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Destination: Denim City Los Angeles

By Dorothy Crouch Associate Editor

Denim City is an impressive educational institution that has a jean school that incorporates a three-year denim-development program to train people in all aspects of the blue-jeans industry with courses, workshops, access to the showrooms of world-renowned denim designers and a retail space for consumers.

With so much concentration on denim and blue jeans, one would assume that Denim City is located in Los Angeles, the world's denim manufacturing center. But it's not. It is located in Amsterdam.

Denim City was founded in 2014 as a collaboration between the **House of Denim Foundation** and denim leaders with a mission to improve production through cleaner, more sustainable and less pollutive methods.

Now some blue-jeans veterans in Los Angeles are working toward developing a similar initiative and asking, "Why has this taken so long to bring it here?"

➔ Denim City page 3

Apparel Production in Mexico Will Change Slightly Under NAFTA 2.0

By Deborah Belgum Executive Editor

The renegotiated free-trade deal between the United States and Mexico has a new name and a new set of rules that will make it a little more difficult to manufacture apparel in Mexico.

From what trade experts know, the changes for apparel in the new free-trade accord, now being called the United States–Mexico Trade Agreement unless Canada decides to continue negotiating, aren't draconian. That is probably because the United States doesn't have a trade deficit with Mexico when it comes to apparel and textiles under the current North American Free Trade Agreement.

We export about \$8 billion a year in apparel and textile products—mostly fabric and other raw materials—and import about \$5 billion.

But still, the full details of the accord haven't been revealed

➔ NAFTA page 3

FASHION TEMPO

Harmony and color were front and center in the Resort collection created by Trina Turk, known for her styles that are always colorful. For more looks, see page 6.

INSIDE

Where fashion gets down to businessSM

7



8

Guess's second-quarter results ... p. 2

New Macy's pop-up stores ... p. 2

Forever 21's new AI e-commerce feature ... p. 4

Made in America Resources ... p. 9

Guess Stores in the U.S. Make Major Improvements During Its Second Quarter

Victor Herrero, a Spaniard who had worked for **Inditex** for more than a decade, came on board three years ago as the new chief executive of **Guess? Inc.** to turn things around.

With the recently reported second-quarter results for fiscal 2019, he felt he was finally accomplishing his mission as same-store sales for Guess locations in the Americas as well as e-commerce increased 3 percent during the quarter and all business segments are expected to be profitable this year. "I see the Americas retail joining the turnaround in the company and a return to profitability after two consecutive years of losses," he said during an Aug. 29 conference call reporting the company's financial results.

The company has aggressively worked to reduce the rents for U.S. stores, closed unprofitable stores and uncluttered the merchandise inside the stores. "You can get into the store and see it all the way back," said Chief Financial Officer Sandeep Reddy. "It is a simple and seamless shopping experience for the consumer, and that is making an impact. We are seeing the first positive comps in eight years."

The Guess consumer continues to be the Gen Z or millennial consumer who wants a sexy, cool look.

Since Herrero came on board, Guess has embarked upon an aggressive campaign of hiring influencers and celebrities to publicize its product (think Jennifer Lopez) and

has been quite active in social media, particularly on **YouTube** and **Instagram**.

The results for the second quarter showed that net earnings were up 68 percent to \$25.5 million compared with \$15.2 million during the same period last year and net revenue increased nearly 14 percent to \$645.9 million compared with \$568.3 million during the prior-year quarter.

Particularly strong was revenue growth in Asia and Europe, where Guess continues to expand by working with the Chinese e-commerce site **Tmall**, run by the **Alibaba Group** and opening a new 625,000-square-foot distribution center in the eastern part of the Netherlands.

While revenues in the Americas were up

in single digits, they were booming in Asia and Europe. Europe revenues increased 22.2 percent in U.S. dollars while retail comp sales including e-commerce was up 5 percent. In Asia, revenues jumped 32 percent in U.S. dollars and retail comp sales including e-commerce expanded 17 percent in U.S. dollars.

Product consistency has been a boon for the company. Trends that are resonating in the stores, Reddy said, were print mixes that were bold and bright, feminine dressing, destroyed denim, embroidered denim as well as denim with special washes. For the upcoming season, the company is developing eco-friendly fabrics. While denim is very popular, activewear is a very important part of the trends.—*Deborah Belgum*

Macy's Rolling Out Pop-Up Shops Around California

Macy's is getting into the pop-up shop business. Emerging and new brands are encouraged to pitch the department-store chain to display their merchandise in this new venture.

Earlier this year, the department-store giant rolled out the pop-up store concept called **The Market @ Macy's** at 10 locations, including its flagship Herald Square location in New York City.

In California, it also opened pop-ups at locations including the **Hillsdale Shopping Center** in San Mateo, Calif., and in Orange County at the **Westminster Mall**. In October, **The Market @ Macy's** is scheduled to open a 1,000-square-foot pop-up space at **Westfield Century City** in Los Angeles'

Century City neighborhood.

On its website, Macy's invites brands to exhibit at **The Market**. In exchange for a one-time fee, Macy's provides small spaces to new brands where they can promote their product at a section staffed by the store's sales personnel.

Macy's will provide sales data to the exhibiting companies as well as build and take down the booth areas. Participating brands will keep 100 percent of their sales, according to Macy's.

Brands exhibiting at the Westfield Century City pop-up will be announced before the market opens in October.

Brands exhibiting at **The Market** in the Westminster Mall include **Non-Blonde**

clothing, **Sutra Beauty** footwear, **Piperwai** natural deodorant and **Joriki**, a yoga-clothing brand.

According to Hal Lawton, Macy's president, **The Market @ Macy's** is part of a new look for the retailer. "Macy's is in the experience business. We're always looking for new formats that allow our customers to discover and connect with our products and services in-store in a way that drives

engagement with our brand," Lawton said in a statement.

