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Beyond the Label Sustainable Fashion Show Returns in Santa Monica

At the **Beyond the Label Sustainable Fashion Show** in Santa Monica, Calif., all the looks on the runway were sustainably dyed, featured natural materials, and were made using ethical and fair-trade manufacturing methods. Labels included Industry of All Nations, Triarchy and Beyond the Label as well as eco fashions from ethical e-tailer Bead & **Reel**. Fashions were accessorized with vegan footwear by MooShoes and handbags by Matt & Nat, Indosole, Veja x Industry of All Nations and Insecta Shoes. There were also vintage looks from resale boutiques such as Tradesy and Buffalo Exchange as well as upcycled styles made by students from Santa Monica College. One of the projects, titled Concert Couture, featured jackets made from aban-

doned tents collected after the **Coachella Valley Music and** Arts Festival. Another, called Chop Shop, reworked denim jackets. The Concert Couture jackets will be sold in a benefit for Beyond the Label's fashion education program.

The Nov. 6 event was organized by Beyond the Label founder Taryn Hipwell and her efforts to convince consumers to research how their clothing is made and what materials are used to make them.

In addition to a runway show, the event also included a panel discussion on pollution within the apparel supply chain moderated by Hipwell and featuring Lisa Mazzotta, a producer of the documentary film "RiverBlue"; Isaac Nichelson, **Beyond the Label** page 5

Apparel Marts Across the Country Are Figuring Out How to Adapt to Changing Times

By Deborah Belgum Senior Editor

Six months after Brookfield acquired a controlling interest in the California Market Center in Los Angeles, plans are still swirling around about how the half-century-old complex will be modernized and updated.

As rumors and conjecture buzz around the building, Brookfield still hasn't released definitive plans about what the future brings beyond the fact that more creative office spaces will be developed in an area of downtown Los Angeles undergoing a major Renaissance.

"Brookfield is still fine-tuning a lot of the design," said Chris Penrose, a real estate agent with CBRE, hired to lease the revamped space at the CMC, which is 50 percent vacant. "But I can tell you, there is going to be a night-and-day difference in the look and feel there."

Brookfield, which in June spent \$440 million to acquire a controlling interest in the building from Jamison Realty, has already said it wants to develop more creative office spaces and ► Apparel Marts page 8

Bendoni Breaks Down Trend Science at FGILA Event

By Alison A. Nieder Executive Editor

When Wendy K. Bendoni got her start in the trend-forecasting business, the job involved multiple overseas trips to international fashion capitals with a long lead time to distill the trends for the upcoming season.

"You would go to Europe five times a year and then you would have nine months to produce it," she said.

While the trends trickled down into the mass market, the trend forecaster moved on to the next season.

The advent of fashion bloggers and social media changed that leisurely cycle and shifted the focus from the runway to the bloggers themselves.

"The fashion cycle is completely destroyed at this point," said Bendoni, an assistant professor and chair of the marketing and fashion marketing departments at the Burbank, Calif.-based Woodbury University. "Retailers have to be able ► FGILA page 6



Scharff leaving Dreamgirl... p. 4 Tags & Labels ... p. 7 Tags & Labels Resources ... p. 9

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Robertson Plaza Opens

Once one of the top retail streets in Los Angeles, Robertson Boulevard is lined with both high-end boutiques and vacanciesaround eight between Alden Drive and Beverly Boulevard.

But a new development on the street might change Robertson's fortunes.

Construction crews are finishing work on a more than two-year remodel of Robertson Plaza, located at 116-120 N. Robertson Blvd. The 169,937-square-foot compound once was the address of the Newsroom Café as well as a boutique for the **Paige** brand.

On Nov. 14, the plaza's first new tenant, the bar Bibo Ergo Sum, opened. On Nov. 19, a Blue Bottle Coffee location is scheduled to open. In 2018, restaurant chain The Henry is scheduled to open a location in the

former Newsroom space. The Box Union boxing/fitness stu-



dio also is scheduled to open at Robertson Plaza in 2018, said Pamela S. Smith, senior portfolio manager for the Rob-

ertson Properties Group, the owner of the compound. Robertson Plaza is 80 percent leased. The Henry and Blue Bottle will offer sidewalk dining. Robertson Pla

Robertson Plaza will pave the way for a comeback for the street, said Jay Luchs, vice chairman of Newmark Knight Frank. He served as a co-broker for Robertson Plaza and has worked on deals for the street for more than a decade

