

# CALIFORNIA Apparel News

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TRADE SHOW REPORT

## A Better Economy Means Better Orders at the Las Vegas Trade Shows

By Andrew Asch, Deborah Belgum and Dorothy Crouch

LAS VEGAS—The conglomeration of apparel, footwear and accessories trade shows, which twice a year invade this city in the middle of the desert, filled the town with thousands of visitors from all over the world under a blistering sky where the temperatures reached up to 105 degrees during the day.

The shows' locations, with the first events starting on Aug. 11 and the last ending on Aug. 16, ranged from the Las Vegas Convention Center to the Mandalay Bay Convention Center with stops in between at the Sands Expo and Convention Center near The Venetian hotel and across the freeway at the Rio All-Suites Hotel & Casino.

Many felt visitor traffic was softer than last August, but that was hard to determine because many shows still had a vibrant buzz of buyers making the rounds.

Margrit Laman, whose Limited Additions store is located in Las Vegas page 3

TECHNOLOGY

## The Power of RFID

*RFID may not be new, but its increasing affordability is proving to be a game-changer for retailers large and small.*

By Paula Levy Contributing Writer

Radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology is one of the fastest-growing retail initiatives today. RFID consists of electromagnetic tags attached to objects, tickets and merchandise that contain electronically stored information, sensors and antennae.

Through radio waves and hardware such as beacons for proximity marketing or communication sensors, the tags are read and emit data. These tags are not only attached to products but also to shelving and display tables within a store and are embedded in many luxury goods.

RFID entered the retail market in the late 1980s, primarily for tracking inventory. Early on, RFID hardware and tags were cost-prohibitive for the mainstream with a price of \$1 per tag or higher plus antennae and sensors. In 2015, the RFID market was valued at \$26 billion, and innovations within the Internet of Things page 8

# SHOW TIME

If it's August, it must be time for a dose of trade shows covering the apparel, footwear and accessories industries. With a buoyant economy, buyers were on the hunt for goods to fill their stores.



## INSIDE

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



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# Technology Changes Are Driving LA Fashion Industry

Fashion-industry leaders in Los Angeles far prefer to use **Instagram** as their social media of choice than any other digital outlet, with most gravitating toward making their social-media decisions in-house rather than using outside consultants.

Those were some of the findings in the recent "2018 LA Fashion Report," conducted by **CIT Group Inc.** and done with the **California Fashion Association**.

Half of respondents said social media was the most enlightened concept for the future of the apparel industry, followed by integrated systems between manufacturing and retailing, which was mentioned by 34 percent of those surveyed.

Eight percent thought 3-D fitting was important, followed by 3-D printing by 4 per-

cent of fashion-industry leaders.

"This research highlights the role that technology is playing in transforming the fashion industry," said Darrin Beer, western regional manager for CIT's Commercial Services unit. "The findings confirm the role of social media in shaping consumer tastes and emphasize the importance of remaining alert and nimble in responding to market changes."

Compared to two years ago, LA industry executives are much more likely to believe that a multi-channel distribution strategy incorporating stores with online sales is their biggest opportunity.

And newer fashion brands at the beginning are preferring to sell online to customers rather than selling to bricks-and-mortar

stores. Later they branch out to pop-up stores or other retail outlets or are sold to private investors or private-equity companies.

Los Angeles is the No. 1 center in the United States for manufacturing clothing, with 30,600 employed in that sector. Fashion companies prefer to put down their roots in Southern California because of the fashion talent located here and the ease of logistics.

Forty-six percent of those surveyed said they keep their businesses in Los Angeles because of nearby ports in Long Beach and Los Angeles. Another 25 percent said they liked the area because of access to fashion designers and local suppliers.

"The fashion industry remains one of the most important economic engines in LA and Orange counties," said Ilse Metchek, presi-

dent of the California Fashion Association.

With the industry under intense pricing pressures, executives are always searching for cheaper and better places to source their goods. Some 40 percent of industry leaders said they manufacture their goods overseas and another 15 percent manufacture domestically. The rest of the respondents said they do a mix of both.

To make goods in the United States, companies must have first-rate technology to compete with overseas factories.

And the new era of fashion bloggers, influencers and celebrity partnerships is more important than ever. Access to celebrities was 13 percent in the recent survey compared with 2 percent in 2015.

—Deborah Belgum

## Agenda and Liberty Fairs Moving to Downtown Las Vegas

In what might be considered a bold and historic move, **Agenda** and **Liberty Fairs** are moving out of the **Sands Expo and Convention Center** on the Las Vegas Strip, where for years the two trade shows have been held, and relocating next February to downtown Las Vegas.

