

# CALIFORNIA ApparelNews

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## URBANE LEGEND

With By Louis, the moniker for the celebrated Louis Verdad's newest collection, the designer dug deep into his archives to reimagine them with today's trends in mind. "It's oxygen for people like me," Verdad said. "It's the desire of continuously creating. It's the idea that every day you come to a place and make something new." For more looks, see page 3.

TONY DURAN

### INDUSTRY FOCUS: DENIM

## Adding Affordability Into the Denim Mix Amid Economic Challenges

By Dorothy Crouch *Contributing Writer*

The working-class origins of denim eventually bled into the culture of rebels and misfits—a far cry from high price points. Once denim became stylish, rising price points placed it farther from its humble beginnings. There is now denim across all fashion categories and retail pricing. Its versatility, durability and status as a fashion staple make it one of the most ubiquitous options for apparel.

For denim and apparel insiders, from discount retailers to luxury fashion houses, this category might seem to be an easy sell during times of economic hardship, but convincing consumers to part with their hard-earned cash remains difficult. *California Apparel News* asked denim experts: *What are the best solutions to present affordable options in the denim space amid global tariffs and challenged economies?*

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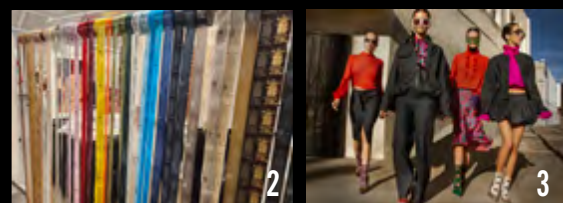


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### INSIDE

*Where fashion gets down to business<sup>SM</sup>*



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Texworld and Apparel Sourcing provided inspiration and education during the July 21–23 Los Angeles edition at the California Market Center, which featured educational sessions such as “From Innovation to Adoption:



Scaling Next-Gen Bio-Based Materials From Innovation to Retail Reality” (pictured top left), an array of exhibitors such as Moda Style with Texlabel (center bottom), and trend installations.



## L.A. Sourcing, Textile Shows Provide Greater Options

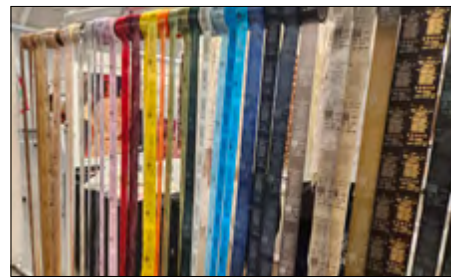
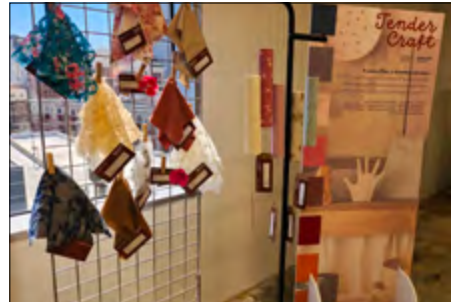
By Dorothy Crouch Contributing Writer

As July wound down, Los Angeles welcomed a roster of apparel textile and sourcing shows across categories. **Messe Frankfurt** hosted its summer Los Angeles **Texworld** and **Apparel Sourcing L.A.** editions July 21–23 at the **California Market Center** in downtown’s fashion district to showcase supply-chain resources from textile providers to apparel manufacturers. **Comexposium’s Interfilière Los Angeles** launched as a colocated event with **Texworld** and **Apparel Sourcing** to provide supply-chain options in intimates, active and swim.

**Preface Los Angeles** hosted its summer event July 29–30 at **Mica Studios** in the arts district, partnering with consultancy firm **Denim Dudes** and denim-industry event **Here|After** for an intimate take on sourcing and supply-chain options.

### Texworld and Apparel Sourcing LA treat visitors to ‘one-stop’ sourcing

Texworld and Apparel Sourcing Los Angeles provided variety to support attendees’



sourcing decisions, yet the shows are also popular for the calendar of Textile Talks education sessions. This year’s education schedule included topics such as “The AI-Powered Product Journey: Design, Production and

Commerce in 2026,” “Weaving Tomorrow’s Narratives: Fall/Winter 2027/28 presented by **Peclers Paris**” and “From Innovation to Adoption: Scaling Next-Gen Bio-Based Materials From Innovation to Retail Reality,” which drew the attention of Kathirine Jameson, creative director of San Diego casual womenswear brand **Lilial**, who was interested in sourcing fabrics made with sustainable, natural fibers

“There is a lot of different information,” Jameson said. “You can source different types of things and it’s a one-stop place.”

Lavini Tang, a technical designer and owner of Los Angeles-based **N49 Studio, Inc.**, was grateful for the opportunity to explore sourcing, factories and trims in a local setting.

“I found a factory and they have great prices to produce my styles and I found a trim company,” Tang shared. “We don’t have many options to really connect with international vendors. I am grateful they’re doing this show here. I don’t want to go to New York or Las Vegas.”

First-time exhibitor Monica Mazzucchelli of **Moda Style** represented **Texlabel**, whose focus is producing care labels. The need for accuracy and transparency has made the companies within this segment of apparel manufacturing crucial partners for designers and brands.

“There are new regulations and the Digital Product Passport is starting soon, so it’s becoming a reality for clients to know they have to be compliant with the information that they put on the care labels,” said Mazzucchelli. “The concern for the client is ‘Is my garment going to have the correct information?’ and ‘How do I know if that is right or not?’ We offer the service of making sure the labels are compliant for all the countries you’re going to sell in.”

