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Mitchell & Ness' booth at the Agenda trade show in Las Vegas

Sports Apparel Maker Mitchell & Ness Moving to Irvine

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

The North American licensed sportswear business is estimated to be a multi-billion-dollar market, and Philadelphia-headquartered brand **Mitchell & Ness** is making a gambit for a bigger chunk of it. It is scheduled to open its first West Coast office and a distribution center by mid-March in Irvine, Calif.

Mitchell & Ness holds licenses with sports leagues such as the **National Football League**, **Major League Baseball**, the **National Basketball Association** and **Major League Soccer**, making caps, jerseys, shorts and other apparel bearing the logos of popular sports teams.

The brand will move into an Irvine business park a short drive from the headquarters of the **Billabong** label and the corporate headquarters of retailer **Tilly's Inc.** When the new Mitchell & Ness office opens, 20 people are scheduled to work there in divisions such as headwear development, marketing, human relations and information technology. The brand's head of Latin America business also will work out of the Irvine office, said Kevin Wulff, the brand's chief execu-

tive officer.

"This facility will house all of our product under one roof and modernize our operations with the goal of providing gold-standard customer service. The organization will also feature an official showroom where select personnel will be chosen to support the brand's overall business goals," he said.

Mitchell & Ness, a privately held company, has frequently exhibited at the **Agenda** trade show and is retailed at sports venues such as **Dodger Stadium** and high-end boutiques such as **Kith** and **Flight Club** as well as in the brand's e-commerce shop (www.mitchellandness.com).

The brand's roots go back more than a century, when it started as a golf and tennis apparel maker in 1904. By the 1930s, it was making on-field uniforms for major Philadelphia sports teams such as the **Eagles** football team and the **Phillies** baseball team. In the 1980s, the brand created the **Mitchell & Ness Nostalgia Co.** to design and sell replicas of historic sports jerseys. ●

Nasty Gal Offices to Remain Open in Los Angeles

By Deborah Belgum Senior Editor

After being acquired by British-based online fashion retailer **BooHoo.com** for \$20 million, **Nasty Gal** is marching forward with its same website and smaller offices in Los Angeles as well as work spaces in New York, London and Manchester, England.

Nasty Gal will continue to offer its clothing, shoes and accessories geared toward women in their 20s and 30s under its own label with plans to design exclusive collections later this year, BooHoo executives said. But in early February, Nasty Gal laid off 98 people.

The online retailer planned to close its two Los Angeles-area stores soon and shutter its Kentucky distribution center by April 10.

"We are thrilled to have Nasty Gal as part of our family and are excited by the opportunity to expand the company into international markets," said Carol Kane, the joint chief executive for the BooHoo Group and the interim CEO for Nasty Gal.

Nasty Gal, a pioneer fashion e-commerce site established in

2006 by Sophia Amoruso, was a hot commodity for years with venture capitalists jumping in to invest in the company.

Amoruso resigned in 2015 as chief executive, handing the job over to Sheree Waterson, the former president at **Lululemon Athletica**.

Recently, mounting expenses and decreasing revenues forced Nasty Gal in November to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. In the fiscal year ending Jan. 31, 2015, Nasty Gal had net revenue of \$85 million but a mountain of debt.

In court papers, Nasty Gal attorneys said the company owed **United Parcel Service** \$576,950; **Callahan Capital** \$289,332 for its lease on its downtown LA headquarters; **Google Marketing Services** \$232,786; **BNB Footwear** \$293,653; **Olivaeous**, a womenswear company, \$318,816; **Endless Rose**, a clothing company, \$256,714; and **Cotton Candy LA**, a clothing company in the Arts District, \$182,222—with many more companies owed sizable sums. ●

BCBGMaxAzria Files for Chapter 11 Bankruptcy Protection

By Deborah Belgum Senior Editor

BCBGMaxAzriaGroup, the decades-old Los Angeles apparel company that was one of the first on the contemporary fashion scene, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in papers submitted Feb. 28 to the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York.

The company's Canadian affiliate is beginning a separate filing for voluntary reorganization proceedings under Canada's Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act. Steps are being taken to close its freestanding stores in Canada and consolidate its operations in Europe and Japan.

The apparel venture, founded in 1989 by Max Azria, has been navigating through some tough financial waters in the past few years. New executives have been unable to turn the company around fast enough and now hope to finish the bankruptcy process in six months.

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TRADE SHOW REPORT

Crowded Trade Show Schedule Cuts Into LA Textile Traffic

By Alison A. Nieder Executive Editor

Many of the familiar faces walking the aisles at the **Los Angeles International Textile Show** were missing this season when the longstanding textile show went head-to-head with an apparel trade show in New York.

This season, the show's Feb. 27-March 1 run at the **California Market Center** fell at the same time as **Coterie** in New York.

Several longtime Textile Show exhibitors said many of their contemporary customers could not attend the show because of the overlap with Coterie. Some hoped those customers would turn up on the last day of the show, but the strongest day of the three-day run turned out to be the second day of the show, Feb. 28.

"Yesterday was fairly busy. We've had a good flow," said

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Obituary

Los Angeles Manufacturer Jerry Leigh, 94

By Alison A. Nieder Executive Editor

Jerry Leigh, founder of **Jerry Leigh of California**, died on Feb. 8. He was 94.

Founded in the early 1960s, Jerry Leigh of California grew to be a powerhouse California apparel manufacturer and later a pioneer in the field of licensing.

Today, the family-owned company produces apparel under a wide range of brands and licenses, including **Walt Disney Co.**, **Warner Bros.** and **Dickies Girl**. The company manufactures everything from men's to women's to children's apparel that is sold in boutiques as well as major retailers.

The United Kingdom-born Leigh enlisted just shy of his 16th birthday in the Royal Army's 7th Army Division on the eve of World War II. Along with his brigade, known as the Desert Rats because of their training in Egypt, Leigh fought in Italy and later in Berlin at the close of the war. He married his childhood sweetheart, Frances, during the war and later emigrated to Toronto, where Leigh landed a job as a silk cutter for the **T. Eaton Co.**, then Canada's largest department store. At the same time Leigh studied tool patternmaking and grading, enlisting his wife to be his fit model.

The Leighs were planning to return to England when they decided to take a road trip across America—a trip that included a stop in California, where they decided to relocate. Leigh's first job in Los Angeles' garment industry was with **California Lingerie**, the apparel company owned by the Morse family, who founded **Manufacturers Bank** and later built the **CaliforniaMart** (now called the **California Market Center**). He rose to plant manager before setting out on his own to

found Jerry Leigh of California in 1962.

The business operated out of "a tiny little plant on Beverly Boulevard" and relied on selling direct to local stores, according to his son Andrew Leigh, who joined the company in the 1980s and now serves as president and chief executive.

