

# CALIFORNIA ApparelINews

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PHOTO COURTESY OF BUCK MASON

**LOCAL MADE:** The Buck Mason brand made a splash with its U.S.-manufactured men's collection. A picture of Buck Mason goods being assembled is above. This fall, the brand is scheduled to open a store on Abbot Kinney.

## After a Pure Play E-commerce Debut, Buck Mason Opens Abbot Kinney Store

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

The Los Angeles-headquartered **Buck Mason** brand has found success in every forum that uses electricity and screens.

It launched two years ago by retailing its jeans and tees to the creative classes on its pure-play e-commerce site ([www.buckmason.com](http://www.buckmason.com)). Sales have grown steadily, according to the label's founders, Sasha Koehn and Erik Schnakenberg. The Buck Mason founders jumped from computers to TV screens when they appeared this year on "Shark Tank," the ABC network reality show focusing on entrepreneurs.

But the next step for the brand is based on concrete. It will open a Buck Mason bricks-and-mortar location.

This fall, the downtown LA-headquartered brand is scheduled to open a boutique at 1638 Abbot Kinney Blvd., the

high-profile shopping street in Los Angeles' Venice section. It will take possession of the 650-square-foot space in July. Currently, fashion brand **Freenote** is running a pop-up shop at the address.

The Abbot Kinney space will offer a more detailed picture of the brand compared with the low-key, 380-square-foot boutique that the label has run as a retail space at 580 Venice Blvd. The small space was modest and tucked behind a bus stop, Schnakenberg said.

"It was more of a showroom," he said of the space, which was remodeled for \$895. "It was a great way for our customers to experience the physical product. ... We were surprised at how much of our online following drove traffic to

➔ **Buck Mason** page 7

## Gap Inc. to Close 175 Stores

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

Over the years, **Gap Inc.** forged a reputation for building a location in every mall and in every neighborhood, but in a reversal, the company known as the world's largest specialty-store chain announced a major wave of store closings.

Gap Inc. will close 175 stores, mostly in North America, said Art Peck, the chief executive officer, who took over the San Francisco-headquartered specialty giant. He said 140 stores will shutter this year. A limited number of stores will be closed in Europe. No **Gap Outlet** or **Gap Factory** stores, both of which focus on major discounts and promotions, will be closed.

"Returning the Gap brand to growth has been the top priority since my appointment four months ago," Peck said. "Customers are rapidly changing how they shop today, and these moves will help get Gap back to where we know it deserves to be in the eyes of consumers."

After the current wave of store closings, Gap forecasts that 800 Gap stores, 500 Gap Specialty stores and 300 Gap outlet locations will serve North American shoppers, according to

a Gap statement. The retailer intends to maintain a big fleet around the globe. There will be 1,600 company-operated and franchise locations around the world.

Jeff Kirwan, global president for the Gap brand, also announced on June 15 that 250 jobs will be cut at the company's headquarters and offices around the country.

"These decisions are very difficult, knowing they will affect a number of our valued employees, but we are confident they are necessary to help create a winning future for our employees, our customers and our shareholders," Kirwan said.

Gap Inc. forecasts that it will lose \$300 million associated with store closures and lease buyouts, employee costs, and inventory write-offs. However, it will gain annual savings of \$25 million from the store closures starting in 2016.

The specialty giant announced a wave of store closures four years ago. In October 2011, the company planned to reduce its fleet in North America and forecast that it would reduce its "square footage" by 10 percent by the 2012 fiscal year. ●

## The Gores Group Set to Sell Big Strike Clothing Company

By Deborah Belgum Senior Editor

Four years after acquiring a majority share in the juniors lifestyle clothing company **Big Strike Inc.**, **The Gores Group** has decided to sell the decades-old company to **Unger Fabrik**.

Terms of the deal, done with the advisement of **Intrepid Investment Bankers**, were not revealed, but sources said The Gores Group is selling Big Strike for less than it purchased it.

Neither The Gores Group nor Unger Fabrik returned telephone calls requesting comment.

The Gores Group, a Beverly Hills-based global investment firm headed by Alec Gores, acquired more than 70 percent of Big Strike in 2011 for around \$100 million from the company's co-founders—Lars Vikland, Kevin Talbot and Jodi Sundberg—sources said.

Immediately, Gores announced that Paula Schneider ➔ **Big Strike** page 3

## The Door Revolves Again on the American Apparel Board

By Deborah Belgum Senior Editor

More than five months after taking over as chief executive of **American Apparel**, Paula Schneider now sits on the clothing company's board of directors.

On June 14, David Danziger, an auditor who had been on the board since 2011 and was the co-chairman with Allan Mayer until last December, stepped down. After Danziger's resignation, the remaining directors appointed Schneider to join the board.

Danziger's departure comes after American Apparel signed a letter agreement on June 7 with former employee and current stockholder Jeffrey Kolb. In the agreement, Kolb said he would withdraw two candidates he intended to nominate to the company's board of directors at the annual meeting in New York on July 16. Those two candidates were Gene Montesano, co-founder of Los Angeles

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



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# Authentic Brands Takes Over Frederick's of Hollywood

Authentic Brands Group has completed its acquisition of the iconic **Frederick's of Hollywood** lingerie label after Frederick's declared bankruptcy in April and shuttered its 93 stores.

The lingerie company said increased competition from brands such as **Victoria's Secret** and decreased shoppers at malls led to its downfall. The company listed \$36.5 million in assets and \$106 million in debt.

With the bankruptcy filing, New York-based Authentic Brands put in place a \$22.5 million offer to buy the brand and sell it online.

"Frederick's of Hollywood supports our strategic focus of diversifying the portfolio and strengthens ABG's position in the intimates-apparel category," said Jamie Salter,

Authentic's chairman and chief executive.

Even though online sales will make up a good part of the lingerie line's revenues, Authentic said it hoped to expand Frederick's products and distribute them in department stores and specialty stores in North America, Europe, Asia,



A Hollywood Boulevard star for Frederick Mellinger

South America and Latin America. New products will include perfume and personal care items.

