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\$2.99 VOLUME 72, NUMBER 36 AUGUST 19-25, 2016



SHOW BUSINESS



TRADE SHOW REPORT

Buyers Navigate a Shuffled Trade Show Lineup in Las Vegas

By Deborah Belgum and Alison A. Nieder

LAS VEGAS—Four months after **MAGIC** parent company **UBM** purchased **BJI Fashions'** trio of Las Vegas shows—**MRket**, **Stitch** and **Accessories The Show**—buyers returned to Las Vegas to find a newly shuffled layout during the Aug. 15-18 run of the apparel, accessories and sourcing trade shows.

This season, **UBM** moved the **BJI Shows** from the **Sands Expo Convention Center** to the **Mandalay Bay Convention Center**, where **UBM's Project**, **Project Women's**, **The Tents**, **Pooltradeshow** and **Collective** trade shows are held. **MRket** joined the shows on the first floor of the Mandalay Bay, while **Stitch** and **ATS**—along with **Pool**—moved to the second floor of the convention center.

Show organizers hinted that changes are in the works, including the eventual shift of some **MRket**, **Stitch** and **ATS** ex-

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Kitson's Fraser Ross Sues Former Business Partner

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

In 2011, Fraser Ross hired Chris Lee to turn the **Kitson** chain of boutiques into a global brand.

But five years later Ross is suing Lee in Los Angeles County Superior Court for allegedly defrauding the Los Angeles company, which suddenly closed late last year.

Ross, who recently opened a new boutique called **Kitross** in the same spot on Robertson Boulevard where **Kitson** had its first location, requested a jury trial and more than \$120 million in damages, which was the estimated value of **Kitson** before 2011, said Glenn Feldman, Ross' Canadian counsel. Ross is from Canada.

The lawsuit was filed Aug. 9 by attorney Jeremy D. Smith of **Krane & Smith** in Encino, Calif.

Lee, who left **Kitson** last year, did not return phone calls requesting comment. According to his **LinkedIn** account, Lee works as an advisory partner at private-equity investor **Goode Partners LLC**.

In 2000, Ross moved to Los Angeles and launched **Kit-**

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West Coast Longshore Workers Agree to Talk About a Contract Extension

With the goal of keeping the West Coast ports from being hit with another labor snafu down the road, longshore workers and their port employers have agreed to discuss extending the current labor contract, which ends in 2019.

Extending the labor contract is a topic that has been bandied about since the beginning of the year and comes more than one year after West Coast ports were crippled with a labor slowdown and a chassis shortage during the 2015/2016 holiday season. The paralysis at the ports led to importers, manufacturers and retailers losing millions of dollars in sales during the crucial holiday season, which accounts for 20 percent to 30 percent of retailers' annual sales.

The **Pacific Maritime Association**,

which represents the port terminal operators and shipping lines that hire the longshore workers, said that in an effort to provide stability on the West Coast waterfront, it had proposed talks on a contract extension with the **International Longshore and Warehouse Union**, which represents 20,000 full-time and part-time workers at West Coast ports.

Wade Gates, a PMA spokesman, said the ILWU agreed to hold meetings on the concept of a contract extension.

"As a next step, we will schedule a time in the next 30 to 60 days for PMA and ILWU leadership to discuss the topic," he said.

The ILWU said more than 100 delegates from 30 West Coast ports from San Diego to Bellingham, Wash., met recently to consider

the subject.

By a majority vote, the delegates on Aug. 11 voted to enter discussions with PMA representatives on the concept of a contract extension, said ILWU spokesperson Craig Merrilees in a statement.

"The caucus made a tough decision under current circumstances amid a wide range of concerns and opposing views on how to respond to PMA's request," said ILWU International President Robert McEllrath. "This is a directive to go and have discussions with the PMA and report back to the membership, and we'll do just that, with the well-being of the rank and file, our communities, and the nation in mind."

The current longshore worker contract runs from 2014 to July 1, 2019, but port

employers would like to see it extended to ensure that port activities don't get bogged down in labor negotiations during the 2019 holiday season.

Also, West Coast ports are facing stiff competition from the recently expanded Panama Canal, which spent \$5.4 billion to build a third set of locks that can accommodate ships carrying up to 14,000 containers instead of the previous limit of 5,000 containers.

That means that larger cargo-container ships now can sail directly from China to New York, Miami or other East Coast ports without having to unload their cargo containers at West Coast ports, where they are placed on trucks or trains and then shipped across the country.—*Deborah Belgun*

Messe Frankfurt Launching Upscale Off-Price Trade Show in New York in 2017

Trade show company **Messe Frankfurt**, organizer of **Texworld USA**, will launch a new high-end, off-price trade show in New York next year.