For the past couple of years, the department-store giant has been experimenting with new concepts and rolling out new ventures, which include the off-price division **Macy's Backstage**. It also has leased out space to other retailers such as **Lids**, which has sold T-shirts, jerseys and caps of professional sports teams.—*Andrew Asch*

Major Executive Departures at Parent Company of Men's Wearhouse

Tailored Brands Inc., the Fremont, Calif., parent company of several menswear-store chains, said its chief executive as well as its president and chief operating officer are leaving.

The company announced on Aug. 28 that Doug Ewert, the chief executive, was leaving at the end of September, when he was scheduled to retire, and Bruce Thorn, its president and chief operating officer, was departing Aug. 31 to pursue other opportunities.

In a separate announcement the same day, Tailored Brands said it would have an \$8.1 million net loss for the second quarter of fiscal 2018, which will be reported on Sept. 12.

Ewert had been the company's CEO since June 2011 and was also a member of the company's board of directors. He will be stepping down from the board, and Dinesh Lathi, a non-executive chairman of the board, will become

executive chairman.

While Ewert was the CEO, Tailored Brands' revenues grew from \$2.4 billion a year to \$3.3 billion. "We have a compelling business with brands that can win in today's market, and I believe that now is the right time to begin the succession process to hand over the reins to new leadership," Ewert said in a statement.

In April, Tailored Brands announced it refinanced a \$900 million loan due in June 2021, extending its maturity date to April 2025. Before refinancing, Tailored Brands made a \$93.4 million prepayment on its existing term loan.

Tailored Brands is headquartered in the San Francisco Bay area, but its main operations are in Houston. The company's other brands include **Jos. A. Bank**, **Joseph Abboud**, **Moore's Clothing for Men** and **K&G**.—*A.A.*

Moss Adams Resurrects Its MAFI Award

After a two-year hiatus, the Moss Adams Fashion Innovator award will return with the coveted honor being presented on Oct. 6 at the opening night of **LA Fashion Week** at the **Petersen Automotive Museum**.

The MAFI is given every year to a California-based apparel company that has in the past 12 months exemplified creativity and innovation from design, to marketing and commerce, noted Martin Hughes, the national practice leader for apparel at **Moss Adams** who will be presenting the award on behalf of the accounting firm. The award includes \$5,000 worth of Moss Adams services.

The last MAFI was given in 2016 to **Rails**, a global lifestyle brand launched by Jeff Abrams in 2008. The presentation took place at the annual October fashion show organized by **Fashion Business Inc.** at **Union Station** in downtown Los Angeles. FBI disbanded in 2017, and Moss Adams had been searching for a new fashion-week presenta-

tion partner. Other winners of past awards include **Frankie B**, **Nally and Millie**, **AS by DF** and **Petro Zillia**.

"Finding the right partner to fulfill our goal of giving back to the industry and honoring innovation was a lengthy process, and we are thrilled to have selected LAFW for this year's award," Hughes said.

LA Fashion Week, organized by Arthur Chipman, held its first fashion show at Union Station several years ago and now has a permanent location at the Petersen Automotive Museum. This year, its five days of runway shows will take place Oct. 6–10.

"LA Fashion Week represents cutting-edge designers from all over the world who aspire to be part of that West Coast renaissance happening within the creative community," Chipman said. "Moss Adams has been one of the biggest supporters of that very idea, and we're proud to have their support."—*D.B.*



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Denim City *Continued from page 1*

Many of these leaders set the foundation for premium-denim heritage brands and have been at the forefront of cleaning up the industry to transition toward more efficient, less toxic production.

"I am on the board of Denim City in Amsterdam," said **Genious Group** founder and Chief Executive Officer Adriano Goldschmied, who is the co-founder of the Italian apparel brand **Diesel** and for years worked for premium-blue-jeans label **Citizens of Humanity**.

"The idea—and promoting the idea—made them the capital of the world's denim," he said. "In LA, we missed that energy. I would like to make a Denim City in LA."

During a West Coast tour in August, which included stops at **Liberty Fairs** in Las Vegas and a pop-up event at the **Rose Bowl** in Pasadena, Calif., House of Denim Foundation founders James Veenhoff and Mariëtte Hoitink brought their **Indigo Embassy** initiative to the United States. Gathering with denim-industry leaders, government officials and press during the **Ace Hotel** meeting on Aug. 16, the pair discussed the need for a Denim City initiative in Los Angeles.

"What we are looking for is local collaboration with the local school and community in Los Angeles, which has the heritage,"

Hoitink said. "Amsterdam is a good example of how working together and getting education, industry and consumers on the same page can make a brighter blue."

Hoitink wants to work with leaders who have pushed for environmentally safe apparel manufacturing and been key to the city's apparel industry, including Goldschmied, **Marithé + François Girbaud's** Francois Girbaud and **Atelier & Repair's** Maurizio Donadi.

"There is no other place in the world that has the legacy of denim," Donadi said as he addressed a room full of his peers at the Ace Hotel. "Our responsibility toward Los Angeles is not the status quo. It's not to keep things as it is. It's to create an industry that is clean, that is creative and innovative and help the public socially and philosophically."

While Amsterdam's Denim City includes the **Jean**

School, Hoitink feels that working with existing fashion schools in Los Angeles to create greater educational opportunities would be ideal. The organization has already partnered with New York City's **Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT)** to create an exchange program every January that allows students from both cities to learn about the local denim industries.

"We go to New York for one week," Mira Copini, coordinator of Amsterdam's Jean School explained. "Our students work with students from FIT, they do a denim project together, then they all fly back to Amsterdam and they have a week



The Aug. 16 meeting at the Ace Hotel in downtown Los Angeles

in Amsterdam where they work together again on the same project. At the end, they present the project."

The Amsterdam school offers a three-year course for Dutch-language speakers, which began before Denim City in 2012 with 20 students and recently included a class of 50 graduates in July.

There are also short programs for industry professionals whose companies sponsor their trips and a yearlong program for international students, which is administered over 40 weeks and has included students from the United States, United Kingdom, South Africa, Sweden, Pakistan, Korea,

Brazil, India, Germany and Italy.

