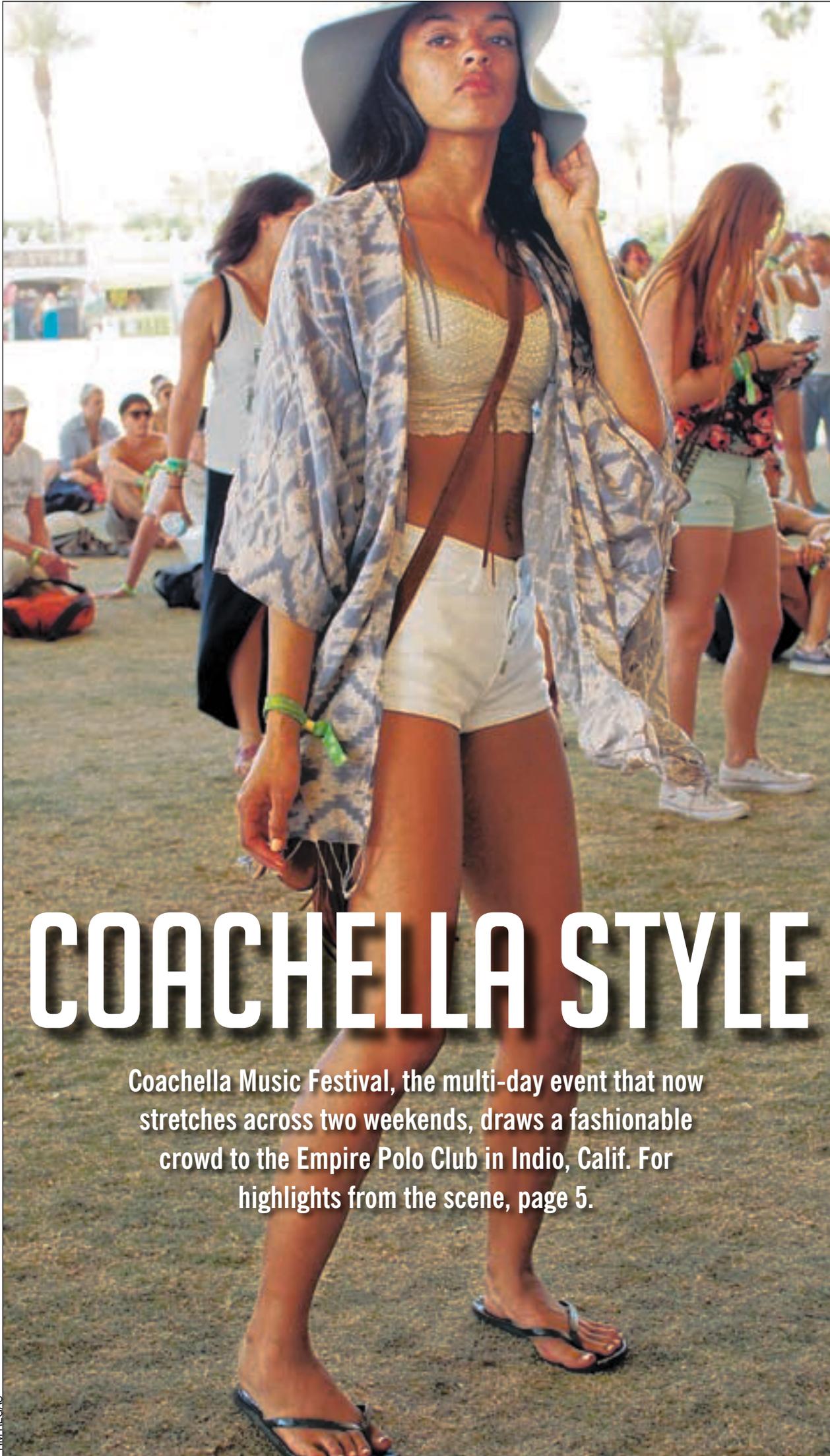


CALIFORNIA Apparel News

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COACHELLA STYLE

Coachella Music Festival, the multi-day event that now stretches across two weekends, draws a fashionable crowd to the Empire Polo Club in Indio, Calif. For highlights from the scene, page 5.

TIM REGAS

MADE IN THE AMERICAS

New Fashion Incubator Arriving in Downtown Los Angeles

By Deborah Belgum *Senior Editor*

Leah Garvin calls herself a fashion anthropologist, but these days she is sounding more like a fashion entrepreneur.

After years of working in marketing, sales, video journalism and sustainable projects, Garvin is starting a new endeavor she hopes brings more apparel manufacturing jobs to Los Angeles.

In mid-June, the 26-year-old native of Colorado will formally launch **FactoryLA**, a for-profit fashion incubator that will try to help emerging contemporary brands expand while making their clothes in Los Angeles factories where legally documented workers earn a fair wage.

"We will be a full-service agency, from concept to customer," said Garvin, who has a bachelor's degree in anthropology from **Boston University** and studied apparel manufacturing

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Company Profile

Trashy Lingerie: Making Specialty Lingerie in LA for 40 Years

By N. Jayne Seward *Fashion Editor*

Trashy Lingerie is one of Hollywood's iconic retail destinations—and this year the specialty lingerie store is celebrating its 40th anniversary. The company has dressed everyone from Hollywood's leading ladies to playmates at the **Playboy** mansion and provided countless costumes for Halloween soirees.

Known for its "members-only" policy, kitschy valet-parking sign, themed window displays and pink storefront on La Cienega Boulevard, Trashy Lingerie has made its mark in more than 500 movies and in the closets of women around the world. "We've been here so long, and we're famous for what we do," said co-founder Mitch Shrier. "If you know our stuff, it really shows up. You can tell,"

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INSIDE

Where fashion gets down to businessSM



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Sourcing at MAGIC Adds More American Sourcing Exhibitors, Services

Manufacturers, retailers and designers looking to source in America—or in the Western Hemisphere—will have more resources at the upcoming Aug. 18–21 run of **Sourcing at MAGIC** in Las Vegas.

Once again, the U.S. Department of Commerce will partner with the trade show giant for the Americas Pavilion, which will feature 150 companies from the U.S., Mexico, and Central and South America, including Peru and Colombia, that will increase their presence at the show, said Karalynn Sprouse, vice president of **MAGIC**, Sourcing at MAGIC/**Sourcing@WSA**.

Resources will include contract manufacturers, original design manufacturers, and suppliers of fabrics and components.

“We are continuing to see demand from many U.S. brands and retailers for products ‘Made in the USA’ and for sourcing in the Western Hemisphere,” said Kim Glas, deputy assistant secretary for textiles and apparel. “We are pleased to say that the number of manufacturing facilities in operation within the United States continues to grow. In addition, our Western Hemisphere partners continue to build their expertise, making it a perfect fit for fast-fashion retailers and brands.”

In addition to returning exhibitors—including **American Apparel**, **Trend Chasers** and **Brooks Brothers**—the show will feature new exhibitor **Maker’s Row**, an online marketplace for American manufacturing and small businesses looking to produce domestically.

“They will be a great resource partner with their established business members, and, by equal importance, they are inspiring the next generation of American businesses

to think domestic first and will be showcasing their services at Sourcing at MAGIC in August,” Sprouse said.

Sprouse said she is expecting 1,600 apparel and footwear resources at the show, which will be co-located with Sourcing & WSA for the first time.

“We’re focused on what the buyers are looking for,” Sprouse said, adding that the co-location of Sourcing@WSA and Sourcing at MAGIC means a 40 percent increase in footwear resources at the show. The new Home section launched last season for buyers looking for home textiles and décor.

In August, the show will also feature a Global Artisan Showcase, featuring gifts and handicrafts available for sale in small quantities.

And in addition to the Americas Pavilion, this year’s focus country is India, which will feature more than 150 resources for apparel, footwear, accessories and home textiles, Sprouse said.

For the first time, Sourcing at MAGIC will launch a special invitation-only seminar series called Executive Suite. Among the seminar topics is retailing in China, “which, of course, everyone is talking about,” Sprouse said.

Sponsored by **Price Waterhouse Coopers** and presented by **Damon Paling**, the “Retailing in China” seminar will address issues such as “benchmarking your cross-border supply-chain efficiency” and the regulatory outlook for China.

The **NPD Group**’s Marshal Cohen will also present a seminar on globalism and consumer behavior. And the **Otto Group** will present a seminar for brands looking to expand internationally in markets such as

Russia and the European Union.

On Aug. 19, *Apparel* magazine will present its seventh annual summit at MAGIC, which will address issues such as sourcing best practices and supply-chain technology.

Last season, Sourcing at MAGIC launched a mobile app as an added tool to

the show’s matchmaking and personal concierge service. Attendees using the app can search exhibitors by product or country and plan their visit in advance, as well as follow up after the show.

For more information, visit www.magic-online.com.—Alison A. Nieder

NEWS

Gap Unveils Global Strategies

Gap Inc. is serious about becoming the top apparel company in the world.