Boulevard Prêt-A-Sale will bow March 21–23 at the **Javits Center** in New York. The debut show will focus on menswear, but for the second edition, in October, men's and women's apparel, accessories and footwear will be added.

Messe Frankfurt has teamed up with fashion-industry veterans Arnold and Bruce Zimberg to launch the new show.

The Zimbergs have been in the fashion business for more than four decades, developing brands, including men's contemporary shirts under the **Arnold Zimberg** label.

In recent years, the brothers noticed the growing buying power of discounters such as **Off Fifth**, **Ross Stores** and **TJ Maxx**.

"Now off-price shoppers account for 75 percent of all apparel purchases," Arnold Zimberg said. "Today there's nothing you cannot buy at a discount."

The two floated the idea of launching an upscale trade show to their friends in the apparel community. "Everyone loves the idea," Bruce Zimberg said. "It turns inventory into cash."

The show is about helping both retailers and brands "reestablish a return on investment," Arnold Zimberg said.

"Value retailers are the most important retailers of today, and of tomorrow, and they

are not given the same exposure to fashion brands or the opportunity to develop the same relationships with manufacturers and designers," he said. "Boulevard Prêt-A-Sale will offer networking opportunities to those retailers and allow them to better cultivate their offerings for customers."

Dennis Smith, president, Messe Frankfurt North America, called the new show a "unique new addition to the current fashion trade shows in the U.S."

"Messe Frankfurt has also sought solutions to address the shifting North American retail market," he said in a company statement. "Along with Arnold and Bruce, we recognized the extraordinary value this concept would offer the retail industry. It is critical to stay ahead of the ever-changing retail environment and to offer value to current and future buyers and manufacturers. This entirely new concept addresses their needs as no other show can."

The Zimbergs want to create a "comfortable environment where [buyers] can sit down,

not feel pressured and be treated like gold," said Arnold Zimberg, who designed the show booths to look like "little shops in SoHo."

The launch show will be held in the Javits Center's River Pavilion, a 45,000-square-foot space on the convention center's fourth floor overlooking the Hudson River. The invitation-only event for qualified buyers will feature a layout designed to "capture the energy of downtown New York City."

"The United States is the largest retail market in the world, and every major department store in North America has successfully opened outlet extensions with a dedicated buying team responsible specifically for outlet merchandise. Off-price is the true retail today," said Bruce Zimberg in a statement. "This trade show will be the platform to showcase new and fresh high-quality merchandise that will appeal to the savvy U.S. and international shopper who demands fast-to-market and a value price."

For more information, visit www.usa.messefrankfurt.com.—*Alison A. Nieder*

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Apolis Heads to New York

Los Angeles-headquartered **Apolis Holdings LLC** helped pioneer the city's Arts District, where it opened a flagship in 2011.

Recently, it opened a second flagship in New York City, where it plans to go native, said Raan Parton, Apolis' creative director and partner.

The flagship is located at 243 Centre St. in Manhattan in the SoHo area. Parton described his shop's neighborhood as an emerging retail street.

The formal name for the 1,500-square-foot shop is the **Apolis Community Centre**. "We're reimagining what the focus of a community-driven brand is," Parton said. "What Shea [Parton, brand director] and I have been challenged with is how to be a community-driven brand and be a community driver in the neighborhoods we exist in."

The New York store will produce workshops on subjects such as entrepreneurship as well as host live music from artists such as blind pianist Justin Kauflin.

The New York move also will have an impact on the brand's sales. New York's traffic and density can place the label in front of more eyeballs than most places. "You can't deny that a great number of people can change a business and awareness of a business quickly," Parton said. "New York is a tough market to break into, but it's a game changer."

He described the line as one of "travel-minded essentials," with a strong basics program. Retail price points range from \$34 for a T-shirt to \$350 for outerwear. It also makes chino pants, alpaca beanies, oxford shirts,



and accessories and fragrance. Apolis works with farmers and manufacturers in the developing world to harvest organic cotton and do other work for the brand.

There are no plans in the near future to open more bricks-and-mortar stores, Parton said. But the brand plans to develop its e-commerce business, which it runs at [https://store.apolisglobal.com](http://store.apolisglobal.com). It also plans to look for opportunities for more shops-in-shop.

Apolis opened a shop-in-shop on the grounds of the **Alchemy Works**, a store owned by Parton and his wife, Lindsay, located in the **Lido Marina** retail area in Newport Beach, Calif. The first Alchemy Works boutique is located in Los Angeles' Arts District.

