



Unique – Local – Flexible – Custom

A network of independent artisan fiber mills leveraging our expertise so customers who need unique products have viable, sustainable and profitable options

Purpose:

- Provide a central resource:
 - For mills seeking information & support
 - For customers seeking processing
- Develop relationships between mills & suppliers, resulting in cost savings through group buying.
- Assist the textile industry in developing new products & markets.
- Build a network to work together to develop the individual mill as well as the market. Cross-pollinate and collaborate on projects otherwise unattainable.
- Collaborate with and advise equipment manufacturers on issues and opportunities to improve quality and efficiency.

Formalizing the network:

Fee-based membership (Need seed money)

- Mill membership – \$100 initial voting \$50/year
- Affiliates – non-voting \$25/year (suppliers, vendors, consultants, breed assoc., etc.)

Membership requirements:

- Mills are juried for quality & consistency of work
 - Use consultants?
 - Peer review?
 - Must be anonymous.
 - Need to decide on products to be juried.

The structure is a governing board, elected by the membership. Recommend president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, a member at large (past president). Must be an uneven number, half elected at staggering terms. Terms of 2 or 3 years for continuity.

Initial membership: Steering committee members, mills having attended a summit serving as membership committee. A retired mill owner is amenable to serving on a vetting committee, but not alone.

Summits are networking, educational opportunities, and brainstorming meetings. Need to address frequency & locations.

- Annual
- Semi-annual
- Regional mini-summits?

Decision making is via balloting of member mills, unless the officers are charged with handling routine matters, such as paying bills.

Is there a better internal communication tool than Facebook? Phone or web conference? Not everyone is on FB, not all are tech savvy for web conferences. Just set a time & hope they come?

Benefits of joining/network services

Rug core buys – better price for network members?

Bulk fiber buys – better price for network members?

Cones- who wants to buy 3000 at once?

Suggest we charge a small amount extra on the above to fund network activities such as summit speakers.

How are group buy point people compensated for their time? Discounted membership? Lower unit cost on product than everyone else?

Vendor negotiations – who? Encourage individuals to facilitate growth & take advantage of contacts; bridging.

Mentoring program – give access to group FB page (existing private group); pay for training; Wiki page?

Network Projects – How are mills paid and how is pricing determined? Bids? Who is point?

The initial contact or the mill doing the bulk of the work? What are the ramifications of the network receiving payment & forwarding it to the mills involved?

Suggestion for quality control: For each network project, interested mills send in representative samples of that specific product to be considered as a partner in that project. Project lead is original mill contacted. If no mill initiated the project, then participants get vetted as memberships do.