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TIM REGAS

STREETWEAR FESTIVAL

A stylish crowd turned out for the debut of Agenda Festival, the one-day consumer event organized by the Agenda streetwear trade show. For more from the event see page 6.

TRADE SHOW REPORT

Agenda Juggles Trade and Consumer Days

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

After 14 years of being a trade-only show, **Agenda** unveiled a consumer day at the July 13-15 run of its Long Beach, Calif., event.

The consumer day, called **Agenda Festival**, was sold out. According to a statement from Agenda, 15,000 people spent \$45 for advance tickets to shop at more than 500 booths, dine

at food trucks and listen to a hip-hop concert headlined by Tyler, the Creator and Ludacris at the **Long Beach Convention Center**. Agenda Festival follows **ComplexCon**, a consumer-oriented festival of music, art and booth-style retail that was produced in Long Beach in November by Agenda founder Aaron Levant, **ReedPop** and media platform **Complex**.

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How the Apparel Industry Is Coping With Higher Minimum Wages

By Deborah Belgum Senior Editor

The introductory video on the **Tianello** website talks about how the Los Angeles clothing maker's collection of **Tencel** and silk tops lovingly passes through 100 hands before ending up in someone's closet.

Images are shown of workers cutting fabric, passing it through sewing machines, trimming loose threads and inspecting garments before they are packaged and shipped to a store or online customer.

But those hands are getting more expensive. As of July 1, the minimum wage in Los Angeles for medium-sized companies with more than 25 employees went from \$10.50 an hour to \$12 an hour.

With 60 workers at his company, Tianello founder Steve Barraza calculates the pay increase will cost him about \$120,000 a year. But he is not passing on that additional

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TRADE SHOW REPORT

Solo Active Collective Draws Diverse Retailers, Prepares for Move to Anaheim, Calif.

By Alison A. Nieder Executive Editor

The **Active Collective** trade show, focusing on activewear and athleisure apparel, returned to Huntington Beach, Calif., for its July 18-19 run, which is slated to be the show's last at the tony **Hyatt Regency Resort and Spa**.

In January, the trade show will move to the **Anaheim Convention Center**, where its exhibitors will once again show their collections alongside the swim brands in its sister show, **Swim Collective**.

The news of the move came during a particularly busy Active Collective show.

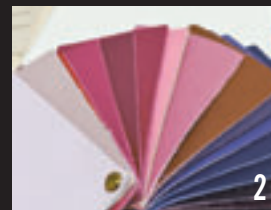
"This is the largest attendance we've had so far—25 percent [increase] since the show last summer," said Devon Damelio, sales manager for Active Collective. "That's quite a nice jump."

This season, Active Collective drew a mix of buyers from core activewear retailers and yoga studios to major department stores and fashion boutiques. Many exhibitors reported seeing

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Where fashion gets down to businessSM



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Trade Protectionism and E-Commerce Are Top Concerns for Chief Fashion Industry Executives in the United States

With a new president in the White House, U.S. fashion manufacturers and retailers said their biggest concerns this year are about new trade barriers going up that would restrict apparel imports.

In a recent study conducted by the **U.S. Fashion Industry Association**, a Washington, D.C., group that works to eliminate tariffs and non-tariff barriers, nearly 70 percent of executives surveyed rated protectionist trade policies as their top concern, up from No. 10 last year. "Notably, since we began conducting the benchmarking study in 2014, trade protectionism in the United States has consistently been a medium-ranked business challenge [ranking between No. 8 and 11]," the study said. "This year's 'abnormal' result reflects concerns about the unprecedented direction of U.S. trade policy in the Trump

administration. These concerns are understandable—from pulling out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership to threatening to levy punitive tariffs on imports from major U.S. trading partners."

In the study, which surveyed 34 executives with substantially large companies, China was still the big sourcing arena, followed by Vietnam, which was the second go-to sourcing spot. Some 91 percent of respondents sourced from China, down slightly from the past surveys where 100 percent of respondents were using Chinese apparel and textile factories.

While Vietnam is still a popular sourcing destination, only 36 percent of those surveyed said they planned to increase their sourcing in that country over the next two years, much lower than the 53 percent who last year said they would be interested in in-

creasing production in that Asian country. Part of that is because Vietnam was a signatory of the Trans-Pacific Partnership and was in line to receive duty-free status on clothing exported to the United States and 11 other TPP countries.