Apolis also wholesales to 300 stores overseas and domestically, including California boutiques such as the **Mohawk General Store** in Silver Lake and **Stag Provisions** on Abbot Kinney Boulevard in Venice Beach.

—*Andrew Asch*

American Apparel Up for Sale and Eying Production Facilities Outside of California

By Deborah Belgium Senior Editor

American Apparel has a “For Sale” sign up just six months after exiting bankruptcy, according to sources close to the company.

Investment bank **Houlihan Lokey** has been hired to find a buyer for the Los Angeles garment and retail giant, which has the largest clothing factory in the United States, sources said.

Paul Zaffaroni, managing director at **Roth Capital Partners** in Newport Beach, Calif., said he knew there was a pitch book out there that had been issued by Houlihan Lokey, and it was a subject that was discussed at the recent **MAGIC** trade shows in Las Vegas.

Requests for comment from American Apparel were not returned.

The company’s sale has American Apparel’s founder, Dov Charney, wondering why the new owners are trying to get rid of the company so quickly.

Early this year, Charney and an investment group submitted a \$300 million bid to acquire the apparel company, but that bid was rejected by American Apparel.

At its most successful, the company’s annual revenues were in the vicinity of \$650 million in 2013. Charney estimates the company will have challenges reaching \$350 million in sales this year.

“They are obviously underperforming, and the hedge funds running the company are potentially in a situation where they need to get rid of the asset before it is worth less than it is now,” Charney said.

Charney noted that American Apparel has laid off 3,000 employees since he left the company in 2014 and shuttered several facilities, including the denim factory in South Gate, Calif., where thousands of workers were employed as well as a sewing facility in Garden Grove, Calif., and a dyeing and finishing facility in Hawthorne, Calif.

In addition, American Apparel has closed the sock, shoe and sweater production departments at the company’s downtown LA headquarters at 747 Warehouse St., Charney said. “This is what happens when you let Wall Street hedge funds take over American Apparel,” he noted.

As many as 300,000 American Apparel T-shirts a month are being sewn by Los Angeles contractors instead of at the American Apparel factory.

There have been rumors that American Apparel is thinking about moving production to Tennessee, North Carolina or South Carolina, where the minimum wage is only \$7.25 an hour. In California, the minimum wage is \$10.50 an hour and expected to rise to \$15 an hour by 2020.

Charney said moving production outside of Los Angeles doesn’t make sense because American Apparel’s distribution center is located here and the apparel workers in Los Angeles are among the most productive in the United States.

But the current chief executive, Paula Schneider, has a mandate to lower costs and increase revenues. Moving production out of California would make that goal easier.

Investment experts wonder whether American Apparel could fetch a very healthy price. Philippe Faraut, the chief investment officer at **Knight Global** who has put together

several sales of apparel and shoe companies, said it’s likely a new buyer would get rid of the more than 130 American Apparel stores in the United States and concentrate on the wholesale side of the business. “I wouldn’t be surprised if they did something like the **Rock & Republic** deal, where the brand name was bought and then they went exclusively with one retailer [**Kohl’s**].”

American filed for bankruptcy protection on Oct. 5, 2015, in federal bankruptcy court in Delaware.

The troubled Los Angeles clothing company, which started out making blank T-shirts and then branched out into a wide array of clothing sold at its own company stores, has been on a wild ride ever since it ousted Charney in late 2014.

Charney, who started the Los Angeles venture in 1997 by selling T-shirts to the wholesale market, had always been considered the heart and soul of the apparel concern.

In 2000, American Apparel moved to a large, 800,000-square-foot facility on the edge of downtown Los Angeles and three years later branched out to form its own chain of stores. At a time when many U.S. clothing ventures were manufacturing overseas, American Apparel became the largest clothing factory in the United States.

But the publicly traded company was bleeding money for years. In 2014, the company had a net loss of \$68.8 million on nearly \$609 million in revenues. In 2013, American Apparel lost \$106 million on \$634 million in revenues.

But Charney consistently maintains that American Apparel’s earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization, or EBITDA, were always in positive territory. ●

TRADE SHOW REPORT

Las Vegas *Continued from page 1*

hibitors into other UBM shows in Las Vegas.

Erik Ulin, president of men’s for UBM, said the company will look at the merchandise mix at all the shows and “see where brands fit for the retailers.”

Similarly, the move of Pool upstairs follows several seasons of shifts around the Mandalay Bay for the show, which features independent brands showing apparel, accessories and gift items.