Gap Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Glenn Murphy and the retailer’s other top executives gave presentations on Gap’s plans to extend its reach around the globe. The presentation was given to Wall Street analysts at the company’s San Francisco headquarters on April 17.

Murphy stated the company is emerging from its pre-2007 strategy, in which it was primarily concerned with its domestic business.

Murphy joined Gap as the retail giant’s leader in 2007, and in the past five years, Gap Inc. built the infrastructure to be a nimble competitor around the globe. “We are entering a period of global growth,” Murphy said.

Gap Inc. recently reorganized its sales channels and divisions so there will be one global leader each for Gap as well as **Banana Republic** and **Old Navy**, its other brands, which, Murphy said, are considered classic American fashion lines around the world. Responsibilities for sales outside of the United States were formerly handled by a division called International.

Gap will increase its commitment to build franchise stores with retail partners across the

globe, particularly in opening Gap stores in China and Old Navy stores in Japan. It also will open two Gap stores in São Paulo later this year and is scouting opportunities for stores in India. Also on the horizon are more international outlet stores.

Gap Inc. also guaranteed that it will offer omnichannel shopping around the world. Omnichannel bundles and blends all shopping channels, ranging from traditional bricks and mortar to increasingly popular mobile shopping.

“Over the next five years, key to our continued success will be pushing the envelope further to make shopping seamless to customers through our digital strategy,” Murphy said.

Gap Inc. also owns emerging brands such as women’s activewear retailer **Athleta**, contemporary online boutique **Piperlime** and contemporary boutique chain **Intermix**. It will continue to look for ways to develop North American business for its emerging brands, according to a Gap Inc. statement.

Gap is not the only retailer to set its sights on world domination. In February, Tadashi Yanai, the chairman, president and chief executive officer of **Fast Retailing**, the parent company to Japanese retailer **Uniqlo** and Los Angeles denim line **J Brand**, announced aggressive expansion plans. “We will also create a framework to facilitate the opening of 200 to 300 large-format stores worldwide each year,” he said.—Andrew Asch

New VP for Arden B

Tamara Chamberlain started her new job, leading **Wet Seal Inc.**’s long-suffering **Arden B** division, on April 15.

Chamberlain’s new title will be vice president, general merchandise manager for Arden B. She previously worked as the general merchandise manager for contemporary mall retailer **Bebe Stores Inc.** since October 2012 and also worked as divisional merchandise manager for Bebe since February 2011, according to Chamberlain’s **LinkedIn** entry.

Chamberlain replaced Sharon Hughes, who worked as president and chief merchandise officer for Arden B since November 2009, according to media reports. Hughes resigned to pursue other opportunities, a Wet Seal statement said.

Sales have been tough for Arden B. For the fourth quarter of 2012, its same-store sales declined 9.9 percent compared with the previous year.

Also during the fourth quarter of 2012, 19 Arden B shops were shuttered. During a March 21 conference call with Wall Street analysts, John Goodman, Wet Seal Inc.’s chief executive officer, said that the company will close nine Arden B shops this year. Arden B runs a fleet of 62 shops.

However, Goodman said the future is looking brighter for the contemporary division. “We are thrilled to have [Chamberlain] on board and believe her expertise, coupled with Arden B’s seasoned buying team, will enable us to restore sales growth, capture greater market share and build a more sustainable model for long-term success,” Goodman said in a statement.—A.A.

Quiksilver Names New Retail Exec

Another former **Disney** executive was hired by surf giant **Quiksilver Inc.**

Steve Finney joined Quiksilver as senior vice president and general manager of consumer direct for its Americas division. Finney formerly served as senior vice president of global business development for retail at **Disney Consumer Products**.

He follows Andy Mooney, former Disney Consumer Products chairman, who was named president and chief executive of the Huntington Beach, Calif.–based Quiksilver at the beginning of the year.

Finney takes the place of Paul McAdam, who resigned. McAdam joined Quiksilver in December 2011 after serving as chief executive officer of **AllSaints North America**.

In a March 7 statement on Quiksilver’s first quarter for its fiscal 2013 year, Mooney said net revenues declined, in part, due to “disappointing performances in our wholesale channel and in the Americas region.”

The Americas region’s net revenues declined 9 percent to \$186 million in the first quarter in 2013 compared with the same quarter the previous year. Net revenues for the entire company were \$431 million, down 3 percent compared with the previous year, according to a Quiksilver statement.

Expect more changes at Quiksilver. Mooney said the company is actively recruiting a chief marketing officer.—A.A.



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New Resources

Make Smith Leather Co.

California leather craftsman and designer Steven Soria didn't have to look very far when it came to finding inspiration for crafting leather accessories as founder and owner of **Make Smith Leather Co.** The Santa Barbara, Calif., native learned the fine art of working in leather from his father and grandfather, both saddle makers who passed the tradition on to him. Since 2011, Make Smith Leather Co. has produced a collection of leather belts, wallets, iPad cases, jewelry and home décor handmade by Soria in Santa Barbara.

With a "less is more" aesthetic, the leather accessories are designed using top grain leather sourced from **Hermann Oak**, a 132-year-old tannery in St. Louis, and traditional stitching with minimal embellishments. Soria even inherited tools from his father and grandfather that he employs to create designs that are earthy—the only colors are tan, brown and black—yet sturdy. "There's a more rustic feel. It's a little more bulky. We try to embrace that more," said Soria, who also has a fine arts degree in sculpture from **California State University, Long Beach**.

Manufacturing locally is important to



Steven Soria

Soria. "We can turn things around in three weeks [compared with working overseas]," he said. Make Smith also has a robust custom-made service. A recent commission was for a farmer's-market tote bag made with a substantial canvas and a super-thick, wide leather bottom. The leather bottom provided the much-needed support for purchases.

The goal for the small company—he employs only four others plus his father, who works as technical adviser—is to continue refining his classic collection, venturing in the more luxury market. The company recently collaborated with **Adesso** in Santa Barbara to create leather cuffs and with the Santa Barbara silk-screen company **PrintLiberation** with limited-edition wallets.

Make Smith Leather Co. can be found at **Otherwild** in Los Angeles, **Adesso Shop** in Santa Barbara and **Afterlife Boutique** in San Francisco as well as online at www.makesmith.com. Wholesale prices points start at \$25. For more information, call (805) 699-6296.—Lilliam Rivera

Maison de Urbana: International Inspiration, Made in LA

Urbana Chappa is a mom living in one of Los Angeles' most suburban communities, Sherman Oaks, where TV's fictional Brady Bunch made their home. But the emerging designer's take on fashion is urbane and cosmopolitan.

Chappa's Maison de Urbana collection made its Los Angeles debut on March 15 at **LA's Fashion Weekend** shows at **Sunset Gower Studios** in Hollywood.

Perhaps one could call Maison de Urbana looks "multi-culti." They blend cultural influences.

Maison de Urbana's red silk top, "The Tina," bears an Egyptian pattern and a plunging V-neck. In Chappa's lookbook, the top is paired with skinny tuxedo pants featuring a black-and-white trim. Many of Maison de Urbana's designs feature lace and beading, which is inspired by the Spanish heritage of Chappa's mother. The collection also offers veils, inspired by



Urbana Chappa

her father's Persian heritage. For glamour, there's "The Dara" gown, which features spaghetti straps and an 8-foot chiffon train. At the LA Fashion Weekend show, Maison de Urbana debuted some men's and children's looks, as well.

Wholesale price points range from \$225 to \$7,000 for Maison de Urbana. Eventually, Chappa plans to make a diffusion line and design more red-carpet gowns.

Chappa started her fashion career as a stylist, working with notables such as actress Natasha Henstridge and **Grammy** award-winning songwriter Diane Warren. Chappa had planned to pursue a degree at the **Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising** in Los Angeles, but after a semester in 2012, she took the \$180,000 she had saved for education and invested it in starting Maison de Urbana.

She hopes her designs will raise as much discussion and interest as her idiosyncratic coif. One half of her head is shaved. Her hair is worn long on the other half of her head. "When people stop staring, then something is wrong," she advised. For more information, visit www.urbanachappa.com.—Andrew Asch

FactoryLA *Continued from page 1*

at the **Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising** in Los Angeles.

The plan is for Garvin, and a host of consultants, to rendezvous with a budding brand, whip up a team of experts and devise a game plan for success. Experts can help with costing strategies, production plans, marketing campaigns, public relations, branding and sales tips. Need a pattern maker? FactoryLA can help find one. Looking for some advice on how to pitch a retailer? The incubator can help.

From her recently rented 4,000-square-foot space inside a 100-year-old brick building at 840 S. Los Angeles St., Garvin will be setting up a showroom for her "Made in LA" clients. There will also be a round table for meetings to assess what the emerging designer needs and then strategize on what the next moves will be.

Currently, the incubator is funded by an undisclosed private investor, but the idea is to make money by charging clients a project-management fee on top of the fees paid to consultants.