In recent years, Frederick's of Hollywood had a very seesaw existence. Launched in 1946 by Frederick Mellinger, the lingerie company started out as a mail-order catalog and advanced to a chain of around 200 stores

with little competition. But then Victoria's Secret came along and captured a considerable chunk of Frederick's market. In July 2000, Frederick's filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, emerging from bankruptcy in 2002.

In late 2013, the publicly traded company was taken private in a deal by a consortium comprising **HGI Funding LLC**, a subsidiary of New York hedge fund **Harbinger Group Inc.**, and other common and preferred shareholders. The deal valued Frederick's of Hollywood at \$10.6 million.

The lingerie company always had its flagship store on Hollywood Boulevard in Los Angeles. A star in front of the store honors Mellinger for his enterprising retail concept.

—Deborah Belgun

## FINANCE NOTES

# Job Growth Looks Positive in California and the U.S.

With the economy still ticking along, the unemployment rate in California and the rest of the country will continue to drop through 2016, according to the latest **UCLA Anderson Forecast**.

Traditionally, California's unemployment rate is slightly higher than the rest of the nation because it is the most populous state in the country and there are a fair amount of seasonal farm workers. Currently, the state unemployment rate stands at 6.3 percent while U.S. unemployment is doing better at 5.5 percent.

By the end of 2015, the national unemployment rate will shrink to just below 5 percent while California's unemployment rate will hover around 6.2 percent. The

state's economy should receive a boost by burgeoning growth rates in construction, automobiles and business investment as well as more strength in consumer demand.

Even though lower gasoline prices have not translated into large upswings in consumer spending, the economy will see a 3 percent boost in gross domestic product by the third quarter. "We have yet to see the approximately \$150 billion annualized reduction in gasoline prices flow through to consumer spending," said David Shulman, senior economist with the UCLA Anderson Forecast.

Instead of spending that money, consumers have been paying down debt and contributing to their savings accounts. Shulman

expects consumers to eventually start hitting the stores again once they feel comfortable with their economic outlook. He said housing and equipment investing will help to power economic growth.

The one big question on the horizon is will the Federal Reserve start raising interest rates? Shulman believes a slight interest rate uptick will occur in September. "For those who fear the impact of higher, short-term interest rates on the stock market, we would remind them that history suggests that it takes several rate hikes to cause a significant correction in stock prices," Shulman said.

## On the California front

UCLA Anderson Senior Economist Jerry

Nickelsburg said California should see its unemployment rate dip to 5 percent by 2017. There are still a number of long-term unemployed who have been out of jobs since the devastating recession hit in 2008. Many of those workers were in their 50s and are now nearing retirement and see little benefit in gaining new job skills for different jobs.

"The current economic expansion has had an unusually large spike in the number of long-term unemployed," Nickelsburg said.

Many of those jobs may not return in the near future due to the downturn in manufacturing, shrinkage of the construction sector bloated by the housing bubble that burst in 2007, and shifts in the finance, legal and professional services sectors. —D.B.



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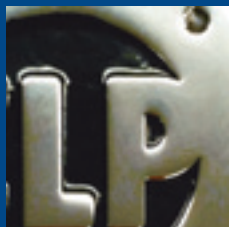
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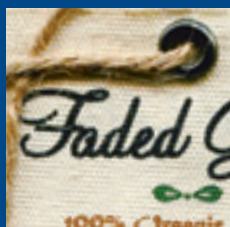
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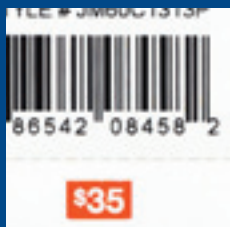
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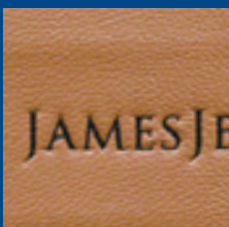
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## American Apparel *Continued from page 1*

blue-jeans companies **Lucky Brand** and **Civilianaire**, and Adrian Kowalewski, a former chief financial officer and executive vice president at American Apparel from December 2008 to February 2011.

In return, American Apparel's board agreed to identify and appoint a new independent director with significant retail experience to fill a subsequent vacancy before the company's annual stockholders meeting in 2016.

The board also consented to form a new advisory committee comprised of industry executives, company employees and other qualified personnel who will provide insights, guidance and strategic input to Schneider. Montesano will lead the advisory committee if he is willing and able, according to documents filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

All these agreements come after ousted American Apparel founder and former chief executive Dov Charney filed several lawsuits against the company and investors.

Other shareholders have filed lawsuits, too, contending that the directors sitting on the board last June committed proxy fraud by saying they would support Charney as the chairman of the board and chief executive when in fact they were planning to suspend

him while an investigation was conducted into his alleged misuse of funds and failing to stop defamatory blog posts by a former employee. Charney, who denies the charges, was fired in December, and Schneider was appointed chief executive on Jan. 5.

With a flurry of lawsuits filed by Charney, American Apparel sought and obtained a temporary restraining order on June 1 preventing Charney from trying to oust board members and criticizing the company until after the annual meeting in July.

Nevertheless, on June 4, Charney filed another lawsuit in Delaware Chancery Court seeking an advance of fees and expenses he has had to pay in defending a May lawsuit filed against him by American Apparel. The Los Angeles clothing company asked in its lawsuit that Charney be barred from disrupting American Apparel's turnaround and trying to remove board members from the ailing company, which employs 10,000 people and operates a huge clothing factory near downtown Los Angeles.

All this legal drama comes at a time when American Apparel is fighting to be profitable. In 2014, the company lost \$68.8 million on \$608.9 million in revenues, and in 2013 it lost \$106.3 million on \$633.9 million in revenues.