"He hit on a fabric called double knit, which was very, very popular fabric in early '60s," Andrew Leigh said. "He started to build a reputation for himself as this low-cost operator making ready-to-wear, which was just starting to pop in the '60s."

The company's reputation attracted the attention of a buyer who placed an order for what Leigh thought was 300 pieces—a sizable order for the growing business, Andrew Leigh said.

"It turns out it was all dozens," he said. The buyer was from a company called **Holly Stores**, a women's and children's chain that was shortly acquired by **Kmart Stores**.

"My dad became one of the very first suppliers to Kmart stores," Andrew Leigh said.

Bill Tenenblatt, owner of **Antex Knitting Mills**, recalled a meeting with Leigh shortly after Antex opened in 1973.

"We had just started Antex," Tenenblatt said. "We bought eight machines. We probably had two employees and I was the mechanic."

Leigh walked into the downtown Los An-

geles mill while Tenenblatt was setting up one of the knitting machines and asked about the fabric he was making. Tenenblatt's polyester jacquard knits turned out to be perfect for a pant style Leigh was selling.

"He was my first customer," Tenenblatt recalled. "That's 45 years ago. He was always a customer probably until a couple of years ago. And it was a great relationship. It was a different era when over 95 percent of what was sold in the U.S. was made in the U.S. It was the beginning of a great supply chain that developed between design and knitting and dyeing and printing."

Over the years, both companies grew. Today, Antex has 450 knitting machines and about 500 employees, while Jerry Leigh of California—now based in Van Nuys, Calif.—employs more than 1,000 employees in facilities around the world.

Tenenblatt said he considers Leigh a mentor.

"He was very precise," he said. "He knew exactly what he wanted, and he told you what he wanted. He was a great teacher. You always knew where you stood with him. That first meeting I will never forget."

Financial and strategic operations consultant Jeff Silver worked with Leigh for more than 20 years as chief financial officer of Jerry Leigh of California. Silver described Leigh as "a self-made man" and "a pure English gentleman."

Described by his son as "a very dapper man," Leigh had a daily work uniform of navy blue jacket, gray slacks, button-down shirt and a tie. "That was his look," Andrew Leigh said.

He treated his colleagues and coworkers with a high degree of respect, Silver said.

"His employees referred to him as 'Mr. Leigh' out of respect," he said.

He was also a generous, albeit quiet, supporter of organizations such as the **City of Hope** and **Operation Smile**.

"He would say, 'Give with a warm hand,' meaning give when you're alive," Andrew Leigh said.

Kind to all but exacting in business. Leigh "was true to the craft of patternmaking and cutting and sewing and all the technical aspects," Silver said. "He grew up on the side of the business that was the old school of cutting and sewing and patternmaking and engineering. He



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The Wet Seal Receives Bid for Its Brand Name

The Wet Seal, the Southern California teen retail chain that filed for bankruptcy protection in early February, has received a \$1.5 million stalking-horse bid from a Canadian chain based in Toronto.

YM—which owns juniors retail chains that operate under the nameplates of **Stitches**, **Sirens** and **Suzu Shier**—submitted its bid by the Feb. 28 deadline stipulated by the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Delaware.

Hilco Streambank was retained to market and sell The Wet Seal's intellectual-property assets. Included in the sale are trademarks, domain names, customer databases and the e-commerce platform.

The Wet Seal's online site is temporarily shut down with this message on its home page: "Thanks, Babe, It's Been Real."

The Wet Seal, headquartered in Irvine, Calif., has been slowly drowning in debt over the years. The teen retailer emerged from bankruptcy two years ago after being sold to an

affiliate of **Versa Capital Management** for \$7.5 million and \$20 million debtor-in-possession financing.

At its height, the shopping mall-based retail chain, which sold young contemporary clothing, operated more than 500 stores in 48 states.

The company also operated 54 stores under the **Arden B** nameplate, but that chain was closed in 2014 with 31 of the locations being converted into plus-size fashions under The Wet Seal label. In fiscal 2013, Arden B had \$60.4 million in sales, which represented 11 percent of the company's revenues.

After emerging from its last bankruptcy in 2015, The Wet Seal downsized its footprint to 170 outposts. Two weeks before announcing its bankruptcy this February, The Wet Seal notified the state's Employment Development Department that it was laying off 148 employees, effective March 20.

—Deborah Belqum

Celebs, Buzzing Business at Project

It was a time for celebrity endorsements at the Feb. 21–23 run of **Project Womens** at the **Mandalay Bay Convention Center** in Las Vegas.

Business at the sprawling trade show was briefly diverted when TV cameras and celebrity journalists crowded **The Bugatti Group's** booth to catch a glimpse of music star Celine Dion. The singer dropped by the Bugatti booth to introduce her **Celine Dion Collection** accessories line on Feb. 21.

The same day, Jenna Dewan Tatum, an actress, appeared at the **Danskin** booth. On Feb. 22, Julianne Hough, an actress and champion of the "Dancing With the Stars" dance competition show, made an appearance and took pictures at the **MPG Sport** booth.

More often than not, the executives running other booths at Project Womens and its sibling shows—**Project, The Tents** and **The Collective**—said that the pace of business at the shows matched the star power.

Greg Garrett of **Z Supply LLC** estimated that Project Womens enjoyed greater attendance than the February 2016 show. "You can't see down any of these aisles," he said of the area around his company's booth. The booth's real estate

grew by 300 square feet to 1,500 square feet compared to its Project Womens show in August 2016.

Z Supply's sales chief, Tony Sanchez, said that more traffic brought more business.



Robin's Jean's Robin Chretien

"They're spending more dollars," Sanchez said of retailers. "They're more positive. We're not hearing that business is so rough anymore."

Different vendors described different views of the show. On the first day of the show, Michael Moshi, chief executive officer of the **Lauren Moshi** brand, described traffic at Project Womens as "nice and steady" and mostly coming from repeat customers.

Robin Chretien, founder of **Robin's Jean**, described his booth's traffic as old and new customers, mostly from independent stores. For the Toronto-based Dino Di Girolamo, representing the **Brax Feel Good** label, Project was a great place to catch up with retailers headquartered on the West Coast.

The sprawling shows had featured big booths from established brands such as **AG, Ted Baker London, Tommy Bahama** and **Joe's Jeans** to brands making a trade-show debut or a North American trade-show debut. They included **Mitre**, which made a reintroduction of the brand to North America. The brand supplied soccer-style jerseys to staff working at the Project show. Also appearing were emerging brands **2Nostalgik, 900, Jen Awad, Beachbody** and **Arcady**. The Los Angeles-headquartered Arcady exhibited at **The Tents** show, held adjacent to Project Womens.

"It was an eye-opening experience seeing droves of people walking through the halls," Billy Hines of Arcady said of the brand's debut trade show. "It was a great intersection of influencers and retailers."