One of those consultants is Rocio Evenett, whose **Unlimited Design Services** in Vernon, Calif., manufactures clothes as well as offers a wide range of services, including pattern-making. "In many ways, we operate like factories overseas. We put services under one roof," said Evenett, who has 2,500 square feet of space in a building shared with denim manufacturer **Ark Apparel**. Soon, Unlimited Design Services and



Leah Garvin inside her new space, wearing Los Angeles-made AG jeans and a top

Ark Apparel, founded by Noah Landis, will be partnering and will move to a 10,000-square-foot space in their shared building on Pacific Boulevard.

Minimum-order requirements at Unlimited Design Services are low—48 units. "There are not many companies willing to work with small companies and start-ups," Evenett said. "We can help anyone that has an idea. We can take them from idea to finished product."

But she noted that any new client has to have a solid financial standing and understand that the garment business requires a major level of commitment.

Also working with FactoryLA will be Syama Meagher, who will be the group's business strategist. Meagher has 10 years of experience, which includes working as an e-commerce merchant at **Barneys New York** and an assistant planner at **Macy's East**. Four years ago, she founded **NYC Retail Consultant** to grow small- and medium-sized brands and stores. She recently moved from New York to Los Angeles.

"Designers often have a great product, but they don't know what to do with it," Meagher said. "I ask designers with small brands about their goals. How much time are they willing to dedicate to this? Is this a hobby or something they are investing their time and energy into? Where do they want to be in five years? People don't really think about that."

FactoryLA already has three Los Angeles clients lined up. They are **R.B. of McD** by John Lehman, which does leather goods; **Axthelm** by Kristy Hanft, a new women's contemporary

line; and **Sarine Marie** by Sarine Berberian.

Hanft said she was looking for a way to get her brand's name out there and thought Garvin could help. "We are brand-new," she said. "We wanted to connect with the community of designers and contractors."

The hurdles

Nudging emerging designers to the next level is always a challenge. Frances Harder, founder of nonprofit LA fashion incubator **Fashion Business Inc.**, said the apparel industry is a tough business. "The average fail rate is much higher than in other industries," said Harder, a designer who has taught at FIDM and at the **Otis College of Art + Design**. "It's not all about the product. The person involved has to understand all the moving parts and get along with people and network. There are five new lines a year to create, and each line needs 25 new styles and fabrication. ... I have 400 members, but how many are going to be in business next year? I don't know."

Ilse Metchek, president of the **California Fashion Association**, said it is important that any new clients taken on by FactoryLA be scrutinized to make sure they are viable. "[Garvin] is only going to be as successful as her clients are," Metchek said. "The reason trade shows such as **Coterie** and **Designers and Agents** are successful is the fact they are a juried show. Without that juried analysis, you wind up hungry and taking all comers because you want to make a living."

Garvin said she will be asking potential clients to fill out a detailed application form and go through an interview. "We have to make sure they can pay for our services and the growth of their brand," the fashion-incubator founder said. "I am still deciding whether people should have one or two seasons under their belt before we talk to them. And we want to make sure we have the best foundation to serve them."

In the end, Garvin would like to see the Los Angeles apparel-manufacturing scene, which has 44,500 workers, down from 45,000 last year, make a comeback. ●

Designers Behind the Music

LA designers specialize in making clothes for top musicians.

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

Call it the other side of the red carpet.

Los Angeles is a capital of the entertainment industry and awards shows, and the city is a center for red-carpet fashion. With music companies keeping headquarters here—and so many musicians based here, as well—many local designers specialize in making the clothes for the world's most famous musicians.

For some, the stint is as fleeting as a one-hit wonder when a designer spots a musician wearing one of his or her creations in a **YouTube** video. But for others, it's a gig that can last a career.

It takes the coordinated effort of designers and stylists to outfit a musician—from brainstorming a new look to pulling all-nighters making costumes for a tour that starts the next day.

"There's a whole glam squad who makes it happen," said Maggie Barry, one of Los Angeles' most established clothiers for musicians. "It's the coordinated effort of a lot of people."

Barry most recently worked with Nicki Minaj, the "American Idol" judge and chart-topping musician. Barry's clients have ranged from hard-rock band **Van Halen** and country group **Lady Antebellum** to outfitting Cher in 1990.

Despite looking like creatures of leisure, most musicians don't have the time—not to mention expertise and resources—to create their own look.

"The artist ultimately picks what they are going to work in," Barry said. "They don't have time to run to 50 stores to find the right T-shirt."

Getting started

The entry point for outfitting a musician seems to take a page of classic Hollywood fantasy—the designer gets discovered. "Stylists will find you," said Barry, who also works as stylist, scouting new looks for musicians, along with making costumes with her self-named company, **Maggie Barry**, and designing her upcoming **M8 Urban** streetwear line, which is scheduled to be introduced in May.

Stylists scour clothing and accessories lines, boutiques, and other sources to find a specific look for a celebrity client. Designers can get the ball rolling by sending clothes to stylists and artist-management companies, Barry said.

If a designer's looks are chosen for a celebrity, the designer will most likely continue working with a stylist throughout the entire process of crafting the look.

Giuliana Mayo, co-founder of **Junker**, a Los Angeles-based fashion label, has worked



COURTESY OF MAGGIE BARRY

GLAM RACKET: Maggie Barry (pictured) has made clothes for musicians ranging from Nicki Minaj to Van Halen and Cher.

with Steven Tyler of **Aerosmith** and up-and-coming group **Black Veil Brides**, along with pop singers Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera.

Mayo said this styling has its roots in other disciplines. "It's very much like costuming," she said. "We have to make sure that we made something that represents a character. That is exactly what you are doing—you're enhancing a character."

Developing a look for a celebrity often starts with the slightest bits of inspiration, such as a color used in a video, a mood of a song or a mere sketch of what the artist should look like, Barry said.

The initial point of discovering a designer can seem to be wrapped in Hollywood legend. But building a relationship is not glamorous work. In 2010, designer Gita Salem was minding his atelier on Melrose Avenue when music superstar Prince walked in the studio. He was intrigued by the keyhole jacket in the window of the store, then called **Sequoia & Gita**, currently called **Gita Salem**. With a musician in his touring band, Prince shopped the atelier for 45 minutes and made purchases.

It could have been a one-time gig, but Salem followed up by making the keyhole jacket in Prince's favorite color, purple. He sent Prince's London-based management clothes and sketches of clothes for Prince. More than a year later Prince's management company, by direction from Prince, invested more heavily in Salem's collections. It took a lot of effort to build trust, he said. There were a lot of other variables, such as where the designer is headquartered and if personal chemistry exists with the artist. "You get lucky and they find you," Salem said. "But it's some kind of personal connection. It's about personalities. It's also about location and being well-positioned."

Other factors come into play with designers and musicians. Most importantly, do musicians have money to afford stylists and have clothes made for them? What kind of fashion trends are influencing musicians? What kind of look best fits them? For Alejandra Hernandez, who styles Australian rapper Iggy Azalea, finding the right look is a matter of experience and intuition. "I know it when I see it," Hernandez said.

Stylists also are the domain for the most established, well-off musicians, said Chloe Chaidze, vocalist for **Kitten**, a rock band signed to the **Elektra** music label last year that will start a national tour with rock band **Paramore** on April 25. "I don't know of any band that [uses] stylists for shows," she said. Rather, stylists typically work with bands on magazine and video shoots.



COURTESY OF GITA SALEM

PRINCELY CLOAK: Prince wears a cowl-neck top by LA designer Salem Gita at the 2013 Grammys.

For shows, Chaidze typically puts together an extreme version of her own style, which she described as "Kurt Cobain meets Missy Elliot meets Arabian princess."

Changing business

The music business is much smaller than it was 20 years ago, and there are fewer musicians being professionally groomed by music labels. At the same time society is increasingly more attuned to visual images—thanks to social networking. Clothes typically create arresting images that help artists stand out when music fans dart from YouTube to **Twitter**, often spending no more than a minute on each site, Barry said.

Despite the attention poured on fashion icon Lady Gaga, many rock bands keep a traditional look when it comes to fashion, said Henry Duarte, a career couturier to musicians ranging from Bob Dylan, **Guns 'N' Roses** and MC

Hammer to **New Kids on the Block**.

They keep returning to the iconic 1970s looks minted by Keith Richards and Iggy Pop, Duarte said. For new styles, hip-hop stars such as Kanye West have been making appearances with a Japanese look of drapery jackets and drop-crotch pants.

Branding over business

For designers, clothing a musician does not immediately translate into wholesale dollars. Performers want unique looks and often don't want streets and stadiums to be filled with people wearing the same pieces. But fans do seek out their idol's styles, said Maya Reynolds, founder and designer of **Clade**, a downtown LA-based label that has been worn by musicians such as Steven Tyler, Lenny Kravitz and heavy-metal band **Korn**.