"It is not our idea to open a Jean School in Los Angeles. However, if there would be one it has to be raised from the city's existing fashion schools," Copini said. "The answer toward a brighter blue in Los Angeles can only be found in Los Angeles and answered by the Los Angeles industry and fashion schools together."

Fashion students at one Los Angeles school will not have to wait long to explore Amsterdam's Denim City. A fixture in the fashion community for nearly 50 years, the **Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising (FIDM)** is now in its second year of offering an associate's degree in the Business of Denim. The program includes a trip to the major denim regions of Tokyo and Fukuyama, Japan, and the Netherlands and is timed for students to experience **Denim Days**, the House of Denim-produced event that celebrates denim Oct. 22–28.

"So many brands are designed there [Amsterdam]. We visit Denim City," Barbara Bundy vice president of education, said. "They do some workshops and we've never been able to fit that into our schedule. We keep talking about some type of collaboration in the future."

While there is talk about a Denim City in Los Angeles, the organization is opening **Denim City São Paulo** in Brazil in 2019. In December, the consul general of the Netherlands, Gerbert Kunst, will organize a pop-up embassy that could potentially

forge a stronger connection between the denim industries in Amsterdam and Los Angeles.

"As consul general, I will help open doors where necessary," he said. "We look forward to working together with Dutch and American creatives to help them exchange thoughts and ideas and build their business." ●



From left: Gerbert Kunst, Adriano Goldschmied, Mariëtte Hoitink and James Veenhoff

NAFTA *Continued from page 1*

and probably won't be released for at least another month as Congress examines the terms of the renegotiated deal, announced Aug. 27.

What is known about the trade agreement comes from a fact sheet previously distributed by the U.S. Trade Representative's office, which said the U.S. government wanted to require that sewing thread, pocketing fabric, narrow elastic bands and coated fabric, when used in apparel and other finished products, come from the free-trade region to qualify for duty-free benefits. Under the previous NAFTA deal, those raw materials could come from any region in the world.

One big question mark is whether trade-preference levels would be altered, allowing for some non-regional yarns and fabric to be used when producing garments within the free-trade area while still receiving duty-free status.

In previous negotiations, U.S. representatives—with the backing of the U.S. textile industry—had proposed eliminating TPLs. In the U.S. Trade Representative's fact sheet, it said the Trump administration did want to limit rules that allow for some use of non-NAFTA inputs in textile and apparel trade, but it didn't go into specifics.

"They [the U.S. trade negotiators] have been pretty silent on TPLs," said Julie Hughes, the president of the **U.S. Fashion Industry Association**, a Washington, D.C., trade group representing apparel importers and retailers. "And that has been one of the major concerns for us. I have heard different things from different people who say there will only be minor changes."

But no one is sure about the future of TPLs. Tom Gould, senior director, customs and international trade, at the international law firm **Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg**, said the companies he works with doing production in Mexico plan to use the TPLs as long as possible until the specifics of a new trade deal are implemented.

If they can't use those TPLs—allowing a certain amount of fabric from countries such as China and South Korea for duty-free production—they will have to start using more regionally produced fabrics or move their production to other

countries to keep their costs low. "Fortunately, my clients are not panicking because for a long time I have recommended that companies be agile and not put their eggs in one basket," he said.

But there are several apparel companies in Los Angeles, he said, that are doing 100 percent of their production in Mexico and should be concerned about changes under NAFTA 2.0.

The little things

For years, sewing thread and pocket linings under the Dominican Republic–Central America Free Trade Agreement have had to come from regional sources, but that was not the case under NAFTA.

So, integrating those rules into the new free-trade agreement with Mexico shouldn't be a huge problem as long as there is enough supply to go around.

Daniel Barcenas, who previously worked in sourcing with **Hudson** jeans and **Fortune Fashions** and now runs his own consulting company called the **Barcenas Sourcing Group**, believes there will be an immediate gap between the amount of regional sewing thread available and the demand by factories. "**American & Efird** makes some thread in the United States, but it is not enough," he said.

American & Efird, the largest sewing-thread manufacturer in the United States, has five plants in North Carolina and one plant in Mexico.

Les Miller, the chief executive officer at American & Efird, said that most Mexican apparel factories currently are using regional sewing thread because it streamlines the production process. When it comes time to export their products to the United States, it makes life easier and the importing process more efficient when you don't have to explain where your non-regional sewing thread came from. "There is going to be little change as far as I know," he said.

Gail Strickler, the former assistant U.S. trade representative for textiles under the Obama administration and now president for global trade at **Brookfield Associates** in Washington, D.C., is more concerned about pocket linings.

In the past, apparel factories have often used fabric scraps left over from production to make pocket linings. With the new regional requirement, apparel manufacturers will have to verify that those scraps come from regionally made fabric instead of Asian or Central American fabrics.

"This regulation doesn't allow you to use waste material. You will have to trace where it comes from," Strickler said. "Pocket linings are a great place to recycle material."

The timetable

The Trump administration is scheduled to submit the United States–Mexico Trade Agreement to Congress on Aug. 31 to give them 90 days to examine the agreement under something called the Trade Promotion Authority, which allows for expedited congressional consideration of trade agreements struck by the executive branch.

"This is a chance for Congress to review the free-trade agreement and schedule briefings," said Steve Lamar, executive vice president of the **American Apparel & Footwear Association**, who is on all of the congressional advisory committees that will start reviewing the trade pact 30 days after it is submitted to Congress.

Once the advisory committee reviews take place, businesses and the public will have a better idea of what is actually in the free-trade agreement.

The big question is whether Canada will wrap up negotiations in time to be part of the accord, which first went into effect in 1994 and opened up the borders for trade between Canada, Mexico and the United States.

President Trump has threatened to keep Canada out of the pact if it doesn't agree to some of the United States' demands.

But few people want to see Canada left out. Rick Helfenbein, president and chief executive of the **AAFA**—a trade group in Washington, D.C., that represents hundreds of apparel, footwear and sewn-products companies—said it is mandatory that Canada remain in the free-trade deal.