Walking The Tents were boutique owners Ross and Debra Hunter of **Provisions** of Santa Rosa, Calif. Trends they saw included sweatshirt styles and increased use of cashmere fabric.

Veteran retailer Fraser Ross of the **Kitross** boutique in Los Angeles placed orders for brands at the shows he shopped. However, he said there were not enough emerging brands and new lines at Project. "The brands we retail well are not at the shows," he said. "They only sell at less than six stores in North America. They can't afford a booth."—*Andrew Asch*

Positive Vibe Floats Through WWDMAGIC

The energy was high at **WWDMAGIC**, a vast young contemporary and trend-driven show held Feb. 21–23 in the Central Hall of the **Las Vegas Convention Center**.

The three-day event is always a study in creative booth designs, which give the humongous space a more relaxed and festive air than some of the other apparel trade shows held at the same time.

Whimsy was seen in the tall bubble-headed mannequins that sported over-sized eyeglasses outside the booth housing the Los Angeles young contemporary line **Ina**, designed for the 25-to-35-year-old woman in mind.

This is the fifth year that Ina owner Rennan Joo has attended the show. "This is a good show for getting new customers," said Joo, who posted on **Instagram** and sent out emails that his company would be at WWDMAGIC.

About 60 percent of the retailers he saw were from Latin America and another 40 percent were from the United States. They were checking out the delicate lace-driven styles that Ina manufactures in China.

Nearby was the wood-paneled booth for **Tea & Cup**, another Los

Angeles label attending the show for the second year in a row. Ivan Kim, a company director, was nattily dressed in a three-piece suit and tie, as were his male team members, who were ready to write orders for the 5-year-old line.



Ivan Kim of Tea & Cup

About 70 percent of the people he saw were returning customers and the other 30 percent were new buyers looking for something different. Tea & Cup's line is heavy on ruffles, abbreviated silhouettes and styles in bright primary colors. The collection is popular with South American boutiques—particularly in Colombia. "So far the show has been okay," Kim said. "The first day was good, and the second day was a little slower."

Another relative newcomer to the show was juniors line **Miley + Molly**, based in Los Angeles. Some of its retail customers include **Forever 21, Charlotte Russe, Fashion Nova** and **Papaya**. "This is the third time we are doing the show, and every time we attend it is getting better," said Joanne Kim, a vice president with the company.

She had met with several specialty-boutique retailers who often do their reordering online.—*Deborah Belgum*

Pooltradeshow Remains an Alternative



Curbside booth at Pooltradeshow

Pooltradeshow, which ran Feb. 21–23 at Las Vegas' **Mandalay Bay Convention Center**, kept its status as a trade show for fashion alternatives.

Exhibiting at the recent run of the show was **OppoSuits**, which features suits that retail for \$100 or less. OppoSuits bear humorous prints such as a deck of playing cards or St. Patrick's Day shamrocks. There was **Out of Print**, which specializes in T-shirts bearing images of cover art for controversial books such as "1984" and "A Clockwork Orange." Also exhibiting was **Dapper Boi**, a clothing line for androgynous women and men.

Pool marked the first major trade show for Dapper Boi, and the label's founder Vicki Pasche said that the show was a great forum for networking. "We made some really great contacts and have some very interested retailers that we are speaking with this week," she wrote in a post-show email.

The **Next Level Apparel** basics label exhibited at the show and sponsored Pool's photo booth, its interactive charging lounge and a live screen-printing section of the show. Jeremy Morillo, a Next Level senior account executive, said the show gives an opportunity for his well-established company to network. "It allows us to really connect and see what the new emerging brands are doing. It keeps us in touch to understand the who's who and what's what to help deliver a new and exciting product for the following years," he said.

New sections introduced at the show included the Japan Shop, a section devoted to Japanese brands.—*A.A.*

Post NY Fashion Week, Good Liberty Show for Krammer & Stoudt

Print media is still a powerful medium. Just ask the cofounders of the **Krammer & Stoudt** label.

On Jan. 30, *The New York Times* featured the emerging label in an article on men's fashions during **New York Fashion Week**. Fast-forward to the **Liberty Fashion & Lifestyle Fairs**, which ran at the **Sands Expo** Feb. 20–22, and Krammer & Stoudt's Courtenay Nearburg and Mike Rubin estimated that they received double the orders they made during the February 2016 Liberty show in Las Vegas.

However, Rubin noted that an element of risk remains with all trade shows. "You don't know where people are going to show up and buy. It's weird that way," he said.

During its recent run, Liberty was a big market for all sorts of men's styles, ranging from suits to denim, streetwear to accessories. Other vendors also spoke of the risk present at all trade shows. "Ultimately at shows you have to expect that you have one opportunity to gain a buyer's attention," said Jason Schott of the **Schott NYC** label. "It's a quick impression, a little face time, then you have to do a lot of follow-up." Los Angelenos will see a lot more of Schott. In late March, it is scheduled to open a new store on the city's La Brea Avenue.

But the risk was worth it to many vendors. Retailers such as **Bloomingdale's, Holt Renfrew, Neiman Marcus, Kith, Ron Robinson** and **LASC** visited the show. Booth real estate was about even with the Liberty show from February 2016, according to trade-show management. A new section called Alt-Terrain made a debut at the show. It was developed in partnership with *Gear Patrol* magazine and

was devoted to active- and outdoor-lifestyle brands.

Brands saw Liberty as a good forum to make their trade-show debut. Making an introduction was **Vivien**, with offices in Santa Ana, Calif., and Shanghai. The **T&A Showroom** formally introduced its 150-piece **Le Cruz** streetwear line and also reintroduced the **Von Dutch** line.



Schott NYC

Alfred Davis, T&A's co-owner, said that the new Von Dutch will adhere closer to the original art of founder Kenny Howard, not the tattoo graphics that popularized the brand in 2004. Canadian brand **Vitaly** introduced a denim line at the show.

The **Moods of Norway** brand showed samples for its Fall '17 and some Immediates for its Spring '17 line at Liberty. "Liberty is a great platform," said cofounder Stefan Dahlkvist. "We pretty much see all of our wholesale accounts during the show's three days."

At the show, Darrel Adams, owner of the **Kin** boutique, noted that he saw a lot of classic men's suiting on the show floor. Alfredo Izaguirre, buyer for the LASC boutique, said that athleisure remains an important trend. He also saw T-shirts featuring looser, less form-fitting silhouettes.

Izaguirre hopes that retail emerges from a tough season this spring. Cold, rainy weather in Los Angeles County kept people from shopping. Many upset about the election of Donald Trump to the U.S. presidency also have not been in the mood to shop in heavily Democratic Los Angeles County, Izaguirre said. "If people are not in a good mood to shop, there is not much you can do," he said. "Hopefully as the weather gets warmer things will get back to normal."—*A.A.*

Curve's Central Location

This season, for its Feb. 21–23 run, **Curve Las Vegas** moved from the corner of the **Mandalay Bay Convention Center** to a central location next to the athleisure exhibitors at **Project Womens**.