"I've had guys come into Clade downtown who come from Japan," Reynolds said. "They looked through the Clade press book, and they wanted to see Steven [Tyler's] tail coat in person. They wanted to have a little piece of that charisma."

Working with a musician also can add to a designer's cachet, Mayo said of Junker. "Steven never sold anything for me," Mayo said of Aerosmith's Tyler. "He just made me look cool. It gives you credibility."

The final result could be nothing but a good time, though. Victor Wilde, designer of downtown LA label **Bohemian Society**, designed some jackets in 2004 for George Clinton, one of the innovators of funk and urban music.

"As far as the fashion world is concerned, I don't think it raised my profile at all. I am certainly a fan of George, so above all I got a big kick out of hanging out with him, listening to his stories, and I was paid well to create things for a living legend who really likes what I do," Wilde said. "One of the best 'cool-factor' moments of my life was when [Clinton] answered a call and proceeded to tell whoever was on the other end that 'I had everything.' What else can I say?" ●



TODD OWYOUNG

THE PERFORMANCE: Vocalist Perry Farrell wearing designs from downtown LA label Clade. Courtesy of Clade.

Calendar

April 21

SDI Executive Logistics Forum
Four Seasons
Las Vegas
Through April 23

April 24

Lazr
Cooper Design Space
Los Angeles
Through April 25

April 25

SEAMS Association's biannual networking conference
Grove Park Inn
Asheville, N.C.
Through April 27

WGSN Spring/Summer '14 Textile Trend Presentation
Pacific Design Center
West Hollywood, Calif.

April 27

Woodbury University's 49th annual fashion show benefit
Natural History Museum
Los Angeles

Vintage Fashion Expo

Santa Monica Civic Auditorium
Santa Monica, Calif.
Through April 28

"Denim Bootcamp With Noah Landis"

5140 Pacific Blvd.
Vernon, Calif.

May 1

2013 West Coast Manufacturing Conference
Millennium Biltmore
Los Angeles

May 2

Woodbury University's runway event
Los Angeles Center Studios
Los Angeles

May 4

Otis College of Art and Design's 31st Scholarship Benefit and Fashion Show
Beverly Hilton
Beverly Hills

There's more
on ApparelNews.net.

For calendar details and contact information, visit ApparelNews.net/calendar.

Submissions to the calendar should be faxed to the Calendar Editor at (213) 623-5707. Please include the event's name, date, time, location, admission price and contact information. The deadline for calendar submissions is the Tuesday prior to Friday publication. Inclusion in the calendar is subject to available space and the judgment of the editorial staff.

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Coachella Style

For two weekends in April, Indio, Calif.—home of the **Coachella Valley Music Festival**—becomes a fashion hot spot where crowds beat the heat in their festival best. *California Apparel News* sent photographers Felix Salzman and Tim Regas to the desert to capture the scene. Be sure to check out our expanded Coachella Style galleries online at ApparelNews.net.

FELIX SALZMAN, TIM REGAS



Jeremy Scott and Rita Ora



Katy Perry



Alexa Chung at Lacoste

Dev at Details

Julianne Hough



Russell Simmons at Flaunt

Santigold at H&M



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MADE IN THE AMERICAS

Trashy Lingerie

Continued from page 1

he said. What started out as a shoe store has transformed into a lingerie boutique offering custom-made designs, a mega-website, and a costume wholesaler selling to companies in England and Brazil.

Founders Mitch and Tracy Shrier launched the business on April 1, 1973, and haven't looked back since. "It was a shoe store, and I designed a shoe, which was like a 'come f*ck me shoe'—very sexy—and [then] everybody wanted stockings," Mitch said. The stockings were hand-dyed in more than 150 colors to match the shoes. That soon led to garter belts, and lingerie was a natural progression.

"It was much easier to make the lingerie and clothing than it was to make the shoes," Shrier said.

Today the store still carries a small quantity of shoes and hand dyes stockings in 30 different colors. Lingerie lines the walls of the store's Victorian interior and is displayed on mannequins and rounders throughout the store. A separate room is filled with a multitude of costumes from sexy cowgirls bedecked in fringe to elaborate corseted Marie Antoinette brocade dresses.

The business is family-owned and operated by Mitch and his wife, Tracy, along with their son Randy. The lingerie is designed and still manufactured, in part, on-site. To accommodate the business's growth, the company opened

a downtown LA location, which employs 35 sewers. The website, which launched in 1998, offers more than 100,000 items.

The costume portion of the business began in the late '70s and is an entity all its own. "[We make] everything from shoes to hats—and everything in between," Shrier said. Trashy's costumes carry the same high level of craftsmanship and, of course, the sexy aesthetic. Last year, the best-selling costume, a version of the Marie Antoinette, sold for \$900, Shrier said. The company also wholesales its costumes to rental businesses, such as **Breshow Fantasias** in São

Paulo, which carries approximately \$1 million in Trashy merchandise.

Custom-made customer service

The store is open to members only and requires a \$2 admission. "It's just a way to screen people," explained Mitch. "I always explain it to women that 'remember when you were at a party and a guy across the room stared at you and made you nervous?' They never get in my store. There is always a woman at the front door. So, if she gets



PRETTY IN PINK: Trashy Lingerie's storefront on La Cienega Boulevard



ONLINE LINGERIE: A sexy look available at Trashy.com



COSTUME DEPT.: Elaborate costumes are one of Trashy Lingerie's specialties.

COURTESY OF TRASHY LINGERIE

that vibe, they don't get in." The Shriers rely on word of mouth to build the business. Twenty-five percent of the store's revenue comes from custom-made items. Recently, Internet sales have surpassed in-store sales—although there are days when a customer will drop by the store and spend \$5,000 for lingerie and costumes for parties and events, Mitch Shrier said.

Trashy built its reputation by producing high-quality products and original designs and by offering a high level of customer service, Shrier said.

"I can make anything," he said. "That's what my cachet is. People come here, they want to be different. They want to wear something that everybody else doesn't have."

The company's client list reads like the who's who of entertainment: Rihanna, Kate Hudson, Gwyneth Paltrow, Dakota Fanning, Nicki Minaj and Kate Beckinsale, to name a few. Customers are measured and fit in the store, and detailed records are kept for future reference. Many costume designers count on Trashy to create costumes for the big



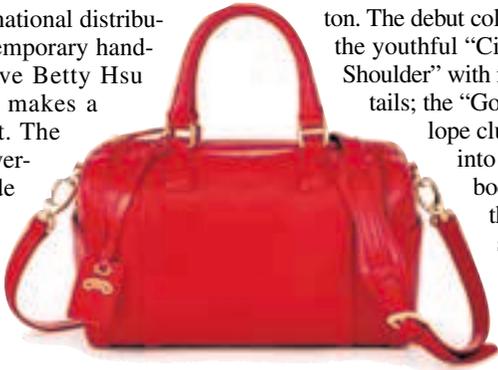
SEXY CHIC: Trashy is known for its original designs.

➔ Trashy Lingerie page 7

New Resources

RoviMoss: Classic Bags, Contemporary Price

As head of an international distribution business for contemporary handbags, California native Betty Hsu knew firsthand what makes a leather handbag great. The perfect bag has to be versatile yet stylish, made with the best materials, and, above all else, must be available at a contemporary price point without losing its high-end design.



On a quest to create such a bag, Hsu teamed up with accessories designer Cathy Lee (recently named creative director of accessories for **LG Fashion**) to launch **RoviMoss**. Underscoring the phrase “classics reborn,” the company is carving out a space in the mid-price point category with a strong collection of satchels, shoulder bags, totes and clutches in vibrant, saturated colors and luxurious Italian leather. Appealing both to the younger market as well as the “lean in” fashionable executives, RoviMoss is bridging the gap where luxury meets accessibility in handbags.



Headquartered in Pasadena, Calif., the company launched a robust collection with a full three deliveries and silhouettes in all sizes. Highlights include the “Go1” collection, which features a shoulder bag with detachable shoulder straps, blend of 14- to 18-karat-gold-plate hardware, and detachable colored luggage tags meant for the woman on the go. Edges are also hand painted seven times with minimal seaming and lining made of milled cot-

ton. The debut collection also includes the youthful “City Lights Girlfriend Shoulder” with neon color-block details; the “GoX5” fold-over envelope clutch, which converts into a shoulder or cross-body shoulder bag; and the “First Class Go1” structured satchel in BBG smooth leather.

“The goal is to bring our customer a meticulously constructed bag—made of the finest leather with a timeless silhouette—that doesn’t break the bank,” Hsu said.

Designer and co-founder Lee is an industry veteran. A **Rhode Island School of**

Design graduate, Lee’s résumé includes stints at **Liz Clairborne**, **Gap** and **JC de Castelbajac**. Besides RoviMoss, Lee is also head of a design firm that lends behind-the-scenes expertise to high-profile international brands. For RoviMoss, her designs are refined with bold touches that can be found in the rich colors.