### Inaugural Interfilière LA affords access to sourcing intimates, active, swim

The launch of **Interfilière’s** Los Angeles show drew attendees representing the intimates, active and swim categories in search of fresh materials and production partners. Searching for the perfect new fabric or a factory more aligned with a brand’s mission was top of mind for visitors, but the show also afforded opportunities to connect and collaborate.

“Our conference program explored the trends shaping the 2027/2028 seasons, featured a candid roundtable talk with leading

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## Inside the Industry

**Functional Fabric Fair** powered by **PERFORMANCE DAYS** has announced that registration is now open for the Oct. 27–28 edition at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland. New this season on Oct. 26 is the Day 0 OIA Catalyst Conference, developed in partnership with the Outdoor Industry Association. Designed for both attendees and exhibitors, the conference precedes exhibit-hall sourcing and Expert Talks education programming, bringing together designers, product developers and material decision-makers focused on performance, sustainability and innovation. “Our exhibitors and attendees have been asking for more than just depth on supply-chain sustainability and compliance; they’ve wanted more peer-to-peer engagement, and OIA is the right partner to help us deliver both,” said Steve McCullough, event vice president, **Functional Fabric Fair**.

**Covation Biomaterials LLC** has introduced **Sorona elasterell-p** fiber. Made with partially plant-based Sorona polymer, it is the first U.S.-produced bicomponent stretch fiber offered by **CovationBio**. Sorona elasterell-p fiber delivers durable stretch and exceptional shape retention without the use of elastane. Designed for apparel applications that rely on responsive and durable stretch, including activewear and workwear, Sorona elasterell-p fiber offers the added benefit of its bio-based foundation, giving apparel brands the dual benefit of garments that perform and have a lower environmental footprint. “Sorona elasterell-p fiber is our first branded fiber,” said **CovationBio** CEO Steven Ackerman. “As a partially bio-based polymer, Sorona has been an ingredient in innovative textile solutions used by leading apparel brands worldwide for what they need next.”

**The Dallas Men’s Show** wrapped its July run at Dallas Market Center with the strongest total store attendance the summer edition has seen in at least five years. Temporary exhibitors and permanent showrooms also shared a single roof at the World Trade Center, a small logistical change that buyers said made an already strong show seamless. “We received positive feedback on having everything under one roof, which makes the show even easier to work,” said Cindy Morris, president and CEO of the DMC. “We value the time of our retailers, who want to fly or drive in, meet with brands, take time for discovery, make decisions then depart with the confidence they accomplished a lot in a couple of days.”

**United Leather** has supplied hides from the L.A. Fashion District to fashion designers, interior designers and entertainers for four decades. In 2023, the company brought on a new generation to lead: Kiana Dadbin as head of sales and Zach Cadwallader as head of online marketing and innovation. Their first move targeted how emerging designers source now. Cadwallader built an AI visualizer that renders any hide in **United’s** catalog as a finished product: a bag, a shoe, a whip, anything imaginable, so a designer can judge the leather before ordering. It’s made for the emerging and DTC brands that source remotely, move fast and rarely set foot in a warehouse. It also changes how designers think. Check it out at [UnitedLeather.com](http://UnitedLeather.com).

Jay Wetherald (818) 613-2385 SoCal Textile Group  
Showroom Cooper Design Space Building, Suite M6  
[jbyrdtextiles@aol.com](mailto:jbyrdtextiles@aol.com) / Updated website! [www.SocalTG.com](http://www.SocalTG.com)

## SoCal Textile Group

### ECLAT TEXTILES Performance Knits

Leading provider of circular knits to higher-end athleisure and activewear brands. Los Angeles stock program for domestic production. Heather Moss Jersey, Interlocks, TENCEL, and many more performance-knit options to choose from. Also, knit-to-order from Taiwan.



### VICTORYTEX Performance Wovens

Victory is a woven converter based in Taiwan. Excellent source for stretch and non-stretch wovens. Minimum order quantity is 3,000 per fabric / 1,000 yards per color. Can be flexible on MOQ.



### REX FABRICS Los Angeles Stock

Rex Fabrics is a converter located in Los Angeles offering a large selection of stock fabrics for yoga, sport, swim, gymnastics, and dance. Minimum order quantity is only 5 yards per color. Large color selection, and color cards available upon request.



### TANGANA TEXTILES

Tangana Textiles is a European producer and your wholesale source of eco-friendly cotton and poly knitted fabrics, as well fine blank garments that are perfect for imprints. From GMO-free cotton, through mixed compositions, to recycled polyester-based products - our fabrics are the perfect canvas for your brand’s casual apparel, athleisure, high fashion collections or even lingerie.



Upcoming Trade Shows  
Functional Fabric Fair Portland, Ore., Oct. 27-28, Booth #925  
The Fabric Show San Francisco, Nov. 8–9 /





## Louis Verdad Revisits Classics to Create Empowering Fall '26 Collection

With a career spanning nearly 25 years, Louis Verdad went into his archives to inform his Fall 2026 collection, named **By Louis**. The designer downplays the concept of being inspired, instead expressing the design process as vital to his existence.

"It's oxygen for people like me," Verdad said. "It's the desire of continuously creating. It's the idea that every day you come to a place and make something new."

Verdad planned his direction by examining his style library, where he looked through almost a quarter century's worth of his patterns, updating them to make the styles relevant to today's trends.

"It becomes effortless. I have a library of so many patterns and adjust for the current fashion. That library has been my archival history. From there, I pick up what I used to do," said Verdad. "I am still a tailor and believe in clothes that fit the body. It's a misconception that because you fit the body it has to be uncomfortable."