Its stock price has been trading at around 53 cents a share, near its 52-week low of 50 cents. ●

## Corrections and Clarifications

In a June 12 story about the **National Jewish Health Black & White Ball**, Sunnie S. Kim, president and chief executive officer of **Hana Financial Inc.**, was incorrectly attributed in one paragraph. The paragraph should have read: Kim told the crowd about the privation she saw in her native Korea in the years after the Korean War. "I saw people gathering together in

shelters where there was not enough to eat," she said. Initially, she brought rice to feed hungry people, and later she taught reading and writing to people who did not have access to education. When Kim founded Hana Financial in Los Angeles in 1994, it provided Kim with the opportunity to help small businesses that did not have access to traditional financing.



# New Look for South Coast Plaza's Tadashi Shoji Boutique

The **Tadashi Shoji** boutique in **South Coast Plaza** in Costa Mesa, Calif., is scheduled to unveil a high-tech remodel on June 20. Shoji, a Japanese-born, Los Angeles-based designer of red-carpet gowns and eveningwear, said his 1,175-square-foot store will keep its location on South Coast Plaza's level 2, adjacent to **Bloomingdale's**. Yet the store will offer an entirely new experience.

The store's new look will be defined by unique architectural installations and a giant plasma screen, which will display Shoji runway shows. The boutique's flooring will feature a simulated stone ceramic floor tile, and the color scheme of the store will show a palette of cream and soft pink. The space was redesigned by **(M)Arch.**, a Santa Monica, Calif.-based architecture firm that also designed the look of Shoji's upcoming store in Doha, Qatar, as well as the Venice, Calif., offices of **Vice Media Inc.**, which produces



**TADASHI EXPERIENCE:** Renderings of South Coast Plaza's remodeled Tadashi Shoji shop



IMAGES COURTESY OF TADASHI SHOJI

a print magazine and a news show on **HBO**.

The focus of the new look of the South Coast Plaza boutique was to create a unique space that embraces the Shoji aesthetic, said Sherry Hoffman, a partner at **(M)Arch.** "We wanted to define 'a luxurious moment' for Tadashi's clients," she said. "Luxury is reflective of his craftsmanship, about the idea of fit and pattern making, while taking about his ethos of designing for all women of all ages, from 17 to 70."

Shoji has introduced the Tadashi Shoji Runway Collection in fall 2007 at **New York Fashion Week**. Since then, his designs have been seen on Michelle Obama and actresses Octavia Spencer and Nina Dobrev and entertainers Ciara and Britney Spears.

—Andrew Asch

## Port Container Volumes Return to Normal After West Coast Congestion Problems

It could be called a tale of two ports.

In May, the **Port of Long Beach** saw its container volumes jump 4.8 percent over the same month last year while the **Port of Los Angeles** said its container volumes barely budged, rising only 0.8 percent in May over the previous year.

The Port of Long Beach noted that May's volume of 635,250 20-foot cargo containers was the facility's busiest month since October 2007 and the busiest May since 2006.

Port officials believe a better retail market is one of the reasons for increased imports. Also, a months-long West Coast port congestion problem that started last September and didn't end until February had many companies holding back on some imports or choosing to ship them by air.

For the first five months of this year, cargo volume at the Port of Long Beach was a little more subdued, rising 1.1 percent over 2014.

Meanwhile, the Port of Los Angeles said in May it handled 694,791 cargo containers, a slight improvement over last year. But for the first five months of this year, cargo volumes were down 4 percent.

The two Southern California ports make up the largest port complex in the United States, handling about 40 percent of all the cargo-container traffic in the United States.

A chassis shortage and work slowdowns at the two ports quickly hampered import volumes during the critical holiday shipping season last year and at the beginning of this year. At one time there were 28 cargo containers stacked up beyond the breakwater waiting for berths to unload their cargo sitting while negotiations over a new five-year labor contract were ongoing between the **International Longshore and Warehouse Union** and the **Pacific Maritime Association**, whose terminal operators and shipping lines employ the longshore workers.

Nationwide, the major ports across the country experienced robust activity in May, with import cargo-container volumes estimated to be up 5 percent. In April, imports rose 6.1 percent over the previous year, according to the monthly "Global Port Tracker" report, prepared by **Hackett Associates** for the **National Retail Federation**.

"Despite some lingering labor issues, the volume of cargo and the rate of growth have both largely settled down," said Jonathan Gold, the NRF's vice president for supply chain and customs policy. "There are still congestion issues to be dealt with, but we're hoping to see reasonably normal back-to-school and holiday seasons this year now that the tensions of contract negotiations are behind us."

During the first half of 2015, import container volumes at the major ports will be up 5.4 percent over the same period last year, to 8.8 million containers.—Deborah Belgun

## NEWS

### Big Strike *Continued from page 1*

would take over as the chief executive officer to work alongside the principals. She left in 2013 and is now head of **American Apparel**. She was replaced by Kevin Mahoney, who had been the president of **NYDJ Inc.**, formerly called **Not Your Daughter's Jeans**.

Big Strike is a large juniors manufacturer in Gardena, Calif., launched in the early 1990s, with retail customers such as **Kohl's**, **Dillard's** and **JC Penney**. Its labels include **Heart Soul**, **Soulmates**, **Workshop**, **Tracy Evans**, **Free to Love**, **Halo** and **Star City**.

At the end of 2012, The Gores Group bought **12th Street** by **Cynthia Vincent** and rolled it into Big Strike. But The Gores Group is in the process of quietly shuttering the Cynthia Vincent label, sources said.

The Gores Group first ventured into the clothing world with an apparel-related buying spree that started in 2010 with the acquisition of **J. Mendel**, a New York maker of fur coats and high-end dresses. Then in 2011 it acquired **Big Strike** and **Mexx**, a European and Canadian retailer once owned by **Liz Claiborne Inc.**, now called **Kate Spade**. The spree concluded in 2012 with its purchase of Twelfth Street by Cynthia Vincent.

