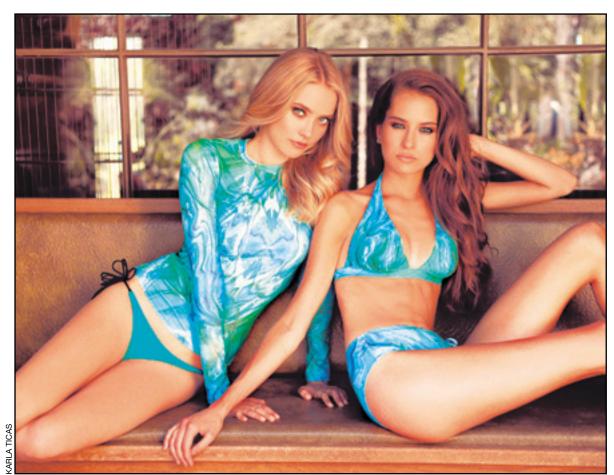
CALIFORNIA pare \$2.99 VOLUME 70, NUMBER 29 JULY 11-17, 2014 THE VOICE OF THE INDUSTRY FOR 69 YEARS



SWIM SEASON: The Cruise '15 swimwear season launches July 17 in Miami, where scores of runway shows and trade exhibits unveil the latest creations to hit the water. For more on the Belusso collection (pictured), see page 7.

Menswear Trade Show Has an Alternative Vibe

By Sarah Wolfson Contributing Writer

A new menswear show called Fi3 took flight at Barker Hangar at the Santa Monica Airport, but it had a different twist.

It was a mash-up of men's fashion, conferences and music. Held July 7-8, the show hosted 60 specialty men's brands that varied from apparel to accessories, including bags, footwear and unisex jewelry.

Barker Hangar is a popular venue for fashion-forward events. For a while it was the site of the annual Barneys New York warehouse sale.

To keep with that fashion-forward, edgy atmosphere, the 35,000-square-foot building in Santa Monica, Calif., had a display of classic-looking motorcycle bikes custom made

by Eastern Fabrications and Seaweed and Gravel. They were displayed in the front entrance to set the tone for an urban, modern vibe

The trade show also featured a retail pop-up shop, Fi3 Supply x Wittmore, that had a selection of men's brands showcased by Paul Witt. The Wittmore pop-up carried brands that could be visited on the trade-show floor and an additional

15 that did not exhibit, including Apolis, The Essential Man and Robert Siegel Ceramics.

Fi3 is the brainchild of André Warren and Bernard Campbell, who once worked for Advanstar and wanted to create a platform for premium menswear brands.

The consumer-friendly event gave people the opportunity to gain some insight into a trade show. The public could listen to talks and panel discussions. Brands could sell directly to the public.

Accessories brands such as Capital Eyewear, Capsule Wallets and shoes by Oliberté, Northern Cobbler and Shoes Like Pottery were exhibiting. Several denim brands were present, and a good range of ready-to-wear lines also showed.

Madelyn Krevitt, the men's sales executive and brand manager for Gypsy 05, was excited about the show. The casual line

> features men's twills, T-shirts, sweatpants and long sleeves. "With a new show like this, we hope to gain exposure, especially in menswear, which isn't as well known," she said.

Kevin Brennan of Hudson was looking for new and progressive

➡ **Fi3** page 7



Fi3 trade show, held at Barker Hangar at the Santa

Monica Airport

MID-YEAR FINANCIAL REVIEW Economy on Strong Footing to Grow, But **Apparel Sales Challenged**

By Deborah Belgum Senior Editor

For once, economists are in agreement. The financial outlook for California and the rest of the nation is bright for the rest of the year.

After severe cold weather in the rest of the country froze economic activity this winter, consumers and businesses have been making up for lost time.

"We wrote off the first quarter," said Esmael Adibi, director for the A. Gary Anderson Center for Economic Research at Chapman University in Orange, Calif. "But we think the second, third and fourth quarters should be relatively strong."

The International Monetary Fund recently revised its Finance page 3

Tough Retail Times Lead to Complex Ways to Stay Alive

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

After a decade of solid growth, Ricky Takizawa's Popkiller chain of stores will experience its first big setback. Its long-running boutique at The Lab, an upscale and hip specialty retail center in Costa Mesa, Calif., is scheduled to close at the end of July.

For 11 years, the Japanese-born retailer has run a handful of Popkiller stores that sell vintage and new clothes as well as T-shirts with graphics inspired by Japanese and American pop culture. But hanging up a "Going Out of Business" sign at a hip retail center known for serving a well-to-do clientele has made Takizawa think it's time to shuffle his business plan.

"We need to change something," Takizawa said in his downtown Los Angeles creative workshop lined with road

🗭 Retail page 6

INSIDE fashion gets down to business^{ss}



American Apparel saga ... p. 2 Retail Sales ... p. 2 Venue trade show ... p. 3 Denim Report ... p. 5 Finance Resources ... p. 9

www.apparelnews.net

Major Investor in American Apparel Commits to Keeping Production in Los Angeles

The largest investor in **American Apparel** has agreed to infuse the company with \$25 million so the Los Angeles clothing maker can pay off a \$10 million loan that is being called in.

Standard General, the New York hedge fund that now controls 43 percent of the stock with the company's founder, Dov Charney, will loan the clothing maker the money. In return, American Apparel's board of directors must be reshuffled to include a member representing Standard General.