This understanding of designing tailored pieces with comfort in mind has led Verdad to create his signature suiting with small yet powerful feminine details. Verdad also nods to Bi-

anca Jagger—actor, activist and **Studio 54** regular—who famously wore a powerful **Yves Saint Laurent** suit at her wedding to **The Rolling Stones** frontman Mick.

"I reinterpreted the suit that Bianca Jagger wore in the '70s. It's been very successful. The suit has a soft, tailored jacket. It's been a winner for everyone," Verdad noted. "The brand is recognized for good, soft tailoring and beautiful blouses."

Softer tailoring is the hallmark of Louis Verdad's pieces, which the designer sees as clothing that supports strong women. The designer aims to create silhouettes that relay strength but speak to a feminine power.

"The whole juxtaposition of having something softer with something masculine is appropriate for women who like to empower themselves," Verdad said. "It is a celebration, and saying, 'Look, I can be just as strong as you are by wearing the same shirt, but mine has a little bit of [feminine features]—it's the same feeling. The way the industry is going, there are no boundaries for men and women's fashion. A lot of men are wearing skirts.'"

The new collection is represented by **French & Co. Show-**

**room** owner Elizabeth French, who noted that many of Verdad's clients have been fans of the designer's work for decades.

The new collection can be found in shops such as **Lou Los Olivos** in Los Olivos, Calif., **Bleu Clothing** in Los Angeles, **Garbarini** in Denver, **Chatta Box** in Baton Rouge, La., and the **Estilo Boutique** in Austin, Texas.

"He always has his finger on the pulse of what's happening. He's always got a fresh approach. It just looks feminine and powerful and beautiful, and yet, the one new thing about the brand is it's much more wearable now," explained French. "He is really diving into stretch denim. We mastered this suit. Not one person who bought the line for Fall didn't buy this stretch denim suit. It's an amazing wardrobe builder. Everybody needs it, and it's super flattering."

By Louis bottoms are available in sizes 0–10, with tops and jackets made in sizes 2–10. The collection retails from \$350 to \$650. Additional information regarding Louis Verdad and wholesale opportunities is available at [louisverdada.com](http://louisverdada.com).

—Dorothy Crouch

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# What are the best solutions to present affordable options in the denim space amid global tariffs and challenged economies?



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## Denim

Continued from page 1

**Christina Choi**  
Founder  
DE: Part Denim



The best solutions are to make smarter decisions throughout the supply chain rather than simply lowering quality or raising prices.

For us, one of the solutions is producing closer to market when possible.

While the unit cost may be higher, shorter lead times and lower minimums help reduce inventory risk and overproduction, which are often much more expensive in the long run.

Also, it's important to create products that customers genuinely value. In a challenged economy, consumers become much more intentional with their purchases. If you deliver exceptional fit and quality at a fair price, people are often willing to invest because the product lasts. Affordability isn't always about having the lowest price—it's about delivering the best value.

**Onur Çınar**  
Senior Marketing Executive  
ISKO



Affordability is increasingly about delivering greater value rather than simply lowering the cost of the fabric. At ISKO, we focus on developing solutions that combine performance, comfort, durability and design appeal, allowing

brands to create products that deliver long-term value to consumers.

At the same time, we are seeing greater interest in versatile and commercially relevant fabrics that can work across different fits, categories and collections. Technologies that enhance comfort or performance without adding unnecessary complexity can help brands optimize product development and production.

Scale and efficiency are also becoming increasingly important. By combining advanced textile technologies with industrial-scale manufacturing capabilities, we can support brands in developing differentiated denim solutions while responding to cost pressures across the supply chain.

Ultimately, the goal is to find the right balance between price, quality, performance and desirability, ensuring that denim remains accessible without compromising the product experience.

**Laura Corna**  
Sales Manager  
ACM



At ACM, we are seeing growing demand for raw, non-electroplated metals such as aluminium and steel. Compared with more elaborate electroplated finishes, these materials can help reduce both produc-

tion costs and process complexity, while also offering environmental benefits through the reduced use of electroplating treatments.

Their naturally industrial and understated appearance is particularly well suited to denim, where authenticity, functionality and a worn-in aesthetic remain central. Rather than representing a compromise, raw metals can become a deliberate design choice: contemporary, functional and consistent with the identity of the garment.

The best affordable solutions, therefore, are not simply lower-cost alternatives. They emerge from the combination of intelligent material selection, process efficiency and aesthetic relevance. In this way, brands can manage costs, reduce environmental impact and continue to offer denim products with a strong and distinctive identity.

**Chad Doub**  
Global Market Segment Manager,  
Casual Wear and Home  
Eastman Naia



The most effective solutions are those that combine proximity, flexibility and performance, helping the value chain manage costs and tariff exposure without reducing product value. Brands and mills need solutions that can

adapt to different markets, applications and price points while also being developed closer to where products are made and sold.

In denim, for example, the U.S. market plays a central role due to its strong heritage and brand ecosystem. This makes collaboration with regional supply chains essential, including mills in Mexico and the broader network that comes together in initiatives such as the Apparel Sourcing Show in Guatemala City. These connections help link material innovation with regional production capabilities and support more-localized sourcing strategies.

Versatility is equally important, across performance requirements and price points. The Naia Renew denim proposition is structured around three directions. Authentic Denim blends Naia Renew with cotton to preserve denim's familiar character while enhancing softness and dry comfort. Fashion Denim combines it with lyocell for lighter, more-fluid constructions. Performance Denim pairs it with polyester or recycled polyester to support moisture management, quick-dry performance and odor management.