Bangladesh has been a popular sourcing destination because of its low-cost labor, but those surveyed said the country's factories have a higher risk in complying with labor standards. Only 32 percent of U.S. fashion industry executives surveyed expected to increase their sourcing there.

While duty-free imports are critical for keeping costs down, most of the 19 free-trade agreements the United States has with other countries are underutilized, the survey said. Only the North American Free Trade Agreement is used by more than 50 percent

of the survey's respondents.

Not surprisingly, 100 percent of those surveyed said they opposed the U.S. border adjustment tax that would tax imports and subsidize exports.

Second on the list of concerns is competition from e-commerce sites that are cutting into bricks-and-mortar store sales. Some 57 percent of respondents said they are worried about the growth of companies such as **Amazon.com** and new entrants to online sales. But they felt bricks-and-mortar stores were still an important source for shoppers.

Taking a look five years down the road, only 71 percent of U.S. fashion industry executives surveyed felt optimistic about the future, down from 92.3 percent surveyed last year. That is a record low since the survey started in 2014.—*Deborah Belgum*

French Tanneries Make Their West Coast Debut at the CMC

The **California Market Center** played host to a small coterie of French tanneries when six companies showcased their upscale leathers for apparel, accessories and home décor July 13–14 in a suite on the CMC's eighth floor.

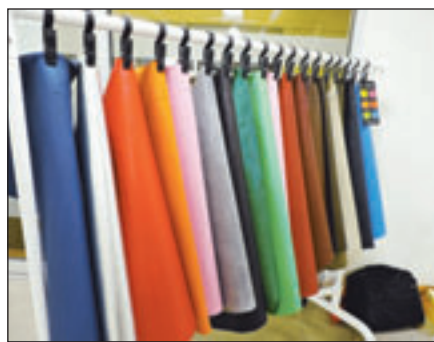
Organized by the **Fédération Française de la Tannerie Mégisserie** (or French Tanners Association), many in the group were exhibiting in Los Angeles prior to showing in New York at the **Première Vision New York** and **Lineapelle** trade shows. The companies—many family owned and dating back to the 19th and early-20th centuries—participated in

the exhibition to gauge interest from the West Coast market, said Sophie Hivert, the association's director general.

Cuirs Du Futur was showing stretch leathers made using a process it invented in 1991 to bond Spanish lambskin with stretch cotton. The leathers have a comfortable interior side and 30 percent stretch.

Laurent Bove, commercial manager for Cuirs Du Futur, said he was interested "to see what is possible to do in the West Coast."

Cuirs Du Futur has 70 employees working in a vertical facility in Graulhet, France. The



Alran SAS



HCP

company works with European luxury brands and U.S. brands.

Tanneries Haas is located in the Alsace section of France near the German border. The Tannery was established in 1842 and is currently run by the sixth generation of the family-owned company.

"We use only French calf," said Jacques Kress, Haas export manager. "In France we eat veal, so we have the raw material."

Most of Haas leathers—80 percent—are used for handbags, with 15 percent used for shoes and 5 percent used for saddlery. The company works primarily with French and Italian brands but does have one U.S. customer—a footwear company in the Midwest.

Remy Carriat was established in 1927 and is today run by the granddaughter of the company founder. The tannery produces young

ny's New York office, brought exotic leathers from the company's tannery in Louisiana to show in Los Angeles.

"We do 100 percent American-made product," Grumbach said. The crocodiles are sourced in Louisiana and finished in the company's facility in the state. HCP leathers are used for handbags, shoes, garments and accessories. The parent company was founded in 1923, and the Louisiana tannery has been in operation for 20 years.

"We do a lot of business around the world," he said. "We work with the biggest names in fashion."

Grumbach said HCP was exhibiting with the other tanneries as a show of solidarity with the French Tanners Association.

"It's very important to support each other," he said. "We have to be together."

Alran SAS specializes in calf and goat leather and vegetable tanning.

The tannery's hand processing and adherence to strict sustainability standards is attractive to top-range brands, said Alran President Jérôme Verdier. For example, the company's boarding process to soften the leather is done by hand. The company is also in compliance with the EU REACH standards for leather processing.

"REACH regulation is extremely strict," Verdier said.

That should be attractive to companies in California, where environmental regulations are also strict, he noted.

Raynaud Jeune was founded in 1921 and specializes in lambskin with vegetable tanning. The company's primary market is Eastern Europe, but it is hoping to broaden its business with the introduction of new products.