As part of the deal, Standard General agreed to keep American Apparel's production in Los Angeles. Also, Standard General and Charney agreed to certain standstill and voting limitations through the company's 2015 annual meeting.

That means they will not acquire any more stock until then. It also limits their vote to no more than one-third of the company's shares on any issue put to stockholders. Their remaining shares would be voted proportionately to the vote of other stockholders.

"This truly marks the beginning of an important new chapter in the American Apparel story," said Allan Mayer, co-chairman of the clothing company's board, in a statement. "With the support of Standard General, we are confident the company will finally be able to realize its true potential."

Mayer and David Danziger, co-chairmen of the seven-member board, will remain in their posts. But the five other members will leave. The departing members will be replaced by two new directors chosen by both Standard General and the current board. Another three board members will be designated by Standard General. Charney will not be on the board.

Meanwhile, an investigation will continue into Charney's alleged misconduct, which was not detailed by the board. The investigation will be overseen by a newly appointed independent board committee. Charney will serve as a paid strategic consultant until the investigation ends. Then the committee will decide whether Charney will resume his job as chief executive or an employee.

Standard General's \$25 million infusion will go to pay off a \$10 million loan called in by **Lion Capital**, a London-based invest-



DOWNTOWN LA: American Apparel employs thousands of workers in Los Angeles.

ment company.

The loan stated that if Charney is no longer the clothing company's chief executive, then American Apparel is in default on the loan. American Apparel's board voted in June to kick Charney out as chief executive and off the board for alleged misconduct. —Deborah Belgum

Longshore Workers Return to the Negotiating Table

After taking a three-day break, longshore workers and their employers were planning to get back at the negotiating table to hammer out a new six-year contract that expired on July 1.

The **International Longshore and Warehouse Union**, which represents some 13,600 registered workers at 29 West Coast ports,

We Take

and the **Pacific Maritime Union**, whose 72 members include shipping lines and terminal operators, had been negotiating since May 12. But on July 7, they agreed to take a 72-hour break while ILWU representatives attended unrelated negotiations taking place in the Pacific Northwest.

The break was scheduled to last from 8

a.m. on July 8 to 8 a.m. on July 11. During that time, both sides agreed to extend the previous six-year contract to July 11.

Meanwhile, independent truck drivers who pick up cargo at the **Port of Los Angeles** and the **Port of Long Beach** have been picketing various terminals on the waterfront. On July 8, longshore workers at three terminals decided to honor the picket lines. Work stopped for two hours at the **Evergreen** and **APL** terminals at the Port of Los Angeles. Dock workers also didn't work for two hours at the **Long Beach Container Terminal** at the Port of Long Beach.

But an arbitrator quickly ruled that the dockworkers' contract didn't allow them to leave the job in sympathy with the drivers. The truckers who were still on strike on July 10 complain they are classified as independent truck drivers instead of company employees, which means they don't get paid as much and don't qualify for benefits such as health coverage and Social Security payments. The drivers have been targeting three truck firms: **Total Transportation Services Inc.**, **Green Fleet Systems** and **Pacific 9 Transportation**.

About 15 to 20 truckers were still picketing the Evergreen, APL and Yusen terminals at the Port of Los Angeles. "Operations there are near normal. Occasionally, they get slowed at the gates by pickets," said Port of Los Angeles spokesperson Phillip Sanfield.—*D.B.*

RETAIL SALES

June Retail Sales Better Than Expected

A month of warm weather melted some of the winter blues held by some retailers, according to the **International Council of Shopping Centers**, a New York trade group for the shopping-center business.

Same-store sales charted by ICSC in June climbed 5.9 percent, said Michael Niemira, an ICSC research consultant. The results beat ICSC's earlier forecasts, which predicted that June sales would only increase

3.5 percent.

"Overall retail sales performance was healthy and strong in June, following a sluggish winter, with consumers shopping for staple items, and modest spending on non-essential items like apparel," Niemira said.

June's sales results also were judged better than expected by Adrienne Tennant, an analyst with **Janney Capital**

Markets. "Based on our checks, we believe weeks four and five were the best, driven by pre–July Fourth buying and hot weather, while trends in the earlier part of the month were choppy. June is a transitional month and typically lacks reason to buy until the latter part of the month, leading into the July Fourth week," she wrote in a July 10 note.

Ken Perkins, president of market-research firm **Retail Metrics**, also credited June's good performance to improved consumer confidence, Retailers were offering more deals and promotions. Plus, more people had jobs.

Perkins noted, however, that retailers have not left their economic troubles behind. He quoted gloomy assessments of the U.S. retail environment.

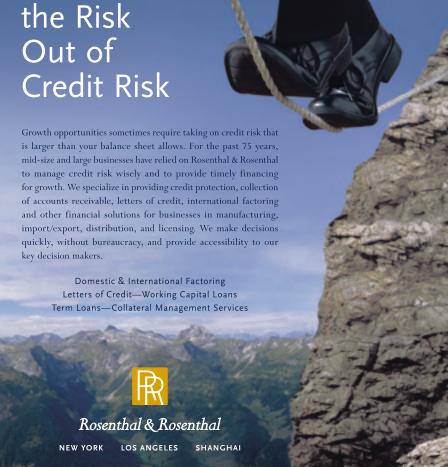
Kip Tindell, chief executive of **The Container Store**, said that America is in a "retail funk." **Walmart** President Bill Simon ob-

June Retail Sales				
	Sales (in millions)	Change from yr. ago	Same-store sales	
The Buckle	\$84.80	+2.8%	+0.7%	
Gap	\$1,540.00	+1.0%	-2.0%	
Brands Inc.	\$1,176.00	+7.0%	+2.0%	
Stein Mart	\$113.20	+3.8%	+2.6%	
Zumiez	\$65.30	+11.1%	+3.1%	
nformation from comp	any reports			

served that U.S. employment gains have not been felt at the cash register yet.