This adaptability allows mills and brands to build differentiated products from a shared fiber platform, responding more efficiently to different consumer expectations, end uses and market segments.

**Anatt Finkler**  
Creative Director  
Global Denim



When the market is under pressure and uncertainty becomes the norm, relationships matter more than ever. This is the moment to remind customers, supply-chain partners and the brands we work with that

we're committed for the long term, not just when business is easy. Trust is built over years, and periods like this are when it proves its value.

From a product perspective, core programs become the strongest strategy. When confidence drops, brands are naturally less inclined to take risks on highly directional products. That doesn't mean innovation disappears. It simply shifts. Instead of chasing the next big thing, innovation comes from improving what already works: developing better fabrics, integrating more-responsible materials, optimizing processes and delivering greater value without compromising quality. Timeless, versatile products tend to outperform trend-driven ones in uncertain markets.

From a sourcing standpoint, nearshoring has become one of the most effective ways to reduce exposure to tariffs and supply-chain volatility. Producing closer to the end market shortens lead times, lowers freight and currency risk, and provides greater agility when demand shifts. That's where mills like ours in Mexico can play an important role.

At the same time, nearshoring shouldn't come at the expense of long-standing supplier relationships. The strongest supply chains are built on diversification, not replacement. Brands that balance trusted global partners with reliable regional manufacturing and collaborations are ultimately more resilient than those constantly chasing the lowest landed cost. In the end, the same principle applies across the board: long-term partnerships, consistency and reliability will always create more value than short-term decisions driven solely by cost.

**Paolo Gnutti**  
Creative Director  
ISKO LUXURY BY PB



In times of global tariffs and economic uncertainty, the challenge is not simply to make denim more affordable but to make it smarter.

For decades, denim has been the world's most democratic fabric. It has always combined quality, functionality and accessibility, becoming a universal language that transcends generations, cultures and lifestyles. I believe this is still its greatest strength.

When costs increase, the most immediate reaction is often to reduce them. I prefer to look at it from a different perspective: increasing the value of what we create. A product with a strong identity, designed to last and to create an emotional connection, will always be a better investment than one that simply costs less.

Today we have incredible opportunities through innovation. Advanced materials, responsible dyeing technologies, new finishing techniques and more-efficient production processes allow us to offer greater value without necessarily increasing the final price.

I also believe consumers are changing. They are no longer looking only for a garment; they are looking for authenticity, quality and products with a story worth wearing. They want pieces that remain relevant beyond a single season.

For me, the future of denim is about balancing tradition with innovation, creativity with technology and accessibility with lasting value. Denim should continue to be the world's most democratic fabric while becoming one of its most innovative.

The future doesn't belong to the products that cost less. It belongs to the products that are worth more.

**Juan Carlos Gordillo**  
Independent Designer



The conversation around affordable denim often starts with tariffs. I believe it should start with value.

Tariffs certainly increase costs, but they are not the root cause of the industry's challenges. They simply expose a business model

that has spent decades teaching consumers to expect more for less.

The solution is not to make denim cheaper. The solution is to make it more valuable.

That begins with educating consumers through honest storytelling. When people understand why a well-made pair of jeans lasts longer, uses better materials, reflects skilled craftsmanship and is produced under responsible labor and environmental standards, they stop comparing only prices and begin recognizing true value.

At the same time, I believe the industry should continue strengthening regional manufacturing and producing closer to the markets it serves. Shorter supply chains improve resilience, quality, collaboration, transparency and accountability while creating a healthier balance between business and responsibility.

A responsibly made garment will never compete with fast fashion on price alone—and it shouldn't have to. They are fundamentally different products created for different expectations and different consumers.

The future of denim will not be defined by who offers the lowest price. It will be defined by who earns the greatest trust through thoughtful design, lasting quality, transparency and purpose.

Affordability should not mean making denim cheaper. It should mean creating denim that is truly worth its price.

**Philippe Mignot**  
Project Manager  
NextPrinting



For us, digital textile printing represents a particularly effective response to market uncertainty. It enables brands to develop and produce smaller quantities without having to commit to high minimum-order volumes, aligning production more closely with actual demand and limiting the risk of overproduction. Faster development and execution times also allow companies to respond more quickly to changes in the market and consumer preferences.

Digital printing also offers significant advantages during sampling, prototyping and

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**THE AUTHENTIC LOOK  
OF VINTAGE DENIM,  
WITH THE COMFORT OF STRETCH DENIM.**



*What are the best solutions to present affordable options in the denim space amid global tariffs and challenged economies?*



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## Denim *Continued from page 4*

collection development. By reducing preparation times and allowing rapid modifications, it enables brands to maintain greater flexibility until the final stages of the process, avoiding premature investment in high volumes or solutions that have not yet been fully validated.

A further advantage is the possibility of integrating printing and finishing within the same design and development process. This makes it possible to achieve denim, vintage, leather and trompe-l'œil effects with a high degree of precision and repeatability, increasing the perceived value of the product without necessarily relying on more-complex traditional processes.

In a context of strong cost pressure, the most effective response is to offer speed, quality, service, customization and the ability to transform an idea rapidly into a reliable and distinctive product. This is where digital printing can help make denim more accessible, reducing risk, lead times and complexity, without diminishing its creative value.

### Ebru Ozaydin Product Category Director—Denim, Wovens and Ready-to-Wear The LYCRA Company



Global tariffs, inflation and cautious consumer spending are redefining value in denim. While some brands may respond by lowering quality to reduce costs, The LYCRA Company believes affordability should be measured

by cost per wear, not simply purchase price. The jeans consumers value most are those that maintain their fit, comfort and appearance over time.