"The core of the business is leather for insoles, [but] I'm developing leather for garments," said company manager Olivier Raynaud.

"I used to work with [apparel companies]—including on the West Coast. Now I'm coming back to the apparel leather business."

—*Alison A. Nieder*



Remy Carriat

bull and water buffalo leather for a variety of applications—except apparel.

"At the beginning we did leather for shoes," said Aurélie Estrade, who handles commercial export for the company.

The company then expanded to making leather for the furniture market and, later, accessories. The tannery also produces leather for horse saddles.

HCP is a large international company with tanneries in France, Italy and the United States. Arnaud Grumbach, the director of the compa-





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Henry Cherner, AIMS360 Managing Partner, 66

By Deborah Belgium Senior Editor

Henry Cherner, a Los Angeles pioneer in software programs for the fashion industry and an apparel-industry veteran, passed away suddenly from a heart attack on July 16. He was 66.

Cherner was in the apparel business for decades before transitioning into the world of fashion technology as a managing partner of the software company **AIMS360**. He was also a founding board member of **Fashion Business Inc.**, a Los Angeles nonprofit business incubator that helped startups and young apparel companies become more successful. He was on the FBI board since the organization's inception in 1999 and was an advisory board member of the **California Fashion Association**.

Through FBI and his affiliations with a number of fashion schools and universities, he was instrumental in teaching thousands of fashion students and aspiring apparel entrepreneurs how to use software solutions such as enterprise resource planning (ERP), an integrated program to manage core business processes. He also donated millions of dollars in software programs to be used in classrooms in some 14 educational institutions.

Cherner, whose parents were Holocaust survivors, was born in Gothenburg, Sweden, moving to St. Louis when he was 3 years old. A year later, his family moved to Los Angeles. He graduated from **Fairfax High School** and later received his bachelor's of science degree from **California State University, Northridge**.

His first foray into the apparel industry was with his own company, called **Casablanca**,

which made leather goods inspired by the movie "Casablanca."

From the mid-1970s to the late 1980s, he was managing director of import/export for **Condor**, a sportswear company, as well as owner of **Zephyr Group**, which manufactured children's suspenders and accessories licensed for **Disney Products**. In the early 1990s, he was operations manager for **OK SAM**, which imported women's rayon clothing from Bali, Indonesia.

By 1992, he had become the president of **AIMS Technology Solutions Inc.** and later one of four managing partners at **AIMS360**, the successor to AIMS Technology.

Cherner was a generous donor of his time and money to help fashion students, burgeoning apparel companies and small businesses get off the ground. Early this year, he donated more than \$200,000 worth of AIMS360 software to FBI's Fashion Merchandising Program.

"He really went out of his way to help us to help the people we were helping," said Frances Harder, FBI's founder. "He got what we were doing and always supported us. It was sad to see him go."

Most recently, Cherner was focused on educating students and young people about software systems and technology. "Henry had a heart of gold. He was one of the original FBI board members," said Trish Concannon, FBI's executive director. "He had a passion for teaching people."



Henry Cherner

Bob Berg, director of international business development at **Sourcing at MAGIC**, met Cherner some 15 years ago when Berg was working at **Hana Sportswear** and was looking at software programs to control costing and production. "Henry was a very knowledgeable person but a very down-to-earth person. You would never know how successful he was and how generous he was with his time to help companies," said Berg, who also was an FBI board member for several years. "He was a really good person and a good ambassador for the industry. He was always a real pleasure to talk to and had time for everybody."

Rob Greenspan, president of **Greenspan Consult** and an FBI board member, said Cherner offered one of the first computer systems for Los Angeles' apparel industry that was affordable for smaller and mid-size companies. "He was young and vibrant," Greenspan said. "He cared about the people in the industry and enjoyed helping people."

Ilse Metchek, another longtime apparel-industry veteran and president of the California Fashion Association, was shocked to hear about Cherner's death. "Henry was off on his next career," she said. "His next avocation was to make a very clear difference with the business and professional knowledge of college students from all over the country."

Shahrooz Kohan, one of AIMS360's four

managing partners, said everyone in the office was surprised to hear of his death. "Driven by his passion for education, Henry played a pivotal role in helping shape AIMS360 and has been a valuable asset to this company throughout the years," Kohan noted. "He was around the fashion industry for a very long time and people really respected him and let him help them when they were getting their business going. They really took his advice into consideration. I was always surprised to hear a client say, 'If it weren't for Henry, I wouldn't be here.' Some of the brand owners had heard him talk when they were students. He gave them tips and advice."