Last season, Pool moved to a central location next to Project—a move praised by longtime exhibitors. This season, the show was located on the second floor next to the upscale womenswear and accessories sections at Stitch and ATS.

“I like having Pool downstairs,” Ulin said. “I would love to have a cohesive mix. Pool is a great entry level for brands [that can then] graduate to other parts of the show. Similar to **Vanguard** [the emerging brands section at] MRket.”

UBM’s other trade shows—**WWD**MAGIC, **Sourcing at MAGIC**, **FN Platform** and **WSA at MAGIC**—remained at the **Las Vegas Convention Center**—although **MAGIC** exhibitors reported a rumor that **WWD**MAGIC will relocate next season to Mandalay Bay.

Although Ulin declined to say what other changes were in store for UBM’s shows, he said there is space available at Mandalay Bay. “We still have space available. We have room to grow,” he said, adding that it was important to get the merchandise mix correct to help retailers find brands and navigate the show. “We focus on the experience,” he said. “It’s never about selling space. That’s not a value-add.”

Another change this season was the move of lingerie and swimwear trade show **Curve at MAGIC** from the **Las Vegas Convention Center** to the Mandalay Bay, where it was located next to Project Women’s.

“I think it’s a positive move to be here next to Project,” said **Luli Fama**’s Gregorio Hanimian, who was showing the Florida swim line’s latest collection of brightly colored, Brazilian-fit swimwear. “We have accounts we always work with, but we’re looking for new, healthy accounts.”

This season also saw the launch of **Project PIVOT**, a new area for technology providers to network with brands and retailers.

Convening in the LV Convention Center

The number of exhibitors showing at **Sourcing at MAGIC** at the Las Vegas Convention Center numbered 2,600 booths, down slightly from last year’s 2,680, said Bob Berg, senior sales manager, international, for the show.

About 80 percent to 85 percent of the apparel and footwear

exhibitors were from China, Berg added, but more than 80 countries were represented at the international show. Ethiopia had a strong presence, showcasing its new industrial parks coming online to expand apparel and textile production in that African country.

The **Hawassa Industrial Park** in the center of Ethiopia was recently inaugurated with clothing companies such as **PVH**, **Busana Apparel Group**, **Epic Group** and **Must Garment** opening factories there.

The **Istanbul Chamber of Commerce** attended for the first time, and the Bangladesh ambassador to the United States, Mohammad Ziauddin, addressed concerns about the state of the apparel industry in that country, where hundreds of workers in recent years have died in factory fires or collapsed buildings.

While the sourcing show was held in the convention center’s North Hall, **WWD**MAGIC took place in the South Hall, where it was a vibrant mix of women’s fashions for both juniors and



Agenda



Offprice

misses.

The turquoise-carpeted halls were filled with retailers walking the show and rifling through the racks upon racks of clothing set up in mammoth booths creatively designed to enhance the shopping experience.

There was everything from **Pokémon** backpacks and workout clothing to lace dresses and bohemian tops. The large hall always has a festive air and a certain hum of constant activity and chatter.

Some felt the show’s traffic was down, but others believed it was in keeping with past years. “The show has been good. It has been flowing, and we are not complaining,” said Sidney Leon, a sales representative with **Freeway Apparel**, a Los Angeles juniorswear brand. “We are receiving orders for Spring 2017, and some late Fall orders and Cruise have been doing well.”

Holding court at the Sands Expo and the Rio

Only four shows remained at the Sands Expo this August as **MRKT**, **Stitch** and **Accessories The Show** moved over to the Mandalay Bay.

The **OffPrice Show** was on the ground level of the Sands Expo while the trio of shows under the **Modern Amusement** banner—**Capsule**, **Liberty** and **Agenda**—occupied three large ballrooms on the first floor.

The OffPrice Show, held Aug. 13–16, hit a snag this year because the Jewish holiday Tisha B’Av, which commemorates the anniversary of a number of disasters in Jewish history, took place the first day of the show. Consequently, scores of vendors did not participate, and buyer traffic was off. “Everybody came on Sunday and then all the other shows opened on Monday,” said Victor Martinez, a representative for **Mik Mak Inc.**, headquartered in Los Angeles.

Agenda, with its edgy streetwear fashions, was vibrant and a happening place with blasts of music playing. A drone equipped with a camera flew over the show, and picnic tables adorned with potted plants were set out for lunch-goers.

“The show has been super good and busy,” said Lucas Pierce, sales director for **Dope**, a Los Angeles menswear brand debuting a denim collection that retails for \$88.