"It is essential that the updated agreement remain trilateral," he said. ●

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TECHNOLOGY

Forever 21 Unveils AI Search Engine With Visual Angle for Shoppers

Technology company **Donde Search** recently partnered with **Forever 21** to introduce a visual search and navigation system, which the retailer said has boosted its sales.

Shoppers visiting www.forever21.com and its mobile home page will find this new search engine in the standalone "Discover Your Style" module.

Shoppers no longer have to type a fashion term into a search bar. Instead, they can click on an icon that represents the features they want in an outfit, including the length of a skirt, the color of a shirt or the type of neckline.

Donde's search engine provides images of millions of styles, and shoppers can use the icons to find the specific item they want in seconds, said Liat Zakay, chief executive officer and founder of Donde Search, which is headquartered in New York City but runs a research and development office in Tel Aviv.

"We allow a more relevant recommendation system," Zakay said. "Donde offers levels of granularity when shopping. When looking for a dress, the shopper can find similar dresses with different lengths, sleeve

styles, patterns or cuts."

The use of icons, not words, on Donde's search engine gives retailers an increased opportunity to sell goods globally.

Forever 21 started testing "Discover your Style" in May with dresses and tops. The retailer saw an increase in sales conversions and a 20 percent increase in average purchase value for the two test categories, said Alex Ok, Forever 21's president.

Visuals were key to the program's success. "Visual-search technology bridges the gap between the convenience of online shopping and the rich discovery experience of traditional retail by enabling our customers to search for clothing in the same way they think about it—using visuals, not words," Ok said in a statement.

While Donde released a popular consumer app in 2014, it wasn't until earlier this year that it released a business-to-business app, which Forever 21 started testing. Donde hopes to work with other retailers with this business-to-business app, which uses a proprietary algorithm and artificial intelligence.—*Andrew Asch*

NEWS

Hybrid Apparel Names New CEO

Hybrid Apparel, the Cypress, Calif., company that does all kinds of casual clothing, announced it has a new chief executive.

Taking over the top spot at the more than 20-year-old company is David Lederman, who was the chief operating officer and is now stepping up to be the new CEO. He replaced Jarrod Dogan, the company's founder, who will be working with the company's board of directors to focus on acquisitions and further strengthen Hybrid's relationships with studios, licensors, retailers and other partners.

Dogan founded the company in 1997 in the back of a print shop in East Los Ange-

les. It quickly expanded from a small T-shirt supplier to a full-service apparel house, designing and distributing branded, licensed and private-label apparel to a diverse retail base.

In 2014, **Altamont Capital Partners** in Palo Alto, Calif., made a strategic investment in the company.

Last year, Hybrid Apparel acquired childrenswear maker **Evy of California**, which used to be headquartered in downtown Los Angeles. Hybrid, through its acquisition of **JMJD Ventures**, owns **Junkfood Clothing** in Culver City, Calif.—*Deborah Belgum*

Calendar

Sept. 6

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

IFJAG

Stewart Hotel
New York
Through Sept. 9

Imprinted Sportswear Show
Orange County Convention Center
Orlando, Fla.
Through Sept. 8

Dallas Total Home & Gift
Dallas Market Center
Dallas
Through Sept. 8

New York Fashion Week
Spring Studios
New York
Through Sept. 12

Style Fashion Week
The Manhattan Center
New York
Through Sept. 9

Sept. 7

Denver International Western/English Apparel and Equipment Market
Denver Mart
Denver
Through Sept. 9

Kingpins
HCDC Hangzhou Creative Design Center C-Box
Hangzhou, China

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
Javits Center
Through Sept. 17

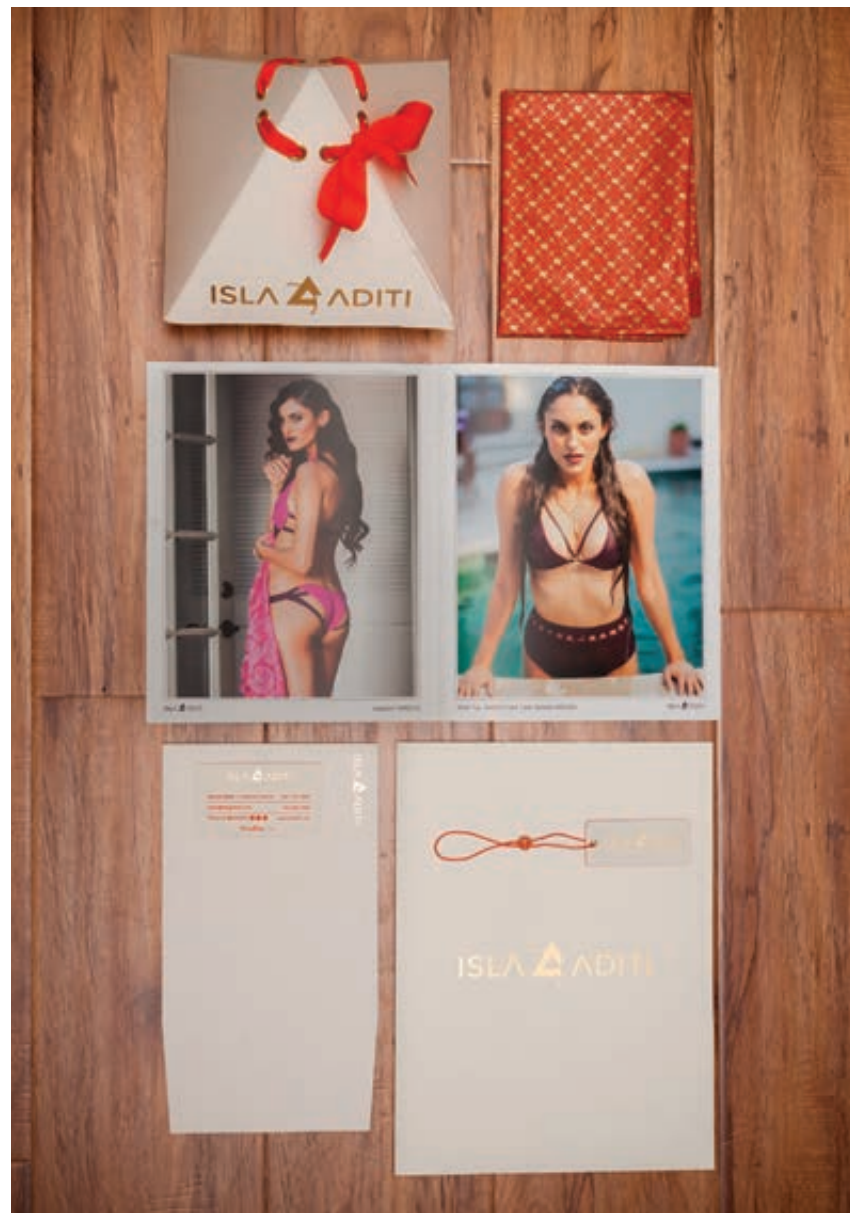
There's more
on ApparelNews.net.