The move earned high marks from the show's exhibitors. "This year is good. There are more people. Curve is smaller, but the location is good," said Liz M. Siabato, senior product specialist, North American division, for Colombian lingerie and shapewear company **Leonisa**.

The company is a longtime Curve exhibitor. Siabato said she saw her existing customers and new prospects—including buyers from Asia, Canada and Europe—as well as U.S. stores from California, Texas and Alabama.

Simon Southwood, with San Diego-based swim line **Sauvage**, took advantage of Curve's proximity to menswear shows **Project**, **The Collective** and **The Tents** by bringing some of Sauvage's men's styles as well as its women's collection.

This was the first time Tiziano De Franco was showing Romanian lingerie line **Jolidon** at Curve. The 30-year-old company is looking to enter the U.S. market, and Curve's proximity to Project Women's was advantageous, according to De Franco, president of New York-based **Tiziano**.

"I'm glad we are close to Project," he said. "We see more traf-

fic. A lot of these stores integrate some pieces of lingerie, too."

Jolidon is a vertical company that produces its lingerie in-house using European fabrics and European trim such as **Swarovski** crystals.

"It's a company that has a lot to offer," De Franco said. "It's manufactured in Europe at a competitive price."

Stacey Gossman with **The Gig Showroom** in Los Angeles was at Curve with two shapewear collections: **TC Shapewear** and **Miraclesuit**.

On the first day of the show, Gossman said traffic seemed to be a "tiny bit down, but people seem to be writing orders."

TC Shapewear (the TC stands for "total comfort and total control," Gossman said) sells in **Neiman Marcus**, **Nordstrom**, **Bloomingdale's** and better specialty stores. Miraclesuit is more mid-tier priced and sells at **Macy's** and bridal stores.

"It is great to be at the crossroads," said Pierre-Nicholas Hurstel, chief executive officer of **CurvExpo**, which produces Curve Las Vegas in partnership with Project parent **UBM**. "It's good to have athleisure side by side with swim and lingerie."

This season, Curve Las Vegas had 80 brands exhibiting—a small increase over last season, Hurstel said. Preregistration was strong, he added, and there were about 200 appointments and matchmaking sessions booked prior to the show.

Lingerie brand **Wacoal** was busy with back-to-back appointments at Curve.

"We do a good job in prebooking appointments—that's the key to a successful show," said Joseph Smith, director of sales specialty accounts and director of international logistics.

Smith and sales representatives Michelle Caiazzo and Cheryl D. Rice said they saw a mix of existing accounts and potential new ones. Most retailers were West Coast based, but a few from the Midwest and Florida shopped the show as well.

"We see international in New York," Smith said, adding that the new location was an added benefit.

"I like the new location—you're right in the thick of things," he said. "There seems to be a better energy." —*Alison A. Nieder*



Freya

Attendance Climbs at WWIN Show

The several ballrooms that make up the **Women's Wear In Nevada** show at the **Rio All-Suite Hotel and Casino** in Las Vegas were packed to the gills with booths that sold everything from large colorful hats for church to slip-on sleeves to be worn under sleeveless dresses.

About 2,800 buyers, or 13 percent more than last year, showed up for the Feb. 20–23 event, which featured women's clothing and accessories. There were more than 500 exhibitors representing some 1,500 lines.

Because WWIN started one day before many of the other Las Vegas shows, the first day was buzzing with activity. Jenni-



Jennifer Hutton, fifth from the left, with her team

fer Hutton, whose Los Angeles showroom represents five lines of clothing—such as **Impulse California**, **Fantazia** and **Michael Tyler**—said the first day was very good but the second day was very disappointing.

Her retail clients, she noted, are being cautious. "My stores say that business isn't good, and they are backed up with goods," she said inside a triple-wide booth that carried

hundreds of pieces of clothing she brought with her large team of salespeople.

Business ebbed and flowed, depending on the ballroom and the categories. Karyn Seo, the owner and president of

Caite—whose embellished goods sell under the **Caite**, **Kyla Seo** and **Love Kyla** labels and are manufactured mostly in India—has been exhibiting at the show for 15 years. She sells to 2,000 specialty stores as well as major catalogs that want a fashionable item at moderate prices.

This was one of her best shows. "We've seen a lot of people," she said. "Sometimes people come to browse, but a lot of orders were taken."

Not everyone had an upbeat market. Rita Toro, an account executive for the New York sweater and faux-fur company **Lisa International**, said her business was probably down about 50 percent from August, but she blamed it on not bringing any updated merchandise to the show. "I didn't come with any newness," she said. "I think retailers want to see something new and something different at a good price." —*Deborah Belgun*

Stitch Levels Out to Blend With Other Shows

Stitch, the show for women's ready-to-wear fashions, found its groove.

This year, the show was located in one big hall with other shows in the **Mandalay Bay Convention Center**, which allowed buyers to easily move from **Project Womens**, **Project**, **Curve**, **Pool** and **The Tents**.

Last year, exhibitors complained that the shows were located on two different levels, which kept some buyers from moving between floors. "Last year, they had two different floors, and some of the buyers said they couldn't find the Stitch booths," said Dmitry Sviridov, who was showing the **Komarov** line of high-end dresses that his **Strategy L.A.** showroom carries. "This year, it is one level."

Ashley Segal, vice president of sales for Los Angeles-based Komarov, said they had been slammed on the first day and worked nonstop. "We had 47 appointments, mostly by people from the West Coast" who were booking orders for the special-

occasion dresses, which wholesale for \$145, Sviridov said.

Los Angeles contemporary label **Johnny Was** occupied a huge amount of real estate at the show with a large booth that displayed its embroidered blouses, dresses and tunics. "We have been really busy and doing well," said Linda Shaich, director of sales. "We've not really slowed down."

She said about 90 percent of the buyers her team saw were from specialty stores and then some small chain-store buyers from all over the United States.

Some companies were hedging their bets and exhibiting at two shows at the same time. The misses line **Magdalena**, which is headquartered in Lancaster, Calif., where it does all its production, was showing at **Stitch** and **Women's Wear In Nevada**.

Rina Romero, whose mother started the company in the late 1990s, said she liked the **Stitch** layout because buyers were able to wander through various shows rather seamlessly. "Because of that, we are getting everything from contemporary

buyers to misses buyers," she said.

She felt she was writing more orders this year than last year, but she preferred the way **Stitch** was organized at the **Sands Expo and Convention Center** before **UBM** acquired the show last year from **Business Journals Inc.** and moved the event to the **Mandalay Bay Convention Center**.