Capsule and Liberty, in adjoining ballrooms, were more mellow. Capsule showcased clothing as well as accessories, vintage items and environmentally friendly goods in a space that was airy and not too crowded.

Danish brand **Soulland** was exhibiting at the show to reach more West Coast clients. “The brand is rooted in the skate and streetwear culture, and Vegas is definitely a streetwear place,” said Janine Ciccone, a sales agent for the label.

Liberty, a show for contemporary menswear labels, was mellower than Agenda, reflected by the quieter music that filled the room. “This is a place where buyers come to find new things,” said Joseph Janus, chief executive of the North American division of Swedish brand **WESC**, which stands for “We [Are the] Superlative Conspiracy.”

The label has been participating in the show for the last five years. “The show has been going good. We always like it,” Janus said.

One show that is always buzzing with activity is the **Women’s Wear in Nevada** show at the **Rio All-Suite Las Vegas Hotel and Casino**, a venue located off the Las Vegas strip. Many of the same tried-and-true exhibitors show up every season, catering to specialty-store buyers, catalogs and other buyers from across the country.

“We didn’t know what kind of traffic to expect with retailers complaining about sales,” said Tamara Ward-Mattos, one of the owners of **Surrealist**, a California brand that makes a lot of lace and knit tops that are part of the soft-dressing movement. “But I’ve opened three new accounts today and it’s the early afternoon.” ●

Fraser Ross *Continued from page 1*

son. The store gained notoriety for selling emerging brands and pop-culture gifts and collectibles. Paparazzi often photographed celebrities shopping at Kitson, and the store was written up in the *Wall Street Journal*. At one time, Kitson had 19 locations and an online store.

In 2011, Ross hired Lee, a former senior vice president of fast-fashion giant retailer **Forever 21**, to expand the store fleet.

Lee maintained that Kitson was more than prepared to take a giant leap forward in the retail world. In 2013, Lee claimed that Kitson's flagship store was making \$1,000 a square foot in sales, which was double the average sales per square foot that year for other stores, according to the **International Council of Shopping Centers**.

"You can do a billion-plus dollars around a great merchant," Lee told the *California Apparel News* in July 2013. "Fraser is one of those great merchants of retail."

The lawsuit claims that Lee led a movement to push Ross out of his business. In 2012, Ross was hospitalized with an infection that paralyzed the right side of his body. The legal filing alleges that Lee took advantage of Ross' incapacitated state.

The lawsuit alleges that Lee sneaked documents past Ross, including one that said Ross had resigned from the company and sold his interest in Kitson to Lee for \$300, leaving the Kitson founder without a salary and benefits, Feldman said.

"He was left with nothing but a check for \$300 for the shares that he held for Kitson," Feldman said. "It raised immediate doubts in minds on how could Fraser be reduced to \$300 for all the time and effort and notoriety that he put toward the brand."

In 2015, Lee wanted Ross to sign a waiver of a conflict-of-interest document that would allow the firm of **Jeffer Mangels Butler & Mitchell LLP** to represent both Lee and Ross at the same time. The document was not signed in front of any attorney,

the lawsuit states. Instead, it was completed outside the purview of a lawyer and completed with Ross' forged signature.

After Ross recovered from much of his illness, the lawsuit said he came across the alleged forged document. Ross showed it to Feldman, who took it to a handwriting expert. The expert confirmed that the document did not contain Ross' signature. For Feldman, the phony signature confirmed that there had been a plot against Ross.

The suit also describes other deals that hurt Ross. In May 2015, Lee put together a loan transaction with retailer **Spencer Spirit Holdings Inc.** The deal required that Ross remain involved in Kitson.

The lawsuit alleges that Lee gave Ross pain medication during a meeting where Ross signed a document stating that he would act as a consultant for the project. The deal also had Ross waiving his right to be reimbursed for a \$2 million loan Ross extended to Kitson when the retailer was in trouble.

Ross was promised a speedy repayment on the loan with 6 percent interest, but it never came through.

In addition, the lawsuit maintains that Lee hid a personal enrichment scheme where he developed Kitson stores in South Korea.

Lee also allegedly blocked attractive deals for other companies to acquire the Kitson string of stores. Instead, the lawsuit said he did not consult with Ross about obtaining a \$15 million loan in 2013 from **Salus Capital Partners**, a Massachusetts lender focused on lending to distressed companies.

By late 2015, Spencer Spirit was operating the retailer. The deal seemed to be running smoothly until Kitson ran out of money and shuttered its 17 stores in December, bringing an end to Kitson's business.