While no specific location was mentioned, the show organizers said the new site would be located next to the Arts District. "Downtown Las Vegas is the ideal home for the shows to continue to break the mold of a conventional trade-show model to offer standout events, unique activations and an overall elevated experience," the show organizers announced in a press release issued while the trade shows were being held in Las Vegas Aug. 11-16.

The move will mean that in the future, the biannual collection of apparel, footwear and accessories trade shows held in Las Vegas—which range from **Project** and other shows at the **Mandalay Bay Convention Center** to **WWD**MAGIC and various shows at the **Las Vegas Convention Center**—will now stretch for miles, from Mandalay Bay in the south to downtown Las Vegas, which has been undergoing an urban renovation.

To overcome the distant location, there will be complimentary express-car service from the Mandalay Bay Convention Center and the Las Vegas Convention Center to Agenda and Liberty Fairs. The advantage of the new location, the organizers maintain, is that hotels will be cheaper and there will be gourmet

food trucks to cater to various culinary tastes.

"We're excited to host Agenda and Liberty in such a vibrant, creative location, giving our brands a new creative platform to share their brand story," said Tony Shellman, Agenda Vegas event director.

Liberty Fairs co-owner Sharifa Murdock said the shows are taking control and igniting a new tradition, which the shows did with sister event **Cabana**, a swimwear show in Miami. "The possibilities for us to continue to disrupt the traditional trade-show model are virtually limitless," Murdock said.

With the new location, Agenda will create a new footwear area, featuring a variety of men's and women's fashion and lifestyle footwear to complement the current brands exhibiting at the shows. "More and more brands are asking for a more intimate exhibit space with

footwear, apparel and accessories brands all displayed together under the same roof for the convenience of buyers," Shellman noted.

Milton Castro, of **Soulstar Premium**, who exhibits at Agenda, said the move might prove to be challenging. "Are buyers going to want to make the move? Logistically, it could be a pain," he said.

Another Agenda vendor, Freddie Rojas of **Rojas Clothing**, recently sold his brand's clothing at an art walk-style event in downtown Las Vegas called First Fridays. The neighborhood offers a lot of space for outdoor performances and installations, which has been a focus at **Agenda Day**, a consumer-focused day at Agenda's show in Long Beach, Calif.

"These shows need evolution. This may be a good move," Rojas said.—D.B.

## Differential Brands Reports Second-Quarter Earnings Results

**Differential Brands**—the Los Angeles company whose labels include **Hudson Jeans**, **Robert Graham** and **SWIMS**—said its second-quarter sales for the period ending June 30 were down 1 percent from the same period last year to \$36 million.

The company's net loss increased to \$5.7 million, up from \$4 million during last year's second quarter.

However, the company's direct-to-consumer sales during the three-month period rose 8 percent.

"Our consumer-direct business continued its strong performance in the second quarter at both Robert Graham and SWIMS. Robert Graham's assortment was embraced by its customers for Spring, and we are optimistic for the Fall offering based on customer feedback thus far," Michael Buckley, the company's chief executive, said in a statement. "SWIMS' expanded Spring assortment was in high demand during the second quarter as continued improvement in general-brand awareness in North America also played a major role. This momentum bodes well for the Fall season."

In June, Differential Brands announced it was buying a significant share of **Global Brands Group's** licensing business in North America. The deal is valued at \$1.38 billion and should close some time in the third quarter, Differential Brands said. The purchase price will be paid in cash.

The brands that make up the North American licenses include **Calvin Klein**, **Under Armour**, **Tommy Hilfiger**, **BCBG**, **Bebe**, **Joe's**, **Buffalo David Bit-**

**ton**, **Frye**, **Michael Kors**, **Cole Haan**, **Kenneth Cole**, **Disney** and **Star Wars**.

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

The company was close to declaring bankruptcy in 2015 but ended up selling its



The Fall campaign for Hudson

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Las Vegas *Continued from page 1*

cated in Tucson, Ariz., has been coming to the shows for more than 30 years. She used to spread out her buying by attending trade events in Dallas and New York, but with limited time and money she budgets her travel to mostly West Coast venues, including Las Vegas and California. About 40 percent of her buying is done in Las Vegas followed by 30 percent in Los Angeles and another 20 percent at **Fashion Market Northern California** in San Mateo.

“To come to Las Vegas or Los Angeles, I can fly in the morning and get a full day’s worth of work done,” she said, noting she was visiting **Stitch @ Project Womens, Project Womens and Liberty Fairs**.