His daughter Ariella Schrader said he was passionate about educating and inspiring students so they could be successful. She said he touched many people across the industry and treated everyone he came in contact with as if they were family. "Whether it was a small phone call with a student or an important meeting with a big client—he took great pleasure in helping other people succeed," she said. "He loved his career and often brought his kids to visit clients, instilling the same ethics he used in business with his family. On July 16, the LA fashion industry lost an iconic figure and the Cherner family lost a loving husband, brother, nurturing father and doting grandfather."

Besides his daughter Ariella, Cherner is survived by his wife, Miriam Scharf Cherner; two sons, Dac and Noah Cherner; daughter Leanna Cherner; and granddaughter Presley Schrader.

Funeral services were held on July 18 at **Mount Sinai Cemetery** in Los Angeles. ●
With additional reporting by Andrew Asch

NEWS

Minimum Wage *Continued from page 1*

cost to his customers right now. Instead, he is whittling away at his bottom line to trim costs here and there.

"Retail right now is not good for bricks-and-mortar operations," he said from his factory just south of downtown Los Angeles on Main Street. "I'm looking at lowering fabric costs and watching consumption of raw materials going into a product."

He also is reexamining the number of trade shows he attends—eliminating unprofitable shows and concentrating on the lucrative ones.

In addition, more attention is being shifted to his direct-to-consumer website, which does a heavy made-in-the-USA marketing campaign that talks about how every worker's hands are respected for their years of talent and wisdom touching each piece created in the Tianello factory. "We know these hands. We know their names, and we know their story," the video says, showing employees at sewing machines and workers carving out fabric on a cutting table.

Yet the Tianello owner wonders how much longer his made-in-the-USA story can continue. "I am looking at China," Barraza said. He already buys his silk fabric in Shanghai, where he is constantly approached by factories to do production. But he doesn't like the long lead times and he likes being 10 to 15 feet away from any problems. "I really enjoy having my own factory," he said.

This constant challenge to balance rising wages with wholesale prices is eating away at many Los Angeles apparel factories hard hit with more than 5,000 store closings this year across the country. With e-commerce websites cutting into traditional retailers' profits, clothing prices continue to slide as merchandise is constantly on sale to attract shoppers.

Los Angeles is still the largest apparel manufacturing hub in the United States, but every year the numbers shrink. Most recently, Los Angeles County had 35,100 apparel manufacturing workers in May, down nearly 33 percent from 45,400 five years ago.

But keeping apparel workers employed is hard when California has one of the highest minimum wages in the country, surpassed only by the \$12.50-an-hour minimum wage in Washington, D.C., or the \$13-an-hour rate in Seattle.

Additionally, pockets of California are carving out their own minimum-wage increases. In Emeryville, the minimum wage for companies employing more than 55 workers is \$14.82 an hour while San Francisco raised its minimum wage on July 1 from \$13 an hour to \$14 an hour.

The San Francisco minimum-wage hike really hit Firuzé Hariri, whose company makes colorful crinkled blouses that wholesale for \$65 under the **Beluva** label. She already had her prices set for her Fall collection before the minimum wage went up. So any price hikes in the 13 percent to 14 percent range will have to be made for the Spring 2018 group. "Right now, we are going to have to bite it," she said.

Hariri is whacking away at some of her operational costs, such as her electricity bills and **Comcast** expenditures in the office, which employs eight people. "We are cutting corners," she said.

Keeping it local

Jin Ryee, who has been making print-based athleisure garments under the **Aimee M** label for four years, prides himself on his all-domestic production—from the inks used to dye the U.S.-made fabrics he orders to cutting and sewing in Los Angeles. But the minimum-wage rise may be the

nudge that forces him to shut down his sewing operations with 21 employees and eight sewing machines. He might have to use outside contractors. "At least I could save on rent," he noted.

He finds that customers are still trying to push back when it comes to price hikes, which he is implementing. "Our expenses are the same or higher, but our buyers want to pay less," he said. "There are a lot of people who come back and ask if we can lower our \$34 wholesale price for leggings by \$8 to \$10," Ryee explained. "I say, 'Go to **Ross [Dress for Less]**.'"