The former owners used to serve buyers a free lunch, which kept them at the show longer, Romero said. "The show has lost its identity, but it is attracting higher-end buyers who are coming over from Project Womens," she said.—*D.B.*



Rina Romero from Magdalena

Calendar

March 7
Interfilière
The Wave
Hong Kong
Through March 8

March 8
"How to Transform Your Apparel Business Into a World-Class Brand," presented by **FBI**
California Market Center, A792
Los Angeles

March 9
Style Fashion Week
Pacific Design Center
Los Angeles
Through March 12

Coast
Ice Palace Film Studios
Miami
Through March 10

March 13
LA Fashion Market
California Market Center

Cooper Design Space
The New Mart
Gerry Building
824 Building
Lady Liberty Building
Primrose Design Building
Academy Awards Building
Los Angeles
Through March 16
Brand Assembly
Cooper Design Space
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 18

Designers and Agents
The New Mart
Los Angeles
Through March 15
ALT
Contemporary Curves
Emerge
Select
Transit
California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through March 15
LA Kids' Market
California Market Center

Los Angeles
Through March 16
Coeur
California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through March 15
Capsule
Axis at Capsule
California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through March 14
Source British
California Market Center
Los Angeles

Through March 14
March 14
Art Hearts Fashion
Beverly Hilton
Los Angeles
Through March 18

March 16
Marcum Retail Symposium
JW Marriott
Los Angeles

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Jerry Leigh 1922 – 2017

February 8th was just another Wednesday for most people, but for me it was the end of an era. My father, Jerry Leigh, passed away that morning.

The '50s and '60s brought us a new form of garment manufacturing. Ready-to-wear was growing along with regional chains. Kmart and Walmart were just starting out. This was long before EDI, ASN or even the world-wide web. It was an era of colorful, scrappy women and men who helped shape and grow the California fashion industry. A warm handshake was all it took for a deal to be done. I am not the first partner of Jerry Leigh (that honor belongs to my mom, his wife and partner for over 70 years) but I am the longest business partner. I have had the honor of sitting across from him at our desk for countless years, hearing his flawless business philosophy (“watch your overhead!”) and sharing his superstitions (“don’t spin a hanger or someone will lose his job”). Jerry, my dad, loved to tell stories; from his childhood in England, his service in the British army, and his crazy adventures in the garment industry. Just shy of his 95th birthday, he was pleased and fortunate to see the growth of his company and it is truly my honor to make sure his legacy lives on.

—Andrew Leigh

Agenda Introduces Enclave to Vegas

The **Agenda** trade show moved to a bigger hall for its Feb. 20–22 run in Las Vegas, but the spirit of the streetwear- and action sports-focused event remained similar to its past Vegas shows.

Agenda moved to the **Sands Expo Hall B** from Hall D, so the show had more than 88,000 additional square feet to play with. The new real estate allowed Agenda to add a new section, **Enclave**, to its Vegas production. The art-inspired Enclave was introduced at Agenda's much bigger show in Long Beach, Calif., in January. Enclave specifically offered space for brands to take a 10-by-10 space and build a unique environment.



The '47 booth at Agenda

In the case of **Feature**, a Las Vegas-headquartered boutique and brand, it built an installation of a waffle house-style restaurant. Called the **Feature Waffle House**, the booth was a backdrop for its product collaboration with footwear and apparel company **Saucony**. Along with checkerboard floors and bar stools, it featured a sneaker inspired by the colors of Belgian waffles.

Aaron Levant, Agenda's founder, said that the number of vendors at the recent show was about even with the Agenda Vegas from February 2016. He also noted that buyers for retailers such as **Tilly's**, **Pacific Sunwear**, **Active**, **Nordstrom**, **Macy's** and **American Rag Cie** shopped the show. For Agenda exhibitor Alberto Rodriguez, his **Soulstar** brand worked with more international retailers at the Vegas show

compared to past Agenda Vegas shows, he said.

Many of Agenda's veteran vendors—such as **'47**, **The Hundreds**, **Ezekiel**, **Herschel Supply Co.**, **Primitive Skateboarding** and **Staple**—exhibited at the show. John Rabik, '47's national account manager, said that his booth enjoyed an uptick in traffic. "Our '47 Clean Up caps really opened a lot of doors for us because of the dad-hat trend, with a lot of buyers seeking a full head-to-toe look from us," he said.

For Polish brand **Femi Stories**, the Vegas show served as a second round at Agenda. The Warsaw-headquartered brand made its American trade-show debut at Agenda Long Beach in January. It showed California-inspired beach clothes and swimwear at its booth. Looks included a women's rash guard and gold-colored mini-skirt. "There is a lot of men's stuff," Julianna Marczyńska, Femi Stories' sales director, said of Agenda Vegas. "But we are doing something new."

Art-driven graphics continued to make a splash at Agenda and may have been even more prominent in 2017, said Gene Han, owner of the **Alumni** and **Hatchet Supply Co.** boutiques with locations in Brooklyn, N.Y., and Los Angeles. He also noted that more vendors were offering customization services for retailers and that they were offering smaller minimums for private labels. "If they could have more private-label manufacturing, that would be an important thing for retailers," Han said. —Andrew Asch

Art-driven graphics continued to make a splash at Agenda and may have been even more prominent in 2017, said Gene Han, owner of the **Alumni** and **Hatchet Supply Co.** boutiques with locations in Brooklyn, N.Y., and Los Angeles. He also noted that more vendors were offering customization services for retailers and that they were offering smaller minimums for private labels. "If they could have more private-label manufacturing, that would be an important thing for retailers," Han said. —Andrew Asch

Capsule's Independent Vibe

This season, **Capsule** and **Agenda** shared space in a ballroom at **The Venetian** in Las Vegas. The two companies are under the **Reed Expositions** umbrella, but show organizers made sure to keep each space distinctive and independent with a



MR. Completely

separate look and music.

Freddie Rojas, designer of **Rojas Clothing** in Los Angeles, said Capsule retained its indie spirit and business got off to a strong start on Feb. 20, the first day of the three-day trade show.

"We had traffic all today," Rojas said, adding that he saw a surprising number of Canadian stores as well as many of his existing Japanese buyers.

Emily Sansom, sales and customer-service coordinator for Vernon, Calif.-based **Groceries**, was similarly enthusiastic about the first day of the show.

"It's been busy," she said. "A lot of East Coast people are here—more than I expected. So, it's good."

Sansom said traffic was split between appointments and drop-in traffic.

"People love the new colors," she said. Adam Derry, owner of the Los Angeles-based sustainable collection **ABD**, was showing at Capsule for the first time.

In fact, this was the first time showing at any trade show, Derry said.

"It's the first time we've taken the business outside our own walls," he said. "What we like about Capsule is they provide us the opportunity to tell our story. It's not over-defined."