"The street has a shot for a comeback. The way it comes back is food," Luchs said. Retailers will want to return to the street when they see affluent, stylish people din-

ŝ ing at Robertson Plaza, he said. "Fashion brands will take notice again. It is an early comeback." Robertson also is well known as a destination for restaurants The Ivy and

Cuvée, both of which offer outside seating.—Andrew Asch

Hermèsmatic, C Magazine Open Pop-ups at Westfield Century City

Paris fashion house Hermès will be taking a headlong dive into color at the Hermèsmatic pop-up, which opened Nov. 10 at Westfield Century City and is scheduled to remain open until Nov. 28. Hermèsmatic features orange washing machines that have been given the task of overdyeing silk scarves. One of the washing machines dyes the scarves a denim blue. The other dyes them a fuchsia pink. The overdyed scarves are transferred to a tumble dryer and, after a couple of days, given to the

consumer with a unique color, according to a brand statement.

The Hermèsmatic pop-up will travel to Vienna as well as Bologna and Palermo, Italy. It had previous engagements in New York City and Manchester, England, this year.

On Nov. 27, C Magazine will open a Westfield Century City pop-up. Named State of Mind Curated by C Magazine, C's editors, in collaboration with Martha Mulholland, will feature ready-to-wear by California labels such as Rodarte, Lib-



ertine, Greg Lauren, Rosetta Getty, JC **Obando Co., CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund** winners Elder Statesman and Brock, along with hats from Nick Fouquet and jewelry and skin-care products.

Heather Vandenberghe, Westfield chief marketing officer, U.S. operations, said that State of Mind will be the first of a string of pop-ups.

"When we first envisioned a rotating

curation and their ability to blend the finest elements of California living in a way that feels both seamless and aspirational," she said in a statement. The State of Mind popup will remain open until Jan. 2.—A.A.

pop-up at Westfield Century City, the goal

was to bring in partners who would deliver

a unique, one-of-a-kind experience to our

guests. C Magazine was the first brand we approached because we trust their taste, their

Buck Mason Opens in NYC

Downtown Los Angeles-headquartered California basics brand Buck Mason opened a New York boutique on Nov. 11. Buck Mason has been expanding from its roots as a pure-play e-tailer by opening one bricks-and-mortar store each year since 2015. That year, the elevated basics brand opened a boutique on Abbot



NY STORE: Interior of Buck Mason's Nolita store

Kinney Boulevard in Los Angeles' Venice from the downtown bustle," he said. section. In 2016, the company opened a boutique in Los Angeles' Silver Lake district.

The 400-square-foot New York shop is located at 235 Elizabeth St. in Manhattan's Nolita district, said Sasha Koehn, Buck Mason's cofounder. "Since Eric Allen and I launched Buck Mason in 2013, we've shipped close to 100,000 tees to Lower Manhattan, so it was only a matter of time before we set up shop here. Of all the neighborhoods in the city, Nolita has always been our dream location. It's got a similar feel to Venice—lots going on but also a nice respite

The boutique will sell Buck Mason–brand styles, which are inspired by Americana looks. The brand makes wool knits, jeans made from Japanese denim and T-shirts with curved hems. It also makes polo shirts, hoodies, leather jackets and a collaboration collection of hats made with the Stetson brand. Most of its goods are manufactured in America. Koehn said.

Koehn said that the brand will open more stores in 2018, but he declined to say how many or where the stores would be located.—A.A.

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Owner of Hudson Jeans and Robert Graham Sees Net Loss in Third Quarter

Differential Brands, the Los Angeles parent company of **Hudson Jeans**, **Robert Graham** and **SWIMS**, reported that its third-quarter net loss was \$183,000, down from a net loss of \$2.82 million for the same time last year.

However, net sales for the third quarter ending Sept. 30 were up slightly, totaling \$42.4 million in the third quarter compared to \$41.2 million in the third quarter of 2016. Net sales were driven by the addition of the SWIMS brand last year as well as high, double-digit sales growth in Hudson products to specialty retailers.

E-commerce sales have been the company's strong point. "Our consumer-direct segment growth rate continued to outpace our wholesale segment, with double-digit e-commerce growth this year, which came on top of more than 50 percent growth in the comparable quarter last year. The increase was driven largely by higher conversion rates and more units sold per order across our brands' websites," said Michael Buckley, chief executive of Different Brands. "Robert Graham retail comparable-store sales improved 3 percent for the quarter, excluding stores affected by hurricanes Harvey and Irma. Just prior to the hurricanes, total retail-store sales compared to the same period in the prior year were trending in the high single digits."

