



Zine of group 10

Textile repair
in The Hague

Introduction

In this zine we try to show some of the challenges and complexities of the textile repair sector in The Hague.

By identifying the problem, the stakeholders and the problem theory, we slowly got a better view on this sector, or maybe even better: the lack of sector. Textile repair in The Hague happens very fragmented, making it hard to get an insight. That is also one of the main struggles of our collaborating PHD student Angela ... She helped us start up, giving insight in the knowledge she had already gathered. After that we tried to map these challenges in practice. Our team exists of Anna, Ilse, Lara, Marit and Tinus.



Lotte's Textile Adventure

Once upon a time, there was Lotte who was madly in love with her soon-to-be husband. The only thing missing for her dream wedding was a dress. Since she was a little girl she has dreamed about getting married in her mothers dress. It has this beautiful fabric and Lotte tried the dress on and it fits her perfectly. Apart from that Lotte also would like to wear her mothers dress since she wants to be more sustainable, respect her mother's tradition and also because she just graduated and therefore doesn't have a lot of money. But then one day she saw that part of the lace got ripped. Because of that, she now has to look for someone who can repair her mothers dress before the wedding.



Oh no, I can't fix this myself! I have to call Julia, she does these kinds of repairs all the time

*Lotte dreaming about her
wedding...*



*with the perfect
wedding dress...*



... at Julia's place

The first person that came to Lotte's mind is her friend Julia, since they once had a talk about textile repair and Julia mentioned that she can repair clothing. So Lotte went to Julia with her dress but Julia said that it is way too difficult for her to fix the lace, she can only do easy fixes. That's too bad but at least Lotte knows now that if she has something minor to fix then she can go to her friend.

Sorry, I can't do lace. You need to find someone with professional knowledge. Honestly, I often don't know where to send people either. Everyone does slightly different things but nobody knows who does what! Have you tried online yet?



Julia

We talked to some people who do their own small repair of clothes. We even do it ourselves! We all know someone who can fix those small holes and easy textiles.

Lotte thinks to herself:

“How can it be that none of the repairmen know each other? There are so many places in The Hague... but none talk to each other.



There is no overview, no central point, no easy way. Why does it feel like a treasure hunt without a map?”

Lotte lost all hope and started wandering aimlessly around in The Hague. She sees a small repair shop and walks in. The first person she talked to was one of the repairmen working in the back of the shop and he unfortunately did not speak Dutch or English. Lotte was about to give up, when the owner walked in and he spoke Dutch. He said they could repair her dress.



We talked with a local shop owner. He told us that he learned his craft from his father. He also noticed that there are little to no people who work in tailoring and textile repair that come from a western European background. He did not see any contact between single shops.

Lotte did as Julia recommended and checked online.



However, most people who could help her lived far away and the dress would have to be shipped to them and then back to her.

“Oh this will never get done in time! I need to find someone in the Hague!”



Lotte then thought that maybe she could just ask the store where her mother got the dress in the first place if they are able to fix it, but unfortunately the store does not offer a repair option.



Because of that, while Lotte was strolling around in the city to taste her wedding cake she saw a repair cafe and thought to herself: "This must be it, here for sure someone will be able to fix my wedding dress".

But...



Old lady at the repair cafe:

Oh no dear, this dress needs some professional hands. But I don't really know anyone who can do that for you...



Lotte couldn't believe it!!! Finally she found the person with the right knowledge to fix her beautiful dress.

As a thank you she invited the repairman to her wedding.



Happy End!!

Reflection

This story embodies the stakeholders and challenges in the textile repair industry in The Hague. We decided to let Lotte visit all of our identified stakeholders and let her explore the fragmented world of textile repair, including the different identified challenges.

The reason we chose a wedding dress is that it often has emotional value and contains special textiles like lace. Lace can be a hard textile to repair, because every seam is very visible.

Our first choice was to let the story go from more corporate to personal. Which means that in our initial draft, Lotte would go to all the established repair shops / cafes etc. but would in the end have it repaired by an informal repairer who has the right knowledge to fix the lace. However, we changed that after visiting a local repair shop. The owner contradicted us on our bias on lace; he could definitely repair that! So, to align the story more with reality, we decided that the wedding dress should be fixed at a local shop.

The challenges Lotte faces in the story are also based on true challenges. We learned that the textile repair sector is very fragmented, and doesn't communicate amongst themselves at all.

We were unfortunately not able to visit all of our identified stakeholders. Repair café Den Haag will open on 22-11-2025 again, making it not within our timeframe to visit them. We tried contacting them, but we did not receive an answer unfortunately.

In the story we incorporate online repair as well. However, because Angela specifically focusses on The Hague, we did not incorporate it in the rest of our research. This explains the choice for the city of The Hague as well.

We consciously incorporated a possible language barrier as well. This is because we learned that most people working in a single repair shop are not from a western European background, making it very possible for a language barrier to exist.



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Thank You for reading