The various trade shows were in four locations, ranging from the southern side of the Las Vegas Strip to the northern side. The Sands Expo and Convention Center set up exhibition space for **Offprice, Agenda** and **Liberty Fairs**. **Agenda** and **Liberty Fairs** announced they are moving next February to downtown Las Vegas next to the Arts District, but no specifics were announced yet.

At the Rio All-Suites Hotel & Casino, the **Womenswear in Nevada (WWIN)** show packed all the hotel ballrooms.

The Las Vegas Convention Center contained **Sourcing at MAGIC, WWDMAGIC, FN Platform** and **Footwear Sourcing at MAGIC**.

At the Mandalay Bay Convention Center, the shows included **The Tents, The Collective, Project, Project Womens, Stitch @ Project Womens, Pooltradeshows, Curve Las Vegas** and **Children’s Club**.

The Mandalay Bay had a certain hum of activity at the

tailers from Thailand, Japan and Canada.

But at Project, the menswear show located near The Collective, U.S. retailers were the foundation of the show. Vince Gonzales of the **Paisley & Gray** brand said retailers across the board were seen on the show floor.

**Order numbers were spot on at Offprice**

At the below-wholesale show known as Offprice, held Aug. 11–14, exhibitors were excited with the number of orders coming in and the high volume of traffic. This optimism stemmed from a belief that the typical Offprice customer was more confident to spend money due to a robust economy.

“We’re working very hard. Yesterday [Sunday] was the best day yet. It was nonstop, and we had 14 salespeople on the floor,” said Raymond Chen of the Houston-based **Very Moda**. “Everybody is coming here [Las Vegas] for other shows, but the other shows had not started yet when we opened.”

In business for 20 years, Chen has exclusive partnerships with factories in China, which he sees as an advantage when selling to his established clientele, which includes **Marshalls**, owned by **T.J. Maxx**.

At his booth, there was so much business Sunday night that they were still working well after the show closed.

**Neighboring shows**

In the same exhibition center but one floor up, **Liberty Fairs** saw a steady flow of buyer traffic. “It’s been a good, consistent show,” said Teri Ferguson Roth, U.S. sales man-

York, said he was very busy during the first day of the show. “The second day was slower. We typically set the second day aside for one-on-one meetings. We’re not rushed like we are on the first day,” he noted.

**Festive and focused at WWDMAGIC**

The atmosphere at WWDMAGIC at the Las Vegas Convention Center was energetic.

At the **K Too** booth, owner Audrey Kim was busy selling eye-catching formal attire with a nightclub twist and a selection of more casual pieces. While she reported meeting with buyers from different areas of the United States, a large portion of her clientele came from East Coast areas, including Georgia and New York. When it came to buyer attendance, she felt her Los Angeles brand was experiencing the same amount of business.

“We have our regular customers, so they always come and check out our new stuff,” she said. “I feel like there are not that many people walking around, but sales-wise it’s the same. The same amount of customers are coming into our booth.”

**Camaraderie in micro-factory model at Sourcing at MAGIC**

For the exhibitors who showed at the Made in the USA section of Sourcing at MAGIC, held Aug. 12–15, many were pleased with the amount of business they received and were spreading the word about just-in-time manufacturing.

Catherine Trifiletti manufactures her own label and uniforms for tourism properties nationwide, including Las Ve-



Odilia Therriault and Valentina Correa of Agua Bendita at Curve Las Vegas



Project/The Tents



The Paisley & Gray booth at Project



Sourcing at MAGIC

shows, held Aug. 13–15.

The various events filled one warehouse-sized space divided by ceiling-hung banners and different-colored carpeting to distinguish each area. **Curve Las Vegas**, which carried swimwear and lingerie, had its own special bamboo entrance with umbrella-covered picnic tables, flamingo-shaped inflatable rings and benches to give the area a beach-like feel. “We’ve been seeing people from all over the world,” said Valentina Correa, U.S. sales director for the Colombian swimwear brand **Agua Bendita**.

The **Pooltradeshows**, housing artsy and new brands, had a cash-and-carry section for mostly jewelry while other booths showed new goods for upcoming seasons. **Los Angeles Apparel**, the relatively new brand launched by **American Apparel** co-founder Dov Charney, had a booth showing basic T-shirts as well as new products.

**Stitch @ Project Womens**—which features contemporary, sportswear and lifestyle brands—was a favorite among specialty stores. “Stitch is really our go-to show and then Project Womens,” said Isabelle Whitley, whose **Democracy** store is located in Palm Desert, Calif.