For RoviMoss’ Fall 2013 collection, Hsu said, stores are responding well to the custom-blended red as well as the classic nude vachetta and black leather styles. Wholesale prices range from \$65 to \$245. RoviMoss handbags can be found at **eLuxe.com**, **Gus Mayer** and **Michael Hayes** as well as online at www.rovimoss.com.

For more information, email sales@rovimoss.com or call (626) 799-6099.

—Lillian Rivera

Trashy Lingerie *Continued from page 6*

screen—think Kim Basinger in “9½ Weeks,” Pamela Anderson in “Barb Wire” and Emma Stone in “Easy A.” The bunny outfits for Reese Witherspoon in “Legally Blonde” and Renee Zellweger in “Bridget Jones’s Diary” were both by Trashy, which has also created stage looks for Madonna, Dolly Parton, Britney Spears, Cher, Fergie and Dita Von Teese.

A quick two- to three-day turnaround time is the norm for movies and TV productions, and it’s seven to 10 days for regular customers. “We do a lot of wedding corsets to go under wedding dresses and a lot of stuff for the **Academy Awards**,” Shrier said. “It’s the only place you can get them [custom fit],” he said.



HOLLYWOOD KITSCH: Customer service is key to Trashy’s success.

by a whole bunch—but the down payment is more,” he said. “It doesn’t fall apart—and if it did, we would fix it. If somebody hand-washes it and hangs dry, we guarantee it forever. And we don’t get much stuff back.”

Trashy’s young, fashionable clients look to the store for fashion-forward pieces such as high-waisted panties, retro ’40s looks, studded vinyl fabrics and ’60s-inspired babydoll nighties to update their lingerie closet. Although, Shrier said he doesn’t look to fashion trends to create Trashy’s designs. “We start trends,” he said.

Trashy’s direct contact with customers is one secret of its success. “We deal directly with the customer where other stores deal with the wholesaler,” he explained. Lingerie can be created on the spot

when inspiration strikes and new materials are found.

Because they sell direct to the consumer, they have the luxury of trial and error to create new products. It’s a built-in test market. At least four or five new designs are created every month by Trashy designers Dot Ferrone and Jessica Owens.

The biggest challenge is finding fabric and findings, Shrier said. “You’ve got to be creative to make something different,” he said. Many times trims such as embroideries, rosettes, sutache lace and studs add Trashy’s signature touch. It’s that originality that has created loyalty with its customers. “We have customers that have been coming here for 25 years,” Shrier said. “We do something that nobody else can do.” ●

Competitive edge

Like many other businesses, Trashy has experienced challenges during the economic slowdown. Business from the entertainment industry slowed down somewhat, and some customers opted to buy cheaper items—although Shrier points out that the Trashy customer typically isn’t concerned with price. Prices start at \$15 for thongs, \$50 for garter belts, \$70 for bras and \$200 for corsets and go up from there. Brands such as **Agent Provocateur** and **Victoria’s Secret** have also created competition, but the quality of the product keeps Trashy’s clients loyal, Shrier said.

“If you buy one here and count how long you’re going to wear mine, mine is cheaper

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Social Media in the Workplace Is the New Water Cooler

As social media becomes more commonplace, a blurry line has formed between employees' permissible use of sites such as **Instagram, Facebook** and **Twitter** to discuss work-related issues and employers' policies regarding discussing company matters in online public forums.

Federal law protects employees' right to talk publicly about work issues. However, employers often mandate that discussing employer information, salary or benefits or making disgruntled remarks about the company can result in disciplinary action or termination.

The **National Labor Relations Board (NLRB)** has been focusing on social media in particular. The organization has issued rulings in response to several complaints that were filed alleging that employers have retaliated against employees who have used social media to engage in activity that is protected under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) of 1935.

The NLRA states it is in violation of the act for private employers to make such broad social-media rules and place legal limits on employee activity in the office or outside.

Attorney **Ami Silverman** outlined some recent court rulings on the subject at an **American Apparel & Footwear Association** meeting held in February at the **Vans** headquarters in Cypress, Calif.

Silverman referenced a recent *New York Times* article in which NLRB board chairman **Mark G. Pearce** described social media as the "new water cooler"—the proverbial place where employees meet to discuss company issues.

"The Internet has become a modern water cooler characterized by social media like **Twitter**, except it can be amplified where employees can communicate and complain about terms and conditions and elicit responses," Silverman said.

At the event, Silverman advised employers to assess situations individually and develop detailed and specific labor media rules, particularly outlining small group activity in the workplace.

For example, the **Adidas Group's** social-media guidelines advise employees to consult managers before writing mate-

rial that could potentially harm the reputation of the company, also stating that if the phrase "for internal use only" is included in an email, it is not to be shared.

Examples of the **Adidas Group's** guidelines include "messages from our CEO to all employees are not meant for the media" and clients' names should only be used with their approval.

According to attorney **Laura Worsinger** of the Los Angeles office of **Dykema**, "The NLRA makes it illegal to interfere with, restrain or coerce employees in the exercise of their rights under Section 7 of the NLRA. This section specifically grants employees 'the right to self-organization; to form, join, or assist labor organizations; to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing; and to engage in other

"The Internet has become a modern water cooler characterized by social media like Twitter, except it can be amplified where employees can communicate and complain about terms and conditions and elicit responses." —Ami SILVERMAN

concerted activity for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection."

NLRB officials are adapting existing rulings under federal labor laws to modern digital activities. Under the NLRB guidelines, employees are allowed to engage in discussion in a physical break room—or a virtual one.

Still, confusion over the issue has led to several recent lawsuits.

In a case involving **Hispanics United of Buffalo Inc. (HUB)**, the NLRB held that employees' Facebook posts about another employee's comments of their job performance are protected concerted activity under NLRA.

"Hispanic United of Buffalo Inc., a nonprofit that provides services to the economically disadvantaged, was accused of discharging employees in retaliation for their participation in concerted activity under the NLRA," Worsinger said.

A domestic-violence advocate who worked out of HUB one day a week was known to critique social workers about their job performance.

The Facebook posting, which was made from an employee's home computer, discussed the advocate's comments, asking her coworkers their opinion on the matter. All of the postings were made outside of the workplace, and some included profanity.

The domestic-violence advocate complained to HUB's executive director, and the five employees involved in the Facebook posting were then terminated.

The executive director informed the employees that the domestic-violence advocate suffered a heart attack as a result of the postings and that their comments constituted "harassment" and "bullying" in violation of the companies' policies.

The NLRB administrative-law judge concluded that the conduct of concerted activity is protected by the employees.

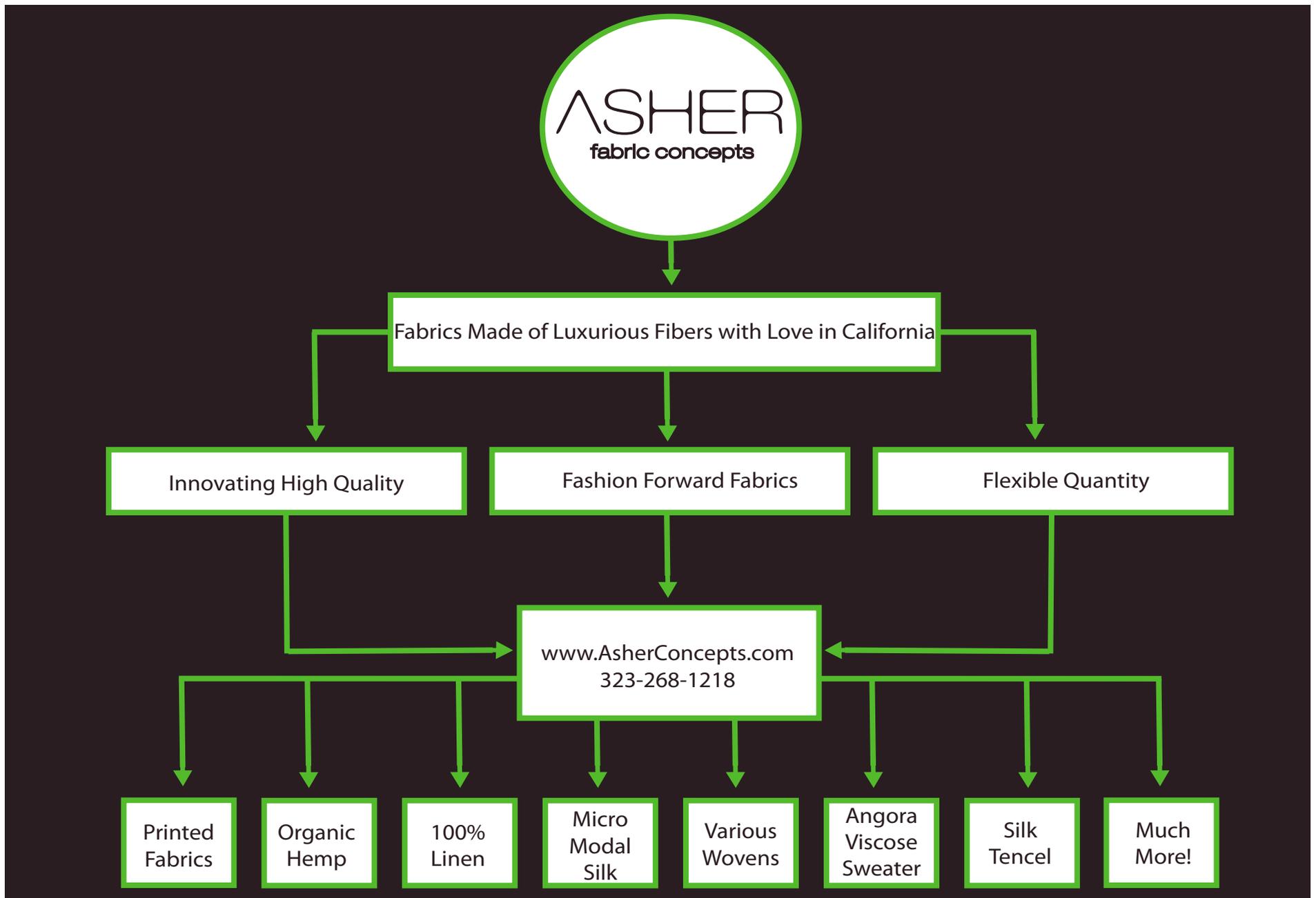
Worsinger explained, "Applying previous decisions, he found that activity does not need to have the goal of changing working conditions to be protected. Rather, as was the case here, discussions about criticisms of employees' job performance are protected. In addition, the ALJ [administrative-law judge] found that the employees were taking the first step toward taking group action to respond against the domestic-violence advocate's accusations, which they thought she may take to management. Further, the fact that the five employees were terminated at the same time showed that HUB viewed them as a group and that their activity was concerted."