One of the month's retail winners was **Zumiez Inc.** The teen retailer posted samestore sales of 3.1 percent.

For retail giant **Gap Inc.**, June was a middling month. The San Francisco company reported that same-store sales declined 2 percent, but its **Old Navy** division, which sells economically priced apparel, posted a 7 percent rise in same-store sales.



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TRADE SHOW REPORT

Venue Makes Its Third Appearance

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

For the owners of the **Casablank** streetwear label, business can be a transcontinental road trip.

They wanted to introduce their Montreal-based brand to Los Angeles. So they bought a booth for \$2,200 at the **Venue** trade show, which ran July 8–9 at the **Cooper Design Space** in downtown Los Angeles.

To make the trip, co-founders Nicolas Bearzatto and Sharif Aina—along with Mathieu Brunet, who does sales for the Canadian brand—took a six-day trip that started in Montreal and wended its way through Denver and Las Vegas



THE TRAVELERS: Sharif Aina, Nicolas Bearzatto and Mathieu Brunet (left to right) of the Casablank label traveled from Montreal to exhibit at Venue.

before arriving in Los Angeles.

At the end of the show, when many vendors were watching the World Cup's semi-final match between the Netherlands and Argentina, Bearzatto said they found what they were looking for. "We met people. We wanted to get more exposure," he said.

The recent run of Venue was the third time the show was produced and the second time it exhibited on the 11th floor of the Cooper Design Space, said Miles Canares, founder of the show for streetwear and emerging labels. Fifty brands exhibited, which was about the same number as last January.

Canares said he picked this particular date for the show because it was the same week as **Agenda**, one of the leading streetwear shows in the market. He thought more buyers than usual would be in town.

Retailers such as **Nasty Gal** and **Tradition**, both of Los Angeles, shopped the show, as well as streetwear boutiques such as **Backside** in Burbank, Calif., and **Crown Roots** in Pasadena, Calif.

The great majority of the brands exhibiting were new, but



VENUE BIZ: Brian Chan, director of the Wolf & Man label, center, shows a flight jacket to Joseph Ortega, pictured right. Jared Ito, marketing for Wolf & Man, is pictured on the left.

established brands such as **X** -Large of Los Angeles and Bearpaw of Sacramento, Calif., also had booths.

For Tepi Benjamins, brand manager for the 23year-old X-Large, Venue was the place for commerce and self-expression. It was a great place to meet retailers, and brands could also produce brief demonstrations such as a hip-hop dance show.

For Dana Noh, who does sales for Bearpaw footwear, the show was a means to introduce her brand to emerging retailers. "We knew they weren't going to write a lot



Miles Canares, founder of Venue

of paper, but it's about making connections," she said.

But business was done at the small show. Brian Chan, director for Los Angeles–label **Wolf & Man**, said 70 percent of his orders were for Immediate deliveries. Others were for Fall.

Terence Harrison, owner of Crown Roots, said business has been hard for independent retailers. He knew some boutiques that were going out of business due to rising rents. However, there were new trends bubbling up in streetwear that were bringing in new customers. Silhouettes such as baseball jerseys and walking shorts have been in style. Patterns such as florals and tie-dye designs have been on their way out, he said.

The tough business environment may have kept some buyers at home, said Jacob Seedman, founder of **Shalom CPP**, a Santa Cruz, Calif.-based streetwear label. "It was a good show but a little slow. It was not as many buyers as we anticipated. But I plan to do the show again. I believe in its potential," he said.

Finance Continued from page 1

estimate for economic growth in the United States, saying the weak first quarter means the country's gross domestic product will rise 2 percent this year rather than the 2.8 percent it predicted earlier.

A growing economy means that hiring has been robust across the country and in California. The unemployment rate has been dropping steadily as employers add more workers. With more people in the workforce, there is more money to spend on clothing, cars and other consumer items, economists noted.

Adibi predicted that California's retail sales should grow by about 6 percent this year after rising 7 percent in 2013, 7.3 percent in 2012 and 8.8 percent in 2011. Right after the recession ended in the summer of 2009, there was a flurry of spending because of pent-up demand.

On the employment front, California has been creating jobs faster than the rest of the nation. A lot of those jobs have been in technology, but construction is catching up, too. Between January 2013 and April 2014, construction job growth made up 12 percent of all new payroll jobs in California.

"The state and Los Angeles County have been adding wage and farm jobs at a faster clip than the nation,' said Robert Kleinhenz, chief economist for the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corp. "In Southern California, just about every industry has been adding jobs on a consistent basis."

The two exceptions have been in non-durable goods manufacturing, which includes apparel and textiles as well as finance and insurance. "People aren't refinancing as much, and consolidation is taking place in financial institutions," Kleinhenz said.

Otherwise, there have been strong gains in healthcare, leisure and hospitality as well as professional and business services and retail. "We are looking at an economy that has performed well during the first half of the year, but wage growth has been very slight," Kleinhenz noted.