**Project Womens** was particularly busy with buyers cramming into booths, including **Z Supply**, whose high, white countertop collection of tables stretching for more than 30 feet was constantly packed with buyers perched on stools looking at the Irvine, Calif., company’s wide range of brands, which included **Black Swan, White Crow, Rag Poets** and **Icons of Culture**.

At **The Collective** menswear show, vendors noted there was an international contingent of buyers. Alan Ruddy, a U.S.-based sales representative for **Charly**, a Mexican brand, said he had conversations with re-

ager for **Parajumpers USA**. “We saw all of the buyers we wanted to see.”

Rodolfo Ramirez of **Pocket Square Clothing** agreed. “A lot of the buyers this time were from international retailers,” he said.

The adjacent **Agenda** show was equally as busy. Nico Reyes, sales director of the **Staple** brand, based in New

gas favorites such as **Gordon Ramsey, Mr. Chow, Caesars Palace, The Cosmopolitan** and **Aria**.

She brought some of her Las Vegas-based sewers and participated in a micro-factory-style initiative at the show—with **Mutoh America; Tukatech Inc.**; and **EFI** with its partners **Klieverik, Zünd** and **Brigade Manufacturing**—where each company provided resources to create apparel onsite during the show.

“If you are in this industry, you really need to spend some time researching this new technology that is changing the apparel industry to on-demand,” she said, explaining the small-unit production needs of a new generation of designers.

**Winning in contemporary womenswear**

At the **WWIN** show, held Aug. 12–16, exhibitors from the misses and contemporary women’s apparel segment showcased different pieces from accessories, clothing and outerwear. There was a lot of optimism from retailers and exhibitors, some of whom have been showing at the event since its launch nearly 20 years ago.

San Diego-based **Kippys** had been in business since 1948 as a retail shop but branched off into production in 1984. The company has attended the show since **WWIN**’s first event.

“We’re having a great show this time. Some new business and lots of return customers,” said Erik Kipperman, who is the third generation to oversee his family’s business. He reported a high demand for **Immediates**. “Our embellished jackets are what I sell mostly and handbags, and we’re known for our belts.” ●



WWDMAGIC



Z Supply at Project Womens



Agenda



Descendant of Thieves booth at Liberty Fairs

# COMING SOON IN CALIFORNIA APPAREL NEWS

## August 24

Cover: Full Vegas Wrap  
Surf Report

### Surf Advertorial

### Bonus Distribution

Surf Expo 9/6-8

## August 31

Cover: Fashion  
Retail Report  
Made in America

### Made in America Advertorial

### Bonus Distribution

Designers & Agents NY 9/13-15

## September 7

Cover: Fashion  
New Resources

### Fashion Advertorial Finance Advertorial

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Coterie NY 9/15-17  
Stitch@Coterie 9/15-17  
Sole Commerce 9/15-17  
Fame 9/15-17  
Moda 9/15-17  
Sourcing @ Coterie 9/15-17  
Midwest Apparel Trade Show 9/16-17

## September 14

Cover: LA Runway  
New York Fashion Week Coverage  
Freight & Logistics  
Surf Expo Coverage  
Made in America  
Trims, Accessories & Branding  
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### Textile Preview with Tech and Resource Guide\*

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## DENIM

# Denim Tops for Martial-Arts Athletes

Mike Dytri's puffy, cauliflower ears are badges of honor he got after years of gaining expertise in the martial art of jiu-jitsu.

He had the discipline to earn a black belt as well as the ambition to introduce a new look to the traditional, baggy, white top—or kimonos—used by jiu-jitsu practitioners. Instead of a plain white fabric, denim was his textile of choice in keeping with his denim and streetwear brand **Ludwig Van**.

"They fit like an **Armani** suit. They were designed to fit in a tailored way, but it doesn't take away from the performance aspect," he said of the martial-arts wear from his newly minted **Vanguard Kimono** by **Ludwig Van** label.

The limited-run kimonos are made in Los Angeles and have been sold at Dytri's direct-sales channel at [www.vanguardkimono.com](http://www.vanguardkimono.com).

In September, the denim kimonos will be selling at **United Arrows** in Tokyo's Shibuya district with the hope they will be snatched up by jiu-jitsu martial artists and people who spar at jiu-jitsu mixed-martial-arts studios.

Vanguard might be one of the most ex-

pensive martial-arts tops produced, Dytri said. They retail for \$500 and are made of dead-stock fabric from **Cone Mills'** White Oak plant in Greensboro, N.C. Before closing in 2017, it produced high-end denim fabric.

Dytri is a self-taught fashion designer who ran a streetwear brand called **Subfreakie**, which was sold in 2003 at an undisclosed price. Then he started denim and streetwear brand **Ludwig Van**, which has been placed at high-end retailers such as **Barneys**, he said.