The ALJ ordered that the employees be reinstated with back pay.

In another ruling, the NLRB ruled that a police reporter at *The Arizona Daily Star* was rightfully fired.

On a slow news day, the reporter posted a few Twitter comments expressing his frustration. One post said, "What?!?!?! No overnight homicide. ... You're slacking, Tucson."

The NLRB found the termination legal, stating the reporter's comments did not fall under the concerted-activity category, the tweets were "offensive," and they were not aimed at discussing working conditions to illicit support from other co-workers.—*Sarah Wolfson*



High-Tech Activewear Brand Moves From Oregon to California

Skins, a gradient compression sportswear brand, has moved its U.S. headquarters from Portland, Ore., to Encinitas, Calif.

The move was prompted by the number of professional athletic teams and training camps in Southern California whose participants are ideal candidates for Skins' compression products.

Skins' compression wear develops specific products for various sports. The technology-driven compression garments are specially designed to compress muscle groups to trigger accelerated blood flow, resulting in increased oxygen to working muscles and enhanced performance.

"As our renewed focus is on growing the North American compression category through increased presence across multi-sport segments, transferring Skins to the California coast provides a unique opportunity for us to reach our core audience," said Johnny West, general manager of Skins North America. "The wide array of thriving sport disciplines, businesses and active individuals within the north county San Diego area allows us to bring the Skins brand to the consumers who use the product the most and keep a close watch on the trends that drive the industry."

Skins was originally developed in Australia in 1996. The brand came to the United States in 2007.—*Deborah Belgum*

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Santa Barbara based China garment manufacturer seeking organized, self-starter able to multi task from initial concept to eventual production. Strong in follow-up, detail oriented, and ability to communicate clearly and effectively by email a must. Import experience preferred. Knowledge of Photoshop, Illustrator, Excel and Word very helpful.
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We are a developer of trims and logo identity products for fashion. Seeking individual with exp in trims or related products. Qualifications: Exp in dealing with factories in Asia, ability to work well with others, analytical & math competencies, highly organized, top verbal and written comm skills. Resume (with salary history): jobs@aziusa.com

Jobs Available

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Technical Designer:

Technical Designer needed to work in a fast paced environment. Applicant must have a great understanding of garment construction, specs, and patterns. Also, must be able to efficiently solve any fit issues. Must be detailed, self-starter, organized, and a team player.
Must have 5 - 7 years' experience.

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Send Resume to: resume@meridiantex.com

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Please send resume to alan@chungwoocorp.com & alfred@chungwoocorp.com or Fax: 323-722-8593

Jobs Available

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Major LA Based Fashion Company seeking in-house sales reps. Must have 5 years experience preferably with department stores. Salary and commission to commensurate with experience. Email resume applynowlosangeles@gmail.com

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-Must be an experienced leader; solution-oriented

-5-10 years sales, including mgmt of a sales team

-Major and specialty store relationships preferred

-Compensation Based on Experience
fashionjobs05@gmail.com

TECHNICAL DESIGNER

Premium Denim Co. located in the South Bay is seeking an individual to work with creative director. Must be familiar w/garment construction, excellent communication & follow-up ability. Well rounded knowledge of overseas and domestic garment production & construction req'd. Must have exp. in Adobe Illustrator & Excel to create technical packages. Knowledge of construction & wash processes (denim exp. preferred) required..
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TO APPLY:

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E-mail: lonni.mag@gmail.com/Fax 213-746-8500

PAIGE

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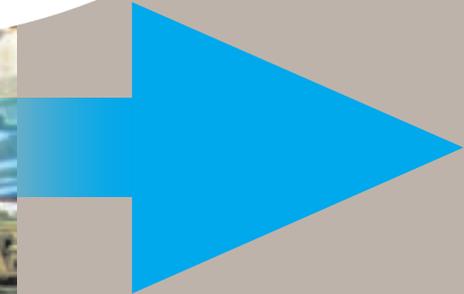
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- **Brother's Digital Garment Printer Deal**
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When to Upgrade
to Product Lifecycle
Management Software

SOURCING NOTES:
Safety and Compliance
on the Agenda at AAFA
Conference



Brother Offers Limited Lease Promotion for Digital Garment Printers

Bridgewater, N.Y.-based **Brother International Corp.** is running a special 0 percent financing program on its **GraffiTee** series of digital garment printers.

The promotion, which runs through the end of May, applies to Brother's GraffiTee models GT341, GT361 and GT381.

"We are excited to announce this special financing offer to those looking to start or expand a garment-decorating business," said Peter Holland, senior director and general manager for Brother's industrial-products division.

The Brother GraffiTee Series are mod-

ular, allowing customers to upgrade as business grows. They are available as a CMYK-only printer; a CMYK with two white print-heads model; and a CMYK with four white print-heads model, which features single-pass printing for higher speed and performance, according to the company.

The printers offer up to 1200 dpi for photographic-quality printing, print areas up to 16 by 18 inches, LAN/ethernet/USB connectivity, an ink-cartridge system and **OekoTex Standard 100**, Class 1-certified inks, and a compact size. The printers

come with **GraffixPro Studio** T-shirt design software.

For more information about the GraffiTee series, visit www.graffitee.com.

The special promotion applies to new 27-month leases on Brother GraffiTee digital-garment printers leased directly from Brother International Corp. and is valid within the United States only.

For more information about Brother's promotional lease program, including terms and limitations, visit www.brotherusa.com.

—Alison A. Nieder

Safety and Compliance on the Agenda in Long Beach, Calif.

Product safety, compliance and sustainability issues—including state and international regulations; import surveillance; and developing an efficient, cost-effective and reasonable testing program—will be discussed at an all-day seminar and workshop in Long Beach, Calif., hosted by **American Apparel and Footwear Association**.

Danielle Abdul, AAFA government-relations manager, will kick the event off with an update on the state of the industry, and Nancy Nord, commissioner for the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, will give the keynote address and answer questions from attendees.

A panel discussion titled "California and Beyond the Border: An In-Depth Look at Regulations" will address West Coast state regulatory issues, including Proposition 65 and green chemistry, and will look at international regulations, including those from Canada, the European Union and China.

Panelists include Erin Maus and Douglas Sanders, both with **Baker & McKenzie**, and Barbara McAndrews, senior legal counsel for product safety and compliance for **Quiksilver**.

Import surveillance, requirements and strategies to avoid having goods stopped at the ports will be discussed at another panel, titled "Stopped at the Border: The Impact of Import Surveillance on Your Business." Panelists include Vicky Hutson, compliance investigator for the Consumer Product Safety Commission, and Dora Murphy, director of the **Center for Excellence & Expertise**.

Cost-effective testing and the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA) will be discussed at a panel titled "What's Reasonable? Developing a CPSIA-Compliant, Reasonable Testing Program."

The May 19 Product Safety and Compliance Seminar will be held at the **Long Beach Marriott**.

Sponsors include Baker & McKenzie, **ecVision**, **OekoTex**, **SGS**, **TEXbase**, **Olympus**, **UL**, **Bureau Veritas** and **TUV SUD**.

For more information, visit www.wewear.org.—A.A.N.