E-commerce sales at the company's recently acquired SWIMS brand of footwear more than doubled compared to the same quarter last year, due to the launch of a U.S. website this past June for the Norwegian brand and the addition of a second outlet store in Norway.

Last year, Differential Brands acquired SWIMS, a Scandinavian-style footwear, apparel and accessories company started in Norway in 2006. SWIMS was founded to build a better rubber boot that was fashionably tasteful and had a bold look. Its products include boots, water-resistant loafers, ponchos and sportswear.

The Norwegian footwear label sells its products through high-end department stores such as **Neiman Marcus**, specialty stores, luxury resorts and through 10 licensed SWIMSbranded stores as well as through e-commerce.

Moving the brand forward, Differential Brands said it got its U.S.-based sales team up and running during the quarter, which will play a key role in the label's rapid growth next spring.

The SWIMS brand has now expanded into approximately 380 better specialty stores and department stores in the U.S. and Canada and could be approaching 600 doors in the near

Raquet said.

lot of opportunities.

the highest and best use for that land?

It might not be a traditional anchor,"

back locations, there may be more

regional malls left without traditional

anchors, said Larry Jensen, JLL's executive vice president and senior di-

rector of national retail business de-

velopment. However, there still are a

with quite a few good names at-

tached," Jensen said of Westside Pa-

vilion. "If they are performing well,

it's not Macy's that is causing them to

ion was among the most celebrated

shopping centers in the Los Angeles

area. Influential architect Jon Jerde

designed the three-story retail center.

The first **Aeropostale** location was

When it opened, Westside Pavil-

perform well. It's the market."

"You still have quite a few stores

With department stores scaling

future, company executives said.

More exposure for Hudson also has helped sales. "At Hudson, increased doors combined with better sell-through in both the men's and women's categories drove growth. Overall, we continue to navigate the sales-distribution shift in our industry from traditional bricks-and-mortar channels, especially at department stores, to e-commerce-driven sales on both our brands' sites and our partners' sites and to new and innovative digital marketplaces around the globe," Buckley said.

Before becoming Differential Brands, the apparel venture operated as **Joe's Jeans**, which hit a financial hurdle in 2013 when it borrowed \$90 million to buy Hudson for \$97.6 million and then defaulted on its loans.

The company was close to declaring bankruptcy in 2015 but ended up selling its flagship brand, Joe's Jeans, to **Sequential Brands Group** and **Global Brands Group Holding** for \$80 million. Funds from the sale were used to retire Joe's Jeans' debt.

The Hudson label remained behind and the company was merged with the high-end label Robert Graham and then combined under the Differential Brands Group corporate name, which is publicly traded on the NASDAQ.—*Deborah Belgum*

Westside Pavilion Soon to Be a Mall With No Anchors

Nordstrom closed on Sept. 30, then on Nov. 9 **Macy's** stated that it was going to close its store at Los Angeles' **Westside Pavilion**.

With Macy's scheduling its 2018 closure, the 32-year-old mall will be left without a single traditional anchor store.

The **Macerich**-owned mall's tenants include well-known specialty retailers such as **Banana Republic**, **Pacific Sunwear**, **Hot Topic**, **Cotton On**, **Express**, **Forever 21** and **H&M**. But running a regional mall without department stores is rare and perhaps without precedent. The **Americana at Brand** retail center in Glendale, Calif., opened in 2008 without any department stores in its tenant mix. However, a Nordstrom opened on the site in 2013.

Macerich has been reported to be considering a renovation for the mall but did not return a request for com-

ment by press time. Karen Raquet, director of retail property management for **JLL**, a professional-services firm with a focus on real estate, said that Macerich would probably have to redevelop the site.

"It's great real estate and it's a great piece of land. What is



THE TOP: View of Westside Pavilion from above the mall's third level

said to have opened there in 1987. The hit movie "Clueless," which chronicled the lives of stylish Beverly Hills teens, filmed some exteriors at Westside Pavilion before the film was released in 1995.

Since Westside Pavilion's Reagan- and Bill Clinton-era heyday, other major retail centers, such as **The Grove**, which

Calendar

is five miles away, grew to prominence. **Westfield Century City**, which officially unveiled a \$2 billion remodel in October, is located about two miles from Westside Pavilion. Nordstrom opened a full-line store in Westfield Century City in October. Macy's opened a new department store at Westfield Century City earlier this year.