Our LYCRA XTRA LIFE brand platform is designed to extend garment life by addressing the reasons consumers stop wearing their favorite jeans. LYCRA VintageFX fiber remains the market's only comfort-stretch solution that delivers authentic rigid denim aesthetics with lasting comfort and recovery. LYCRA ADAPTIV fiber adapts to everyday movement and natural fluctuations in body size, helping garments stay comfortable and wearable longer. LYCRA T400 fiber serves as the fabric's performance engine, delivering durable stretch, recovery and shape retention. LYCRA Anti-Slip fiber—the denim industry's only value-chain solution—improves garment construction by reducing seam slippage and is now also available as renewable LYCRA Anti-Slip fiber.

These technologies can be combined into layered performance systems. For example, LYCRA VintageFX EcoMade fiber paired with renewable LYCRA fiber delivers authentic vintage styling, lasting comfort and renewable content in one fabric solution.

Beyond fiber innovation, The LYCRA Company brings decades of expertise across the entire denim value chain, partnering with mills, garment manufacturers, laundries and brands to engineer better-performing garments.

Ultimately, affordable denim is not about making cheaper jeans—it is about creating jeans that last longer, perform better and deliver greater value with every wear.

### Stefano Parrotta Technical Manager SOKO



Everyone in this industry is getting their margins squeezed. The goal isn't just using cheaper ingredients—it's about building smarter processes. When we help laundries cut down on energy, water and processing time, brands can

keep their collection affordable without compromising on quality.

### Katie Tague Senior Vice President, Global Marketing and Sales Artistic Milliners PVT LTD



Affordability doesn't have to come at the expense of innovation or product integrity. The most successful brands are finding value by investing in versatile fabrics that deliver multiple benefits—from comfort and durability to

performance fibers—while creating efficiencies throughout the supply chain.

Rather than chasing the lowest cost, we're focused on helping our partners build stronger assortments with fabrics that perform across multiple categories and price points. Innovation that improves manufacturing efficiency, reduces waste and extends product longevity ultimately creates value for both brands and consumers, making denim more accessible even in a challenging global environment.

### Adam Taubenfligel Co-founder and Creative Director Triarchy



Affordability is often framed as a pricing problem, but I think it's fundamentally a systems problem.

When tariffs rise or economies tighten, brands are forced to absorb higher costs, pass them on to consumers or compromise somewhere else. That usually means lower quality, more promotions or increased pressure throughout the supply chain.

The better solution isn't simply finding a cheaper way to make denim. It's designing a production system that removes unnecessary cost in the first place.

Fashion still relies on processes that consume enormous amounts of water, energy, chemicals, transportation and inventory. Each one adds cost before a garment ever reaches a customer. If we can eliminate those steps rather than optimize them, affordability and sustainability stop competing with one another.

That's why I believe the industry's biggest opportunity is redesign rather than efficiency. Better systems don't just reduce environmental impact—they create more-resilient businesses that are less vulnerable to external shocks, whether that's tariffs, inflation or supply-chain disruption.

Consumers deserve products that are well made and fairly priced, especially during challenging economic times. The brands that succeed won't simply be the ones that absorb today's pressures. They'll be the ones that

rethink how products are made so that lower cost becomes the natural outcome of a better-designed system.

### Alice Tonello Chief Brand and Strategy Officer Tonello



The best way to offer more-affordable options in denim is to rethink the process itself.

Alternative technologies can deliver the authentic looks the market expects while reducing the real cost of production. This means using less water and energy, lowering wastewater treatment costs, reducing harmful chemicals and achieving more-consistent results.

A fast return on investment is essential, but so is quality. Fewer defects, less reprocessing and fewer second-quality garments can make a significant difference to the final cost without compromising the product.

### Andrea Venier Managing Director Officina39



In a market affected by tariffs, inflationary pressure and cautious consumers, cost remains critical. Denim must compete not only on affordability, but on quality, emotion, aesthetics and product relevance.

At Officina39, this is where imaginable and performable strategic pillars come together.

Imaginable represents the creative power of chemistry: technologies that help brands and laundries create stronger visual identities and renewed desirability. Platforms such as Marvel Coating, with its leather-like, brilliant, metallic and laser-enhanced surface effects, or Recycrom, which transforms textile waste into a new language of color, show how finishing can make denim more distinctive, premium and emotionally relevant.

Performable makes this creativity industrially realistic. Technologies such as ZERO PP ALL.IN, designed to replace potassium permanganate through a simplified and cost-neutral process with laser and ozone, or AQUALLESS ALL-IN-ONE, developed to replace pumice stones while reducing water, sludge, handling and garment damage, demonstrate that efficiency can support both responsibility and product value.

The solution is a denim with a stronger value equation: more beauty, more differentiation and more quality, produced through smarter processes.

When efficiency serves creativity, denim can remain accessible without becoming ordinary—and can regain the desirability that has always made it an icon.

### Alejandro Ventura Sales Director Tejidos Royo



In today's environment, affordability is not about making cheaper denim. It is about creating more value through innovation, efficiency and supply-chain resilience.

We believe the best so-

lutions start with industrial efficiency and vertical integration. Our new vertical manufacturing platform in Alcedia de Crespins (Valencia, Spain) streamlines processes, increases flexibility, shortens lead times and improves cost efficiency while maintaining the quality, consistency and service global brands require.

