

# THE MATERIALS SHOW

California's NEW one stop Apparel and Footwear Materials Sourcing Expo

January 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015

California Market Center-Los Angeles



## SoCal Materials Show Debut Highly Anticipated

Come the new year, Hisham Muhareb, president of American Events Inc., is looking to bring the same magic he weaves with his hugely successful Northeast and Northwest sourcing shows to Southern California. The semi-annual SoCal Materials Show will launch Jan. 14–15, 2015, at the Los Angeles Fashion District's California Market Center.

"The time is right," Muhareb says. "I do feel like this will be the next successful endeavor for us. We are fulfilling a need in California, and Los Angeles is the next logical locale."

Muhareb, whose Northwest Materials Show started as a Nike vendor fair in the 1980s and then took it over in the 1990s, has put together the recipe that works for a wide range of manufacturers, from footwear companies to performance apparel brands to high-tech companies such as Apple and Samsung looking for cutting-edge materials and trend forecasting all under one roof in a two-day format. His 20-year-old Portland, Oregon-based Northwest Materials Show, which attracts nearly 200 suppliers from around the world, is the largest single performance apparel and footwear materials expo of its kind in North America. Its Northeast counterpart, held in Boston and created in 2005 at the request of Muhareb's East Coast clients, mirrors the West Coast format. The pair of shows, which run twice yearly and are usually sold out, run back to back in March and September.

For the SoCal show, however, Muhareb is tweaking both his focus and his timing. While many of the suppliers will be the same, "the additional ones we are going after are apparel-specific suppliers such as Texollini, Events Fabrics, Deer Creek, Schoeller Textil," Muhareb explains. "It's more apparel than footwear, more exhibitors with performance materials as well as fashion and lifestyle. Lifestyle is what drives this industry to do more and more every year. We're looking to bring in skate companies, surf companies, sports-related, activewear, and outdoor manufacturers—anyone who can use technical fabrics and materials. Wearable technology is the next thing. It's so Los Angeles, so the future."

And the show will take place two months earlier—in January and July. "Many apparel brands said that the Northwest and Northeast shows are too late to source materials," Muhareb says. "Two months prior, it fits with the lifestyle and fashion calendar."

Muhareb was prompted to create the SoCal show by loyal clients such as Skechers, DC Shoes, and Deckers, all of whom have been holding their own individual vendor shows. "They've been asking me to come down and combine all the vendor fairs together because essentially the same people come to all of them," Muhareb says. "We will be combining all the brands' vendor fairs under one roof, so instead of having to stay for a week or ten days, they can see all the brands in two days in one place."

As the word is getting out, registration is brisk. Muhareb anticipates some 120 suppliers and 500–600 attendees. Suppliers at the SoCal Show will be exhibiting "a lot of new materials that are available sooner

than the Northwest Show," he notes. The offerings include natural and synthetic leathers, fabrics including the latest technical fabrics, threads, sustainable and green materials, hardware such as fasteners of all kinds, buckles, buttons, shoelaces, accessories, outsoles and midsoles, and even chemicals—Rustoleum will be demonstrating its Never Wet fabric and leather spray, which is water and dirt repellent. In addition to the materials themselves, the show will offer visitors presentations on color and trend forecasting.

One of the keys to the material shows' success is their very comfortable, personable atmosphere. "We hear back from a lot of attendees that they feel like they are dealing with a small mom-and-pop shop," Muhareb says. "They know everyone's name and face, we provide a lot of services—lunch, receptions, coffee, tea. Hospitality is number one for us."

At the same time, the brief two-day timeframe, coupled with the one-stop-shop setup, makes for a high-energy environment. "It's a no-nonsense show," Muhareb notes. "It's nose to the grindstone, all business. There's no extra fluff of the other shows that can distract them."

Another bonus for vendors, Muhareb says, is that so many major companies are headquartered in the Los Angeles area, which will make it easier for them to send more people to the show. "Instead of a handful of people, these companies will actually shuttle their people to the show," he explains. "Instead of sending a few from their materials and sourcing department, they will send product developers and designers. More of the decision-makers will be attending. It's a huge opportunity for a lot of people to network, meet other people in the industry."

Muhareb is confident the SoCal Materials Show will become a staple in the sourcing schedule, and not just for Los Angeles-based companies. "We have a track record," he says. "What differentiates our show is the fact that we're taking a successful event and duplicating it in different parts of the world where it is needed. People would not keep coming back if they weren't doing good business. A lot of brands that are down in Southern California will be very happy to find this resource right in their backyard."

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[www.thematerialshows.com/SoCal\\_Materials\\_Show.html](http://www.thematerialshows.com/SoCal_Materials_Show.html)