The Lee lawsuit is only the latest part of this legal saga. In July, Ross sued Jeffer Mangels Butler & Mitchell for legal malpractice. ●

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Calendar

Aug. 21

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

Aug. 22

Apparel Textile Sourcing Canada
The International Centre
Toronto
Through Aug. 24

Aug. 25

Courtney Allegra VIP Pre-Opening Party
7224 Melrose Ave.
Los Angeles

Aug. 30

CALA
Fort Mason Center
San Francisco
Through Aug. 31

NW Materials Show
Oregon Convention Center
Portland, Ore.

Through Aug. 31

Sept. 2

Bread and Butter
Arena Berlin
Berlin
Through Sept. 4

Sept. 4

Londonedge
Business Design Centre
London
Through Sept. 6

Riviera by Mode City
Palm Beach Casino
Cannes, France
Through Sept. 6

Sept. 6

Milano Unica Shirt Avenue
Rho Fieramilano
Milan, Italy
Through Sept. 8

Sept. 7

NE Materials Show

Doubletree by Hilton
Danvers, Mass.
Through Sept. 8

CentreStage
Hong Kong Convention and
Exhibition Centre
Hong Kong
Through Sept. 8

Sept. 8

Surf Expo
Orange County Convention Center
Orlando, Fla.
Through Sept. 10

Imprinted Sportswear Show
Orange County Convention Center
Orlando, Fla.
Through Sept. 10

There's more
on ApparelNews.net.

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

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Trends Are High at Swim Collective

By Sarah Wolfson *Contributing Writer*

Swim Collective returned to the **Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach Resort and Spa** in Huntington Beach, Calif., for an Aug. 8–10 run that drew a sizeable crowd and an expanded exhibitor base.

With just over 500 vendors, Swim Collective featured an upbeat vibe with steady foot traffic on the second day of the show.

Brooke Jones, swimwear sales representative with **Perry Ellis International**, was showing three licensed brands under the Perry Ellis umbrella: **Jantzen**, **Jag** and **Laundry by Shelli Segal**. Jag featured sporty ex-pat gear and paddle pants along with boardshorts. Jantzen added more tankini styles to its collection, which is a largely one-piece–driven brand. “We are seeing high-neck and back-detailed tankinis as well as new one-pieces, coverups and caftans,” Jones said.

The show was split between two floors at the Hyatt, which could have affected traffic, Jones said, but added that all her booked appointments came to the show as did drop-in visitors, but most buyers were taking notes rather than placing orders.

First-time exhibitor **Mamazoo** showcased its 2016/2017 collection to show versatility in the line. “Buyers mainly come by appointment, but it’s also about getting brand recognition and it’s hard to get it here because our category is up there,” said Maria Ana Moura, owner and designer of the Brazilian swimwear brand.

Now in its third season, Mamazoo is sold in specialty boutiques including **In Heroes We Trust** in Los Angeles’ Venice neighborhood. The collection features a full range of separates, with six tops and bottoms that could be mixed and matched, as well as one-pieces with open backs.

“In Brazil, we do a lot of mix-and-matching [with pieces], so we like to produce classic pieces that keep tan lines in

mind,” she said.

Bohemian luxury resort line **Gypsy Soul** was faring well with mainly walk-ins, according to Brandi Dea, founder and creative director of the Canadian brand.

Dea, who launched the line five years ago, said she attended Swim Collective to connect with new retailers and network.

Brazilian line **Sambarela** was another newcomer to Swim Collective.

“Swim Collective is a new show for us, but we wanted to see a different demographic of buyers,” Christina Chambers, senior sales director, said. “We are really big in the East

fabric, which is an amazing selling point. It’s huge in Europe and growing in the U.S.,” Chambers said.

Abyse Official, designed by Hanalei Reponty, was showing its activewear and swimwear collection for the first time at Swim Collective. Taking a cool, fashionable, eco-friendly approach, the line features a mix of activewear pieces made out of recycled fishing nets and wet suits made from a lightweight Japanese “geoprene” material. The collection featured fringe details, bandanna prints, vintage ’90s-style metallics and darker colors as well as ’70s rainbows and paisley prints.

“Everything is [constructed] from an Italian fabric, [which is] UV protective and dries fast,” Reponty said. Neoprene bodysuits—which can be used for surfing, kayaking and swimming—retail for \$230 while long-sleeve wet suits retail for \$20 to \$350.

Abyse is sold at **Planet Blue** in the U.S. as well as internationally in Paris, Turkey and Australia. “We are trying to branch out here with this show,” she said.