One of the ways some factories are coping with rising prices is to improve efficiencies and buy automated machinery. That is what **JS Apparel**, with 150 workers, is doing to cope with the rise in minimum wage, which in California will eventually go up to \$15 an hour by 2022 for companies with more than 25 employees. Smaller companies have until 2023 to catch up.

Being in Carson, Calif., miles away from Los Angeles, the sewing factory was only subject this year to a minimum-wage bump to \$10.50 an hour from \$10. But that prompted a 50-cent-per-T-shirt wholesale price hike, said Scott Wilson, vice president of sales.

But price hikes can't always cover rising costs. **Gildan Activewear**, which produces thousands of its **American Apparel** T-shirts at JS Apparel, came to the factory and revamped the sewing floor by instituting a modular rather than a linear sewing structure. It is a dynamic that Gildan employs at its huge sewing factories in Honduras.

Modular systems are set up in a circular formation with each garment always being passed to the right to the next sewing-machine operator. "We have reduced our sewing time per shirt by 40 percent to a minute and a half," Wilson said. "But it's only good if you are doing the same thing over and over."

JS Apparel is also investing money in better machinery that does more. Last year, the company spent \$250,000 to purchase an automatic cutting machine that doubles the number of pieces cut in a day with one-fifth the labor.

As the sewing factory becomes more automated, JS Apparel may be buying more machines. "We are doing whatever we can to automate and think far ahead," Wilson said. "With wage increases, you have to figure out how to get it back if you can." ●



FACTORY FLOOR: Garment workers at JS Apparel

Trade shows and runway shows have been looking to produce extra revenue streams for their vendors.

Agenda tried a consumer day on the last day of its July 13–15 run in Long Beach, Calif. (See related story, page 1). For the price of a \$45 advance ticket, the trade-show floor was opened to the public. A consumer could walk the trade show and buy items from their favorite brands, ranging from skateboard decks to shoes and T-shirts. Canadian cloud-based, multi-channel commerce platform **Shopify** served as an official commerce partner for that event.

A few days later, and across America, Shopify worked with trade shows **Capsule** and **Liberty Fashion & Lifestyle Fairs** as well as the **Council of Fashion Designers of America** to facilitate sales during designer presentations during those shows, which ran July 17–19 at the **Javits Convention**

Center in New York.

Consider these markets something like a flash sale. The Capsule/Liberty Fairs/CFDA sales were powered through Shopify's **Frenzy** mobile flash sales app. Brands such as **Daniel Patrick** and **Band of Outsiders** produced presentations of their looks. The public checked out the presentations through a **Facebook** livestream show.

Through the Frenzy app, the consumers were able to purchase the item with the **ApplePay** mobile payment service, according to Tucker Schreiber, Frenzy's cofounder.

Chris Corrado, director of Capsule, said that the flash sales had the potential to open the trade show to a new audience. "We're very interested in helping our exhibitor base to discover alternate or progressive paths to engaging the end consumer. Our partnership this season with Frenzy is part of this exploration," Corrado said in a statement.—*Andrew Asch*

The slogan “grown locally/buy locally” resonates for fashion, said the cofounders of e-commerce platform **ChicCartel**, a new market that promises to connect savvy fashion consumers with independent designers from their city and region.

ChicCartel builds special pages for locales such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, Manhattan, Brooklyn and "From the Heartland." The company is headquartered in New York City. The owners plan to build a Los Angeles office. However, an opening date for the office has not been scheduled, said Olga Gomonova, a cofounder and the e-tailer's chief operating officer. She also serves as chief operating officer for **Abingdon Ventures**, a venture capital fund that focuses on the fashion and technology business.

ChicCartel is part of a growing wave of drop-ship companies that focus on serving independent fashion labels. Drop-ship companies typically provide back-office services to designers—think shipping, webhosting and marketing—in exchange for a cut of sales.

ChicCartel's point of difference is that it offers stronger support compared to other drop-ship retailers, said Victoria Janashvili,

a cofounder. She made a career shooting editorial for glossy fashion magazines and shooting commercial photography for retailers such as **Nordstrom** and **Target**. Janashvili and her assistants will handle visuals for the site, *chiccartel.com*. Some other dropship companies ask designers to provide their own visuals.

Styles from individual designers are photographed in the region they are based, Janashvili said. Models of all sizes are photographed to give consumers an idea how a certain garment looks on differently shaped women. California fashion labels listed on the site include **Aoui, Lavender Crush, Eco Peace Swim** and **Sarah Liller**.

