

AT A TIME OF GLOBALISATION AND FIERCE COMPETITION, PUNTI BLOND'S COMMITMENT TO RESEARCH AND ADDED VALUE REPRESENTS A CONSTRUCTIVE MODEL WHICH LOOKS TO THE FUTURE. LOOKING BACK, THE FIRM'S MANAGING DIRECTOR ATTRIBUTES PUNTI BLOND'S POSITION ON TODAY'S MARKET TO THE DEDICATION AND PROFESSIONALISM OF ITS WORKFORCE.

## Juan Manuel Aloy

*Managing Director of Puntiblond*

*“Staying in the new social and economic framework is only possible through a major investment in RDI, and by developing product with high added value.”*



By Agnès Felis

Puntiblond started out in Barcelona in 1947, and for 20 years it worked to produce trimmings, tulle and edgings. In the late 60's it pioneered the manufacture of stretch fabric and today, after surviving insolvency in 1973 thanks to the intervention of Juan Manuel Aloy Font, its diversification policy is a model for other firms in the industry to follow. Juan Manuel Aloy's enthusiasm, and professionalism have made their mark on the history of a company which 1997 has dealt with every single phase of the production process: Puntiblond controls everything from receiving the thread to finishing off the fabric.

**How is Puntiblond doing at the moment? What are the firm's challenges in the short, medium and long term?**

Puntiblond products are being marketed throughout Spain and in many other countries on all five continents. Expanding our exports is in fact one of our immediate challenges, one on which we are working very hard.

Puntiblond is a pioneering, innovative company which is constantly investing, researching and working hard on new developments. We occupy an important position in the more traditional textile industry and we create leading-edge products and fabrics, including in areas outside corsetry. Our challenge is to develop products with added value – like the Colibrí line in corsetry – and to diversify, moving into sectors like specialised articles and high-tech products.

**China joining the WTO has completely shaken up the textile industry all over the world.**



**Do you think the process could have been carried out in a less traumatic way?**

The process and its development could have been and would be less traumatic if the regulations were followed in every single member country.

**How do you rate Spanish companies' reaction to the changes arising from the new international scene? Will it settle down, or will we be seeing many more closures of textile factories?**

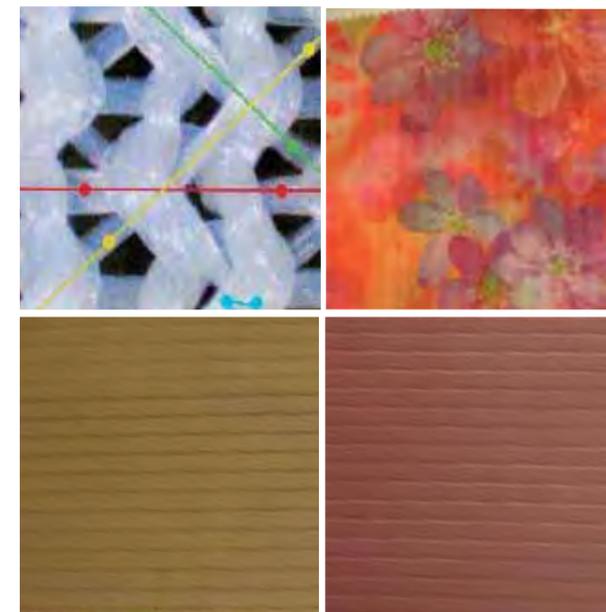
Obviously, different companies have reacted in very different ways. It has been positive for those firms which have managed to mould themselves to the new market situation. Successfully staying in this new social and economic framework is only possible through

a major investment in RDI, and by developing products with high added value.

**Assessing the last decade in the industry, what changes and turning points would you highlight? Have there been any important innovations?**

The last few years have undoubtedly been marked by many important changes, among which I would highlight the deregulation of markets, with the opening up of frontiers and the ending of duties. These changes have given rise to major innovations both in technology and on the sales side.

Factors such as energy saving or environmental protection have taken on great importance in the production process.



*“The power now lies in the hands of superstore retail distributors, who make the rules for supplies and set the price.”*

Puntiblond has earned Öko Tex certification and its manufacturing business meets all current environmental requirements. Our firm carries out many of its washing processes using dry cleaning, we have purchased a latest-generation treatment plant and our facilities are equipped with the technology necessary to avoid polluting gas emissions.



**corsetry manufacturers the same as those with fashion brands who also make underwear? Do they make different demands?**

Both the demands and the relationship are basically the same, or very similar. Our customers demand quality, innovative fabrics and good service. Our goal as a supplier is to provide a satisfactory response to this demand.

**Are relations between the different stages in a product process conditioned by different priorities? How do they fit together?**

The whole process has a single purpose, which is to create and market a quality product. Puntiblond has realised that all stages in the process are important, and that a product's success is the result of good co-operation between everybody involved in the process.

**Do you agree that power has moved over to distributors, because consumers have the last word and downward pressure on prices has taken power away from firms, brands and the media?**

I am totally convinced that consumers pay the price they are charged and that the power now lies in the hands of superstore retail distributors, who make the rules for suppliers and set the price.

**The importance of RDI and the need to invest in technology in order to be competitive is an argument which comes up again and again, but how is this investment channelled and made profitable? How is a return gained on the role of specialised technology centres?**

Technology centres, being aware of what the product means to consumers, play a highly positive role both for producers and for consumers themselves. Institutions like the CDTI and CIDEM are boosting and backing up manufacturers with their RDI projects, and one of these is in fact Puntiblond, which currently invests over 2.5% of its turnover in RDI projects.

Our commitment to diversification means that we are investing a lot of resources in various innovative products: non-slip stretch fabrics (second skin), fabrics with rigid fastenings, a heat-sensitive fabric with silver filaments, fabrics with microcapsules (of Aloe Vera or insecticides, for example), microfibre cloths for cleaning and so on.

**Are Puntiblond's relations with traditional**