The brand does limited runs of jeans made of dead-stock fabrics such as high-end selvedge denim and Vietnam War-era **U.S. Army** sleeping bags.

The pants often feature details such as unique stitching and a label

featuring the face of composer Ludwig van Beethoven sporting the bowler and makeup worn by actor Malcolm McDowell in the 1971 film "A Clockwork Orange."

Ludwig Van has produced collaboration lines with brands including **Vans** and **G-Shock**. Dytri said there are plans to produce more special projects for the label.

—Andrew Asch



## Calendar

### Aug. 19

**Fashion Market Northern California**  
San Mateo Event Center  
San Mateo, Calif.  
Through Aug. 21

### Aug. 22

**Dallas Apparel & Accessories Market**  
Dallas Market Center  
Dallas  
Through Aug. 25

### FIG

Fashion Industry Gallery  
Dallas  
Through Aug. 24

### Active Collective

Metropolitan Pavilion  
New York  
Through Aug. 23

### Aug. 23

**China Import & Export Fair Briefing**  
Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce  
Los Angeles

### Aug. 24

**Denver Apparel & Accessory Market**  
Denver Mart  
Denver  
Through Aug. 27

### Sept. 6

**Surf Expo**  
Orange County Convention Center  
Orlando, Fla.  
Through Sept. 8

### IFJAG

Stewart Hotel  
New York  
Through Sept. 9

### Sept. 12

**Brand Assembly**  
201 Mulberry  
New York  
Through Sept. 14

### Sept. 13

**Designers and Agents**  
Starrett-Lehigh Building and Cedar Lake  
Through Sept. 15

### Sept. 15

**FAME**  
Moda  
Coterie  
Stitch @ Coterie  
Sole Commerce  
Sourcing @ Coterie  
Jacob Javits Center  
Through Sept. 17

### Sept. 16

**Midwest Apparel Trade Show**  
Embassy Suites  
Deerfield, Ill.  
Through Sept. 17

### Sept. 17

**Texworld Paris**  
**Apparel Sourcing Paris**  
Le Bourget  
Paris  
Through Sept. 20

There's more  
on ApparelNews.net.

For calendar details and contact information, visit [ApparelNews.net/calendar](http://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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### VISITOR PROFILE

- Buyers & Traders
- Manufacturers
- Importers
- Distributors and Wholesalers
- Retailers
- Hoteliers and Restaurateurs
- Business and Trade Associations
- Agents
- Investors
- Media



### TRADE EXPO INDONESIA IN FIGURES

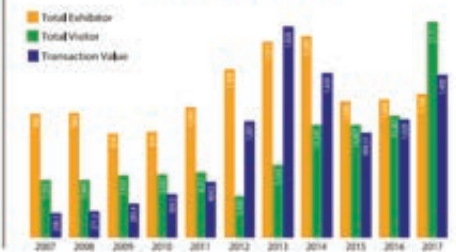
#### TOP 5 TRANSACTION VALUE 2017 By Product

- Coal USD 588 Million
- Coffee USD 91.62 Million
- Essential Oil USD 80.43 Million
- Food & Beverage USD 78.61 Million
- Palm Oil USD 69.58 Million

#### TOTAL TRANSACTION VALUE 2017

USD 1.41 Billion  
 (YoY Growth 37.36%)

#### 2007 - 2017 STATISTICS

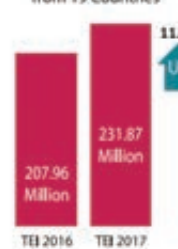


#### TOP 5 TRANSACTION BY COUNTRY 2017 (In Million USD)



#### TOTAL MoU SIGNING

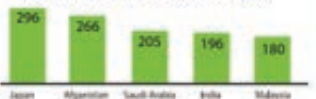
37 Buying Missions from 19 Countries



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EXHIBITORS	VISITORS FROM 125 COUNTRIES	TRANSACTION VALUE

#### TOP 5 VISITOR BY COUNTRY 2017



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- Complimentary use of business lounge at venue
- Free Wi-Fi at venue
- Shuttle Services hotel - venue - hotel

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Jakarta City View



The Venue: ICE - BSD-City



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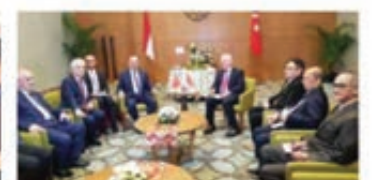
Business Visitors  
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 10 am - 8 pm

#### TARGET VISITOR

**28,000**  
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#### TARGET EXHIBITOR

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# Celebrating the Difference in Silver Lake

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

When a lease ran out on a boutique run by Deborah Brosenne, she didn't want to move out of the Silver Lake/Echo Park neighborhood. So she grabbed a chance to open a store in the area, moving to Sunset Junction by the intersection of Sunset and Santa Monica boulevards in Silver Lake.