Cassie Palmeri represents brands such as **Ale by Alessandra**, **Blue Life** and **Tori Prayer Swimwear**. According to Palmeri, several large West Coast accounts stopped by Swim Collective.

“Resort and Spring have been getting amazing [feedback]. Since Resort has an 11/30 delivery and a [tight] deadline of next week, we

have been getting a lot of orders in at the show,” Palmeri said.

Key trends to look out for in upcoming seasons are stripes and ruffles for Spring, Palmeri said, also noting embroidered suits and high necks are popular this year.

L*Space introduced a lot of new body styles and top silhouettes this season.

“You have to keep reinventing yourself every season,” designer Monica Wise said.

Angi Hart, L*Space’s director of merchandise and sales, said neutral colors and saturated brights are trending as are new silhouettes. ●



Monica Wise and Angi Hart of L*Space



Tori Prayer Swimwear

Coast, Miami and the islands, so we wanted to get more exposure in other parts of the U.S. market right now. For us, it’s not about quantity but quality, so we have made strong contacts on this side of the country.”

The brand is known for its Brazilian cuts, expanded into one-pieces with an emphasis on solids and prints. Sambarela features exclusive patterns, and all manufacturing is done in-house in Brazil. Buyers showed an interest in Sambarela’s exotic animal prints and vibrant colors. “People are shopping for summer, so it’s been getting their attention. All of our fabric is biodegradable as well so it’s eco-friendly. We use a CO2

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Active Collective Sees 25 Percent Increase in Attendance

By Alyson Bender *Contributing Writer*

Active Collective had its “most successful show to date” with a 25 percent increase in buyer attendance and 20 percent more resources than ever before at the Aug. 11–12 edition at the **Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach Resort and Spa** in Huntington Beach, Calif., according to Shannon Leggett, executive show director. Leggett credits his international buyer-relations outreach strategy to the growing success of Active Collective, which was acquired by **Emerald Expositions LLC** this month along with its sister show, **Swim Collective**.

“We have been aggressively outreaching and bringing buyers in from all over the world,” said Leggett, who founded Swim Collective in 2010 and then expanded to launch Active Collective in 2014. “By including an edited group of brands

show, so we decided to try it out,” he said. “This has been a great fit for our brand, and the networking and contacts we have made here have made it worth it. We plan to come back.”

Another new brand to the show floor that was looking to break into the U.S. market was **Every Second Counts** from London.

“This is our first trade show outside of the U.K., and it has been a great way to cement relationships over here and gain exposure,” said Naomi White, who said she met with **SoulCycle**, among others.

Veteran exhibitor Marcelo Kugel, chief merchandising officer and cofounder of **Koral**, reported having “an amazing show.”

“We have picked up numerous accounts—especially from the U.K., Japan and Australia in particular—and have noticed more and more fitness studios starting to stock apparel and fitness accessories,” he said.

Buyers from **Neiman Marcus**, **Revolve**, **Amazon.com**, **Bandier** and **Pure Barre** were among the accounts Kugel said he saw this show. “We have been well received by retailers looking to add more fashion elements that are complementary to active lifestyles,” he said.

“This is my first time here, and it’s been great because there are so many brands under one roof,” said Linda Esh, category buyer for **24 Hour Fitness**. “Roughly 300 of our 400 stores across the country include retail. While the two main brands we carry are **Nike** and **Under Armour**, we are currently looking to incorporate more

fashion-minded fitness brands and accessories into our merchandise for women and men. The apparel part of our business is definitely growing.”

Representatives from Southern California spin studio **GritCycle**, which currently has one location in Costa Mesa, with a second under construction in Dana Point, were pleased with the selection at the show as well. “We have



BUSY BOOTH: Onzie reported heavy, constant traffic throughout the show.

had a very successful show in finding everything we were looking for, specifically merchandise to wear and use in our ‘saddle room,’” said Dani Wellbrock-Gallinger, director of operations.

“This has been a terrific show. We are very pleased” said Dick Cantrell, cofounder of **Hard Tail Forever**, which had the largest booth at the show. “Out of our top ten accounts, we saw six of them. This show was not necessarily about quantity but quality buyers who’ve been writing.” Cantrell said **Nordstrom** and **YogaWorks** were among the accounts he saw at the show.

Hilary Moore of **Onzie Yoga Clothing**, which has been participating in Active Collective since the beginning, was equally enthusiastic.

“This show has great relations with buyers and consistently brings the heavy hitters through,” she said. “We have seen accounts such as **CorePower Yoga** and **Carbon38** as well as opened many new international accounts. There also seem to be many more spas and resorts attending than ever before.”