Derry said the show provided an opportunity to meet with the line's buyers from New York and Japan.

"It's an interesting time to be a brand," he said. "We can control our model. We are not forced to be on the same calendar. We sell what we make. Nothing goes on sale. We make sustainable clothes that matter. We want to challenge everybody to just supply their demand."

This was the first showing for **CottonlinkCA**, a new line based in Santa Ana, Calif., and started by veteran apparel manufacturer Robby Khalek.

Khalek and his team were explaining the concept of CottonlinkCA, a luxury line of basics made with sustainable materials such as organic cotton, hemp and Modal.

"A lot of good stores came by—and they're buying," Khalek said. —Alison A. Nieder

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Sourcing at MAGIC Shines a Light on Africa

The 56 booths in the African pavilion were filled with bright bursts of color where countries such as Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Nigeria, Rwanda, Uganda and Ethiopia displayed their various products.

At the **Alfie Designs** booth, Adja Dede from Ghana was wearing a colorful turquoise dress punctuated with large orange swirls. She displayed some of the company's vividly designed skirts and other clothing she was showing in the West Africa Trade & Investment Hub section.

This was Alfie Designs' first visit to **Sourcing at MAGIC** as part of the African pavilion. Her trip was partly sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development, a government organization that provides foreign assistance to end poverty.

Dede is on a mission to find more customers for her family's business, which was started in 1990 by her mother, Afi Agbenyega Nyarko. The company now employs 93 people in a factory that churns out all sorts of African-centric clothing. The company also gives free lessons to teach young women how to sew. "We are trying to get more opportunity for our workers so they have full-time employment," Dede said. "We have gotten some good leads and we will finish up with emails."

Dede said many people were surprised that products from certain African countries, such as Ghana, enter the United States duty free under the African Growth Opportunity Act. That is a bonus for the factory, where the wholesale price of a dress is \$10 to \$15.

While Africa had a bigger presence this

year than last year, China commanded the most exhibition space, taking up more than 60 percent of the booths. Donghui Lu of **Only Star Trading** in Ningbo was one of those in the Chinese section, which was divided up by categories. In the past, Only Star Trading, whose dresses wholesale for \$5 to \$15, had done production for **Forever 21**.

Lu had seen buyers from a Canadian retail chain called **Ardene** and from **Whispers Fashions NY**, a juniors line that produces trend-driven products. "We have some potential clients," Lu said.

In the Made in USA section, Akay Shiraz hung a huge American flag in his booth to advertise that his selection of T-shirts, activewear, leggings and other goods are made in Los Angeles. As the president of **Made Here**



Alfie Designs' Adjo Dede

USA, he has been coming to the show for the past six years.

He believes traffic at the Sourcing show has declined ever since the event moved a few years ago from the South Hall of the **Las Vegas Convention Center** to the North Hall. "The attendance keeps dropping every year, but I only need two good clients to make the show work," he said.—*Deborah Belgun*

Upbeat at Offprice

The aisles were crowded, the booths were bustling and the exhibitors were upbeat at the **Offprice** show, held Feb. 19–22 at the **Sands Expo** in Las Vegas.

Tony Peters, vice president of sales for **Bermo Enterprises**, said it was the busiest show in years for the Schoolcraft, Mich., company, which sells branded offprice apparel.

"We picked up a brand-new account from New Zealand," Peters said. "They left good paper."

Peters said part of the brisk business was the timing.

"If they want Spring goods, they're going to buy," he said. "I've got good deals."

Some retailers held back on buying last year, so "there are some needs out there" as well, Peters said.

The booth for **Big Bang Clothing Co.** had a sign indicating that the company carries made-in-America merchandise.

The Los Angeles-based company "does everything" but specializes in printed apparel for the gift and souvenir market, said Sam Lee, president of the company, which was founded in 1989.

"All the casinos on the Strip" as well as major retailers carry Big Bang tees, Lee said.

Lee said his company has been showing at Offprice for 10 years.

"We are doing well," Lee said, estimating that about 60 percent of the business he does at Offprice is with new accounts.

Los Angeles-based **Jsquard Clothing** was showing its resort collection at Offprice as well as at **WWDMAGIC**, said company representative Manish Vaid.

The company shows its higher-end collection at MAGIC. The line, which features silk fabric and hand-embroidered details, is wholesale priced around \$28. For Offprice, Vaid said, the company produced a separate line with wholesale prices that start at \$15.

Nexst Clothing specializes in denim and casual apparel. The Vernon, Calif.-based company was showing denim pants, jackets and shorts as well as activewear pieces. Everything is produced in the company's factory in Hong Kong, said sales repre-



Big Bang Clothing Co.

sentative Melissa Echevarria.

This was Nexst's third time at Offprice, Echevarria said.

"It's really good," she said on the second day of the show. "So far, we have had lot of new customers."

At the booth for **Iris Impressions**, a model was demonstrating multiple ways to rewrap a skirt into a dress.

This was the first time the 10-year-old company was showing at Offprice. Iris Impressions typically shows at **Surf Expo** and **ASD**, said Tal Block, chief executive officer of the Las Vegas company. Iris Impressions's silk/polyester skirts are designed in Hawaii and made in India.—*Alison A. Nieder*



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LA Textile Show *Continued from page 1*

Sherry Wood, director of merchandising for **Texollini**, the vertical knit mill in Long Beach, Calif. "Because the show fell during the same time as Coterie I saw slower attendance than normal. We haven't seen [many of] the designers and brands we usually see."

Wood said Texollini typically does well at LA Textile. This season, many of the attendees seemed to be new designers, new brands and up-and-coming e-commerce companies, she said.

It was a similar story for Ray Gabbay, owner of **RC International Fabrics Inc.** in Los Angeles, who said many of his key LA customers were in New York during the show.

The longtime LA Textile show exhibitor said his company imports a wide range of woven textiles, including denim, chambray, yarn-dye stripes and flannels, novelty gauze, linen, voile, Tencel, seersucker, and eyelet. The company has about 5 million yards in stock with minimums of 100 yards.

"I can drop-ship anywhere, but my strong point is I'm stocking all kinds of fabric [in Los Angeles]," Gabbay said. "The people I want are the people who are making [apparel] in the USA."

This was the third time at the show for Brazilian printed textile mill **Kalimo**.

"Many clients were in the fair in New York," said Kalimo Chief Executive Officer Jay Khaliefex, who said the show was "in general emptier than last time."

"But for us it was better. We were busy," he said.

Julia Culau, who runs Kalimo's Los Angeles office, said it was important to consistently exhibit at the show.

"We are starting to feel people are recognizing us," she said. "We had more people at our booth this time than last time."

This was the second time at LA Textile for Montreal knit mill **Tricot Liesse** after many years away. Tricot Liesse de-

al sourcing resources as well as trend forecasters, technology companies, printers and print suppliers.

