

Fashion MANNUSCRIPT



Simparel, Inc.

Ron Grilli, CEO and Richard Farb, VP Sales

TECHNOLOGY ENGINEERED FOR CHANGE

SIMPAREL

Imagine an enterprise resource system that is more flexible and scalable than ever; that's fast and easy to change, and that can revolutionize supply chain processes from sourcing through delivery. Wherever efficient supply chain management is crucial, this new solution is already helping companies – in apparel and accessories, footwear and home fashions, and costume jewelry—to make the right business decisions more speedily and simply.

The system is called Simparel, new this past year and already making a difference in many companies.

Simparel is unique in that it doesn't use program code to do its work. Instead, it uses a dictionary of terms that enable clients to configure their own operations quickly and easily, on their own sites. As an alternative, Simparel can do it for them at its hosting facilities.

"We have launched our solution built on a technology engineered for change," says Ron Grilli, CEO of Simparel. "We're changing the paradigm, introducing a system that manages the entire transaction flow of a fashion-related business: buying, selling, shipping, in an easy-to-use, completely comprehensive manner for businesses, large and small."

"Every decade or so, a new technology emerges that changes our industry," adds Richard Farb, Vice President, Sales and Marketing. "Simparel is that new technology. Complex fashion-related businesses can now manage their enterprise in a fast, flexible and affordable way."

David Roth, the company's Chief Technology Officer, devised the Simparel solution. Roth's career includes more than 450 successful enterprise system installations for the apparel, footwear and soft goods industries. "I started to look at all

the earlier solutions I had introduced," he comments, "and I thought, 'if I could do it all over again, how would I do it? How could I avoid all the traps and pitfalls that prior systems carried?'"

The old way was complex and time-consuming, Roth points out. "First, an implementation specialist had to review the client's business processes. Then he had to determine which of these processes were really essential and which the client could live without; that often involved negotiating back and forth. Then the development process got handed over to technicians, who engineered the system and tweaked it. And still you weren't finished: if the customer neglected to specify a function he needed, back you went into technical specification and development mode."

Roth evolved a system that worked on a simpler and broader basis, utilizing the concept of metadata, which is information on how each client should be processed. He brought his ideas to L Capital Partners, a mid-sized investment firm that seeks breakthrough ideas and helps bring them to market. Simparel made a good fit with L Capital's strategies—to such an extent, in fact, that L Capital invested \$4 million to bring the concept alive and create Simparel.