Active Collective will return to the Hyatt Regency for its Jan. 13–14 run and then head to New York for its first East Coast show, which will debut Jan. 26–27 at the **Metropolitan Pavilion**. For more information visit www.activewearcollective.com. ●



WORK IT: SoloSol Movement models in the Spring '17 collection



IN THE DETAILS: Fitness-minded buyers looking for fashion elements at Koral.

at all price points, the show is all-encompassing in one place.”

New to Active Collective this season was the Brazilian Pavilion, which included 20 participating brands. Flavio Feres, chief executive officer of São Paulo–based activewear line **Vestem**, chose Active Collective as the first show in the U.S. to break into the market.

“One of our clients from San Diego told us about this



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EVENTS

Waterman's Ball Goes Informal

The venerable **Waterman's Ball** has been the backdrop to a wild style of surf looks for much of its 26-year history. But in 2016, it changed venues and took on an informal look.

The cocktail party, fund-raiser and industry dinner on Aug. 6 for Southern California's surf companies shifted locations from the palatial **Ritz Carlton** in Laguna Niguel, Calif., to the more rustic **The Ranch at Laguna Beach**, a renovated golf resort.

This year guests dined under the stars with many wearing blazers and cocktail dresses. Others sported the surf clothes they wear every day.

Missing were the outré surf looks that were a hallmark of the event, such as the fuchsia suit Fernando Aguerre, founder of the **Reef** brand, wore to the Waterman's Ball in 2014.

The event stayed true to its other traditions. Surf heroes were honored for their contributions to the sport and its lifestyle. Surf executives raised money for environmental causes supported by the **Surf Industry Manufacturers Association's Environmental Fund**. SIMA produced the event.

For 2016, honorees were Mick Fanning, a three-time surf world champion, who was named "Waterman of the Year." Ramon Navarro, a big-wave surfer and Chilean environmentalist, was named "Environmentalist of the Year." Simon Anderson, a prominent surfboard shaper well known for his boards bearing three fins, was presented with the "Lifetime Achievement Award."

During its history, the SIMA Environ-



TROPHIES: Mick Fanning, right, receives his Waterman of the Year trophies.

mental Fund has raised \$7 million for environmental charities. In 2016, it raised funds for **The 5 Gyres Institute**, **Assateague Coastal Trust**, **Clean Ocean Action**, **Environmental Defense Center**, **Heal the Bay**, **North Shore Community Land Trust**, **Ocean Institute**, **Orange County Coastkeeper**, **Paso Pacifico**, **Reef Check Foundation**, **Santa Barbara Channelkeeper**, **Save the Waves**, **Seymour Marine Discovery Center**, **Surfers Against Sewage**, **Surfing Education Academy**, **Surfrider Foundation**, **Wildcoast** and **Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation**.—*Andrew Asch*



BOARDS UP: From left, Waterman's Ball honorees Simon Anderson, Ramon Navarro and Mick Fanning.



PRE-AWARDS: Paul Naude, left, president of the SIMA Environmental Fund, speaks before the awards are presented. Honorees included (left to right) Ramon Navarro, Simon Anderson and Mick Fanning.

Mawjee to Sole Technology

Sole Technology Inc., the Orange County, Calif., manufacturer of action-sports footwear and apparel for brands such as **Etnies**, **Altamont**, **Es**, **Emerica** and **ThirtyTwo** recently named Esmail Mawjee as the interim president of the 30-year-old company.

Mawjee, former president of the action-sports chain **Active Ride Shops**, will be responsible for the overall operations, said Pierre-André Senizergues, founder and chief executive officer of Sole Technology. "With a fast-evolving retail environment, we feel confident that Esmail's insights and deep experience in the industry will help guide and direct our planning process as well as support our teams in the strong implementation of our brand strategies as we move into 2017," he said.

Mawjee said he is looking forward to working with Sole Technology and its stable of brands.

"I admire the company's purpose and values of inspiring youth through offering a portfolio of unique and authentic brands—an extremely precious asset to have in our industry today," he said.

Sole Technology distinguished itself as a company with an environmental point of view. In 2007, it took an Ecological Footprint Survey to find out how it could cut emissions and pollution coming from its business operations. The company set an ambitious goal by being carbon neutral, or making no net release of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere, by 2020.—*Andrew Asch*

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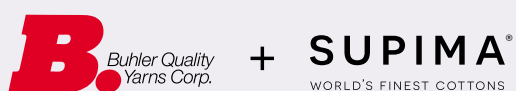
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