Unger Fabrik is a vertical clothing manufacturer based near downtown Los Angeles. Its labels include the misses line **One World** and the juniors labels **Band of Gypsies** and **Weavers**. ●

## TECH NOTES

### App Gives Manufacturers an Eye on the Production Floor

Alpharetta, Ga.-based solutions provider **Shopfloor Support LLC** has launched **Shopfloor Eye**, a solution that helps manufacturers collect production data and get real-time visibility on the factory floor.

Manufacturers can monitor everything from payroll data to worker feedback to key performance indicators with Shopfloor Eye, which runs on **Android** tablets and smartphones and uses Wi-Fi networking to gather data without using proprietary hardware or infrastructure, according to Shopfloor Support.

"We are breaking down the barriers that have traditionally held manufacturers back from adopting real-time controls," said Justin Hershoran, a partner in Shopfloor Support, in a statement. "By leveraging readily available technologies, any company can now benefit from the productivity, management and many other improvements available through this business app, which is easy to install and use. To further simplify deployment, we developed Shopfloor Eye as a plug-in technology that can easily integrate or be embedded into established ERP [enterprise resource planning], reporting, payroll and other production-related systems."

Shopfloor Support is establishing distribution channels through select ERP and other manufacturing technology, equipment and service providers to serve as value-added resellers or referral partners.

"We are excited to partner with successful distributors to bring these innovations to manufacturers across multiple industries and around the globe," said Shopfloor Support Partner Per Bringle. "While our system simplifies the deployment, use and maintenance of SFC [shop floor control], manufacturers can expect to gain the complete range of benefits from a real-time environment that drives a record-fast return on investment."

Shopfloor Eye collects time and attendance information, payroll, worker instructions, performance feedback, work-in-process

tracking, individual and team productivity and efficiency, quality control, and machine downtime.

The Shopfloor Eye solution is available in a pay-per-use model rather than with a traditional license fee and subscription plan.

For more information, visit [www.shopfloor.support](http://www.shopfloor.support).

—Alison A. Nieder

## Me-Ality Announces \$15 Million Investment, New Directors

The maker of the **Me-Ality** body-scanning technology announced the completion of an investment of \$15 million in equity that was co-led by its largest institutional investor, **Northwater Capital Management Inc.**

According to Santa Clara, Calif.-based **Unique Solutions Design Ltd.**, the new funding will help the company boost its overseas expansion and the development of a proprietary handheld body scanner.

Unique Solutions also announced two new directors joining its board. New director Skip Battle is the chairman of the board for business management consultants **Fair Isaac Corp.** Battle also has worked with many high-profile Silicon Valley companies. He is a director of the companies **Netflix**, **Workday**, **Expedia** and **LinkedIn**. He also served on the board of **OpenTable** before its recent sale. From 2000 to 2004, he served as the chief executive officer of Web search-engine company **Ask Jeeves**.

Peter Reiling is another new director for the company. Reiling serves as executive vice president for **Leadership at the Aspen Institute**.—Andrew Asch





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## Calendar

### June 19

**Fashion Designers Expo launch party and runway show**  
JW Marriott Marquis, LA Live  
Los Angeles  
Through June 20

**Splendid/Ella Moss Warehouse Sale**  
Cooper Design Space  
860 S. Los Angeles, St., 11th floor  
Los Angeles  
Through June 20

### June 21

**Fashion Market Northern California**  
San Mateo Event Center  
San Mateo, Calif.  
Through June 23

### June 23

**Active Collective**  
Huntington Beach, Calif.  
San Mateo, Calif.  
Through June 24

### June 28

**OffPrice**  
Miami Airport Convention Center  
Miami  
Through June 30

### June 30

**CALA**  
Denver Mart  
Denver  
Through July 1  
**"Sales = Pitching + Selling Your Product" webinar**  
online

### July 4

**Interfilière**  
Paris Expo Porte de Versailles  
Paris  
Through July 6

**Mode City**  
Paris Expo Porte de Versailles  
Paris  
Through July 6

### July 6

**Hong Kong Fashion Week**  
Hong Kong Convention and  
Exhibition Centre  
Hong Kong  
Through July 9

### July 7

**"Speed Consulting Event at FBI"**  
California Market Center, A792  
Los Angeles

**Bread and Butter**  
Airport Berlin Tempelhof  
Berlin  
Through July 9

### July 8

**Agenda**  
Long Beach Convention Center  
Long Beach, Calif.  
Through July 9

**SoCal Materials Show**  
LAX Marriott  
Los Angeles  
Through July 9

**Premium**  
Station Berlin  
Berlin  
Through July 10

### July 15

**LA Gift & Home Market**  
California Market Center  
Los Angeles  
Through July 20

**Market**  
LA Mart  
Los Angeles  
Through July 20

**Swim Week**  
Various venues  
Miami  
Through July 21

### July 17

**California Gift Show**  
Los Angeles Convention Center  
Los Angeles  
Through July 20

### July 18

**SwimShow**  
Miami Beach, Fla.  
Through July 21

**Hammock/Salon Allure**  
W Hotel  
Miami Beach, Fla.  
Through July 20

**Cabana**  
Collins Park  
Miami Beach, Fla.  
Through July 20

### July 19

**Project**  
Jacob K. Javits Convention Center  
New York  
Through July 21

**MRket**  
Jacob K. Javits Convention Center  
New York  
Through July 21

### July 20

**Agenda**  
Jacob K. Javits Convention Center  
New York  
Through July 21

**Liberty Fairs**  
Pier 94  
New York  
Through July 22

**Capsule**  
Basketball City  
New York  
Through July 21

### July 21

**Texworld Apparel Sourcing Home Textiles**  
Jacob K. Javits Convention Center  
New York  
Through July 23

**Première Vision**  
**Première Vision Designs**  
Pier 92  
New York  
Through July 22

**Kingpins**  
550 Washington St.  
New York  
Through July 22

**Spin Expo**  
Brooklyn Expo Center  
New York  
Through July 23

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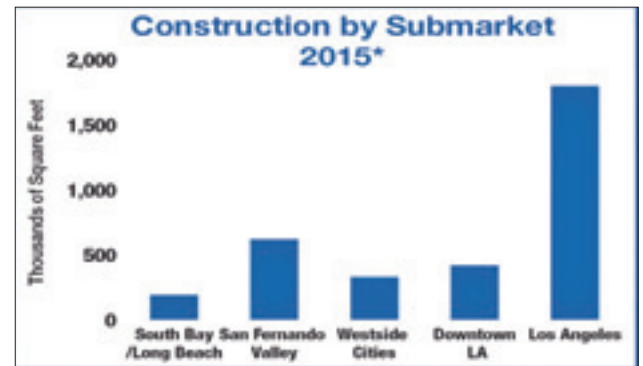