That's because many of the new jobs are entry-level posi-

FINANCE

APPAREL AND TEXTILE EMPLOYMENT

California	May 2014	May 2013
Apparel manufacturing	53,400	57,500
Textile mills	8,600	8,900
Wholesaling	35,600	34,800
Los Angeles County	May 2014	May 2013
Los Angeles County Apparel manufacturing	May 2014 43,600	May 2013 46,800
Apparel manufacturing	43,600	46,800

tions that pay minimum wage or are at the top of the wage spectrum. Fewer jobs pay in the middle. "We might see some improvement in that later on," Kleinhenz said.

California's unemployment rate is still higher than the national unemployment rate of 6.1 percent. But it has been coming down rapidly. In May, the state unemployment rate stood at 7.6 percent, seasonally adjusted, compared with 9 percent the previous year.

Los Angeles County's unemployment rate in May was a seasonally adjusted 8.2 percent compared with 10 percent last year.

The state should see total employment growth of 2.4 percent in 2015 and 2.1 percent in 2016.

Home front

Housing prices are making a slow comeback but still are not near their 2007 peak. From the beginning of 2013 to the beginning of 2014, Los Angeles home prices were risen 18 percent. San Francisco's home prices were up 22.2 percent while in San Diego they inched up 19.4 percent.

While values are up, home sale numbers are lackluster. In a recent **UCLA Anderson Forecast**, senior UCLA economist Jerry Nickelsburg noted that home sales have been soft because banks have fewer foreclosed properties to sell. Still, home sales should return to normal levels as more people get back to the workforce or form new households, boosting new home construction and more inventory.

More homes sales translates into robust retail sales as new property owners snatch up new furniture, accessories and notions to fill their new abodes.

But retailers have been worried about challenging sales in clothing. For the first five months of this year, clothing and accessories stores saw sales inch up only 1.3 percent over last year to \$95 billion, according to the U.S. Census. But department stores were struggling. From January to May, their sales, which did not include leased department, dipped 3.2 percent to \$62.2 billion.

Clothing manufacturers have had to work harder to keep profits up. Levi Strauss & Co. recently reported its net revenue during the second quarter of this year was down 2 percent to \$1.08 billion. Most of that came from a 3 percent slip in sales in the Americas.

"While we are encouraged by business improvements in Europe and Asia, ongoing traffic declined and an increasingly promotional environment continue to pressure our Americas regions," said Chip Bergh, Levi's president and chief executive, in a statement following the earnings report. "We will continue to focus on what's within our control from cost structure to conversion in our stores to engaging consumers with great product and innovation—in order to drive long-term profitable growth."

Gap Inc., one of the largest specialty retailers in the United States, was also seeing soft sales. For its first quarter, ending May 3, its revenues were up only 1 percent to \$3.77 billion. But its net income tumbled 21 percent to \$260 million. The San Francisco–based company's first-quarter same-store sales dipped 1 percent compared with a 2 percent increase for the first quarter of 2013.

Of its three stores, only **Old Navy**'s comparable-store sales were in positive territory, edging up 1 percent. **The Gap** stores saw a 5 percent decline in same-store sales during the first quarter while the **Banana Republic** chain of stores had a 1 percent decrease in same-store sales.



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CREATIVE MARKETING DIRECTOR LOUISE DAMBERG

DIRECTOR OF SALES AND MARKETING TERRY MARTINEZ

SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE AMY VALENCIA

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

LYNNE KASCH SALES & MARKETING COORDINATOR

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MOLLY RHODES

Bebe Announces New Board Members

Last month Bebe Stores Inc. named Jim Wiggett as its interim chief executive officer. Now the beleaguered contemporary retailer has revamped its board of directors.

Cynthia Cohen, Barbara Bass and Caden Wang left the company's board effective immediately, Bebe Stores reported in a July 9 statement.

Their replacements are men with deep roots in mall retail. Coming on board is Seth Johnson, who served as Pacific Sunwear Inc.'s chief executive from 2004 to 2006. He currently serves on the boards of True Religion Inc. and Tillys Inc.

Brett Brewer also was appointed to the board. He currently serves on PacSun's board of directors and is the co-founder of CrossCut Ventures, a venture capital firm. He has worked for more than 15 years as an Internet entrepreneur.

The third new director is Blair Lambert, who was chief operating officer and chief financial officer of The Gymboree Corp. Currently, he is the owner of Napa, Calif.based Lambert Family Vineyard.

Manny Mashouf, Bebe's founder and chairman of the board, said the new directors would provide valuable advice. "They add a wealth of retail experience and strategic business knowledge to the board, and we look forward to their contributions. Overall, driving shareholder value is a priority for our company, and we believe that the appointment of Jim Wiggett as interim CEO and our new board members will help us to achieve this objective," he said.

Bebe has been struggling with its sales. For its third quarter of fiscal 2014, same-store sales decreased 5.7 percent. Net sales declined 17.2 percent to \$93.5 million, compared with \$112.9 million during the same time period last year. Bebe currently runs a fleet of 224 stores across the U.S., Canada, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.—Andrew Asch

<u>July 29</u>

Kingpins

Aug. 3

Fame

New York

Los Angeles Through Aug. 6

Las Vegas

<u>Aug. 4</u>

Through Aug. 5

Gerry Building

The New Mart

824 Building

Los Angeles

Los Angeles

Through Aug. 6

Transit

Through Aug. 7

Los Angeles

Through July 30

Moda Manhattan

Cooper Design Space

Accessories The Show

California Market Center

Imprinted Sportswear Show

Las Vegas Convention Center

Los Angeles Fashion Market

California Market Center

Cooper Design Space

Lady Liberty Building

Primrose Design Building

Academy Awards Building

California Market Center

Jacob K. Javits Convention Center

<u>July 14</u> "Starting a Business Plan for a Fashion Product" workshop by Fashion Business Inc.