Graphics One's Partnership Puts Metalnox Equipment On-site

Burbank, Calif.-based **Graphics One LLC** formed a partnership with **Metalnox**, a Brazil-based maker of heavy-duty calendars and industrial heat presses.

Through the partnership, Graphics One can offer free installation and on-site service of the Metalnox equipment through a nationwide network of dealers. Since 1982, Metalnox has been manufacturing equipment for the textile industry with its original patented technology. Metalnox products are sold in Brazil; South, Central and North America; Europe; and Asia. The company's **Metalnox 8000ACV Pro** and

12000AV Pro have a dual shuttle system, which allows for two continuous pressing jobs. Metalnox's Paper Vacuum System allows users to use generic transfer paper and still produce crisp images with no ghosting.

Graphics One provides a range of digital imaging products, including prepress, graphic arts, large format and color products, as well as installation and technical support through a distribution partner network in nearly 100 countries.

For more information, visit www.graphicsonenews.com.—A.A.N.

Synergy 17 Offers Rhinestone Font Tool for CorelDraw, Free Font Download

Clovis, Calif.-based embellished-apparel resource **Synergy 17** has created a macro for **CorelDraw** to help apparel designers resize rhinestone fonts for custom applications.

Compatible with CorelDraw X4, X5 and X6, the resize tool let users customize design specs and rhinestone size and replace irregular-shaped stones.

A tutorial video is available on the Synergy17 website.

On the 17th of each month, visitors to Synergy 17's website may also download the latest pre-stoned rhinestone font, available for free. After 24 hours, the font will be available for sale, along with the company's catalog of rhinestones, fonts and designs, textile foil and heat-transfer equipment and supplies, graphics, and clip-art.

Launched in 2011, Synergy 17 sells garment-decorating equipment and supplies, including heat presses, vinyl cutters, rhinestone-design software, vinyl, rhinestones, rhinestone-template materials, rhinestone fonts, rhinestone designs and other accessories. In addition, Synergy 17 offers training and information for hobbyists, start-up businesses and well-established decorated-apparel makers.

For more information, visit www.synergy17.com.—A.A.N.



Complimentary Breakfast Event:

Learn about the advantages of the unified model approach to fashion ERP solutions and what the future holds for the fashion ERP software landscape.

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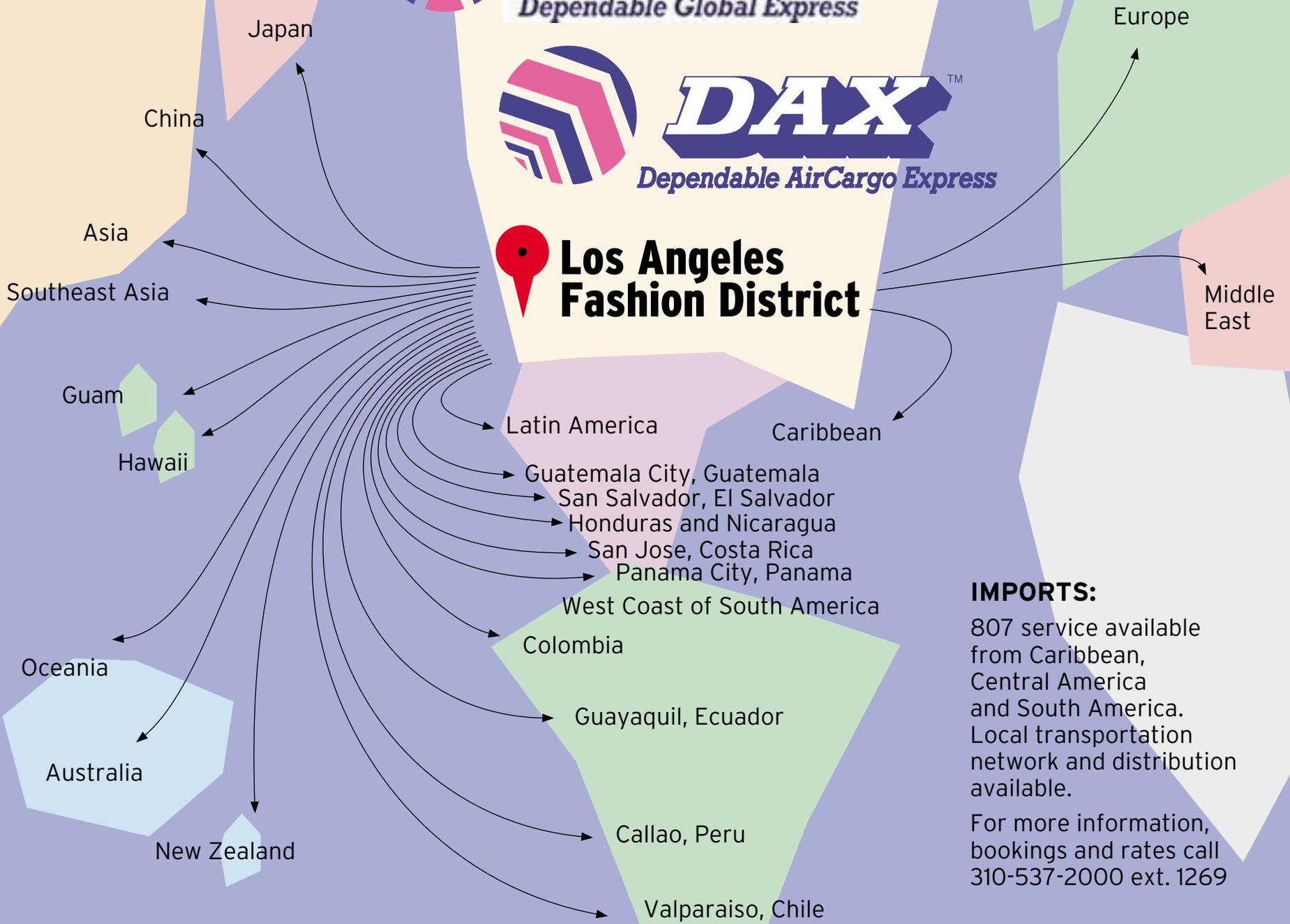


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When Is It Time to Add PLM?

Technology providers offer advice for companies looking to add product lifecycle management systems.

Large apparel manufacturers and retailers producing around the world have learned that product lifecycle management software keeps all divisions on track to bring in production efficiently and on time.

The challenge is to know when to add PLM. *California Apparel News* Manufacturing and Technology Editor Sarah Wolfson recently caught up with several apparel technology executives to find out what signs apparel makers should look for when deciding whether to add—or upgrade—their PLM systems.

Mark Burstein
President of Sales, Marketing and R&D
NGC

If fashion companies are running their businesses by spreadsheets, emails or outdated legacy systems, they're on a collision course with potential disaster. Without the visibility of PLM systems, they run the risk of missing deadlines, over- or under developing product lines, missing their margins, and experiencing mistakes in quality. The list goes on and on, and these are all symptoms that a company is ready for PLM.

Speed-to-market is one of the key reasons that companies adopt PLM systems. The most successful fashion companies are designing closer to season than ever before in order to be on-trend and more responsive

to consumers. As a result, companies must compress their lead times and produce products as close as possible to the retail-floor set date. This helps maximize full-price sales and reduce markdowns, which increases sell-through and profitability.

SKU proliferation is another big driver in fashion PLM adoption. Managing the increasing amount of styles, colors and sizes that fashion companies are developing today is extremely difficult without a PLM system.

PLM isn't a luxury anymore. Fashion companies must become more efficient and productive. PLM can be the key to helping them compete.

Stacey Charbin
Fashion Marketing Director
Lectra

Fashion is a business of change. And it comes as a surprise that, sometimes, fashion companies are hesitant to change. Sometimes because the business is so fast paced that you don't have time to breathe and sometimes because you aren't sure how to go about making the changes that you think you need.

This is where PLM enters the picture. A PLM solution shakes up a traditional way of working with collaborative technology. PLM channels expertise where it matters most—vision, creativity, quality and fit—while providing traceability and visibility.

PLM is a big change. And if top management isn't fully behind the idea of such a solution, a company simply isn't ready for it.

By working with top fashion brands around the world, we've seen several other signs of readiness. Previous experience with enterprise software projects—ERP, in particular—is a good sign that a company can implement PLM effectively. This implies a strong IT team and support, which will be needed for a PLM project. There should also be initiatives already underway to standardize and formalize collection development. A company should have a firm understanding of change management and be serious about critical path management. Clear roles and responsibilities as well as organizational buy-in will help ensure successful implementation and sustainability of a PLM solution.

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2 Liesse Design

Tricots Liesse also has its own very experienced and highly qualified design team using the latest textile software CAD design tools.

Our expert team can custom design fabrics to achieve the look and feel you need, all constructed to your exacting standards.