# Pent-up Demand for Retail Real Estate Could Fuel Development, Drive Rent Prices Up

There are signs of economic recovery in Southern California as “pent-up demand” drives retail real estate development in the region, according to the Second Quarter Market Overview by **Marcus & Millichap**.

“The confluence of strong job growth and elevated retail sales will support improving retail operations through year-end,” according to the report. “Developers have responded to heightened demand by moving several projects into the pipeline. However, pre-leasing commitments are above 80 percent, indicative of pent-up demand from retailers seeking premium space. Secondary space, meanwhile, is also attracting local retailers attempting to gain a foothold.”

Most of the available properties will need renovations and changes to the tenant rosters, according to the report, which predicts asking rents in the region to rise 4.2 percent this year “as retailer demand pares vacancy at dark, in-line space.” Long Beach and East Los Angeles have more than 1 million square feet of development



SOURCE: MARCUS & MILLICHAP

planned, according to the report.

In downtown Los Angeles, there are more than 400,000 square feet of development underway, much of it residential properties that could drive demand for retail services in the area. According to the Marcus & Millichap report, “investors are confident that a gentrifying downtown is creating opportunities to capture retail sales from the occupants of the high-cost apartments under construction.”

Across Southern California, several high-profile retail projects are in development, including the 220,000-square-foot **Runway Playa Vista** within the mixed-use **Playa Vista** development. The project is 70 percent leased, according to Marcus & Millichap. In Culver City, another retail project, **The Platform**, is also in the works, as is **The Point** retail development in El Segundo. In the San Fernando Valley, **The Village of Westfield Topanga** project will add 535,000 square feet of retail space when it is completed later this year. Space is 100 percent leased, according to Marcus & Millichap.—Alison A. Nieder

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## Buck Mason *Continued from page 1*

the store.”

Buck Mason was not merely interested in a larger space. It intends to use the Abbot Kinney address as a billboard on a high-profile street that has become a tourist stop in Los Angeles. “We weren’t getting that traffic from behind the bus stop,” Schnakenberg said. He also forecast that the shop would put the brand higher on the local radar screen. “The new space will allow us to serve the local clientele. We are excited about local exposure,” he said.

Koehn and Schnakenberg will shape the look of the new store with an architect. They will keep the Venice Boulevard store as a retail space. It is a one-minute or so walk away from Abbot Kinney, according to **Mapquest**.

The Buck Mason collection is

manufactured in Los Angeles. Since 2013, the company has sold a basics collection for men, including crew-neck and V-neck T-shirts, denim and chino pants and knitwear as well as oxford and chambray woven shirts. Buck Mason does not wholesale its



**THE FOUNDERS:** Buck Mason's Sasha Koehn, left, and Erik Schnakenberg

products to other stores. Retail price points range from \$24 for T-shirts to \$135 for pants.

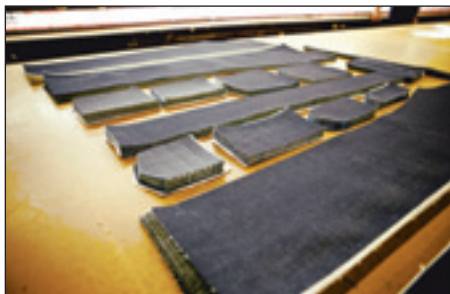
Prices are kept low at the label, Schnakenberg said. “From the beginning, value was important to Sasha and me. If we don’t feel we can make product and offer it at retail at a great value, we choose not to make it. Margin is important, but delivering value to customers is the No. 1 focus,” he said.

The Buck Mason chiefs gave little thought to marketing and advertising throughout their venture. The brand caught on through word of mouth, and according to the label chiefs, it is popular with the technologically astute creative classes in Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco, where Buck Mason enjoys its highest sales. Schnakenberg declined to state the company’s 2014 sales. However, the company hired five staffers in 2014 and added more than seven positions in 2015.

Buck Mason’s appearance on “Shark Tank,” which features investors such as **Dallas Mavericks** owner Mark Cuban and **FUBU** co-founder Daymond John, was broadcast on April 24. Sales skyrocketed after the broadcast. It also introduced Buck Mason to the Midwest and the South.

“Roughly 65 percent of online traffic came from consumers in the middle of the country,” Koehn said. ●

**THE COLLECTION:** Pieces from Buck Mason collection being put together.



# Emsig Manufacturing: Reliable, Responsible, Relevant

Every garment tells a story, believes Larry Jacobs, and the quality of the buttons, he says, “is an index of hidden value.” Jacobs should know. As the president and CEO of Emsig Manufacturing, he has been with the purveyor of “the better button” for over 60 years and has guided the company to become a global powerhouse and the leader in its highly competitive field. But it wasn’t always so.

Emsig Manufacturing began in business in 1928, “the year before the U.S. economy began to crumble,” says Jacobs. “There was very little money to set up a button-manufacturing facility, but we did. The driving force to sustain our newly formed business was simple—the need to make a living.” That plus the concepts the company was founded on were key. “Focusing on innovation, creativity, and uniqueness—those were the principles back then and we are still true to them today.”