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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Paradise Ranch Expands With a New Versatile Division

When Kris Goddard started designing swimwear for her Paradise Ranch Designs brand, she was inspired by a solution to an age-old problem. "Swimwear has ignored a huge demographic of women of all ages who don't feel comfortable baring it all," she says.

"I'm sensitive to areas of concern that women may have about their bodies, and I find solutions for them in figure-flattering designs that camouflage the negative and accentuate the positive."

To that end, she offers elegant knee-length boardshorts in mesh or solid fabrics. Bottoms that feature a lower leg cut front and back. In her collections, Goddard has enticing transparent jackets, draped bottoms, full-length bodysuits, wispy dusters. The look is fashionable and fresh, the collection unique in its goal to marry stylish design with problem-solving silhouettes.

And in that, Goddard, a former fit model, is brilliantly exploring a burgeoning market as aging baby boomers refuse to

compromise their desire for style. "In the past, 'more coverage' translated to frumpy or matronly," Goddard says. "My line is anything but that. I've looked at every possible issue and found ways to make them look sexy and attractive."

For Goddard, the past year has been both a time to educate buyers about this potentially lucrative market but also to listen and respond to retailers about their customers' desires, leading to a broadening of Paradise Ranch's offerings.

"I think we've evolved some," she says. "Our brand has expanded to a different level. We started out as a niche market of swimsuits with more coverage. But we had so many requests from buyers who loved our prints and styles but thought their customers wanted to show more. So we accommodated that. Now we've expanded to include a more revealing side to the brand while we're keeping our original concept as well."

Both lines are marketed under the Paradise Ranch name for the moment, and her boutique clients often are carrying both lines. "I'm using the same prints, the same styles, just doing a more revealing version of it," Goddard explains. "The women who want more coverage still get the same cool, trendy, fashion-forward look that the revealing suits are getting."

That means a plunging neckline on the revealing suit will be covered by illusion mesh on the coverage suit. Other revealing suits will have higher legs and lower backs and will be sleeveless. There is a new, skimpier triangle bikini set in prints and solids. "The revealing suits are still sophisticated," she notes.

All the suits can be paired with complementary toppers, jackets, pants, and coverups, either in solids or

Paradise Ranch's notable prints—a fact that is critically important to Goddard, who is adamant that her multi-piece collections work together beach to boardwalk. "You can slip out of the coverups very easily and jump in the ocean," she says. "That, I think, people find very appealing. It makes it far more valuable than just a swimsuit you wear a few times a year."

Paradise Ranch, which is 100 percent made in the USA, is known for its bold tropical prints, and this latest collection, which features five custom-made prints, is no different. Fifty Shades of Flamingo in shades of pink and coral—"this print will fly"—Banana Leaf in two colorways, and burnt orange Crane Flower, show up in large and small prints, on transparent and opaque fabrics ranging from spandex to mesh.

New silhouettes include three bandeau tops; the High Tied tied-shoulder one-piece; the Out of the Office duo of a long-sleeve crop top and high-waist skirt; a sleeveless version of the bestselling Got Your Back, which has

higher legs and a lower back; the Sheer Plunge racer-back one-piece with a deep-plunging neckline; the Basic Instinct bandeau with both a high-waist and bikini bottom; and the Tarzan Loves Jane bandeau top and draped bottom. These join halters and retro tops, board walkers and boy shorts, skirts and pants in meshes and solids, and diaphanous long dusters and crop jackets in prints or mesh. The collection is varied and deep, always with "something off the beaten path to give it a little twist."

It's the combination of fabrics and the use of peekaboo mesh or netting to gracefully cover yet reveal the body that makes Paradise Ranch stand out in a sea of in-your-face skimpiness that dominates the swim market.

"We're going to cover all the bases," Goddard says. "Instead of being niche as we were, we've expanded to be more versatile. We're doing what our customer wants, and I really think that, more and more, boutiques and stores are finding they can be versatile as well. There's a huge market out there, and they are opening their minds to it. It's a win-win for both of us."

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FASHION

Trina Turk Reaches for Harmony in Her Resort 2019 Collection

Los Angeles designer Trina Turk is known for her resortwear with a Palm Springs vibe.

So for her upcoming Resort collection, she went all out when it came to boisterously bright floral prints that make you feel as if you were in a California garden.

Turk said her prints are grounded in moody, rich tones and accented with splashes of bright colors. Think pink, viola and lacquer red—sometimes combined with striped accents. There are prints with dark backgrounds and pops of color. Geometric prints made a small showing with a configuration of diamonds and polka dots in various colors.

Women's pants came in several silhouettes—from the more traditional slim-fitting shape to wider legs with cropped configurations.

Dolman-sleeve tops in striped interpretations topped black pants as did a kimono top with contrasting striped sleeves. Flounced sleeves and hemlines as well as fringe and tassels kept the collection interesting.