"It has a neighborhood feel, but it is super hipster," said Brosenne, the owner of **Silverlake Bungalow**. "There are a

lot of 20-somethings. There are tons of tourists. There are a lot of stores and restaurants."

The area has an independent vibe and a long history. In 1967, Silver Lake was the site of the first documented gay-rights demonstration in U.S. history, according to the City of Los Angeles' Cultural Heritage Commission. A plaque was put up on **The Black Cat** bar in Silver Lake to mark the event.

The neighborhood continues to fly an independent flag

and takes inspiration from a unique joie de vivre. "It's the celebration of being different," said Laura Howe, owner of the **Matrushka** boutique.

It just follows that all the area's boutiques are independents. They range from designer looks sold at the prominent **Mohawk** boutique to streetwear, contemporary and, of course, vintage styles at Silverlake Bungalow, **MRKT Silverlake**, **Matrushka** and **Gingerly Witty**. ●



Interior of store



Nooworks

Taxi CDC

## Silverlake Bungalow

3815 W. Sunset Blvd.  
<https://silverlakebungalow.us>

For more than a decade, Brosenne has designed a label called **Taxi CDC**, which is sold at her Silverlake Bungalow. Among the line's popular items are tailored Oxford shirts. Brosenne reshapes the bulky Oxfords, so the shirts' silhouettes become more form-fitting. The tops' sleeves also have been shortened and rolled up. Retail price points range from \$42 to \$48.

Also popular are overalls made by **Nooworks**. They retail for \$155 and feature prints from California artists. "It fits all body types," Brosenne said. Nooworks also has a store in the Silver Lake area.

Wrap dresses from the brand **Cotton Candy LA** have been selling well at the shop. Retail prices go up to \$125. It's popular because it is casual and offers on-trend prints, Brosenne said.

## MRKT Silverlake

3814 Sunset Blvd.  
<https://mrktla.com>

Kenji Sunaga, co-owner of MRKT Silverlake, opened his 600-square-foot shop in 2013 as a place to mix Japanese and European fashion, California streetwear and gifts. Fast-forward to the present and the merchandising mix continues to fuel the store's business and style.

Top looks include the "First Issue" T-shirt by **032C**, selling for \$75. This Berlin-headquartered brand also publishes an arts-



and-social-criticism magazine.

The "Carl Pant" by **Chapter**, a Costa Mesa, Calif.-based brand, also has been popular. It retails for \$175 and mixes the waist of a mid-20th century trouser with tapered ankles and drawstrings.

Avant-garde fashion has a place at MRKT Silverlake. Japan's **Sulvam** brand has been making a presence with its patch shirt, selling for \$540 and held together by unique stitching. It is bought by those wanting to make a fashion statement.



Chapter



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**Matrushka**  
 3822 Sunset Blvd.  
<https://matrushka.com>

Matrushka's Laura Howe has been making women's clothing in Silver Lake since 2002. She said her clothes can be worn in an office or at a street café in her bohemian neighborhood. Looks range from rompers and T-shirts to tunics, but what is really popular is the scarlet wrap dress retailing for \$180. "It's a wrap dress with extra flair," Howe said.

Fabrics often feature patterns with a sense of humor, including images of fried eggs, florals and geometric shapes, said Kelly Love, Howe's assistant. "It gives women a chance not to wear black."

The shop's motto is "Size Is Relative." A good percentage of the store's traffic is women getting their Matrushka ready-to-wear altered. Locally manufactured is not just a marketing slogan here. Matrushka's clothes are made at an atelier located a two-minute drive from Sunset Junction.



Laura Howe



Erin Lally at right

**Gingerly Witty**  
 1710 W. Sunset Blvd.  
[www.gingerlywitty.com](http://www.gingerlywitty.com)

Erin Lally opened her multi-brand boutique called Gingerly Witty in November 2016 in Echo Park, which is a short drive from Silver Lake. Lally said Echo Park, like Silver Lake, attracts very creative individuals and people inspired by the bohemian life.

"The women here are trendy. They like comfort," Lally said. Her boutique cultivates its own look. "It's not whimsical, but it is playful," she said.

The clothes make concessions to the environment. When it's hot outside, the clothes emphasize keeping cool. Lately dresses, skirt sets and jumpsuits have been popular at the shop.