Now a third- and fourth-generation business, Emsig prides itself on its international reputation, a deep commitment to the quality of its products, development of new materials, and customer service. “In today’s market, you must be flexible. Knowing your market and being practical—having common sense—are both essential to staying relevant in the marketplace.”

To that end, Emsig has created biotech buttons, which resist the growth of viral and bacterial organisms, making them perfect for medical clothing as well as children’s clothing. Other buttons are made from 100 percent recycled materials. Yet other buttons, such as a men’s shirting button, are truly unbreakable. Made from a non-petroleum-based raw material that is noncombustible, they can withstand compression of 1,800 pounds per square inch, have the strongest pull strength in the industry, and are UL-approved. And then there are the glow-in-the-dark buttons, and “smart buttons” you can wash over 150 times and they will never lose their finish, strength, or color. These are proudly “made in the U.S.A.” in the company’s Connecticut facility.

“We’ve always been a leader in these

things,” says Jacobs, who adds that frequent travel to Asia and Europe keeps him on top of fashion design and trends throughout the world. “You have to be creative for your customers, your product, your factories, your people,” says Jacobs. Remarkable words for anyone, but particularly for a man in his 80s. “I have an extraordinary amount of energy,” he says simply, and it is clearly true.

Not only quality but quantity have gained Emsig its devoted following. Today, the sample selection at its Man-



hattan showroom is “endless,” Jacobs says—“between 10,000 and 20,000 boxes of different items” on view. “I tell our customers, you don’t have to buy our buttons, but you have to at least shop our line.”

Effort is put into marketing and selling and into a sophisticated, quick delivery system in anything from four to seven days, but, Jacobs says, “the value in our company is our people.” They are family to Jacobs. He will pay for further education they need for the job, will pay for any type of addiction treatment they might need—“I believe in handling things that way.”

With Jacobs still firmly at the helm and his nephew—the fourth generation in the family business—working closely with him, Emsig’s solid, inventive presence is certain to endure.

“People want a company that can deliver, is reliable, and is making it from the raw resin to the finish button, because we are ultimately responsible,” Jacobs says. “Who the heck is around making and selling for so long? We’re doing something right. We make a difference.”

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5. 3A Products Twist Metallic by 3A Thread
6. Dara Inc. #SF-02005
7. Dara Inc. #SF-75-03
8. Dara Inc. #B28-3B89, #B153-0880
9. Seram America #N02100C
10. Appliqués With Glitz Inc. #ACT139 "Cynthia Yardage"
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15. Midori Ribbon #RSD06015 "Double Faced Satin"
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19. Emsig Manufacturing Corp. #A3583
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5. Midori Ribbon #RV10004 "Vintage Blue Floral"
6. Dara Inc. #SF-65-06
7. Emsig Manufacturing Inc. #A3406
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- 9. Emsig Manufacturing Corp. #BW086631
- 10. Emsig Manufacturing Corp. #SQ141171
- 11. Dara Inc. #SF-78-01
- 12. Emsig Manufacturing Corp. #A2463
- 13. Emsig Manufacturing Corp. #A3685
- 14. Emsig Manufacturing Corp. #A3769
- 15. Emsig Manufacturing Corp. #A3622
- 16. Emsig Manufacturing Corp. #SQ216881
- 17. Dara Inc. #B153-0879
- 18. Dara Inc. #B94-0499
- 19. Dara Inc. #B174-1150
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7. Midori Ribbon #RVI00006 "Vintage Ribbon"
8. Midori Ribbon #RAZ19219 "Aztek"
9. Seram America #N02100A
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11. Emsig Manufacturing Corp. #A3922
12. California Label Products Label
13. Trim Networks Label
14. Cuteque International Inc. "Embroidery on Sheer Ribbon"
15. Cuteque International Inc. "Rose With Sequin and Plastic Stitches in Center"
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## FineLine Introduces 'As You Like It' for RFID-Integrated Hangtags

Atlanta-based RFID (radio frequency identification) tag provider **FineLine Technologies Inc.** has a new quick-turn program, dubbed "As You Like It."

The program was created for brands and retailers to facilitate the ordering of branded hangtags with integrated RFID capabilities rather than relying on secondary RFID tickets and stickers.

Under the program, brands and retailers can place production orders with a 48-hour turnaround time anywhere in the world. There's a one-week turn time on sample orders. Companies will not be required to meet annual order quantities or inventory commitments.

According to FineLine, the integrated tags will save companies money over the typical expense of using secondary RFID tickets or stickers, which require an additional step to apply to garments and can cost from \$70 to \$100 per 1,000 units. Plus, the company says, having integrated RFID tags eliminates the risk of mismatched RFID tags and UPC tags.

The FineLine integrated tags have an RFID chip embedded in the tag, which will contain all the usual pricing and sizing information. The tags can be made to any specifications for size, color, graphics and text. Once the client's brand art is set up in FineLine's systems, the company can



**MULTIPURPOSE TAG:** FineLine Technologies' branded handtags with integrated RFID (radio frequency identification) technology eliminate the need for using multiple tags for branding, UPC and RFID.

ship flexible order quantities, "including short runs," within 48 hours. The tags can be attached at the factory, distribution center or retail store.

"With our new RFID 'As You Like It' process, we make it easy for fashion brands and retailers to integrate RFID into labels their designers, merchandisers and customers will love, with flexible sampling, ordering requirements and delivery terms they and their entire supply chain can enjoy," said George Hoffman, chief executive officer of FineLine Technologies, in a statement.

Based in Atlanta, FineLine has facilities in the U.S., Canada, Hong Kong, and Shenzhen, China. For more information, visit [www.finelinetech.com](http://www.finelinetech.com).—Alison A. Nieder

## Velcro Cos. Acquires Fastener and Elastic Web Companies

**Velcro Companies** acquired two Belgium-based companies specializing in hook-and-loop fasteners and elastic and rigid webbing in a move the company says will broaden its product portfolio, expand its presence in Europe, and facilitate research and development "to speed the pace of product innovations."