Westside Pavilion continues to offer a retail alternative, said Francisco Aguilar, an assistant manager at the mall's Hot Topic. "It's a more low-key mall," Aguilar said. "If you want to escape crowds, this is the place to be."

The Westside Pavilion Macy's is not the only Macy's slated to close in California. On Nov. 9, Macy's also announced that its locations in **Stonestown Galleria** in San Francisco and the **Laguna Hills Mall** in Laguna Hills will close in early 2018.

Earlier this year, Macy's sold the property of its Stonestown Galleria location to mall owners **General Growth Properties** for \$41 million. GGP will use the space to house new retailers, restaurants and a movie theater, according to media reports.

Macy's sold its Ŵestside Pavilion property for \$50 million to **GPI Properties** at the beginning of the year. Raegan Gall, a Macy's spokesperson, said that the store has operated the store under a lease. The lease will conclude in March 2018, when the store will close. "The decision to close stores is always a difficult one, but Macy's is honored to have served this community for more than 50 years, and we look forward to continuing to do so at Macy's other great locations and online at *macys.com*," Gall said.—*Andrew Asch*

Nov. 17 Holiday Sample Sales California Market Center Los Angeles

Nov. 18 Amaiò Swim Sample Sale 1042 Gerhart Ave. Los Angeles

Nov. 19 DG Expo Fabric and Trim Show San Francisco Hilton San Francisco Through Nov. 20 Nov. 29 Kingpins Basketball City New York Through Nov. 30

Nov. 30 Shop for Success, VIP Night 1101 Westwood Blvd. Los Angeles (Open to the public Dec. 1–4)

Dec. 1 Holiday Sample Sales California Market Center Los Angeles Dec. 2 Unique LA California Market Center

The Palm

Los Angeles Through Dec. 3 Dec. 6 CFF and TALA Annual Christmas Party for Children

Cooper Design Space, penthouse Los Angeles TPC Holiday Party Los Angeles DG Expo Fabric and Trim Show Palmer House Hilton Chicago

Through Dec. 7
Dec. 7
Showroom grand opening

presented by LYCRA, Tavex and Artisan Cloth 1308 Factory Place, Suite 105 Los Angeles Dec. 8 Fashion With a Cause California Market Center Los Angeles Holiday Sample Sales California Market Center Los Angeles Dec. 15 Holiday Sample Sales California Market Center Los Angeles



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

Submissions to the calendar should be faxed to the Calendar Editor at (213) 623-5707. Please include the event's name, date, time, location, admission price and contact information. The deadline for calendar submissions is the Tuesday prior to Friday publication. Inclusion in the calendar is subject to available space and the judgment of the editorial staff.

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Dreamgirl CEO Scharff Leaving Company

Christopher Scharff, chief executive officer of DG Brands, parent company of the costume and lingerie label Dreamgirl Inter-

national, is leaving the company after 14 years to pursue other ventures, according to the company.

Scharff bought Dreamgirl in 2003 and built DG Brands into a \$30 million business producing costume and lingerie sold in more than 2,000 retailer accounts around the world. Today, the company has 12 U.S. sales representatives and more than 20 international distributors.

Barry Revzen has been named the new CEO of DG Brands. The company has formed a new corporate umbrella, DG Brands International, which includes several product categories and brands, including Dreamgirl lingerie and costumes, Dreamguy men's costumes, Alexa costumes and High Demand, a collection of marijuana-inspired loungewear, streetwear, sleepwear and lingerie. Additional changes at DG Brands will be announced in the coming weeks, according to the company.

Scharff came to Dreamgirl after serving as vice president at the BCBG Max Azria

International Group. His career also includes executive positions at the watchmaker Movado Group and St. John International. He got his start in the apparel business at Lanz Inc., a manufacturing business founded by Scharff's father in 1938

"We are saddened to see the departure of Christopher as he has revolutionized the company under his leadership and dedication to the company for

the past 14 years, but we know he will go on to do great things," said Alma Canjura, executive vice president and chief operating officer of DG Brands, in a company statement. "Although this will be a large change for the organization, Dreamgirl has many exciting moments ahead with the launch of our newest lingerie and costume collections in the coming months."