A top seller has been the summer-fling romper from **Étophe Studios**, retailing for \$88. Also popular are the linen pants by **Le Lis**, retailing for \$78. The Eastern Dreams kimono robe has been selling well. It retails for \$98.



Le Lis



Étophe Studios



Eastern Dreams kimono robe

## What's keeping your apparel business from growing?

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## RFID *Continued from page 8*

Things (IoT) was on the rise. Today, the cost of tags is approximately 10 cents per tag, making it cost-effective for the industry at large.

RFID spans tag makers, sensor hardware, platforms and solutions. We will focus on the retail business solutions where RFID creates a "smart product" delivering information, promotions, recommendations, as well as identification and location services.

Luxury brands are embedding technology into their products to identify that a unique item is authentic while mainstream retailers are focused on inventory management, which alone makes the return on investment easy to achieve.

RFID solutions are delivered with the IoT and across the supply chain, streamlining operations, gaining efficiencies, enabling true omni-channel inventory as well as tracking an item from design to delivery and beyond into the hands of the customer for the life of the product. In-store solutions heat-map a store, empower sales associates with

product information, provide real-time inventory for increased sales, replenish back stock, deliver promotions and recommendations, and provide personalized customer experiences.

Retailers are also gaining data analytics for conversion from selling floor to fitting room, tracking product journeys and combining this data with customer data for valuable insights. RFID is also integrated with the interactive technology that powers magic mirrors, digital fitting rooms, kiosks and digitizing the selling floor for customer engagement.

Companies such as **CXIgnited** (with whom I had the privilege to work) was recently acquired by **Mojix**. **CXIgnited** embeds tiny tags inside luxury items including apparel, footwear and leather goods to not only track unique items across the supply chain but also provide authenticity and deliver in-store experiences. **Mojix** hardware and IoT platforms combined with **CXIgnited** solutions provide a comprehensive solution for the luxury and specialty retailer.

**Zebra Technologies** includes enterprise asset intelligence, RFID products and real-time location systems in its product portfolio. **Smartrac** offers scalable products connected

to the IoT that enable businesses to identify, authenticate, digitize and track merchandise through RFID technology.

**Catalyst**, a **Li & Fung** company, offers an end-to-end RFID solution for tagging, inventory, security and customer experiences. **Checkpoint Systems** is a global leader in merchandise availability through RFID offering software, hardware, labels, tags and connected cloud-based solutions. **Impinj** offers a solution platform with **RAIN RFID** connected to IoT inventory and asset tracking, real-time transparency, and item-level visibility and intelligence.

Retailers are experiencing success with RFID. Some recently mentioned in the news include **Lululemon**, a leading vertical athletics retailer, which has improved inventory and

now delivers guest experiences where sales associates locate inventory without leaving the customer's side, resulting in an increase in sales. It also receives products in minutes and can take a full-store inventory in less than an hour.



RFID at work

Specialty retailer **Rebecca Minkoff** launched a limited-edition smart handbag with RFID. Not only is it authenticated, but it also delivers loyalty-program perks and personalized promotions to the owner as well as recommendations and invitations to private events. In addition, it utilizes smart mirrors, digital concierge walls and self-checkout to enhance the customer experience.

Leading department-store chain **Macy's** claims RFID had a big impact on sales and profitability, reducing out-of-stocks by 50 percent and increasing revenues.

It's clear that the business benefits of RFID are plentiful. It can streamline highly manual and labor-intensive processes in the warehouse and in-store for picking, packing and receiving by retailers, achieving 99.95 percent inventory accuracy. Retailers enjoy decreased stock-outs, increased sales, real-time accurate visibility and a better customer experience. ●

*Paula Levy is the Chief Strategy Officer for Demand Worldwide. She is a business-technology strategist whose focus is assisting retailers and brands in transforming their marketing and customer-engagement strategies with the adoption of new technologies and business practices.*

## RETAIL SALES

### National Retail Federation Boosts Its 2018 Forecast

The **National Retail Federation** revised its 2018 economic forecast, saying retail sales are expected to increase by at least 4.5 percent this year compared with 2017 after an earlier forecast saying retail sales would increase 3.8 percent to 4.4 percent, said Jack Kleinhenz, the NRF's chief economist.

"There are many factors that can impact our forecast, but our overall outlook is optimistic," Kleinhenz said. "Spending was weaker than expected at the beginning of the first quarter, but it has grown more rapidly since then, and we continue to anticipate strong sales during the second half of 2018."