ChicCartel also provides customer support, on-site marketing and provides prepaid shipping labels and packaging for designers.

Many independent designers run their separate e-commerce sites while working with a drop-shop company, said Syama Meagher, chief retail strategist with **Scaling Retail** consultancy. “Brands have to be really picky about where they distribute online with drop-ship so they don’t over commit or saturate their own online presence,” Meagher said.—A.A.

July 21
(event began on July 20)

Swim Miami

W South Beach
South Beach, Fla.
Through July 23

Art Hearts Fashion
(event began on July 20)
Funkshion Tent
Miami Beach, Fla.
Through July 22

July 22

SwimShow

Miami Beach Convention Center
Miami Beach, Fla.
Through July 25

Cabana
Tents in Collins Park
Miami Beach, Fla.
Through July 24

Hammock
W South Beach
South Beach, Fla.
Through July 24

July 26

Outdoor Retailer

Salt Palace Convention Center
Salt Lake City
Through July 29

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on *ApparelNews.net*.

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Active Collective Continued from page 1

several international retailers as well.

“We have a really great international presence,” Damelio said.

This season, Active Collective fell a week after Swim Collective, which may have limited the buyer turnout at both shows.

“Swim brings in a lot of resorts and hotels and spas,” Damelio said. “Active exhibitors need to see that, too.”

Contemporary activewear company **Blanc Noir** was juggling multiple meetings and appointments with buyers from **Neiman Marcus**, **Bergdorf Goodman** and **E Street Denim**, according to Burt Damsky, vice president of the company, which is based in Hong Kong with U.S. headquarters in New York.

“It’s a great show with a pretty diverse customer base,” Damsky said. “All the active stores are here—and those that are evolving to become contemporary stores.”

Blanc Noir’s collection includes pieces that bridge the gap between activewear and edgy athleisure.

A new piece, for example, is a lambskin leather jacket with power mesh—“for climate control”—that has the edgy look of a motorcycle jacket with the performance attributes of a track jacket. The new collection also includes a performance blazer and a matching trouser.

“You can go to a boardroom or to work out,” Damsky said. “You have same comfort and range of motion.”

At the **Manhattan Beachwear** booth, the Cypress, Calif., company was showing **Trina Turk Recreation** and the company’s own label, **Green Dragon**.

This season, the company looked to leverage its “design aesthetic to separate ourselves from the crowd,” said Howie Greller, vice president of design and merchandising.

“We’re not going to out-legging someone with a black legging,” he said. “We talk straight to the consumer and find out what she wants to wear. Our job is to give the consumer what she doesn’t have.”

For the Trina Turk customer, that means a blend of fashion and functionality with key pieces in Trina Turk signature modern prints. There are cheeky items, such as the “Trophy Wife” sweater, featuring a trophy graphic. Green Dragon has more of a boho aesthetic but is also for the avid traveler with easy-to wear pieces featuring prints, fabric treatments and embroideries.

“The philosophy is simple: travel clothes with a boho modern aesthetic,” Greller said. “It’s beach to street.”

This was the second time at Active Collective for Irvine, Calif.-based **Z Supply**, which was showing its basics collection along with its newly launched swim line.

Kendra Coleman, Z Supply’s senior account executive, West Coast sales, said turnout at the show included resorts, fitness studios and boutiques.

“We’re looking for different channels,” she said. “They’re all here.”

Eric Balfour, cofounder of **Electric & Rose**, agreed that the turnout at Active Collective was well-targeted.

“All the important buyers are here,” he said. “It’s about seeing the accounts we want to see.”

Based in LA’s Venice neighborhood, Elec-



Active Collective organizers said attendance was up 25 percent.

tric & Rose has become known for its original prints, but for Spring the company went for novelty treatments instead, offering shibori tie-dye styles and garment-dye pieces.

“This year, for the first time, we did a solid black legging,” Balfour said. “The buyers wanted a black legging from Electric & Rose.”

Other new pieces in the collection included a mesh coverall, transition pieces for after workouts and new seamless pieces that are all made in Los Angeles.

The company recently hired Ashley Calagna as the new vice president of sales and merchandising. Calagna spent eight years at **Alo** before joining Electric & Rose in April.

This was the first time at Active Collective for Fountain Valley, Calif.-based **Virus**. The 6-year-old company makes performance leggings for several key markets.