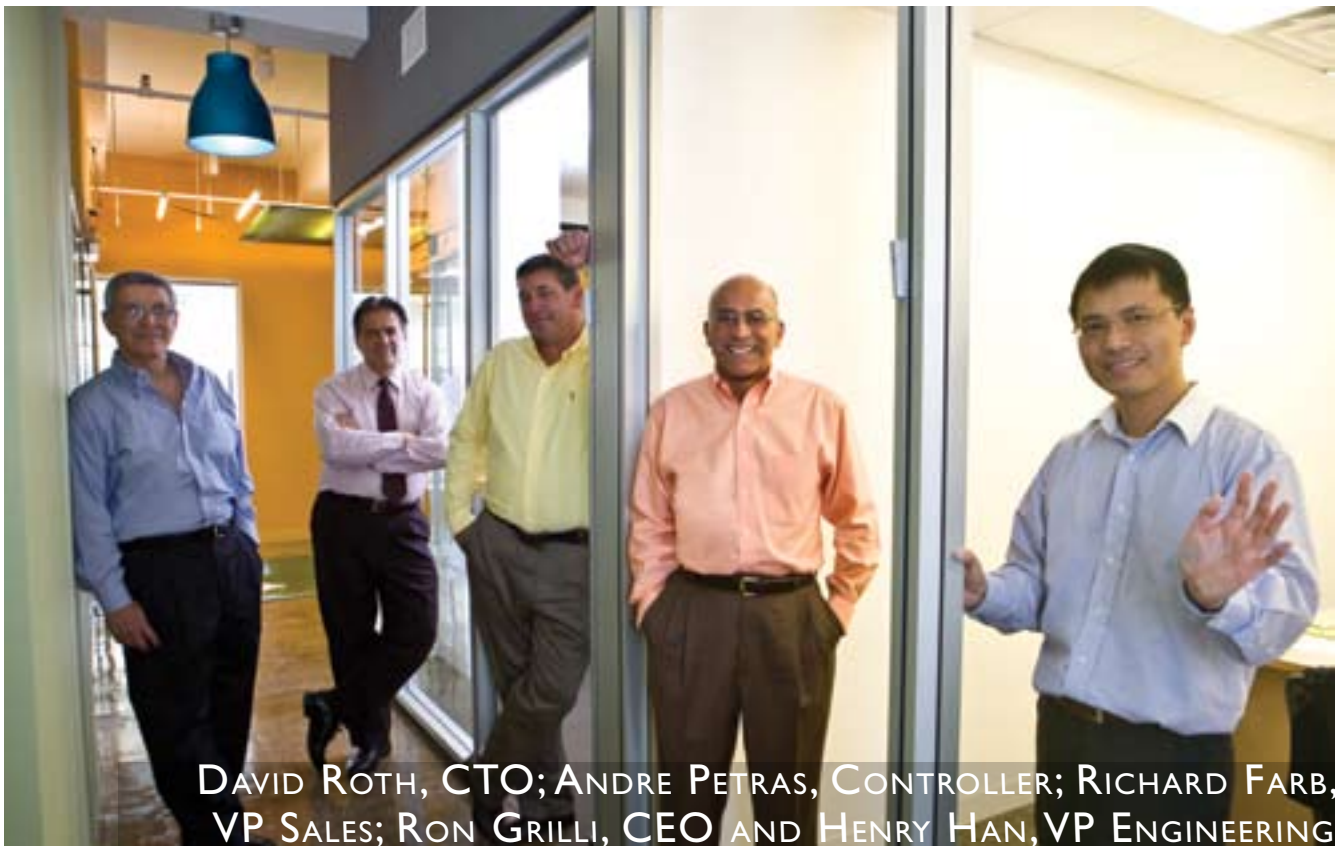
To run the new company, L Capital selected an industry leader with more than 30 years experience in marketing, developing and implementing global supply-chain solutions for top companies in the apparel and fashion-related sectors: Ron Grilli. Prior to starting Simparel, Grilli and his associates managed the implementation of software system for such brands as Phillips Van Heusen, Liz Claiborne, Jones NY, Maidenform, Guess, Perry Ellis and Theory.

The Simparel solution lets custom-

ers track the entire process of global sourcing through delivery, ranging from product management, sales order management, EDI management, account management and customer service information to production order management and tracking, letter of credit management, logistic tracking and cost and variance management. It goes further, as well, encompassing inventory management, warehouse management and RF controls, supply chain inventory balancing and allocation, and the management of picking, packing and shipping, as well as credit checking, accounts receivable, factor management, and return merchandise authorizations. Moreover, Simparel is flexible, available to clients not only as an installed system but also as a pay-as-you-go subscription service called SaaS (Software as a Service).

"With the practical experience of our staff, we have identified the patterns inherent in all enterprise applications, and we have built them into the Simparel engine," notes Grilli. "As a result, all required processes and views are managed by the Simparel definition dictionary. The user interface can be changed instantly, and at runtime. This capability includes languages, menus, form layouts, as well as fonts, formats and colors. If a company is international, the language can be changed instantly, no matter where in the world the user is logging in."

More and more companies are taking advantage of the Simparel solutions. One example: Ballin Inc., a leading manufacturer and marketer of men's better dress slacks in North America, Europe and Japan. Over the past decade, Ballin had spent more than \$1 million developing its custom software system. When its system vendor stopped supporting it and traditional ERP solutions fell short of Ballin's ERP



DAVID ROTH, CTO; ANDRE PETRAS, CONTROLLER; RICHARD FARB, VP SALES; RON GRILLI, CEO AND HENRY HAN, VP ENGINEERING

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requirements, the company turned to Simparel to duplicate its software.