For more information visit dgbrands.com or dreamgirldirect.com.—Alison A. Nieder

HOFB Launching E-Marketplace for **New Designers**

TECHNOLOGY

For many independent designers and brands, the goal of selling to department stores and major specialty retailers is out of reach because of the challenge of finding the right retail contacts and the manufacturers who can produce in volume for major retailers, said Gabriel Ankamafio, chief executive officer of the Los Angeles-headquartered e-commerce marketplace HOFB (House of Fashion Brands).

He said that HOFB will become an enterprise marketplace platform for independent designers where retailers can browse designers' goods and manu-

facturers associated with HOFB will produce the goods that the retailers select. Located at www.hofb. *com*, the marketplace is scheduled to make an official launch in March 2018, Ankamafio said.

We are trying to bring designers who are not known to the forefront, especially with fast fashion," he said.

HOFB opened an office in July a few blocks from the University of Southern

California, just south of downtown Los Angeles. The neighborhood offers a flavorful, urban milieu. It is the address for a light-rail station and a boutique for the **Pros & Cons** skate and streetwear shop as well as a studio for a fortuneteller.

Ankamafio grew up in Ghana, attended Roberts Wesleyan College in upstate New York and ran footwear factories in China from 2012 to 2015, he said. He chose to locate HOFB in Los Angeles because of the region's sizable population of computer-programming talent and its position as a supplychain hub to Asian factories.

Similar to a social-media site, HOFB will give designers a space for profiles called Studio Pages. Designers will upload pictures of their designs, and retailers can browse the profiles

If a retailer places an order, a manufacturer working with HOFB will start working on it. The purchases can range from samples to mass orders. Ankamafio plans to work with manufacturers from around the world. Designers and retailers headquartered in a specific region can work with a manufacturer located near them. HOFB works with certifi-



Gabriel Ankamafic

cation companies such as SGS and **Bureau Veritas** to confirm that manufacturers associated with the site have good reputations for quality, delivering on time and following the law.

HOFB will make money by managing the marketplace and by working on orders to the site, Ankamafio said. The marketplace will focus on mass retailers and

eventually will build a model for smaller, independent retailers.

Los Angeles-area fashion designer Reynaldo Aquino joined HOFB and hopes that it will make the sales part of his job easier. It will be a shortcut to retailers who are open to selling his men's fashion line, Fortis Orbis Atelier. He won't have to make cold calls. "No more making appointments and lugging samples and tear sheets around to showrooms," Aquino said. "As far as manufacturers go, I think HOFB will help designers not to worry about getting our garments done right and on time."—Andrew Asch



Beyond the Label

Continued from page 1

founder and chief executive officer of **S3 Source**; and Mary Herbranson, partnerships manager for the **Surfrider Foundation**.

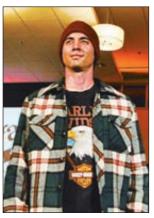
"This community event is yet another example of what is possible when designers, filmmakers, students and individuals invest their time and energy into creating sustainably conscious fashion and art that showcases the tremendous opportunity in the apparel industry for producing garments that are socially conscious and environmentally responsible," said James Velez-Conway, a member of the city of Santa Monica's office of sustainability and the environment.



PANEL: "RiverBlue" producer Lisa Mazzotta, S3 Source founder Isaac Nichelson, Surfrider Foundation's Mary Herbranson and Beyond The Label's Taryn Hipwell



Triarchy



Buffalo Exchange





Beyond the Label tees



Chop Shop by Santa Monica College students



Tradsy



Industry of All Nations



Concert Couture by Santa Monica College students

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FGILA Continued from page 1

to react in real time. Designers have to be able to react in real time."

In the early days of social media, Bendoni said she began monitoring social-media conversations and working with data scientists to create an algorithm to measure shoppers' likes and dislikes. Earlier this year, **Bloomsbury Visual Arts** published Bendoni's book on the subject, titled "Social Media for Fashion Marketing: Storytelling in a Digital World."

The instructor and author recently spoke to a group of Los Angeles Trade-Technical College students at the school's downtown Los Angeles campus. The Nov. 13 event was hosted by the Los Angeles chapter of Fashion Group International and featured the longstanding fashion organization's trend forecast for Spring/ Summer 2018.

These days, there are tools that help retailers and brands track consumer behavior online. This goes beyond simply "liking" something online to predicting purchasing behavior.

"Just because you like a \$300,000 watch, it doesn't mean you will buy a \$300,000 watch," Bendoni said. "You have to look at what is happening with consumers and what they are talking about."