“We have an MMA [mixed martial arts] offering, we have an SUP [stand-up paddleboarding] offering, we have a **Crossfit** offering and an Olympic weightlifting offering,” said owner Colin Gilles.

The company’s newest division is an athleisure program, which was getting a good response from buyers at Active Collective.

“All our female athletes were asking for something to do yoga in that’s more fashion forward,” Gilles said.

This was the debut for new line **Toujours**, based in Dana Point, Calif.

Founder Jennifer Rust spent years in merchandising at **Puma** and **Adidas** before launching a “work-appropriate” activewear collection that can be worn from work to workout.

For the launch of **Toujours**, Rust focused on fit and fabric, using a cotton spandex for the core collection and a **Tencel** fabric for layering pieces. The collection is made in LA and the cotton/spandex is sourced from local mills.

“I want to support the local industry to be able to work with local suppliers and local factories,” she said.

Brazilian textile mill **Kalimo** was another newcomer to the show. Julia Culau, who runs the Los Angeles office for the Brazilian textile mill, also showed at Swim Collective the previous week.

“This is our industry,” she said. “It’s important for us to be present at all levels. We had a good response with active and swim accounts. We feel it’s the right place to be.”

The next edition of Active Collective and Swim Collective will be held Jan. 11–12 in Anaheim. Active Collective returns to New York for its second run Jan. 24–25 at the **Metropolitan Pavilion**. ●

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Agenda Festival Bows

For the launch of **Agenda Festival**, streetwear trade show **Agenda** opened its doors to consumers for the first time since the trade show launched 14 years ago. The debut drew a crowd of 15,000 people, who purchased tickets for the event at the **Long Beach Convention Center**. There they browsed more than 500 booths showcasing apparel, accessories and hard goods and checked out the fare from several food trucks. The event also featured a hip-hop concert headlined by Tyler, the Creator and Ludacris. The event drew a crowd of devoted streetwear fans. Photographer Tim Regas was on hand to capture the stylish scene.

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Agenda *Continued from page 1*

ReedPop's parent company, **Reed Exhibitions**, owns Agenda. An estimated 25,000 people bought tickets for the debut of ComplexCon.

Agenda Festival's mix of consumer and trade may have been the first official consumer day produced by a trade-show organizer in memory, according to an informal

will bring the denim festival to New York for its U.S. debut.

Consumer days are increasingly a topic among trade-show producers as a way to boost audiences. But the jury is still out on it.

Interbike, a bicycling trade show owned by **Emerald Expositions**, recently announced that it cut its consumer day after



FESTIVAL SCENE: Line outside of Agenda Festival



AGENDA SCENE: Rob Jungmann, left, takes in a meeting at the Jungmaven booth.



PERFORMANCE: Burger Records band No Parents played the Volcom stage at Agenda Festival.

poll of veteran trade-show vendors. At the **Action Sports Retailer** trade show, which shuttered in November 2010, crowds of consumers made their way into the trade-only event every season in order to get freebies from their favorite brands. In recent years, other trade shows—including **Pool-tradeshow**, **Capsule** and **Offprice**—offer cash-and-carry sections, which are popular with show attendees buying for their stores and for themselves. The **Kingpins** denim sourcing show runs concurrently with **Amsterdam Denim Days**, a consumer-based denim festival held annually in The Netherlands. While some Kingpins exhibitors also participate in Denim Days, trade-show attendance is industry-only. In September, Kingpins and the organizers of Denim Days

three years. Consumer attendance was only moderate, said Pat Hus, vice president of Interbike.

"We now realize that getting significant turnout to fly to Las Vegas during the week is extremely difficult and that we're better served going back to the old format and making it a trade-only event," Hus said in a statement released in June.

During Agenda Festival, fans were treated to unique products and exclusives from prominent brands. They included airbrushed socks from **Stance**, a brand that popularized the sock as a fashion item at action-sports shops, monogrammed windbreakers and bags from accessories brand **Herschel**, and sterling-silver jewelry from the lifestyle line of athletic brand **Champion**.

It was a place for new independent brands to show their goods. **Poolhouse**, a 4-year-old, Los Angeles-headquartered brand, exhibited at the show.

"Because we are a new brand, we don't get much exposure," said Cici Chon, the brand's creative director. "It's hard to get your name out there, so this was really good for us."

Poolhouse sold T-shirts and tops, with retail price points from \$24 to \$38, at Agenda Festival.