U.S. retail sales have increased every month since November 2009, when the American economy started emerging from a recession. With the exception of a 90-day period at the beginning of 2010, every month's retail sales have posted year-over-year increases. The NRF's revised forecast examines retail sales, personal income and consumption. It excludes car sales, gas-station revenues and restaurants.

In July, retail sales were up 4.9 percent over the same period last year, according to the NRF. Online sales were strong with a 11.3

percent year-over-year gain while clothing and clothing accessories stores saw their sales grow by 5.4 percent compared to July 2017.

Retail sales have been helped by a low unemployment rate of 3.9 percent. Consumer confidence continues to be strong, said Lynn Franco, director of economic indicators for **The Conference Board**, which produces a Consumer Confidence Index.

"Consumers' assessment of present-day conditions improved, suggesting that economic growth is still strong. However, while expectations continue to reflect optimism in the short-term economic outlook, back-to-back declines [in consumer sentiment] suggest consumers do not foresee growth accelerating," she said in a statement.

Kleinhenz agreed that there is some economic turbulence on the horizon, which includes threats of imposing tariffs on Chinese imports. "Despite this upgrade in our forecast, uncertainty surrounding the trade war and higher-than-expected inflation due in part to increased oil prices could make consumers cautious during the fall season," he said.

—Andrew Asch



## Irvine Spectrum Unveils Its Big Expansion Project

The Irvine Spectrum shopping center just got bigger.

The retail spot in Irvine, Calif., recently completed a \$200-million project to construct four new buildings and create new park spaces at the sprawling mall.

The new structures house a slate of stores opening Aug. 18, said Butch Knerr, president of the Irvine Company Retail Properties, which owns the Irvine Spectrum.

"This major reinvestment elevates the center's visitor experience and underscores our long-term commitment to enhancing the Orange County retail landscape," Knerr said in a statement.

New stores scheduled to open include the first flagship store for **Stance**. The San Clemente, Calif.-headquartered brand is best known for raising the fashion profile of socks in action-sports stores and making the formerly second-tier category an



COURTESY IRVINE SPECTRUM

important fashion statement.

Also scheduled to open are **UnAffected**, a women's clothing boutique; **The Denim Lab**; **Concrete Rose**; and a new flagship store for **H&M**. Later this year, **Brigade LA** will reopen at the Irvine Spectrum. It used to have a boutique across the street from **LA Live** in downtown Los Angeles. Italian men's brand **SST&C** is slated to open a store at the mall in 2019.

As part of the expansion, the Irvine Spectrum will unveil new courtyards and open spaces, the Luckey Climber play area/art installation for children, and lawns and seating areas for shoppers to hang out in and rest in between shopping trips.

The Irvine Spectrum is known for its giant Ferris wheel, seen from the 405 freeway, and an ornate carousel. The retail center is anchored by **Nordstrom**, **Macy's** and **Target**.—*Andrew Asch*

## Hyosung to Bring High-Performance and Sustainable Technologies to Munich Fabric Start

During the **Munich Fabric Start** fair, which will be held Sept. 4-6, **creora** brand manufacturer **Hyosung** will launch its new line—**creora Fit<sup>2</sup>**. The new fabrics from the world's largest spandex producer will feature a second-skin fit, offering 360-degree comfort to meet consumer demand and use a creora eco-soft low-heat set spandex. The four-way stretch characteristics of creora eco-soft reduces shrinkage and yields better recovery for smart denim.

"For 2019-2020, we see sustainability and performance as key trends in the denim market, along with new garment designs," Mike Simko, global marketing director for Hyosung, said in a statement.

Creora Fit<sup>2</sup> four-way stretch will afford greater comfort by MIPAN aqua-X and askin cooling technologies. For greater durability, this innovation will

also include MIPAN robic high-tenacity nylon, which offers greater tear resistance and tensile strength.

Through its creora eco-soft fiber, Hyosung will bring greener options to denim manufacturing, as it will reduce the strain on valuable energy resources during the finishing process.

"We offer creora eco-soft low-heat set spandex for sustainability as less energy is required in finishing, and it can be used in for new styling options," Simko explained. "Smart denim, with the addition of functional yarns for enhanced performance, is of interest for added value to the consumer."

For greater comfort and a softer hand, creora eco-soft can be paired with other fibers including organic cotton and **Tencel** and a new option for woven and knit denim manufacturing.

—*Dorothy Crouch*

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The image shows a grid of classified ads from Apparel News. The ads are organized into columns and rows, each with a header and a brief description of the job or service. The ads include positions like 'Pattern Maker', 'Production Buyer', 'Assistant Designer', and 'Real Estate' listings. The grid is a preview of the content available on the website.

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