In a world where the average American consumer spends five hours per day on the phone and consumers expect the instant gratification of service sites such as **Uber** and **Airbnb**, Bendoni noted a number of consumer behaviors to watch.

People are "consuming to share" on social media and looking for "fashion on demand."

Apps such as **The Hunt** and **Like to Know It** help consumers find where to buy items they have seen. Similarly, e-tailer **ASOS** has an app that lets consumers upload a photo and then find the closest item within the retailer's massive and quickly changing inventory. ASOS adds 17,000 new



Woodbury's Wendy Bendoni at the FGILA event at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College in downtown Los Angeles

what other shoppers are viewing and buying online, which might explain why **Pinterest** has the strongest con-

a visual search tool.

products to its website every month, Bendoni said. **Net-A-Porter** also has

Consumers are also influenced by

forms. "Bricks and mortar are trying to figure out how to bring it into the store." Bendoni said.

version rate among social-media plat-

Brazilian retailer C&A displays clothing on hangers that tell shoppers how popular the item is on Facebook. Polyvore's PolyData measures popular items based on what consumers have added to their Polyvore boards. There is also specialized software

for measuring consumer buying patterns, such as **Edited**, which can gather information about what is selling in real time.

"Data is the future," Bendoni said. "My job is to figure out how to keep up with the high expectations of consumers." \bullet

FGI's Key Trends for Spring/Summer 2018

At a Nov. 13 event at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College in downtown Los Angeles, Fashion Group International offered its take on Spring/Summer 2018 with a comprehensive look at the trends based on runways in New York, Paris, London and Milan.

According to the organization," "best bets" include miniskirts, shirt-dresses, long shorts, bomber jackets and blazers, trench coats, big sweaters, nightgown styles for evening, and "power pump"–style shoes. Key fabric and print trends include denim, cotton, florals and stripes, plaids, and logo details.—*A.A.N.*

Cult Gaia Opens Melrose Place Pop-up

A hobby of making floral crowns for friends gained momentum for Jasmin Larian, and she later parlayed it into a fashion label called **Cult Gaia**.

The brand started business in 2012 and it gained popularity with the festival fashion crowd. This year, the brand's "Ark" bags have been featured in glossy fashion magazines. Larian's next act is to produce a Cult Gaia popup shop on designer enclave



Jasmin Larian

Melrose Place in West Hollywood, Calif. With neighbors such as **Marc Jacobs**, **Isabel Marant** and **The Row**, The Cult's pop-up was unveiled Nov. 17 at 8441 Melrose Place, the former site of a **Carolina Herrera** boutique.

The pop-up will feature the brand's Fall and Resort 2018 collections, which include ready-to-wear such as multi-colored print dresses, unique paper bag skirt and trench coatinspired shirt dresses. Larian designed the interior of the pop-up, which will feature a photo booth and an aperitif bar for **Aperol Spritz** cocktail drinks. Larian said the pop-up is way for customers to experience her brand's milieu.

"I wanted our woman to be able to enter our world, the way our team does every day in the studio and our buyers do when they visit our showroom," she said.

The pop-up scheduled to stay in business until Dec. 31. —Andrew Asch



TAGS & LABELS

Avery Dennison and Evrythng Help Rebecca Minkoff Connect to Customers Through the #AlwaysOn Connected Handbag

Rebecca Minkoff's #AlwaysOn handbags feature technology that allows customers to receive exclusive offers, product recommendations and video content. But that's not all the bags can do, according to a recently released study. The smart bags offer "digital emotional intelligence"-or DEQ-which allows consumers to more fully connect with the New York brand.

The #AlwaysOn bags, which recently debuted in stores, feature smart-tag technology developed by label and tag-technology company **Avery Dennison**. Avery Dennison's **Janela** solution connects with **Evrythng**'s IoT (Internet of things) cloud platform.

"We've always want-

ed to enrich our customers' lives and deliver a brand experience that extends beyond the products themselves," said Uri Minkoff, cofounder and chief executive officer of Rebecca Minkoff, in a company statement. "By bringing #AlwaysOn smart features to the bags, we're opening doors to a world of amazing, handpicked experiences we think our customers will love while making it easier than ever for them to access



consumers more empathetically.