California Market Center, A792

Los Angeles July 15 **CMC Gift & Home Market** California Market Center Los Angeles Through July 21 Spin Expo

Metropolitan Pavilion New York Through July 17

July 17 Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Swim Various venues Miami Through July 21

<u>July 18</u> **California Gift Show** Los Angeles Convention Center Los Angeles

Through July 21 July 19 Cabana Miami Beach. Fla. Through July 21 Salon Allure

W South Beach South Beach. Fla. Through July 22 Miami Swim Show Miami Beach Convention Center Miami Beach, Fla. Through July 22

"Illustrator for Textiles." presented by Fashion Business

California Market Center, A792

<u>July 20</u> Pooltradeshow Jacob K. Javits Convention Center New York Through July 22

Calendar

Project Jacob K. Javits Convention Center New York Through July 22

July 21 Agenda Jacob K. Javits Convention Center Through Aug. 5 New York LA Kids' Market Through July 22

"Fashion Technology Night," presented by Fashion Business Inc. California Market Center, A792

July 22

Première Vision Pier 92 New York Through July 23 Kingpins Skylight Clarkson Square New York Through July 23 Indigo

Pier 92 New York Through July 23 **Texworld USA**

Jacob K. Javits Convention Center New York Through July 24

July 24 Fashion Law Summer Intensive Program Loyola Law School Los Angeles Through Aug. 1

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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DENIM REPORT

Blue Jeans Are a Harder Sell to Teenagers, Who Have Other Favorites

By Deborah Belgum Senior Editor

For years, denim hit its stride with everyone snapping up several pairs of blue jeans to wear just about anywhere, anytime.

But in recent years, denim has been seeing some new competition, which has the makers of everything denim taking a second look at what consumers want to buy.

One company taking a close look at denim has been **Invista**, the Kansas company known for its fibers and fabrics such as **Lycra** that go into denim, swimwear, activewear and other apparel.

In May, the company made a presentation at the **Kingpins** denim trade show in Amsterdam about consumer insights into denim. Invista plans to give the same presentation at the Kingpins show scheduled for July 29–30 at the **Cooper Design Space** in Los Angeles.

"What we are seeing in the denim area in Europe is that sales are pretty flat. In the United States, men's sales last year were pretty flat, up 0.2 percent, and women's were up

4.5 percent," said Jean Hegedus, Invista's global segment director of denim.

But men's active bottoms sales last year were up 24 percent, and women's leggings saw a 59 percent jump in sales. "We think, directionally, it is showing a trend," Hegedus said.

In **Piper Jaffray**'s 27th semiannual "Taking Stock With Teens Survey," conducted this spring, denim didn't even make it to the top 10 fashion trends. Coming in at No. 1 was leggings, and No. 2 was the **Pink** label from **Victoria's Secret**, followed by **Uggs** and then boots in general. Highwaisted pants and skirts ranked No. 5. "This is the first time in a number of years that denim was not voted by U.S. teen girls as a top 10 fashion item," Hegedus observed.

According to Marshal Cohen, chief retail analyst at **The NPD Group**, the activewear category is on fire and will remain hot for a while.

Invista started doing its own investigations into megatrends out there and found that they are being influenced by people with too much to do and not enough time to do it all. "People want clothing to be able to dovetail from one activity to the other," Hegedus said.

They also don't have a lot of time to shop at malls or try on clothes.

To help shoppers with little time and more activewear needs, **Levi's** and **Adidas** are doing performance denim that adheres to an active lifestyle. Those new products can be yoga jeans, jog jeans or knitted denim. Blue-jeans makers are employing stretchy fibers normally reserved for activewear and integrating them into denim pants.

Consumers are also into "small indulgences." In the food world, this means you buy yourself a gourmet cupcake, a pound of premium coffee or a scoop of premium ice cream. The Piper Jaffray study found that teens are spending more money on food than clothing.

"In the denim industry, we found that a small indulgence could be spending more on jeans that really keep their shape," Hegedus said. "In our consumer research, fit is the No. 1 driving force for women about whether they will buy a pair of jeans or not." Consumers are also looking for things that make their lives easier. They tend to buy clothes that are small, medium or large rather than having a complicated array of waist sizes and leg lengths. Buying denim is not always the easiest task when shoppers are faced with a wall of blue jeans that come in eight different silhouettes and three different rises.

One solution is measuring machines such as **Me-Ality** that calculate your measurements and then tell you which jeans in the store fit best. Me-Ality is being used by **Bloomingdale's** at its store in **South Coast Plaza** in Costa Mesa, Calif., and at its outlet in **Santa Monica Place** in Santa Monica, Calif.

Invista conducted a study in six countries with 3,000 men that showed that most male shoppers use the Internet when searching out information about buying blue jeans. Then they seek out information from their friends. "One thing that came out loud and clear is that men use the Internet or a brand's website to research jeans. It underscores that a brand should have a good, consumer-friendly website," Hegedus said.



COLOR TREND: For a while, jeans in bright colors pushed denim sales.