A core surf retailer,



AGENDA MEETING: Buyers look at new styles at Icons of Culture booth at Agenda.

Agenda Continued from previous page

7th Wave Surf Shop, also exhibited at the event. Founder Kelli Koller said consumer-day shoppers were buying more than T-shirts. "I thought if they were charging money for tickets, people wouldn't spend money. But I'm slinging decks that were \$60," Koller said of decks for skateboards.

To make time for the consumer event, trade-show hours were cut from the second day of Agenda. The trade show stopped at 3 p.m. on July 14. Buyers and vendors only had a day and a half to get through the show with reportedly 750 brands. Rob Jungmann of the **Jungmaven** brand said that it wasn't enough time for vendors or buyers.

"Every time we turned around, there was another buyer in the booth," Jungmann said of the trade-show segment of the event. "Buyers still needed to come in." He suggested extending trade hours on the second day.

Retailers shopping Agenda ranged across

according to **Action Watch**, which provides market research for the action-sports industry.

First-quarter 2017 sales for retailers followed by Action Watch declined 12.4 percent compared to the same quarter the previous year. However, April sales increased 6.5 percent, followed by a decline of 2.7 percent in May.

Gene Han, founder of high-end sneaker stores **Alumni** in New York City and **Outdoor Supply Co.**, with locations in Brooklyn, N.Y., and Los Angeles, walked the Agenda trade show. He said that business is good for independent retailers with a business model that features vertical retail and selling on multiple channels. "There's a lot of change out there. If

you are focusing only on bricks and mortar, I don't see how it can be that great," Han said.

Styles on the trade-show floor looked similar to what was exhibited at Agenda shows earlier this year in Long Beach, Las Vegas and New York, he said. "I saw a lot of big graphics. Pants have been getting bigger, with looser fits. Foot-

wear brands have been bringing in chunkier shoes and chunkier runners. 1990s styles have been trending," he said. **DC Shoes**, an Agenda vendor, exhibited Spring '18 looks that were inspired by Bill Clinton-era styles.

Most vendors exhibited Spring '18 looks. Agenda veteran vendors such as **Vans**, **Volcom**, **The Hundreds** and **Obey** exhibited at the show. Agenda was the site of trade-show debuts for new lines. Footwear brand **Sanuk** made a trade-show debut for an apparel line.



Hawaiian heritage brand **Reyn Spooner** appeared at the show with a new creative director, Jade Howe, and a new sales director, Shane Wallace. Also at the show, sports lifestyle brand **'47** showed its high-end basics line **'47 Classics**. The **Icons of Culture** brand showed **Gotcha by Icons of Culture** and **Op by Icons of Culture**. The Spring '18 revival lines are now available to specialty retailers following an exclusive launch with **Urban Outfitters**.

LA brand **Year of Ours** unveiled a much larger booth at the recent Agenda. At previous Agendas, it produced a 10-by-10 booth. At the recent run of the show, it produced a 30-by-10 booth. **Patagonia** unveiled a new booth highlighting its "Yulex" natural rubber wet suits and Fair Trade boardshorts and swimsuits made out of recycled nylon.

During the trade show, Agenda introduced a new children's clothing section and a section for music labels to sell vinyl records and other goods.

Agenda veteran **Electric** produced a van-like booth. It was located by the music stages and the food trucks and was the only brand booth located outside the trade-show floor. Steve Hurst, Electric's president, said that the outdoor location gave people the chance to try on the sunglasses in sunlight.

Lost Enterprises Chief Executive Officer Joel Cooper also exhibited at Agenda. He said the pace of buyer traffic was busy during the show. "I've gotten so used to hearing, 'Business sucks. ... Amazon is killing us.' At Agenda, there seemed to be a positive energy. I felt an uptick of business at the show," he said. ●



AGENDA SCENES: Meeting at Tavik booth, top right, scene in aisle of Agenda trade show, bottom left

the retail board—from majors such as **Nordstrom**; outdoor lifestyle retailer **REI**; e-commerce shop **Lulus.com**; specialty retailers **Zumiez** and **Active**; independent surf retailers **Coastal Edge** from Virginia; **Jack's Surfboards** from Huntington Beach, Calif.; and overseas retailers such as **Super Deportes** from Panama City, Panama.

While it has been a time of change for the retail market, there have been signs of improved business for action-sports retailers,

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