**Alfatex** manufactures hook-and-loop fasteners in the medical, automotive and industrial sectors, and **Gevaert** manufactures elastic and rigid webbings for braces, belts and elastic waistbands for the apparel industry. Both companies are based in Deinze, Belgium. Terms of the deals were not disclosed.

"We are rapidly building global capabilities to reach greater scale and efficiency while at the same time strengthening our local presence to remain close to customers," said Fraser Cameron, president and chief executive officer of Velcro Companies. "This approach will help us respond to customer needs, spot opportunities for new product innovations, and improve our ability to deliver for customers quickly and efficiently."

This is the third acquisition for Velcro Companies, which purchased Sapiranga, Brazil-based distributor **Jore Comércio e Representações LTDA** in 2014, which expanded the company's presence in Latin America.

"With three acquisitions in the past 18 months, Velcro Companies has emerged as the leading independent company in the global fastening industry, with a focused strategy to use our agility, creativity and proximity to customers to drive innovation and growth," Cameron said. "Our expanding global scale enables Velcro Companies to sustain significant investment in research and development. Our opportunities lie not only in providing better solutions than any of our corporate competitors, but we are uniquely positioned to open entirely new categories of products. Alfatex and Gevaert have strong reputations for innovation and customer insight that will help us reach this goal."

With U.S. headquarters based in Manchester, N.H., and offices around the world, Velcro Companies owns more than 400 patents and trademarks, including the Velcro trademark, which is registered throughout the world.

For more information, visit [www.velcro.com](http://www.velcro.com).—A.A.N.

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**Products and Services:** Founded in America in 1990, J.N. Zippers & Supplies Corporation serves the industry with a California-based corporate office and warehouse with China factory customization for garment, bag, and accessory manufacturers worldwide. Quick sampling from our warehouse stock of high-quality zippers, pulls and hardware that are ITS, SGS, Oeko-Tex, ISO9001:2000 safety-tested and standards-compliant. Our zipper specialists are ready to assist you with choosing the best zipper configuration suited to your product. We offer private branding on pulls, hardware, and labels. Our warehouse also stocks elastics, tapes, cords, labels, and workroom supplies for spot delivery. Turn to the experts at J.N. Zippers & Supplies Corp. and the in-stock division of ZPRZ Company to provide you with the best combination of quality, price, and service.

## Progressive Label

2545 Yates Ave.  
Commerce, CA 90040  
(323) 415-9770  
Fax: (323) 415-9771  
[Info@progressivelabel.com](mailto:Info@progressivelabel.com)  
[www.progressivelabel.com](http://www.progressivelabel.com)  
**Products and Services:** Progressive Label is dedicated to helping companies develop and showcase their brand identity. From logo labels and hangtags to care/content labels and price tickets, we will develop, produce, and distribute your trim items worldwide. We specialize in producing custom products that will meet your design and merchandising needs. Our mission is to deliver high-quality products at competitive prices, wherever they are needed for production. We understand the rush nature of this industry and strive to meet the tight deadlines facing our customers. Another important part of our business is FLASHTRAK, our online ordering system for price tickets. It's a great tool for placing and tracking price ticket orders and will soon be expanded to include custom products and care labels.

## S & J USA, Inc.

843 E. 31st St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90011  
(323) 231-0811  
Fax: (323) 231-3820  
[snjusa@snjusa.com](mailto:snjusa@snjusa.com)  
**Products and Services:** S & J USA, Inc. has been a major, authorized distributor of YKK zippers for over 25 years. We carry a vast array of zippers, and we have an in-house factory that allows us to complete orders quicker than our competitors. S & J USA, Inc. also specializes in snaps, tack buttons, eyelets, and elastics, among other trims. Our customers range from the U.S. to Asia, and we hope to expand even further in the future. We are known for great customer service and quality materials.

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## Jobs Available

**Karen Kane**

### PATTERN MAKER

Karen Kane is seeking a 1st thru production patternmaker for its established better sportswear division & emerging contemporary divisions. Strong communication skills, attention to detail, great organization skills, self-motivated, energetic. Computer literacy a must, knowledge of Gerber system is beneficial. Bilingual a plus. Min. 2 yrs exp. Fax resume with sal. hist. to: 323-277-6830 or email in PDF or Word format only to [resumes@kareneane.com](mailto:resumes@kareneane.com)



### CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

We are looking for a Customer Service Rep, Sales Assistant. Contributing to the sales & production process. Build relationships w/retail accounts. 1-3 yrs' exp. in apparel/accessory customer service and sales. Please send resume to: [careers@urbanexpressions.net](mailto:careers@urbanexpressions.net)

### MULTI-DIVISION APPAREL FIRM HAS OPENING FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITION:

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Min. of 5 years' experience in purchasing, price negotiation, sourcing, fabric construction, testing methods, and dyeing. Must have exp. with both knits and wovens. Must be detail-oriented, have strong computer skills, and excellent communications skills. Send resume with salary history to: Tom Stevenson MGT Industries, Inc. 13889 S. Figueroa Street Los Angeles, CA 90061 Fax: (310) 538-1343 E-Mail: [tstevenson@mgtind.com](mailto:tstevenson@mgtind.com)

### CORPORATE ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE NEEDED

We're looking for an enthusiastic fast learner who pays close attention to detail while completing high volumes of sales. Monday - Friday: 8:30 - 5:30pm Must have a min. of 2 yrs experience with Product Development Sales at Corporate level. Must be proficient with Word, Excel, a plus if knowledgeable with AIMS and Illustrator. Must be willing to travel. Salary + commission. Email res. to: [rita@danielrainn.com](mailto:rita@danielrainn.com) 7210 Dominion Circle, Commerce, CA 90040