Pat Brandt, owner of the trend-forecasting company **Patricia Brandt Co.**, praised the look of the sourcing space but said it was hard for attendees to find it.

"This space is lovely, but people don't know we're here," she said.

Jennifer Evans, owner of **TEG International**, a vertical factory in Los Angeles and San Francisco, has been showing at the LA Textile Show for several years but was re-located from the main space to the new Sourcing section this season.

"Last season we didn't know they did this section," she said. "This time they



Tricot Liesse



Stony Apparel's Steve Maiman



Kalimo

signer Nathalie Camier said traffic seemed lighter than last season, but the quality of interest may turn out to be better.

"Last time I got a lot of requests—it was crazy," she said. "This time I had better meetings."

Camier said she saw some of her existing clients but not her largest accounts.

"The biggest customers we visit in their office," she said.

Steve Maiman, co-owner of **Stony Apparel Corp.**, was at the show on the second day with two members of his team. The timing of the show is tight, Maiman said, but added, "We have to go."

"The Textile Show is important. Sometimes all it takes is one item to make the year," he said.

Show organizers last season introduced a small sourcing section adjacent to the textile exhibitors on the CMC's 13th floor. This season, the section expanded to include addition-

gave us only this option."

Evans hosted a seminar on the opening day of the show, which brought attendees to her booth. And the second day was strong for her as well, she said.

"It's nice to interact with the industry and have face-to-face interaction," she said.

Ron Frieborn, owner of **Ron Frieborn Printing Inc.** in Canoga Park, Calif., also showed last season in the textile section and moved into the new Sourcing section this season.

"I did fairly well last time," he said. "It's very quiet over here. It's a beautiful space, but you don't have any foot traffic."

Frieborn has been sublimation printing for apparel clients for 28 years. Until recently he has been relying on word-of-mouth referrals to generate new business. He said he decided to exhibit at LA Textile to attract more customers. ●

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9P David Tupaz
9P Richard Hallmarq
9P Mario De La Torre

MARCH 11
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Market Place
Cocktail Reception
7P Disco Panda
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9P Eddie Eddie by Billy Tommy
9P WANGLILING

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Jewelry Show IFJAG Returns in a New Venue

IFJAG, the jewelry and accessories trade show, returned to Las Vegas one year after hosting its first show in Las Vegas in 2016.

The show is organized by the **International Fashion Jewelry and Accessories Group**, a Rhode Island-based nonprofit accessories trade association that has been hosting trade events since 1950, including IFJAG trade shows in New York and Miami. Last year, the company added Las Vegas to the lineup and held its event in hotel rooms on two floors at **Bally's**. This year, the show relocated to the **Embassy Suites** near the **Hard Rock Hotel and Casino** for its Feb. 20–24 run.

IFJAG took up three floors of the hotel in suites overlooking the central courtyard, which overlooks a stream featuring a pair of swans. Exhibitors were able to arrange the one-bedroom suites like a trade-show booth with collections displayed in the front window.

Mary Jo Kurowski, owner of **Accents by MJ**, had several appointments booked but was hoping to also meet potential



I.B. Inc.

new accounts.

“That’s what we’re all about,” she said. “To meet new people.”

Kurowski was showing several collections, including **Classico Inc.**, a line of jewelry made from bohemian glass from the Czech Republic; **Abraham Leech**, a collection featuring cubic zirconia and freshwater pearls; and **I.B. Inc.**, a collection of hand-made sculptural metal jewelry made in India.

Mairaah and Atul Aggarwal, the co-designers of I.B., were also at IFJAG to show the collection. The Phoenix-based designers said they had mostly been meeting with pre-booked appointments.

“The walk-ins are from California,” Atul Aggarwal said.

Luisa Yau, sales manager for **Joann She & Co.**, based in New

York, said business on the second day of the show was good but she said she’d prefer the show move to a hotel closer to the other trade shows in Las Vegas.

“I’d prefer to be on the Strip. It would be more convenient for buyers,” she said, “The last show was at Bally’s. It was more central.”

Peter Kwon, with **Bala New York**, said he was doing well with his collection of hand-made metal, bohemian and celluloid jewelry.

“For our company, we’re doing well,” he said. “We did very well last time, but we had one room. This time we have two rooms.”

Michael Jang, with **Love of Fashion Corp.**, based in East Rutherford, N.J., was showing hats, tote bags and swimwear cover-ups. Jang said he was primarily meeting with drop-in traffic.

“They came from all over,” he said, adding, “We come to the West Coast to get West Coast chain stores and South America [buyers].”

Eighty two buyers registered as of opening day of the show, said Chris Valcourt, who represents **Jacqui Accessories** and serves as president of the IFJAG board.

“Talking to a few customers, they say this year has picked up business-wise,” he said, adding that one attendee—a large Midwestern wholesaler—said they’d had a particularly strong beginning of the year.

“Some had a good Christmas, some had a soft Christmas, but there’s more positivity,” Chris Valcourt said. “I haven’t talked to a person who’s been negative. It’s always positive when you pick up new accounts.”—*Alison A. Nieder*

RETAIL SALES

February Tough for Many Stores

February proved to be a tough month for many retailers.

Same-store sales plummeted 23.2 percent for **The Buckle Inc.**, a long-suffering retailer headquartered in Kearney, Neb. **Cato Corp.**, an off-pricer headquartered in Charlotte, N.C., also posted a similar decline of 25 percent. John Cato, Cato’s chairman, president and chief executive officer, said that the declines “were significantly lower due to delayed tax refunds.” Cato operates 1,371 stores in 33 states.

L Brands—the parent company of **Victoria’s Secret**, **Pink** and **Henri Bendel**—also reported a tough February. Its same-store sales for the month showed a decline of 13 percent. The company claimed that the decline was a casualty of its exit from swim and apparel categories.

Erratic weather throughout the United States—a week of cold weather was followed by a week of warm weather in some places—made it tough to plan wardrobes, and many consumers gave up trying to buy new clothes for the erratic weather, said Jeff Van Sinderen, a retail analyst for **B. Riley & Co.** in Los Angeles.

February business was tough because many shoppers were saving their money to spend during the Easter season. The Easter holiday falls on April 15 this year. The economy remains tough for many.

“We’re coming off of a quarter that was challenging for many retailers; there’s a certain amount of shell shock out there,” Van Sinderen said. “You have a lot of bankruptcy going on, and there will be a lot more. This will be a year of change in retail.”

Good news came from quarterly reports from major off-pricers. **Burlington Stores Inc.** announced its comparable-store sales for its fiscal 2016 fourth quarter March 2. Its same-store sales increased 4.6 percent. **Ross Stores Inc.** reported Feb. 28 that its same-store sales that increased 4 percent for the fourth quarter of fiscal 2016.

