunbound systems that meet the demand for advanced speed and equal machine and cross-directional strength. Following the successful installation of its first STP Italian-engineered nonwoven line, the company has recently purchased a second nonwoven line specifically designed to tick those boxes.

The 'mechanical flapper system' works to increase fibre distribution angles at higher line speeds, which according to the company's director Bobby Shokar, allows improved fibre distribution in machine cross direction, and enhances both product uniformity, tensile strength, overall quality and productivity.

"We have invested a lot of money in our equipment," says Mr Shokar. "We believe that there is something unique about our technology which offers customers a niche product. The harmonically balanced flapper system allows even flow in all directions which provides nonwoven strength that can't be matched. This makes our fabric special to the roofing, construction and geotextile markets, as strength is the key attribute, especially cross-directional strength."

Further benefits of the system include:

- A more uniform fibre placement and

increased cross directional (CD) tensile spectrum of a product's weight

- Improved bi-directional fabric tensile strength and appearance of low g/m<sup>2</sup> material – some tests have shown machine direction and cross direction of nearly 1:1 on fabrics as light as 10 to 12 g/m<sup>2</sup>
- Higher speeds of up to 2,000 cycles per minute. "This enables a 40% increase in speed with lower vibration, noise and increased reliability to improve energy efficiency and performance," Mr Shokar explains.

A customised solutions manufacturer with global locations throughout Asia and North



Director of Microfiber, corp Bobby Shokar



Microfiber's Italian-engineered mechanical flapper system

## Expansion plans

After the company's mechanical flapper system is commissioned, Microfiber has further expansion plans in place for next year. "We have been adding customers with our Private Label program which targets multinational corporations," Mr Shokar says.



America, Microfiber serves a wide variety of markets including industrial packaging, the medical industry, converted fabrics, agriculture and construction. Its nonwoven lines are designed and manufactured in Europe with STP advanced technology to give Microfiber “the edge” over its competition.

Renowned for its large product line and production capacity, Microfiber was originally part of global manufacturing group InterWrap but branched out on its own in 2013.

Mr Shokar explains that an important method of determining an organisation’s approach is to evaluate its capability and visual management standards.

To do this, Microfiber uses the ‘5S’ system, a standard tool for maintaining safe and efficient operations. The five steps are: Sort (sorting and separating items that are needed and not needed in an area); Straighten (arranging items and identifying locations for them so that they can be found and returned easily); Shine (cleaning the workplace and equipment on a regular basis); Standardise (revisiting the first three steps on a regular basis); Sustain (keeping to the rules and carrying out audits for continued improvement).

“5S is not just about housekeeping; its objective is to engage people through the use of standards and disciplines,” Mr Shokar says. “The entire process is managed through the use of team-generated audited documents such as standard operating procedures. The discipline is to check and repair equipment, improve productivity, ensure optimal quality is reached and reduce waste.”

### Sustainability in mind

As one of the most sustainable industries in the world, the nonwovens sector is constantly inundated with companies vying to be the leader in their field. Microfiber’s commitment to the environment can be seen in its global recycling program which consists of post-consumer collection points spread across India, Canada and the US. Once collected and baled, these items are shipped to the company’s recycling facilities in which they are washed, cleaned and segregated by colour and material type. The materials are then processed and made ready for re-manufacturing into new or blended products.



Microfiber's facilities adhere to the '5S' system