3 Di-Tech Dyeing & Finishing

Our European-styled, state-of-the-art dyeing and finishing facility has the unique ability to process small runs to very large programs, including a multitude of different finishes and knitted fabrics from 2 oz. to 22 oz. and everything in between. Di-Tech specializes in the quick turn of samples and/or production of the highest-possible quality knitted fabrics.

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James Horne
Vice President of Marketing
Centric Software

Today, omni-channel retailing practices are pressuring apparel makers to produce more SKUs than ever before. This demand puts enormous pressure on product teams. If existing systems—like PDM [product data management] or spreadsheets—hamper rather than help the efforts of product teams to keep up, this is definitely a sign that it's time for PLM. PLM systems—especially those with apparel-industry business practices built in and that implement quickly right out of the box—allow apparel companies to ramp up product development—and SKUs—quickly.

For example, one North American apparel company found it could manage 22 percent more SKUs year over year—without increasing headcount—once it implemented a PLM system designed for the apparel industry.

Many apparel companies are so strangled by their current work environments and systems that they can't pursue a new market when they identify one. An effective PLM system provides a way to track, document and manage rapid product development with good cost control.

Whether a company conducts its own [regulatory] audits or outsources them, the challenges are the same. Maintaining visibility, documenting results quickly and accurately, and the ability to produce well-organized, clear, succinct documentation upon request (such as for inspectors) are all essential. A good PLM system delivers all of this in the same system where all other product information is stored. This "single source of truth" approach results in better compliance management, visibility and risk mitigation, as well as better and safer products.

Fast fashion used to be a differentiator for a few companies but is now being adopted across the industry. Fast fashion's previously unheard-of development cycles require much more efficient product-development efforts and a way to integrate everyone from designers to line planners and from merchandisers to factories and retailers. Everyone in the supply chain *must* be on the same page, working from the same information—at all times—in all time zones. A PLM system that delivers robust functionality and implements quickly allows more product cycles in shorter periods of time.

Many apparel companies view their creative staff as a differentiator. Yet designers can become uninspired by the atmosphere in which they work. The last thing someone from a top design school wants to do is spend a lots of time tracking information through a myriad of spreadsheets. A PLM system designed for the apparel industry removes administrative headaches and allows creative teams to be creative. As a bonus, this environment can even help in the recruitment and hiring process.

[A PLM system can help] when the supply chain is performing well, but the company still needs to improve margins. This usually happens when companies put all their cost-saving efforts into ERP. The problem with this approach is that ERP only affects costs that occur after the product is in the marketplace. The greatest impact on product costs are locked in during design and development, long before the sale. With PLM, a company has much better control of costs and can do more what-if scenario planning before locking in costs during development.

Debbie Marconi
Director of Global Management
Gerber Technology

We find that companies turn to PLM when their process becomes too difficult to manage in the traditional way. Without a PLM

system, organizations have data dispersed in all sorts of places—in emails and spreadsheets—and, because product details change so quickly, the data is never current. A PLM system serves as a dynamic repository of all of the details associated with planning, designing, developing, sourcing, tracking and reporting on a product line. With PLM, everyone in the process pulls data from a single source that tracks history, workflows and individual responsibilities to help companies go from concept to finished product in a fraction of the time.

PLM systems make it possible to connect your creative process with your supply chain and truly collaborate dynamically with vendors around the world in real time. This means vendors are elevated to true partners because they can actively participate in the product-development process. The best systems are able to translate information into multiple languages to ensure details aren't lost in translation. PLM systems also enable companies to easily track the performance of their vendors to determine who their high-performing partners are at any point in time.

High-performing organizations want visibility into their entire process, from planning to purchase, and need to be able to estimate costs quickly and easily. A comprehensive and user-friendly PLM system will enable everyone involved in the process, including executives, to track progress and ensure that commitments are met and quality is upheld.

Robust PLM systems can also be integrated with a company's enterprise systems like, for example, ERP. This gives managers all the information they need to make informed decisions going forward. Which lines are the most profitable? Which vendors consistently hit their deadlines? They present the information graphically and enable managers to easily drill down to the details. This means you not only reduce time spent in meetings scrutinizing spreadsheets that may or may not be providing the most current, comprehensive view of your business, but you also increase profits by getting the right products to market on time at the right cost.

Ben Silver
Senior Director, Business Development
Simparel Solutions

Growth in smaller companies is the main reason they need to move to a PLM system to enable them to track and cost their pre-production products more efficiently. Doing things in Excel and on spreadsheets just doesn't cut it when companies see growth in the 30 percent to 40 percent range. Their staff can't keep up with all the activities, so they either add staff—which can get expensive and time consuming—or add a system to enable their process to be tracked automatically, and there is only one version of the truth throughout the company.

Larger companies look to add or replace PLM systems based on how their business models have changed. In some cases, bringing production back to this hemisphere has created a need for more design and development than they were getting overseas from their vendors. In that case, a new system is needed to help develop product quickly and efficiently to meet the new business model of manufacturing, where speed to market is needed—as well as replace what was being done overseas for them. What we are also seeing is that the unified approach—where everything is in one system—works best, so interfaces, manual inputs and APIs are not having to be created. [An API, or application protocol interface, allows different software systems to communicate with each other.] **Gartner** [the technology research firm] did a study in 2011 in which they said, "Modern apparel companies must adopt an end-to-end model of operations in order to succeed." ●

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The Emsig Edge

When you have worked at the same place going on 59 years, and run it for most of that time, you might be forgiven for becoming a bit weary, even jaded. However, you would not be Larry Jacobs, president and CEO of Emsig Manufacturing, the global powerhouse button producer. Jacobs has spent his entire adult life—and years that for someone less motivated might have been a golden retirement—continuing to build the Emsig brand with the enthusiasm and energy of a 20-year-old. Can he possibly still enjoy his work routine?

“Well, of course I’m enjoying it,” he shoots back. “That’s why I can go to India for two nights and come home. Who does that? I commute an hour and a half each way to work every day. I enjoy it,” he continues, “because it’s an opportunity to be creative.”

Creativity, along with technological innovation, have kept Emsig at the industry’s forefront since its founding in 1928. The list of Emsig “firsts” is impressive, from the first enameled steel work shirt button to buttons that glow in the dark, and, for the medical field, anti-bacterial melamine buttons that inhibit the growth of bacteria. Emsig has also learned how to recycle the nearly 200,000 pounds of waste melamine into new product—“No one else does that,” Jacobs points out.

While many of Emsig’s buttons are produced in its 110,000-square-foot Connecticut factory—one of only two button makers that still produces in the United States—Jacobs had the foresight some 30 years ago to set up production facilities in China and, more recently, in New Delhi, India, to service U.S. overseas production. Emsig’s Chinese license at its two China facilities allows American companies manufacturing there to avoid import duties on buttons as well as quickly recover the VAT. Seeing opportunity and capitalizing on it has been Jacobs’ genius as much as thinking outside the box has propelled Emsig to the top.

“We are creative because that’s what you have to do,” says Jacobs. “I’m involved in fashion, and fashion is about change. The concepts I’m working on have to be doable, have to be practical, and you have to know the market is ready for certain changes. Then we offer them.”

So, what’s new at Emsig? For starters, a new shirt-size wonder button that, Jacobs crows, “is truly unbreakable. Takes a compression test of 2,000 pounds per square inch. No one has really made a button like this.” The pearlized look stands up to hundreds of washings without change, including enzyme washing, and the button will not burn.

Also in the pipeline is a “photo button,” produced in China, allowing a customer to have any photo permanently infused into a button. “The photo becomes an actual part of the button,” Jacobs notes. “It doesn’t wash off, it’s iron-able. I can’t believe it myself.”

Jacobs is equally excited, however, in the series of products Emsig is not producing but will be distributing in the United States and South America—a rarity for the company. “This is a very special line of products for the swimwear industry,” he says. “It’s so different and so exciting, we’ve never seen anything like it.” The line comes from the children of a former but-



Emsig Manufacturing is Oeko-Tex certified and UL specified.

ton maker in Italy Jacobs knew and comprises more than 1,200 separate items. Jacobs is a bit closed-mouth about it—“it’s a few weeks before I have everything, and I have to wait until it comes in,” he explains—but he will say that the combination plastic-metal line of trim involves “all types of unique ways of fastening a garment, as well as showing a fashion style that is washable, iron-able, and isn’t affected by chlorine or saltwater.”

Innovation aside, Jacobs takes pride in the employees that have become as much a family as a workforce. “What’s important for me is the value I have in the people who work for us,” he says. For them, Jacobs is willing to fund continuing education classes as well as treatment for any addiction. His smarts and style, and unusual longevity, attracted Who’s Who in America to pick him as one of 100 “unusual” top executives, and Emsig has been profiled on the *World’s Greatest* television series. Jacobs’ continuing zest for his business ensures that Emsig will be a powerhouse for years to come.

“I don’t hit a home run every time at bat to be sure,” he says, “but if you are not involved, you end up doing the same thing over and over again. The world goes on. I learn from younger people today. Then I say, ‘Here I am, this is what I’ve got.’”



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