Traceability and transparency are equally important. As brands navigate tariffs, regulations and changing sourcing strategies, fully traceable products help reduce risk, improve planning and build consumer confidence.

Innovation remains a key driver of affordability. Through technologies such as Dry Indigo, advanced finishes and differentiated coatings, we help brands create premium products with lower resource consumption and greater manufacturing efficiency. Our fabric developments combine Spanish regenerative cotton, lyocell and proprietary stretch technologies to deliver softness, comfort, elasticity and recovery. The result is a garment that looks better, lasts longer and retains its fit throughout its life cycle.

We also see durability, circularity and recyclability as critical value drivers. Our portfolio includes 100 percent recycled fabrics, recyclable constructions and regenerative fiber solutions that reduce dependence on virgin resources while supporting a circular model.

We continue investing in research and development, and our technical division has developed a range of premium-denim fabrics, made to protect workers in demanding industrial environments with the comfort and aesthetics of everyday denim.

Affordability and innovation are not opposing forces. Together, they create lasting value for brands, consumers and the entire denim ecosystem.

### Luciana Vivolo Chief Product Officer Vivolo



Making a product more affordable should not mean compromising on quality. The most effective solution is often to optimize processes while also increasing flexibility.

At Vivolo, we work closely with denim brands to develop alternative solutions that preserve the premium look and identity of the garment while keeping component costs under control. Lightweight metal finishes, Jacron labels and carefully selected materials can deliver strong visual impact without adding unnecessary complexity or expense.

Another key aspect is designing trims that comply with environmental requirements and can be more easily integrated into recyclable products. This enables brands to reduce waste, limit regulatory and customs-related risks, and make more-efficient sourcing decisions.

Production flexibility is equally important. Lower minimum-order quantities allow brands to test new collections without overloading inventory while rapid prototyping makes it possible to assess and refine solutions before moving into large-scale production.

The goal, ultimately, is not simply to make the product cheaper but to make every design and production decision more efficient. This can also result in a more-accessible price point, which is particularly relevant in the current economic climate. ●