Some 82 percent of men said that fit and comfort were very important when buying blue jeans. Another 72 percent said their denim pants had to be easy to move around in.



Retail Continued from page 1

signs from the mid-20th century. "But we are going to keep our branding strong."

Takizawa is one of hundreds of retailers—both independent and divisions of major companies—that are presented with a tough choice: shift gears or continue to be battered by a shaky economic recovery and shifting retail sands.

The past year has been particularly rough on retailers. In the action-sports market, Andy Mooney, **Quiksilver Inc.**'s





STORE CLOSING: The Popkiller store at The Lab in Costa Mesa is scheduled to close by the end of July.

NEW PLANS: After closing his Popkiller store in Costa Mesa, Ricky Takizawa, pictured above at his Los Angeles workshop, plans to introduce new businesses.

chief executive officer, said during a recent conference call that in the past year 20 percent of his surfwear company's retail partners in the United States went out of business.

One of those dealers was the Oceanside, Calif.-based chain **K-5**, which closed its three stores in 2013 after 25 years in business. There's trouble for e-commerce sites, too. **Footlocker Inc.** announced on June 26 it would shutter skateboarding e-commerce emporium **CCS**, which it paid \$102 million to acquire in 2008.

It's tough across the board in the retail business, said Jeff Van Sinderen, a senior analyst with **B.Riley & Co.**, a Los Angeles financial-services firm that follows the stock of several well-known teen and surf retail chains. "In my opinion, we are in a period of shakeout," he said. "We're in a weak apparel cycle. We will exit this, but we are in a period where some will not make it. It will also be a period of opportunity, and some will emerge stronger."

Many factors are affecting retailers, Van Sinderen said. For stores that cater to teens, youth unemployment has led to lower store sales. Also, there are no macro-trends, such as the novelty colored jeans fad of a few years ago that inspired people to open their wallets and update their wardrobes. He also noted that retail is still restructuring. "We have this shift going in omnichannel and e-commerce," he

said. "Some smaller independents just don't have the wherewithal to survive. It's evolving so quickly."

Big retail changes

Even if retailers have a website, the e-commerce market is becoming more complex, said Sarah Owen, an editor in the New York office of **WGSN**, a leading fashion-trend forecaster.

"Millennials [ages 14–34] are now redefining the consumption landscape and use online shopping as more of a discovery tool rather than to purchase items," she said. "New technology has begun emerging for social platforms such as **Instagram**, which allow users to click through links by way of start-

ups such as **Liketoknow.it**," she said. "For retailers to stay ahead, they need to embrace new technology like this and also partner with start-ups that are pushing the envelope."

In every market, some businesses succeed even during times of turbulence. But success varies from retailer to retailer. Retailers have suffered because many brands have not been doing enough to differentiate their product. Then there are companies such as **Nike** that offer products to different niche markets. These products are typically wholesaled to specialty retailers catering to that niche.

"They're doing action sports, skateboarding, urban business with the **Jordan** brand—soccer, football. They're making product for many different market segments. They support specialty retail," said Aaron Levant, whose **Agenda** trade show hosts more than 750 streetwear and action-sports brands. "But with our industry as a whole, action sports has not done as good a job influencing customers to buy in one place versus the other."

Others argue e-commerce and niche products are not enough. Darren Gold, a retail consultant and owner of the Palm Springs, Calif.–based store **Alpha**, produces pop-up stores each year in top retail districts such as West Hollywood and Manhattan Beach, Calif.

"You have to be an events producer," he said. "You have to constantly give people a reason to come to a store, which means events. Every week stores are producing book signings or a [product] demonstration. It is part of the game now."

Retailers also need to capture consumers' attention through social media, have great sales skills to close deals, find brands that are not in wide distribution, and be savvy enough to cut expenses and stretch dollars to operate a store.

"I don't think one person can do all of that successfully," Gold said. "You can get experts in those fields if you can afford outsourcing or you have to hire great salespeople. Salespeople can't just be greeters and ring sales up anymore. They have to take it three to four steps further. It changes what you are looking for in your employees."

For Takizawa, he plans to raise the ante with his company's e-commerce offerings and also provide new services. This summer, his boutique, named **Pop**, in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo district, will introduce a program for consumers to use a new in-store kiosk to customize T-shirts. After a consumer chooses the design, graphics and silhouette of a T-shirt, Takizawa's company will assemble and deliver the shirt through various omnichannel options. He plans to open more Pop locations in the future.

Later this year, Takizawa also plans to debut **Popfactory**. The new concept will offer a creative hub for artists, businesses and others to work with Takizawa to make T-shirts, clothes and accessories. "The Popfactory project will help creative people," he said.

He forecasts that Popfactory, which he hopes to expand, will appeal to a far wider demographic and become the main part of his business. Meanwhile, Popkiller, with its fleet of three stores, will continue its mission to sell vintage and new clothes.

DENIM MADE IN LOS ANGELES

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Fi3 Continued from page 1

ways to work at a trade show. "Bernard and André are really doing something cool. I think their ideas are a little bit ahead of their time, and it is a great way for wholesalers and retailers to be a part of [something special]," he said.

The Hudson rep said a few retailers stopped by, which gave him a chance to connect with people he might not have seen.

Courtenay Nearburg of Krammer & Stoudt was excited about showing her company's menswear line at the new trade show. "Los Angeles really needs an infusion of new energy-and in the fashion market, specifically. We feel with Fi3 being here, it's kind of a revitalization," she said.