Barbara Rentler, Ross’s chief executive officer, was pleased with the results, but in her guidance for the upcoming fiscal year, she forecast turbulence.

“There continues to be uncertainty in the political, macro-economic and retail climates, and we also face our own challenging sales and earnings comparisons. Thus, while we hope to do better, we believe it is prudent to remain somewhat cautious in planning our business for the 2017 fiscal year,” Rentler said.

For the first quarter of the 2017 fiscal year, Ross’ same-store sales are forecast to increase 1 percent to 2 percent.

Zumiez Inc., a Seattle area-headquartered mall retailer, is scheduled to report its February sales on March 9. **Gap Inc.** recently reported that it would stop reporting its monthly results. The retail giant will report its sales quarterly.—*Andrew Asch*

February Retail Sales

	\$Sales (in millions)	% Change from yr. ago	Same-store sales % change
The Buckle	\$62.80	-23.3%	-23.2%
Cato Corp	\$63.90	-25.0%	-25.0%
L Brands Inc.	\$765.50	-10.0%	-13.0%

Information from company reports

NEWS

BCBG *Continued from page 1*

In a press release issued on March 1, BCBGMaxAzria said it has a \$45 million commitment in new financing to keep the company running. “The steps we are taking now, to address the shift in customer shopping patterns and the growth of online shopping, will allow us to focus on our partner relationships,” said Marty Staff, the interim chief executive for BCBGMaxAzria.

The company, whose name stands for the French phrase “Bon Chic, Bon Genre” (or “Good Style, Good Attitude”), is looking at several options to go forward. There could be a sale or merger of the company and its assets, including its brand name, or a standalone restructuring.

The most optimistic way to exit bankruptcy, BCBGMaxAzria believes, is to focus on partner relationships, expand digital and e-commerce, keep selected retail locations, and establish more wholesale and licensing agreements.

One of the clothing company’s main problems has been too many clothing stores, which have been draining company finances at a time when many shoppers have switched to online purchases.

Reuters reported that in a January conference call BCBGMaxAzria executives said their store business had plummeted 20 percent in three years. The company’s retail chain accounted for 71 percent of revenues, estimated at \$600 million last year.

Before the bankruptcy filing, BCBGMaxAzria executives said they were focusing on a future that envisioned more

e-commerce and closing nearly 400 stores in its retail chain of 570 outposts.

But exiting leases before contracts expired has been difficult, and bankruptcy was the only way to get out of unprofitable store locations at big malls.

Originally the idea was to keep 50 of the 170 stores in the United States open and another 128 stores of the approximately 400 outside of the United States up and running.

But apparel-industry executives close to the company said that it was inevitable that BCBGMaxAzria would be headed to bankruptcy court because of the store-lease problem and mounting debt.

Prior to deciding to close its unprofitable stores, BCBGMaxAzria laid off 123 people effective Nov. 1, 2016. The BCBGMaxAzria layoffs came months after Marty Staff came on board in April to help turn the company around. Company founder Max Azria was put on paid leave while his wife, Lubov Azria, remained on board as chief creative director.

Debt to the company’s 50 largest unsecured creditors totals more than \$56 million. The top 10 unsecured creditors are located in Hong Kong and handle sourcing and trade deals. **Silverreed Limited**, a trading company in Hong Kong, is owed \$6.4 million, and **Mega Link International Holdings Limited**, another Hong Kong trading venture, is owed \$5.35 million. **Aptos Inc.**, a retail management company in New York, has an outstanding bill for \$2 million, and mall operator **Simon Property Group** has unpaid contracts for nearly \$1.4 million.

BCBGMaxAzria is following in the path of other clothing concerns that ramped up their retail footprint over the years but were unable to close stores fast enough to accommodate the shift of shoppers moving to online clothing sites for their fashion needs.

For years, BCBGMaxAzria borrowed heavily to finance its operations. By 2013, **Guggenheim Partners LLC** held about \$475 million of the company’s \$685 million debt. Two years later, Guggenheim Partners converted its debt into equity in the company and BCBGMaxAzria got an infusion of \$135 million from a group of investors that included Guggenheim Partners and its affiliates.

Other longtime clothing companies with retail stores have been tumbling quickly. **American Apparel**, which filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in 2015 and then again in 2016 while maintaining 110 stores in the United States, didn’t make it. The Los Angeles company, founded by Dov Charney in 1997, was acquired recently by Canadian T-shirt maker **Gildan Activewear**, which bought the brand name for \$88 million but shunned taking on any stores. Some 3,500 American Apparel employees were laid off.

In January, **The Limited** shuttered all its stores and e-commerce site to declare Chapter 11 bankruptcy. In February, The Limited’s brand name was acquired by **Sycamore Partners**—which owns **Belk**, **Talbots**, **Hot Topic** and **Coldwater Creek**—for \$26.75 million.

And **The Wet Seal**, a retail chain in Irvine, Calif., is auctioning off its intellectual-property assets after filing for bankruptcy protection on Feb. 2. ●

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Products and Services: California Label Products has been servicing the apparel industry for 18 years. Our In-House Art Department can help develop your brand identity with an updated look or provide you with a quote on your existing items. Our product list not only consists of woven labels, printed labels, heat transfers, size tabs, RFID price tickets, and custom hangtags, but we also have a service bureau with quick turn time and great pricing. We are dedicated to setting the highest standard of excellence in our industry. Above all, we value quality, consistency and creating solutions that work for you. Check our website for a full product list or call or email us.

Kagan Trim Center

3957 S. Hill St (2nd Floor)
Los Angeles, CA 90037
(323) 583-1400
Fax: 323-583-1600
info@kagantrim.com
www.kagantrim.com

Products and Services: Kagan Trim Center, in business for over 70 years, is proud to be your primary wholesale lace and trims supplier. We offer a complete selection of apparel trim, from the most current designs of the season to all the basics. We have over 75,000 trimming items in stock, including elastic, ribbons, laces, and embellishments of every description. We're able to drop-ship our products from China to anywhere in the world, saving you time and money. Additionally, our team is comprised of experienced professionals in every aspect of the trimming industry, able to provide you with the answers you need, quickly and accurately, thus allowing you to get your finished product to market without delay! Please visit our easy-to-navigate website to see our products. All inquiries welcome.

Progressive Label

2545 Yates Ave.
Commerce, CA 90040
(323) 415-9770
Fax: (323) 415-9771
Info@progressivelabel.com
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. We successfully launched production of RFID price tickets last year. This demand is being greatly driven by the big retailers such as Macy's and Target. Our growth and market dynamics have resulted

in opening up a production center in Tijuana, Mexico. We have also added advanced die cutter technology in our Los Angeles production center to streamline our production efforts and to strengthen our packaging capabilities. A very important part of our business is FLASHTRAK, our online ordering system for price tickets, custom products and care labels. 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.

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