*Responses have been edited for clarity and space.*

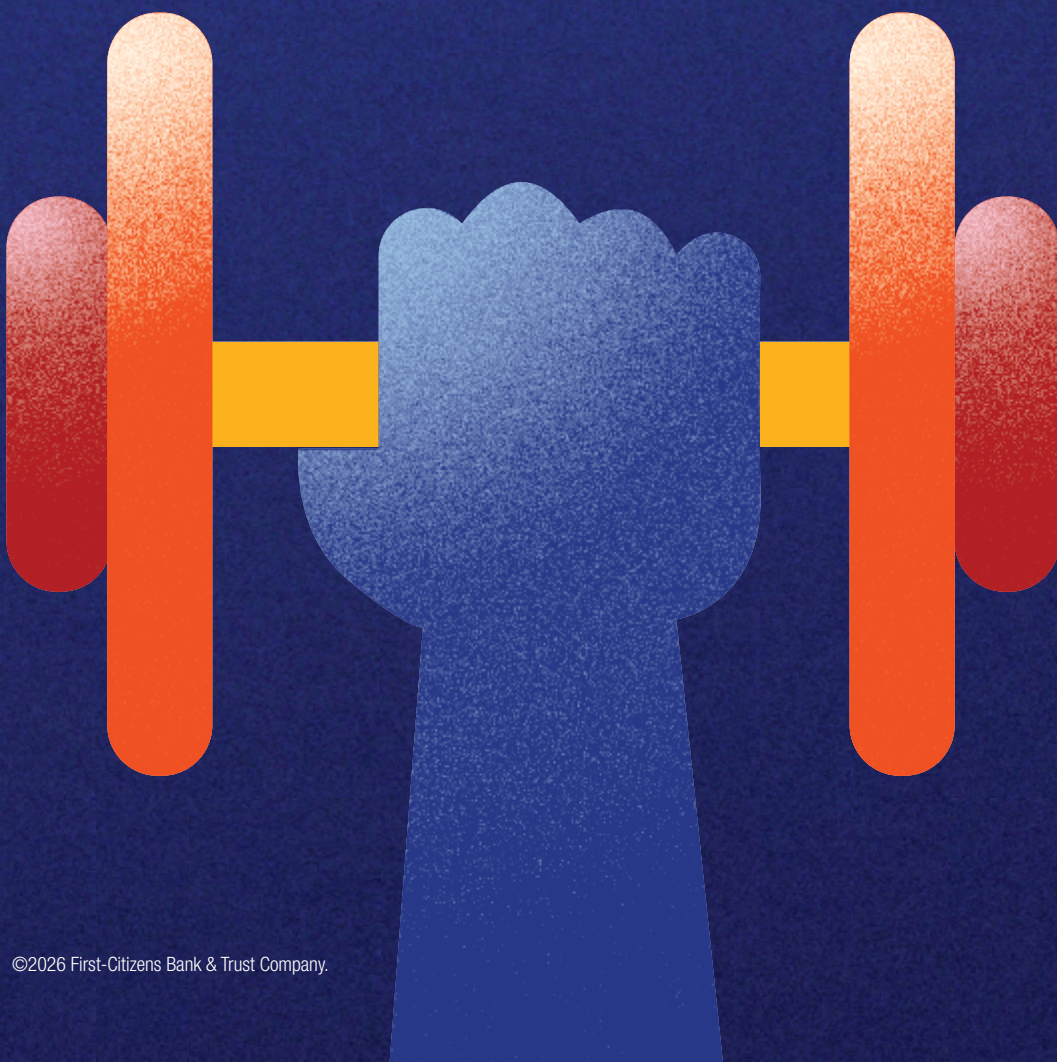


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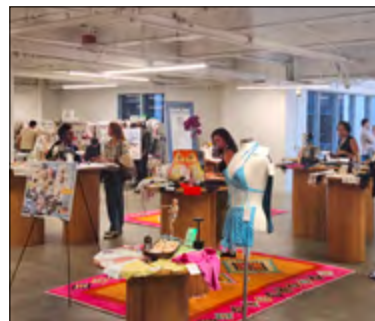
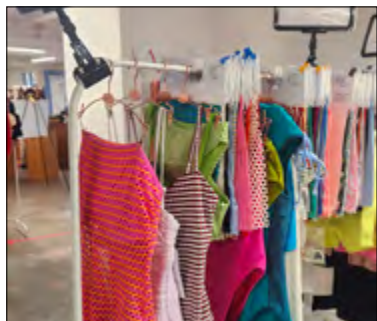


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## TRADE-SHOW REPORT



Interfilère debuted its Los Angeles edition as an event colocated with Texworld and Apparel Sourcing at the California Market Center. The event afforded swim-, intimates- and active-centered sourcing on

the West Coast, as a selection of global mills and suppliers met with designers, creative teams, buyers and executives to plan ahead with fresh and innovative textiles, and manufacturing solutions.

### Trade-show report

Continued from page 2

West Coast designers on the evolving needs of today's market and examined the growing demand for natural fibers and bio-based material innovations," explained Kirsten Griffin, visitor-promotions director of Comexposium U.S.'s fashion division, "These conversations highlighted how creativity, technology and responsible sourcing are driving the future of fashion."

According to Griffin, attendees were largely interested in circular materials, bio-based fibers, seamless technologies and specialty trims. Loulia Gotsis, a swim designer with **Miken Clothing**, which can be found at retailers including **Macy's**, **Nordstrom** and **Walmart**, was looking for nylon and spandex.

"I am looking more for textures like crochet; a lot of jacquards—especially for swim, because they're very easy to find for sweaters and tops but it's a little harder for swimsuits," Gotsis said. "I am trying to find some that potentially have a little bit of nylon because a lot of brands are trying to elevate their bikinis. I am going more for the texture and the content."

Interfilère also gave Gotsis an opportunity to explore factory options. She notes that manufacturers in China stand out for swimsuit production, but there are additional factories in other regions that are starting to catch her attention.

"Keeping the relationship between China and other countries and the U.S. is important because there is talent overseas," she said. "India and Bangladesh, too, but the quality in China is still excellent."

At the **Grandfine Textiles** booth, exhibitor Kina Lee, global director of sales and marketing for the Guangdong, China-

based textile manufacturer noticed attendees were attracted to neon, pastels and prints, while texture and raised patterns were ticking.

"A lot of people are coming and looking for swimwear," said Lee. "They are still looking for texture in swimwear. For lingerie, everybody still likes softer and functional fabrics."

### PREFACE partners with Denim Dudes and Here|After to promote community

Boutique sourcing show PREFACE returned to Los Angeles with event founder Betsy Franjola celebrating its 18th edition with a second collaboration with Denim Dudes and Here|After. Franjola noted the theme of the show was SEEDS, which need the correct conditions to flourish—similar to innovation. The same could be said of the partnership.

"Here|After and Denim Dudes bring deep denim expertise, cultural insight and a wonderfully engaged community. PREFACE brings a broader textile and supply-chain perspective," Franjola said. "We share a belief that an industry event should offer more than a marketplace. It should create conversation, encourage curiosity and give people something meaningful to take back into their work."

Many industry leaders supported the show through meaningful contributions. Aligning with the SEEDS theme, **Eastman Naia** participated in an installation featuring seed imagery printed on fabrics made with Naia fibers.

"We were thrilled to be part of the installation with Naia fabric hanging," said Joy Gruver, Naia business development leader for the Americas. "The word is getting out, and

the fact PREFACE partnered with Amy and Denim Dudes is amazing."

Over the show's two days, attendees were invited to participate in discussions to move the industry forward and find inspiration. Topics included "Denim Dudes Fall/Winter 2027/2028 Forecast," "A Cutting, Not a Copy: AW27 Seasonal Trend" and "Heritage 2.0: From Preservation to Reinvention." Show sponsor **SFI** sought to inspire attendees with its Vintage Denim Archive installation.

The show attracted serious denim and apparel professionals who yearned for connecting with their peers and engaging in enriching discussions.

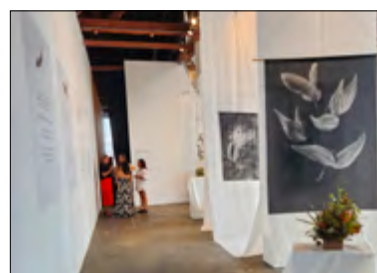
"These trade shows are always great for connecting. I run into people I haven't seen in years," said Loren Cronk, co-founder, and head of operations and curation for **The Denim Institute & Museum**.

The show's boutique feel was a welcome change from the enormous expo-style events that attract a larger, more varied group of attendees.

"After COVID-19, all the shows changed. We are looking for the premium show," Wayne Chiang of Taipei, Taiwan's **496 Fabric**. "The really big shows have thousands of visitors, lots of mills from around the world. We need to be more focused on what we're doing right now."

Meeting in Los Angeles remains a priority for companies that want to help brands in the region set global trends.