"In today's always-on world, brands that use digital technology to connect more emotionally, personally and contextually with consumers, in the moment, will win," said Andy Hobsbawm, cofounder and chief marketing officer for Evrythng. "By connecting physical products and retail environments to the web, brands can unlock new flows of valuable

special offers, recommendations and other loyalty rewards."

Avery Dennison and Evrythng worked with the **University of Sheffington** in the United Kingdom to develop a framework that brands can use to better understand how to engage with their customers. In a report titled "Digital Emotional Intelligence," Phillip Powell, a research fellow at the University's Institute of Economic Analysis of Decision-Making, recommends brands use real-time data gathered from digitally capable consumer products to interact with their customers and understand their emotions and moods.

By monitoring "digital emotions," or physical emotions influenced by interaction with smart products and technology, brands can "predict emotional responses and connect with real-time data to transform their customer relationships—not to mention their supply chains and revenue models," he added. According to Evrythng, there will be more than 800 bil-

lion digitally capable consumer products by 2020. Rather than "passive, unconnected physical objects," connected products are "data-generating, interactive assets" that can "speak directly with consumers and brands," according to the Digital Emotional Intelligence report.

"These interactions and insights can be used by companies to connect more personally with customers by influencing and anticipating their emotions more effectively," the report reads.

Further, the more often consumers interact with these connected items, the "richer and more personalized" the experience becomes.

This takes the experience beyond simply sharing an image of a purchase. Connected products can generate "digital memories of positive product experiences [which] could be replayed to the consumer the next time they shop. Reminding people of the amazing time they had with their previous purchases will overcome human biases and encourage customers to buy more," the report said.

Because fashion is a more "experiential product" than other, more-functional items, the report argues that fashion brands have a greater opportunity "to create more valuable, superior customer experiences based on a more nuanced understanding of digital emotion in the online and offline shopping journey."

This personalized engagement gives brands a way to differentiate themselves from their competitors, the report said.

"At a time when the retail industry is in complete transformation, connected products with a unique digital identity are paving a way for brands to not only easily capture stock visibility but also engage on an emotional level with their consumers. This is key to winning in the marketplace," said Bill Toney, Avery Dennison's vice president, Global RFID market development.—*Alison A. Nieder*

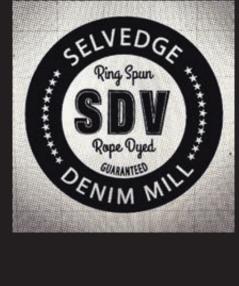


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make the complex's first floor more retail and restaurant centric with businesses opening on to Main and Ninth streets.

Other plans include possibly opening up the ground-floor atrium and reconfiguring the two-story cube building that now houses a **UnionBank** office in front of the complex. "Retail is going to be a big portion of this renovation, with good food, beverages and fashion," Penrose noted. "Creative office space will be the focal point. They really want to go after the fun, hip, creative tech and apparel tenant they think the area will attract."

The California Market Center, like many merchandise and apparel marts around the country, was built decades ago when wholesalers and retailers operated under a different business model and time frame. Big department stores were king of the retail world, and e-commerce was beyond anyspaces on both sides of the building and creating a whole new world.

PHR submitted plans to the city to create a \$1.2 billion residential, hotel and retail complex called **Broadway Square Los Angeles**, which will one day encompass nearly 900 condos and 549 apartments. There will be shops, restaurants, bars and a grocery store as well as a 19-story hotel.

In addition, the LA Mart/Reef building will be renovated and feature a rooftop event space. The front lobby was recently updated.

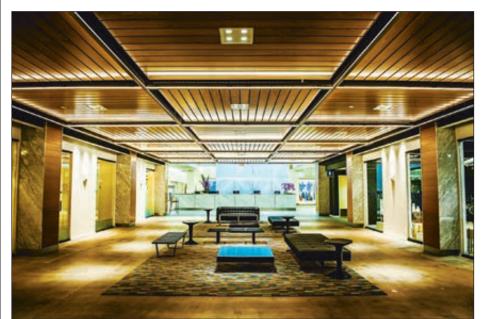
To help with the project, the developers hired the well-known San Francisco architectural firm **Gensler** to design what will become a new LA neighborhood whose plans were approved last year by Los Angeles city officials.

The Windy City

The largest merchandise mart in the



A rendering of Broadway Square Los Angeles



Entryway of The Interior Home + Design Center in Dallas

one's imagination.

Now, with vacancies mounting, several merchandise marts across the country are redrawing their specs and going beyond triedand-true showrooms and exhibit spaces to fill the void with other businesses not related to apparel or furniture.

