Specifying Textiles In A Greener World: Using Sustainable Strategies To Develop New Criteria

Abstract
The complexity of specifying textiles for environmentally-conscious commercial interiors has evolved as layers of evaluative criteria have been added. Increases in information require that designers understand more about textile design and manufacture, and use new processes for product selection. Textiles are the focus of this investigation for several reasons. They are an integral architectural and interior design element and embody an array of art, craft, design, and technology. Historically, the textile industry has been the source of environmental transgressions contributing to pollution on many levels. These characteristics are shared with other interior products, so new paradigms can generalize to other materials. The evolution of the textile industry is also the centerpiece for one of the most significant proposals targeting green product design, the "cradle-to-cradle" philosophy developed by William McDonough and Michael Braungart. Finally, the commercial project emphasis is appropriate because products for this market are subject to rigorous review for compliance with regulatory and performance standards. Based on a review of sources from interior design education and practice, this study will identify and analyze the development of textile specification criteria for environmentally-conscious commercial textiles. This investigation occurs in the context of a burgeoning awareness of green products and suggests that new specification approaches are needed. Although any discussion of commercial textiles has global implications, this report primarily addresses interior design practice in the United States. Keywords: interior design, design education, commercial textiles, sustainability, life cycle assessment.

Keywords
interior design, design education, commercial textiles, sustainability, life cycle assessment.
Figure 3: Strategies that can potentially be applied for textile waste management. 1. Recycling textiles Another option for potentially saving resources in waste management is recycling. 2. System boundaries are specified in a scope definition. The next step is choosing the functional unit which describes the product’s function and social utility. System boundaries also need to be determined. The textile industry is the world’s oldest branch of consumer goods manufacturing. Under the EU Eco-label, criteria have been developed for textiles (Commission Decision 2009/567/EC14, currently under revision), textile floor coverings (Commission Decision 2009/967/EC)15, footwear (Commission Decision 2009/563/EC)16 and criteria for bed mattresses (Commission Decision 2009/598/EC)17. Other public and private initiatives establishing environmental and social standards have also been set up and taken up both by producers and retailers. Developing production processes using lower amounts of water, pesticides, insecticides, hazardous chemicals or lower releases of GHG etc. is as important as the measures adopted by retailers and consumers to select such textiles.