Nearburg hadn't placed any orders in the early part of the show, but she had a few target retailers she expected to see the next day.



Attendees gravitated toward the motorcycles and made sure to ask questions about riding and purchasing.

Sabrina Harper, West Coast account executive for Mavi, felt the show was appealing because it had an alternative vibe. "It's also great to participate in any type of men's show, especially because it's local and in Los Angeles. We want to meet new brands, buyers, and the more exposure, the better. It's also a great venue, and it's different than what we are used to," Harper said.

Fashion veteran Christopher Enuke was also on hand. As creative director of Kasil Rare and Kasil Workshop, Enuke feels the "DNA" of apparel in Los Angeles is mainly women and Las Vegas trade shows. "This is a men's show. It is also a pre-market show, so a buyer that comes here now gets to see Spring early and begins to take notes or whatever they are fully passionate about or they get to take orders now," he said. "This is something that is going to become more of a staple." •

Los Angeles Swimwear Maker Belusso to Make Colorful Splash in Miami

By Alyson Bender Contributing Editor

Inspired by the luxe beaches and resort lifestyle of the French Riviera and coastal Florida, Belusso was established six years ago in Los Angeles.

The label's suits, known as "Lusso" by its customers, are embellished with 14-karat gold and semiprecious stones such as turquoise, carnelian, citrine and coral.

With an uncompromising eye for fit, head designer Kirsten Ehrig-Sarkisian uses only luxurious fabrics sourced from European mills. All pieces are then designed and sewn in Los Angeles, where Ehrig-Sarkisian is able to manage production and quality control while keeping labor stateside.

Belusso tunics and coverups are always made from the best imported silks, cottons and cotton voiles from Italy and around the world," said Ehrig-Sarkisian. "The designs are more fashion than beach and are certainly not an afterthought thrown into a swim collection, as happens so often with swimwear companies."

The design inspiration for Belusso's current collection showing in Miami

began with the beauty of dark-colored feathers. "Upon first look, they may look simply black. However, there are layers of color on each that create a depth that feels rich and luxurious," explained Ehrig-Sarkisian.

The name Belusso was inspired by a private tour that the swimwear designer took of Steve McOueen's automobile collection. Ehrig-Sarkisian said she fell in love with one car in particular—the Lusso Berlinetta.

When she found out that "lusso" means "luxury" in Italian, she knew she was close to the perfect name for her swimwear label. Then she added the letters "bel" from the word "belezza," which is Italian for beauty.

The current collection of 45 pieces includes bikinis, one-piece suits, rash guards, sarongs, shorts, pants, tunics, dresses and tops. The collection's wholesale prices range from roughly \$80 to \$140.

Belusso will be showing in Miami at the Cabana trade show. Its runway show will take place at the Oasis Tent at the Raleigh Hotel on July 20 at 7 p.m.

For more information, visit www.belusso.com





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SLVDR: Taking the Boardshort in a **Different Direction**

Technical boardshorts have ruled the action-sports swim game for years.

But Rob Myers, president and creative director of the Santa Ana, Calif.-based men's collection SLVDR, wants to challenge swim fashion with his label's new "Water Short," which debuted at the Agenda trade show in Long Beach, Calif., on July 10.

Myers grew up surfing and skateboarding on the beaches of Orange County, Calif., which also serve as something of a runway for swimwear and beachwear. It was here

that he witnessed the big Orange County action-sports labels such as Hurley, Quiksilver and Volcom dominate boardshorts sales for years. Technical boardshorts, with monikers such as Hurley's Phantom Fuse 2, have consistently won design awards at the Surf Industry Manufacturers Association's Image Awards.

But Myers thought the market was big enough for an alternative. "When I'm at the beach, I look around.

There's heaps of guys running around in performance boardshorts," Myers said. "They work amazing in the water. But once they're out of the water, they don't look so great. I thought I could improve on the garments once they're not used for surfing. I wanted to create a boardshort that would be casual. It would have some function and not have quite such a teched-out look.'

To make this swimwear he calls the "Water Short," he started with the same stretch fabric used in technical boardshorts. But Myers' version uses more cotton fabric than technical shorts, which gives SLVDR's swimwear a pre-1990s style that Myers was going for.

For the silhouette, Myers also designed a retro look. Instead of the baggy silhouette that has dominated beach styles for more than a decade, the "Water Short" falls around the thighs, with a 9-inch inseam. Technical boardshorts typically fall below the knees. The "Water Short" has all-over prints also

used in SLVDR's Spring '15 collection. There are graphics of cameras, foxes and ocean waves drawn in an abstract Japanese style. It wholesales for \$35.

SLVDR will enter a crowded boardshorts market, said Karen Meena, vice president of the Ron Robinson boutique at the Fred Segal compound of stores in Los Angeles. Ron Robinson has been selling boardshorts since 1978. "Every brand has a boardshort," Meena said. "It's a crowded

market. But if you do something different, you can be successful."

While the market for boardshorts is dominated by a few top players, Myers thought the swimwear would be a perfect complement to his wider collection. "I hope it continues to boost brand awareness and allows the collection to be a little fuller," he said.

For more information, contact Chris Josol $at\ chris@flagship-agency.com.$

—Andrew Asch

mage by Katty Xion





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Sales Executive Assistant

Leading California based manufacturer of Junior, Misses & Girls apparel has immediate opening for a Sales Executive Assistant.

