

1/2 Smart tags and Smart buttons make laundry smarter

Machine-readable, batteryless, digital tags buttons convey garment care instructions universally.

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Smart tags

The Situation. To improve the longevity of their clothes, and or decide what laundry machine settings are appropriate for clothes, many people look at the care recommendations printed on the manufacturer installed tags. Over time, a person may memorize the recommendations for many of his her clothes, which speeds up the sorting process.

The Need/Frustration. Now imagine someone else doing your laundry for you. Another person e.g. family member, relative or helper who doesn't clean your clothes regularly, will have to visually inspect the tags on your clothes to sort them. If this is a laundry service, again another human has to inspect and sort. If this is a robot, laundry sorter or laundry machine, how will it access the tag and get the care instructions? Also, keep in mind that often a piece of clothing has multiple tags to accommodate instructions in many languages.

The Solution. A digital smart tag that is machine readable, and can transmit the cloth care instructions even if the tag is not visually exposed. This can be a cheap RFID tag with flexible electronics in a soft & comfortable texture, appropriately waterproofed and sewn into the clothing, or even attached with modern water-resistant adhesive. The tag may be installed by the clothing manufacturer. **Also, the wearer can program and attach smart tags to clothes that did not come with smart tags. Thus, when tags are shaped as buttons, just sew on 'the button' – maybe even as a spare button in a less conspicuous location in the garment if the button cannot match the regular buttons.**

Solution

My vision is that Miele will sell (1) clothes washers/dryers with tag readers, or USB ports to accommodate readers; (2) a smartphone accessory *tag reader/writer* controlled by an app on the smartphone, AND (3) packs of tags that customers can program themselves, and then attach to clothes - in case the clothing did not already come with a smart tag in it (some clothes already do, but I am looking towards the future of the clothing industry, as well as Miele's future). These smart tags may be soft/flexible tags that discreetly reside in the garments, or in the form of buttons that may be sewn on the garments, or small localized circuits embroidered into the garment itself (Reference 1, cost is already down to 30 cents per embroidery) using a sewing machine and special thread!

Benefits: The smart tagging is an

ENABLER for a whole lot of other laundry sorting and washing innovations. A global standard for

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Creative's profile



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