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## Eco-friendly apparel for your own merchandise

**Company name:** Neutral

**Product category:** Textiles

**Country of origin:** Denmark

**License holder since:** 2008

**Available in:** Mainly the Nordic Countries and Central Europe, however Neutral products are sold all over Europe/EFTA at the B2B-market.

**Website:** [www.neutral.com](http://www.neutral.com)

### What convinced them to apply for the EU Ecolabel?

"Neutral is the result of more than 20 years of experience in the conventional textile industry, witnessing a constant pressure for lower prices at the expense of natural and human resources. With these experiences in mind, founders Lars Bech and Christina Larsen wanted to make a change by developing a platform for sustainable clothing. Our way to do so was to produce according to the highest international sustainability standards within clothing, providing an independent guarantee that Neutral products are okay from cotton field to final product. With the EU Ecolabel being the highest environmental standard, it was a natural choice for us to apply for this certificate."

### How has being certified with the EU Ecolabel given them an edge over competitors?

"Besides producing in accordance with the EU Ecolabel, Neutral is also certified by GOTS, Fairtrade, SA8000 and Oeko-Tex. Additionally, we use renewable energy in the production. Covering all social, ethical and environmental aspects of clothing manufacturing, our palette of certificates has given us a competitive advantage since consumers can rest assure that Neutral products are okay for people and planet. Firstly, the EU Ecolabel provides consumers with an independent guarantee that Neutral is the eco-friendliest clothing in the market. Secondly, our certificates make sure that we constantly innovate the way we make clothing in an even more sustainable direction. For instance, when EU Ecolabel changed the criteria for what chemicals to use in the dyeing process, we had to develop completely new dyestuffs together with our suppliers to meet the revised standard. Finally, the EU Ecolabel assures our customers that with Neutral they buy a high-quality product."

### Has the EU Ecolabel increased their revenue and allowed them to enter new markets?

"In addition to the rest of our certificates, the EU Ecolabel has created the foundation for the Neutral business model. Our commitment to certified clothing is the very heart of Neutral, which has given us a frontrunner position in the market for sustainable clothing. Especially with public and private consumers that value fully certified products and see the benefit in integrating their clothing consumption with the overall sustainable storytelling of their organisation."

### How do they evaluate consumers' and general demand for sustainable products?

"At Neutral, we are experiencing an increasing demand for our products, especially for the last 3 years. However, it has not always been easy and for many years it was difficult to keep going and stay on the Neutral track. Today, we mainly sell our products in the Nordic countries, Germany and other countries in Central Europe. At the same time, more and more consumers both in Europe and around the world show an increasing interest in Neutral. Sustainable production and consumption have been a focus in other sectors for



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some time, e.g. food and personal care. And now we find that the time has come for sustainability in textiles as well. Firstly, consumers are getting more and more aware about sustainability challenges in relation to clothing. Secondly, producers start to see the benefits in producing sustainably, meeting consumer demands as well as sustaining the foundation for their future business by managing resources responsibly.."

### **How are they contributing to the circular economy?**

"We always try to find new ways to improve our production and make Neutral products even more sustainable. For instance, we use buttons made of cotton instead of plastic and metal. Moreover, our hangtags are made from leftover cotton from the production and we do everything we can to minimize waste and recycle resources throughout the production. We also participate in the creation and renewal of sustainability standards, contributing to the ongoing development of the circular economy within clothing."

### **What future plans do they have for the company's sustainability mission?**

"We don't make a bigger difference for people and planet beyond the T-shirts we sell. That's why in the years to come we will focus on developing our business, getting more and more companies and organisations on board choosing sustainably when purchasing clothing items. Moreover, we experience, even though the awareness of sustainable issues overall is increasing, that the knowledge about the EU Ecolabel and strength of sustainability standards in general is still limited. Therefore, we will continue to do our best to share the positive stories on certified clothing."

### **What advice would they give to other companies considering applying for the EU Ecolabel?**

"Make the decision, allocate resources to the matter and do it. And stay committed – even when it's not easy."





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**Should you wish to use the above photos, quote a company representative or have any other questions please contact:**

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