Simparel developed a complete replication of Ballin's existing ERP functionality, including master production scheduling, cut planning, and multi-level automated supply chain allocation. Says Ron Caccione, CIO of Ballin, “Simparel was the only solution capable of delivering an unqualified carte blanche replication of all our existing functionality.” Further, the system roll-out incorporated a number of improvements and new processes that Ballin had been planning. Simparel also trained Ballin developers to use the Simparel configuration and development tools, to ensure Ballin's future self-sufficiency.

Another Simparel success story is that of Lauren Merkin, a designer of handbags, clutches, totes and purses. The firm needed a new supply chain management system to meet its growing costing, importing and management reporting needs. The firm's original system had become obsolete, and compa-

ny principals were spending their time working on spreadsheets rather than managing the business. When members of management searched for hosted solutions that would allow them to re-focus on their core roles, they found that most of the available systems were either one-size-fits-all distribution solutions, with limited reporting and configuration capabilities, or were generic apparel packages unsuited to the firm's handbag business.

Lauren Merkin turned to Simparel's subscription solution, which provided an inexpensive hosted system that included flexible reporting, customized processes, and an interface to the designer's third-party distribution center. Comments Lauren Merkin, CEO of her firm: “Now we can concentrate on growing our business, while Simparel provides the technology to make it happen.”

“Simparel is cutting our customers' implementation costs by at least one third,” says Grilli. “In addition, Simparel solves a frequent complaint from customers that

have used traditional platforms and who say that they are stuck with their initial system. Simparel adjusts to customers' changing needs, so they don't have to conform their business processes to someone else's ERP model.”

“We believe the market for Simparel will be huge,” comments Oded Weiss, partner and Chief Financial Officer of L Capital Partners. “The Simparel system is so adaptable and so easily tailored that it can expand beyond the apparel and fashion-related businesses to numerous other industries that are characterized by quick market responses to ever-changing consumer needs.” *fm*

By Peter Haas

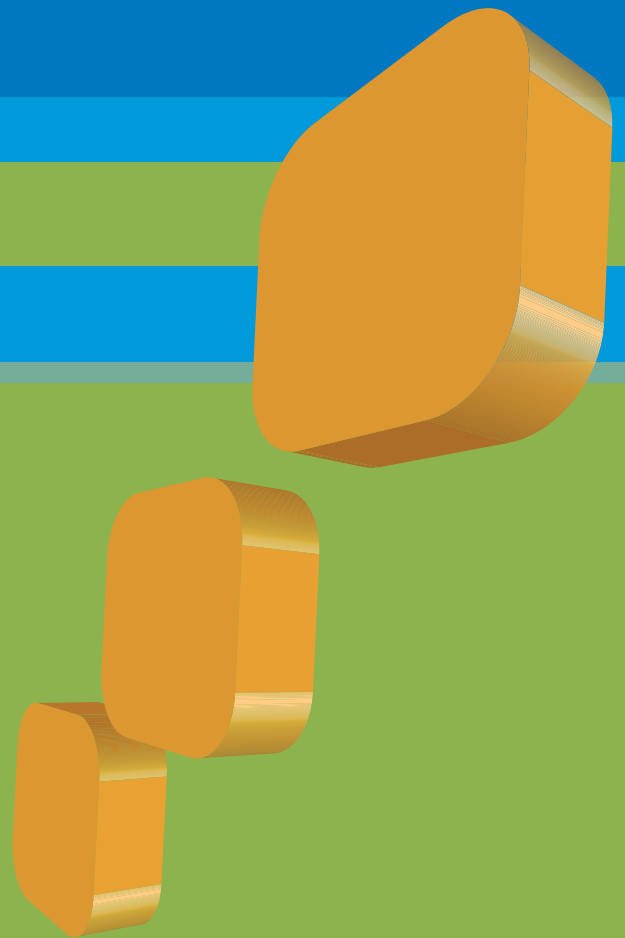
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