For the **Mr. Turk** men's collection, designed by Turk's husband, Jonathan Skow, it was all about prints that made a statement.—Deborah Belgun



JONATHAN SKOW



San Francisco Creativity Meets Italian Artistry for Flora Dancia's Sleepwear

By Dorothy Crouch Associate Editor

In June 2017, Elizabeth Spiering launched her luxury sleepwear line with her sister and mother. The San Francisco brand is designed in the Bay Area but relies on Italian fabrics and manufacturing.

Starting out by selling online only, **Flora Dancia** now counts resort boutiques, lingerie retailers and small bricks-and-mortar locations among its partners.

"We partnered with a retail group that works with the **Four Seasons** and other high-end resorts," Spiering said. "I just shipped four boxes to different Four Seasons locations. The brand can be found in the Four Seasons hotels in Orlando, Fla., and in three locations in Hawaii—Lanai City, Honolulu and Waialua.

The family's mission to develop quality sleepwear began from a search for mid- to high-price items for a different option that fell somewhere between the **Gap** and **La Perla**.

While trying to navigate how to create a quality sleepwear brand, Spiering traveled to Europe to explore sourcing options.

"We went to Italy and did some research. Everything [we do] is sourced and manufactured in Italy. We found some great manufacturers and the fabrics were amazing," Spiering said. "The linens are just so divine in Italy. Our linen pieces are selling incredibly well."

Using mostly Italian resources, Spiering has embraced the heritage of the region's artisan work. With its streamlined production process, from design to the embroidered details, Flora Dancia's apparel and sleepwear is made in one of the most fashionable areas of the world.

"We use a graphic-design house in London to create and curate our print stories. Then everything is printed at a print house in Como, Italy. Our manufacturers are all outside of Florence," Spiering said.

Customers are comfortable enough in Flora Dancia's pieces to wear them out of the bedroom as part of a polished yet casual look, which is versatile and perfect for travel.

"In our linen, we offer a collared shirtdress and a more relaxed, woven cover-up piece. Those really are incredible," Spiering explained. "We have some short sets in a woven that are really beautiful, almost a poplin. All of our pajamas are all cotton sateen."

For Fall 2018, Spiering is adding transitional sleepwear that can be paired with jeans, sweaters or jackets as an outfit.

In addition to a tuxedo-stripe pajama with coordinating robe and fresh nightgown design, made of Italian silk, Flora Dancia's next collection will include a camel-colored long cardigan and navy quilted overcoat.

"It's taking sleepwear to the streets, but it's not really streetwear," Spiering said. "It's adding to that comfort at home and warmth of the fall and winter months."

As a Bay Area-based company, Spiering recognizes the importance of her role in the community as an emerging independent brand.

"We have some major, huge, pioneering apparel companies [in the area], but there aren't

many of us who are smaller companies here," she said. "It makes us unique to be headquartered out of San Francisco and manufactured and sourced in Italy."

Boutique owner Marjorie Bower discovered Flora Dancia by reading the Sunday style section in her local newspaper and knew that the designs reflected her clientele's taste.

Bower's boutique in Larkspur, Calif.—**The Lingerie Shoppe**—opened in the 1970s, but she acquired it in 1991 after becoming a customer. The shop is a fixture in her community.

"As an independent store, it's important in today's retail market that you try as hard as you can to stay ahead of the Internet," she said. "I am always on the hunt for something fresh, something new, something that can be in my store that isn't so represented all over the place."

Through Flora Dancia's approach to elegant comfort in loungewear, Bower's customers have found a brand that offers unique pieces with delicate details and superior materials.

"The real big hit was their white linen little nightdress with a cap sleeve—so crisp!" Bower recalled. "I know half the people who bought it were going to put some sandals on and wear it out. So it becomes a perfect travel piece. If you want to sleep in it, sleep in it. If you want to wear it out, wear it out."

For its first anniversary this past June, Flora Dancia decided to show its gratitude and say thank-you by gifting a camisole to each customer who made a purchase during the year.

"It's all about the brand experience. When we send out orders, there is the branded tissue and a reusable sweater bag with our logo and a handwritten note," Spiering said. "It's the details that we have to include in every order."

Wholesaling at \$65 to \$300, Flora Dancia is available in boutiques, select resort partners and at www.floradancia.com. ●



An Italian-silk pajama set from the Fall 2018 collection



An Italian-silk nightgown from the Fall 2018 collection

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MADE IN AMERICA

Major LA Architect Branches Out to Fashion Line for Men

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

Mark Rios is a Los Angeles architect who has worked on high-marquee projects that include building downtown Los Angeles' Grand Park, developing the industrial-chic look of the Row DTLA retail and creative-office center and the upcoming remodel of Los Angeles' Music Center plaza.

In between these multimillion-dollar projects, Rios has managed to squeeze in the creation of a new men's fashion line called **Guillermo**, which is made in Los Angeles. The line's website, wearguillermo.com, was recently unveiled, showing an urban update of the guayabera—a lightweight, open-necked shirt with four patch pockets often worn for social occasions and get-togethers in Latin America.

"It is the polo shirt for Latin America," Rios said. "It has no class structure. It is worn by the poor and the rich." The traditional guayabera shirt was often worn by the architect's father, Guillermo Rios, a surgeon who came from a long line of Mexican ranch owners. The younger Rios wanted to update the shirt for contemporary, urban society.

He talked about his idea to Carl Louisville, the founder of **Guerilla Atelier** in downtown Los Angeles' Arts District, and Louisville encouraged the architect to work on the idea. Later, Louisville joined the brand as a creative director, taking his experience of developing fashion lines with other brands and selling them at his now-shuttered Guerilla Atelier.

In the past, Rios' architecture firm, **Rios Clementi Hale Studios**, located in Los Angeles' Leimert Park, had developed other non-architecture projects, including **Not Neutral**, a line of coffee and tea mugs mostly used in restaurants. It also introduced **Rio Outdoor Furniture**.

Rios said projects that don't require a construction crew help his firm. "It gives our clients confidence," he said of working on projects outside of architecture. "We look at design as a problem-solving process. We are thinking outside of the boundaries in any project. Design work becomes better if it becomes more integrated and more thoughtful."