"L.A. is important because this place is premium," said Alihan Kesim, deputy general manager with **Maritas**. "A lot of brands—in Europe especially—follow L.A. brands. ●



Preface returned to Los Angeles with its second Denim Dudes-Here|After partnership. "Travel budgets have tightened since COVID, and designers' capacity to prioritize time for new ideas, headspace and inspiration has never been tighter. We meet them where they're at and transport them away for a few hours. We all know that these moments are

good for us and even essential to the creative process, but making them happen is hard," said Amy Leverton, Denim Dudes founder and Here|After co-founder. Pictured from left, SEEDS installation, SFI archive, The Denim Institute and Museum, a SEEDS exhibit and fabric made using Naia fiber.

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## How AI Is Transforming the Apparel and Consumer-Products Industry and Helping Brands Navigate Rapidly Changing Consumer Preferences

By Cody Neely  
Principal, Baker Tilly  
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The apparel and consumer-products industry has always been driven by shifting consumer tastes, seasonal trends, and intense competition. However, in recent years the pace of change has accelerated dramatically. Digital commerce, social-media influence, and evolving consumer expectations have shortened fashion cycles, making demand increasingly difficult to predict. For apparel companies, responding quickly to changing preferences is a key competitive advantage.

Artificial intelligence (AI) helps brands to meet this challenge by transforming every stage of the value chain—from product design and forecasting to inventory management, personalization, and customer engagement.

Demand forecasting is one of AI's greatest contributions. Traditional forecasting methods often rely on historical sales data, which may not accurately reflect emerging consumer behaviors. AI-powered predictive analytics integrate data from multiple sources, including online searches, social media trends, weather patterns, economic indicators, and real-time purchasing behavior.

By identifying subtle patterns that human analysts may overlook, AI enables apparel companies to forecast demand with greater precision. This reduces excess inventory, minimizes markdowns, and keeps popular products available when customers want them.

Consumer preferences, influenced by digital platforms and viral content, evolve quickly. AI-powered trend analysis allows brands to monitor millions of online interactions, customer reviews, influencer content, and visual data to detect trends before they reach the mainstream.

Apparel companies can proactively develop collections that align with evolving consumer interests. This capability is particularly valuable in fast fashion, where speed-to-market directly impacts profitability and market share.

AI transforms product design by supporting creativity with data. Designers can use AI to analyze color, fabric, silhouette trends, and regional buying patterns. Instead of replacing creative professionals, AI serves as an intelligent assistant. This collaboration enables design teams to create collections that better reflect consumer demand while reducing the risk associated with new product lines.

Personalization has become a critical differentiator in the apparel industry. Consumers now expect brands to understand their preferences and deliver relevant shopping experiences.

AI recommendation engines analyze browsing history, purchase behavior, demographic information, and style preferences to recommend products tailored to each customer. Personalized product suggestions improve conversion rates and increase customer satisfaction and loyalty.

As competition intensifies across online and omni-channel retail, delivering individualized experiences is essential, not optional.

Inventory optimization represents another area where AI delivers significant business value. Overstocking results in high carrying costs and aggressive discounting, but understocking leads to missed sales opportunities and dissatisfied customers. AI continuously evaluates demand signals, sales velocity, regional performance, and supply-chain conditions to optimize inventory allocation across stores and distribution centers. This dynamic approach improves product

availability while reducing waste, helping companies achieve both financial and sustainability objectives.

Supply-chain resilience has also become a strategic priority following recent global disruptions. AI enhances supply-chain visibility by identifying potential risks, predicting supplier delays, and recommending alternative sourcing strategies before problems escalate. Real-time monitoring enables organizations to respond more effectively to bottlenecks, shortages, and geopolitical challenges.

Customer engagement has evolved significantly through AI-powered virtual assistants and conversational commerce. Chatbots provide instant support, answer product questions, recommend sizes, and guide customers. Computer vision technologies further enhance the online shopping experience by enabling virtual try-on capabilities, allowing customers to visualize garments before making purchasing decisions. These innovations reduce return rates while increasing consumer confidence.

Sustainability is another area of impact for AI. Consumers want brands that demonstrate environmental responsibility, and regulators are introducing stricter sustainability requirements. AI can help optimize production planning to reduce textile waste, use fabric intelligently, and accurately predict product demand.

Better forecasting reduces overproduction. AI also supports circular fashion initiatives by improving product traceability, facilitating resale programs, and identifying opportunities for recycling and material recovery.

Successful AI adoption requires more than technology investment.

Organizations must develop high-quality data infrastructure, integrate AI solutions across business functions, and cultivate employees with both technical and commercial expertise. Data privacy, algorithmic transparency, and responsible AI governance are crucial. Companies with strong governance frameworks that maintain consumer trust are positioned to realize the benefits of AI-driven transformation.

Looking ahead, AI will become increasingly central to competitive strategy within the apparel industry. Brands that leverage AI will be better equipped to compete in a dynamic marketplace. As fashion continues to evolve toward faster product cycles and greater customer expectations, AI will shift from being a competitive advantage to a business necessity. For apparel companies seeking long-term growth, resilience, and profitability, investing in AI is a strategic imperative that will define the industry's next generation of market leaders.

At Baker Tilly, we help apparel and consumer product companies navigate this transformation by evaluating technology investments, strengthening financial planning, optimizing operational performance, and aligning AI initiatives with business objectives. We help businesses maximize the return on their technology investments while positioning themselves for sustainable, long-term success.

Cody Neely has practiced public accounting since 2010. He specializes in providing audit and consulting services with a concentration in apparel, retail, and consumer products. Cody has significant experience in both overseeing and managing engagements in accordance with both United States and international financial-reporting standards, inclusive of international group audits.



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