### SAMPLE SEWER

Women's contemporary apparel company near LAX seeking a full time sample sewer. At least 5-10 years sewing exp. required. Must have exp. working with knits and wovens, Must be expert at single needle, overlock, coverstitch. Knowledge of zigzag and button hole a plus. Looking for a motivated individual that takes pride in his/her work, is detail oriented and can contribute their expertise on finishing garments. Rate negotiable based on exp. Email resume to: [susan@lfstores.com](mailto:susan@lfstores.com)

### SWEATER DESIGN ASSOCIATE

Wilt Seeking sweater design associate. Stitch, yarn & tech pack exp a must. Minimum 6 yrs exp helpful. Send resume and salary history to [parcandpearl@parcandpearl.com](mailto:parcandpearl@parcandpearl.com)

## Jobs Available

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New Contemporary Lingerie Company seeks an energetic, seasoned & self-Motivated Individual. Must have strong existing and established relationships with Major National Accounts, Wholesalers, Chain + Department Accounts. Attractive package available for qualified individuals. Email res: to: [rajpal@fantaisieco.com](mailto:rajpal@fantaisieco.com)

### • MULTI-DIVISION APPAREL FIRM HAS OPENING FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITION

.....PRODUCTION COORDINATOR.....  
Min. of 5 years exp in off-shore production. Knowledge of Wal Mart, Target, Kohl's or JCP production processes, approvals, sourcing cost negotiation. Must have strong problem solving & communication skills. Send resume with salary history to: Tom Stevenson MGT Industries, Inc. 13889 S. Figueroa Street Los Angeles, CA 90061 Fax: (310) 538-1343 E-Mail: [tstevenson@mgtind.com](mailto:tstevenson@mgtind.com)

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### FABRIC QUALITY INSPECTOR

Seeking full time FABRIC QUALITY INSPECTOR, 5 years exp., Torrance area. Ensures quality and consistency of fabric performance and color meets company quality standards onsite and dye houses. Valid dr. lic. and driving req. Pls. send res. to: [recruitingapparel@gmail.com](mailto:recruitingapparel@gmail.com)

### CONTEMPORARY DRESS DESIGNER

Fast growing women's contemporary company seeks a Dress Designer. Candidate must have 5-8 yrs exp. in the garment industry and have a flair for fashion, be proficient in Adobe Photoshop/Illustrator & Microsoft Office. Please have a current portfolio and send resume with a sal. history to: [jobshr000@gmail.com](mailto:jobshr000@gmail.com)

## Jobs Available

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Seeking right person to work in our JR division. This individual must be detail oriented, organized, and able to work in a fast paced design room. Other responsibilities include working with designers on finishing process of completing line. Assist graphic artist in maintaining print library and recoloring prints. Must be proficient in photoshop and illustrator. Experience with cad graphics helpful. Send resumes to [hr@swatfame.com](mailto:hr@swatfame.com)



### WAL-MART TECHNICAL SPECIALIST

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### TECHNICAL DESIGNER

Evy of California seeks experienced Technical Designer to create detailed Tech Packs. The position deals primarily with tops, bottoms, dresses, knits and wovens for Girls, Boys, and Juniors. Ideal candidate must understand all details of garment construction, fit, measurement specs, textiles, embellishments, trims, and screen printing, and must be proficient in Illustrator and Excel. 3 years-experience preferred. Send resume to [isabelf@evy.com](mailto:isabelf@evy.com) with subject line RE: Tech Pack Artist

### LF SPORTSWEAR LEAD PATTERNMAKER

LA contemporary company seeking a Lead Patternmaker specializing in denim. Min 5 years exp. Must be proficient at Gerber system. Create patterns to specifications and adjust for fit, proper construction and shrinkage, ensuring design and style are maintained through process. Experience with garment dye and knits a must. Ability to work in fast paced environment and manage time effectively. Email resume to: [susan@lfstores.com](mailto:susan@lfstores.com)

### LINE SHEET ILLUSTRATOR

Wilt seeking contemporary full time line sheet illustrator seasoned in adobe illustrator and photoshop. Sketching ability a must. Tech pack exp helpful not required. Submit resume with salary history and samples of sketching ability to [parcandpearl@parcandpearl.com](mailto:parcandpearl@parcandpearl.com)

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Energetic & self-motivated patternmaker needed to work in fast paced environment. Min. 5 years exp with knits & wovens, exp. in domestic & import production. Must be proficient in MSoftware & Gerber system. Self motivated organized & a team player. Pls. fax your resume to 323-266-2590 Attn: Jonathon or email to: [jonathon@mikenclothing.com](mailto:jonathon@mikenclothing.com)

#### JOE & ELLE TECHNICAL DESIGNER

Junior Contemporary Company seeks an exp'd tech designer • Min 3-5 years exp • Must have pattern making knowledge • Excellent communication skills, written & verbal • Exp in conducting fittings, generating fit comments & communicating with factories • Must be able to work in a fast-paced, detailed-oriented environment with strict deadlines • Must have exp with wovens, knits, sweaters, and jackets Pls. email resume to: [Amie@joe-elle.com](mailto:Amie@joe-elle.com)

## Jobs Available

#### ASSOCIATE TECHNICAL DESIGNER & PRODUCTION MANAGER

•5yrs experience in swim/knit, knowledge in grading basic patternmaking. Computer sketch/illustrations a must •must be a team player, highly organized & detail oriented •Proficient in PAD system.

PRODUCTION MANAGER •7yrs exp. Swimwear/Active wear/lingerie. To oversee import production program. Create and maintain production schedule. Proven ability to lead team. Send resume to: [info@rwdesignsinc.com](mailto:info@rwdesignsinc.com)

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#### EXPERIENCED PATTERN MAKER

Exp. In Garment Dye For Both Woven & Knits. Must Understand Ability To Apply Shrinkage To Patterns. Exp. In Grading & Patterns. Full Time Or Part Time. Email: [patternmakerh21@gmail.com](mailto:patternmakerh21@gmail.com)

## Jobs Available

#### WAREHOUSE ASSISTANT

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