Rios is deeply invested in the shirting line, Louisville said. "He has the same passion for this as developing multimillion-dollar projects. He's at every meeting. He has a point of view on everything. He wants it to be hugely successful," the creative director said.

The idea behind Guillermo is to figure out how to make a shirt that will fit any situation—work, play or special occasions. Guillermo's updated guayabera, which re-

tails for \$295 and is sold on the company's website, dropped the shirt's traditional embroidery and bright colors. It also tried out a different silhouette. Instead of the traditional boxy guayabera, the new line went for a jacketlike silhouette.

The new look was created by zippers on the shirt's side seams, which can be undone to give the shirt a fuller look or closed for a sleeker style. "It has different ways to transform the shirt according to mood and occasion," Rios said.

The guayabera's traditional large patch pockets became concealed pockets behind the shirt's seams. Pockets are large enough to hold phones and wallets.

During Guillermo's first season, Louisville sold the new collection at his Guerilla Atelier, which closed in 2017. Louisville noted that as many women were buying the shirts as men. With that in mind, Rios hopes in the future to produce silhouettes that will attract more women. One idea was to make longer versions of the shirt, which could be worn as shirtdresses.

The current season of shirting also has slogans embroidered inside the sleeve, just below the wrist. One reads "La Paz Sea Contigo," which in Spanish means "Peace Be With You," Rios said.

"When you extend your hand to greet someone, it is the message transmitted from you to them," Rios said. "Clothing should represent an attitude and point of view. That is the goal of Guillermo."

Plans for the future include expanding the line to include pants and jackets. Eventually, Rios hopes to bring it to the wholesale market. ●



Mark Rios



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The Key to Building a Better Brand Website

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

U.S. online retailers made more than \$100 billion in sales during the first quarter of this year, according to **Adobe Analytics'** Digital Dollar Report.

But it could be a lot better, said Matt Faulk of **Basic**, a creative and experience agency, headquartered in San Diego.

Often, companies have a hard time reaching their business potential online because it's challenging to make their voices heard in the digital realm. Faulk said that brands and companies need to create unique statements to attract viewers and find success online.

Basic has worked on e-commerce projects for **Apple's Beats by Dre** headphones brand, the **Nixon** watch brand and, in 2017, for the **Volcom** actionwear brand. Faulk, who declined to specify the cost of building a site, recently talked about his work with Volcom. He shared a few thoughts on building a better website.

Andrew Asch: What do brands need to do to get noticed online?

Matt Faulk: Online is a place to be different. With brand differentiation comes value and expression. Many brands aren't willing to commit to storytelling efforts. Far too many are satisfied with the **Amazon.com** model of bringing the consumer to the checkout as fast as possible. When it comes to branded experiences, people want to know what a brand stands for. The dot-com experience should bring together culture and community. They should want to connect you for community and commerce;

one supports the other.

AA: What steps do brands need to take online?

MF: Brands need to establish best practices, which means fast load times, mobile-friendly designs, robust search and product filtering. They are common things that are done across sites, and they need to be done well. But brands need to take it one step further.

They need to layer in the brand and bring in the brand's story. That's where video and immersive experiences come in for a differentiated look. It's emotion based. It wins hearts

and minds. It's what gives people a reason to buy brands and pay a premium for them.

A brand should curate culture and be native to where consumers are. With films and videos, brands like **Nike** show how they are living out a brand's mission and purpose. They make a way to experience products that is memorable and captivating at their stores and digitally.

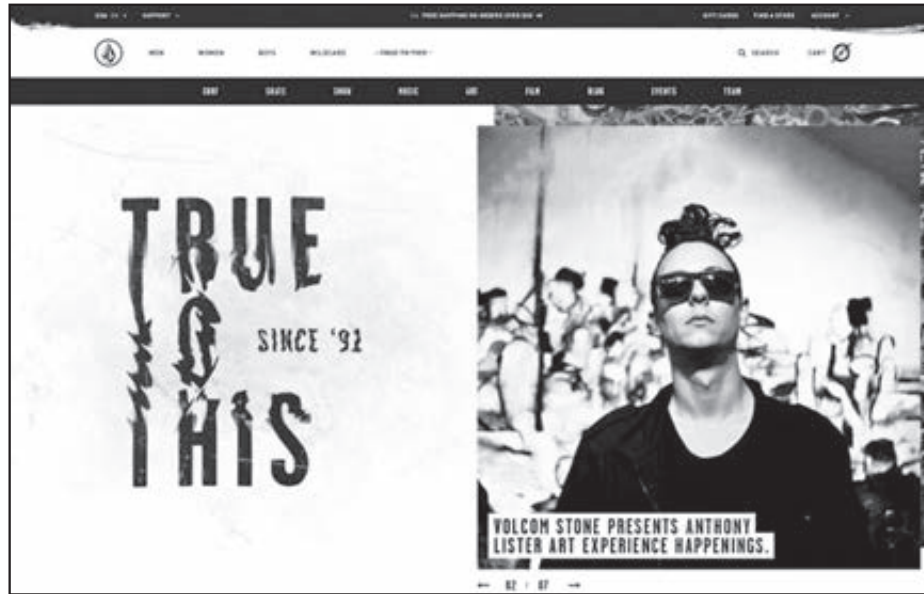
AA: Basic recently worked on the Volcom website. Could you talk about the work you did on Volcom.com?

MF: When you think about a website, e-commerce is a system for telling stories. It's about looking at the core of a brand's personality. Volcom is a major California lifestyle brand in action sports, arts and culture. We wanted to bring the brand's point of view forward and see it away from the beaches.

AA: Volcom.com features surf, skating, snowboarding and videos and music videos. Could you talk more about what you are doing?

MF: You need to focus on doing small things well and bring together details that surprise and delight.