Great opportunity in our Los Angeles offices for a very organized and self-motivated individual to join our highly respected company. Wholesale apparel industry background prefered. We're looking for a detail oriented problem solver, with excellent follow-up and communication skills. Must be a quick learner and be computer proficient in Word and Excel

Salary is commensurate with experience. Compensation also includes generous medical and dental benefits, plus excellent pension and profit sharing plan.

Please e-mail resume to: rnewcomb@byer.com

COSTING ASSISTANT

- * Experience in garment pre-production
- * Efficient in managing and creating tech packs
- Responsible for costing new styles, and creating cost sheets.
- Highly organized, detail oriented, team player and self-motivated
- Knowledge of fabrics and trims
- Computer literate, proficient in Excel
- Must be familiar with garment construction, have excellent communication skills & follow up ability
- Work closely with our import and domestic production
- teams making sure they have all info needed
- * Strong sense of urgency
- Send your resume to vitae101@gmail.com

Associate Designer

Must have great style & fashion sensible to identify and adapt to current fashion trends; Photoshop and illustrator is a must; work well/multi task in a fast paced environment;Spanish speaking is a plus. Email your resume to: submityourresume1212@yahoo.com

Senior Graphic Designer

LULUS.COM seeks in-house senior graphic designer. BA/BS degree or equivalent experience, Adobe Creative Suite & HTML. Design skills for print & digital executions are essential. Fashion forward & trend inspired. Send cover letter, resume & portfolio to Careers@lulus.com.

SENIOR CUSTOMER SERVICE REP.

Stony Apparel - Seeks senior Customer Service Rep. w/ strong EDI back ground and knowledge. Experience with all Majors, highly organized, excellent communication

skills required. NGC Red Horse exp a plus.

Please send resumes to: hr@stonyapparel.com

SWIMWEAR Sample-maker

We seek High Quality Detail Oriented SWIMWEAR Sample Maker with 5 years exp. or more in sewing only SWIMWEAR, capable of sewing complicated luxury swimwear and lingerie with Lycra materials. Full time 35-40 hrs, Monday thru Friday, 7am to 3:30 pm. 323-271-2953

PATTERN MAKER

Development and Production House seeking part time(M-W-F)Pattern Maker for 1st- production patterns. 10 years experience minimum. Work with amazing sample sewers & cutters.Work is High-End Contemporary&Designer. Detail is paramount as well as quality. lipstickprophets3@me.com

Contemporary Women's Patternmaker Wanted Established women's contemporary comp seeks pattern maker exp in PAD, hand patterns or TUKKATECH. min 5 yr pattern experience. first through production. Full or part time options available. Must be an expert at fit & construction. fast paced environment email flora@coreylynncalter.com

Jobs Available



SENIOR MERCHANDISER

Sanctuary Clothing seeking a senior merchandiser with at least 5 yrs exp. in the women's apparel market. Burbank location. Liaison between design & sales/planning team. Manage Sku plans. Create & analyze reporting for merchandising & design purposes. Track seasonal carryovers by style, key items, & color direction. Manage corporate calendar. Provide merchandising assistance to departments throughout the company on an as needed basis. Conduct trend research & inspiration for the season, as well as competitive shopping. Understand how to drive business based on sales, history & market trends.

Email resume along with salary requirement to: erica@sanctuarvclothing.com and ken@sanctuaryclothing.com.

KANDY KISS TECHNICAL DESIGNER

Technical Designer for junior knit division: Min. 3-5 yrs of exp. working with Imports. Works closely with associate designer to create tech packs, Adobe illustrator & Photoshop, PLM, Excel, etc. Knowledge of garment construction, fitting & fabric a must. Highly organized selfstarter, willing to multi task in the design & development process. Valley location.

Please send resume to: tad@kandykiss.com

BedHead Pajamas Wholesale Sales Assistant

FULL TIME Sales Assistant wanted for apparel company to handle all daily sales department tasks for private label & major department store accounts. Minimum 2-3 years experience. Will directly assist & support the Sales Director. Candidate must be organized, detail oriented & have full operational knowledge of AIMS, UPC generation, EDI, sales report generation & analysis & excellent excel skills. Please send your resume to bridget@bedheadpjs.com

Patternmaker/Pre-Production Assistant

High-End Apparel Mfg has an immediate opening for Patternmaker/Pre-Prod. Asst. Reg's. 3-5 yrs of exp with Denim Jackets/Woven Shirts, Knitwear Tops and Tukatech system. Must be detail-oriented, good communication and able to work in fast paced environment to meet deadlines. Email resume to eflores@linesman.net

First thru Production Pattern Maker

Domestic Junior Manufacturer seeks a highly skilled pattern maker. Must have 5+ years exp. with junior novelty knit & woven tops. Send resume to 310-496-1934 or e-mail to brandnames@att.net

Real Estate

SPACE FOR LEASE

- * In newly renovated Anjac Fashion Buildings
- in the heart of Downtown Fashion District.
- Industrial, retail and office space also available throughout the San Fernando Valley.
- Retail and office space also available just
- south of Downtown. 213-626-5321 or email info@anjac.net

Garment Buildings

Mercantile Center 500 sq. ft. - 16,500 sq. ft. Priced Right. Full Floors 4500 sq ft. Lights-Racks-New Paint-Power Parking Available - Good Freight. Call 213-627-3754 Design Patternmaker Garment Lofts 300 sq ft - 1,000 sq ft. Call 213-627-3755



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