A prime example of this is the **LA Mart**, located south of downtown Los Angeles. The 13-story structure has been home to a number of furniture and gift showrooms since it opened in the 1950s.

Once owned by the Kennedy family, the nearly 60-year-old structure at 1933 S. Broadway was sold in 2012 to **PHR**, a commercial real estate company whose president, Glendale physician Ara Tavitian, envisions major changes for the building and the surrounding area.

A few years ago, the LA Mart established **The Reef**, reconfiguring some of its floors to provide incubator space for new creative firms and artists. But the biggest change on the drawing board is taking 7.5 acres of parking United States is located in Chicago. It is so large that the 25-story structure, which encompasses 4.2 million square feet of space, is classified as the second-largest office building in the United States—after the **Pentagon**. When it opened in 1930 by the now-defunct **Marshall Field & Co.**, it housed various furniture, gift and apparel showrooms for department-store buyers. But several years ago, vacancies started to creep in.

In 1998, **Vornado Realty Trust** bought the structure from the Kennedy family and kept the showroom business model going. But in 2008 and 2009, during the height of the recession, the furnishings and apparel industry got hit hard and vacancies increased.

Vornado took a look at the future and saw the world of technology—much like the owners of the California Market Center. Vornado soon started to convert showrooms into creative office spaces that attracted companies such as **Google**, **Yelp**, **PayPal** and **eBay**. **Motorola Mobility** left its head-

REAL ESTATE

Apparel Marts

Continued from previous page

quarters in the Chicago suburb of Libertyville to take over four floors of the mart.

To keep the building fresh, Vornado in 2016 took the wraps off a \$40 million renovation that showcased a 50-foot-wide marble staircase connecting the first and second floors and a redesigned food hall. Today, the Merchandise Mart is almost 100 percent occupied.

In the heart of Texas

For years, Dallas has been the epicenter for the region's apparel and fashion buyers. It is home to two apparel marts: the Fashion Industry Gallery and the Dallas Market Center.

The Fashion Industry Gallery opened in 2004 with a dozen permanent showrooms. It how houses 50 women's apparel showrooms and is 100 percent leased, said Matt Roth, FIG's chief executive. "We are really focused on the women's contemporary market. We don't go outside of that because we found our little niche," Roth said.

But FIG is on the move. In 2007, the twostory contemporary building was sold by

Brook Partners Inc. to Hunt Consolidated Inc., with FIG staying on with a master lease that was to expire this year. This year, that lease was extended to the end of 2019.

Brook Partners now owns 13 acres and several buildings in the hip Design District of Dallas, where it is planning to rehab a few structures. Once the renovations are completed, FIG will move to the up-and-coming area.

FIG may add a few more showrooms in its new space, Roth said, but he doesn't want to expand too much. "The regional stores that shop here want to get here, do their buying and get back to their stores," he explained. "Ten or 15 years ago, it was more about spending a week in Los Angeles, Las Vegas or elsewhere, but the economy has changed."

The Dallas Market Center is another huge complex that for decades has been home to 1,500 apparel, accessories, furniture and gift showrooms housed in three buildings.

But in recent years, with the change in the retail industry and the strength of e-commerce sales, the Dallas Market Center owners noticed that more apparel stores were carrying gifts and home-décor items, and gift stores were beefing up their inventory with accessories and apparel items.

So, Dallas decided to remodel the oldest building in the complex-a two-story mid-

century structure built in 1957 that originally housed furniture showrooms. More recently, botanical showrooms filled the space.

A new remodel of the building, which is now called The Interior Home + Design Center, has floral and holiday showrooms on the second floor. The first floor has open-daily home-furnishings and décor showrooms, with some now featuring exterior windows and doors.

The DMC has also seen certain apparel categories grow. "When the apparel showrooms several years ago moved into our World Trade Center, bridal was a temporary business for us," said Cindy Morris, the Dallas Market Center's president and chief executive. "Now, we have a nice group of permanent bridal showrooms. The same happened with Western wear. It was temporary and now we have a group of permanent Western-wear showrooms.

Stronger apparel categories have also influenced the AmericasMart Atlanta in Georgia. It recently added 70,000 square feet of socialoccasion showrooms and space as demand has grown. The new area-which shows prom, pageant and quinceañera clothing-debuted last August with special-occasion dress designer Jovani taking over 11,000 square feet of space on the 14th floor.

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