The buttons and other elements aren't all square. They are jagged in form. We also showed little things that brought Volcom's "True to This" attitude to life in pictures of people modeling clothes on the Shop page. We also put some texture on the floor. There's duct tape on the ground. It brought grit and ruggedness to the platform. It is what Volcom should look like. ●



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Products and Services: Kris Goddard's designs for Paradise Ranch deliver what she promises—fresh shapes with a vibrant, youthful appeal yet offering comfortable coverage on the top and bottom. Paradise Ranch goes bold with prints, an array of exuberant tropicals mainly sourced from Italy and France, with solids produced in the United States. The line's success has enabled Goddard to start buying print designs exclusive to Paradise Ranch. Beyond the bright look, Paradise Ranch is also developing a loyal customer base for its smart silhouette choices and Goddard's meticulous attention to fit details. "My collection is

meant to be multifaceted," Goddard notes. "It's more than just swimwear—it's wearable to many places, it's interchangeable, it makes for easy packing. That's the mainstay of what we're doing that makes us different. It's coverage but still sexy." Paradise Ranch Designs has been recently photographed on some of the brightest young Hollywood talent including Miley Cyrus in Vogue, actress Amanda Cerny, singer Ashanti, and entertainer Chloe Lukasiak.

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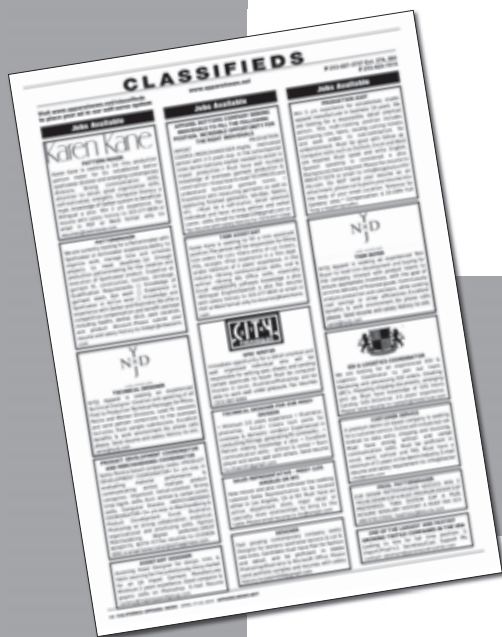
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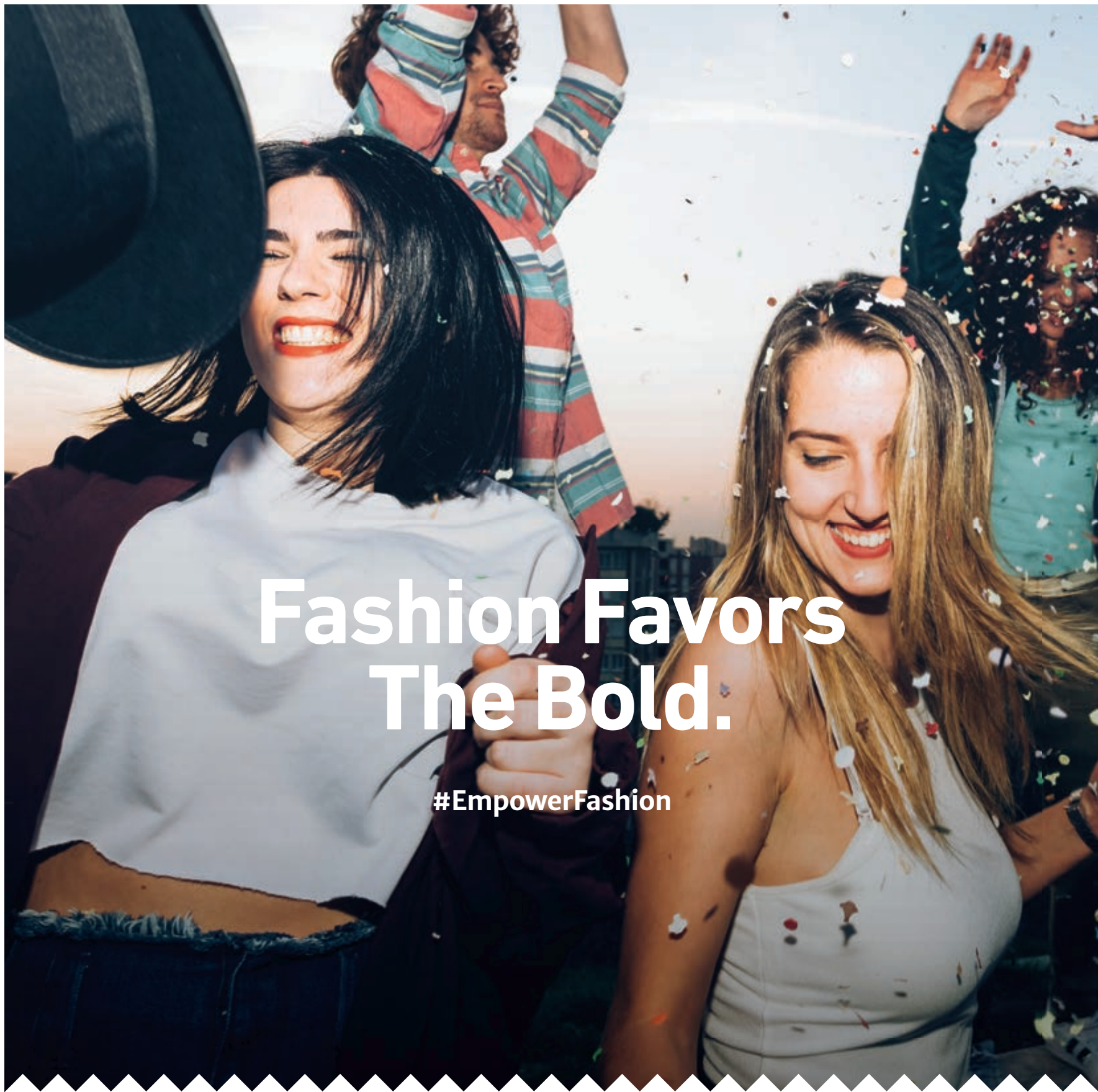
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