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Riding the Wave of Experiential Retail, Skingraft Grows Up and Free Market Expands

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

The **Skingraft** brand was one of the pioneers of high-end fashion retail in downtown Los Angeles, but, after a decade of running the brand's boutique, co-founders Chris and Jonny Cota closed their shop in March. Despite the decision to close Skingraft's doors, the Cota brothers did not lose confidence in bricks-and-mortar business or in the downtown area, where they decided to open a new retail concept called

➔ Experiential page 3

Miami Swim Week 2019 Offers Fresh Takes on Swimwear—and Everything Else

By Dorothy Crouch *Managing Editor*

As designers, brands, buyers and influencers descended upon south Florida for **Miami Swim Week**, there was much competition for business on the trade-event circuit plus newcomers making it to the runway.

On the trade-show scene, **SwimShow** returned for its 37th appearance at the newly revamped **Miami Beach Convention Center** with added offerings but also maintaining its many heritage swim-and-resort brands. Its big news was the launch of a complimentary fashion-runway segment called **Nu Wave Swim** at the **Miami Beach Botanical Gardens** to bring brands to life during Miami nights following trade-show days.

Swim fashion could be found on the **Paraiso Miami Beach** runway located at the **W South Beach** and Collins Park, whose location near the sand was an inspiration for admiring an array of swim styles from sporty designs to elegant swimwear.

After a big move to the Miami Beach Convention Center, **Cabana** still remained committed to maintaining its intimate atmosphere, despite its larger home. The show featured new resort-and-swim styles from many emerging brands in addition to its loyal exhibitors.

At **Hammock**, the focus was on sustainability as management catered to buyers who serve conscientious consumers. Held at the **1 Hotel**, the show included luxury brands that attracted representatives from major high-end retailers.

Making its presence known with a bright, colorful splash, **UBM Fashion** launched its **Destination: Miami** event, which offered an entrance point for many international brands who sought to take on the market in the United States. The event was held at **Faena Bazaar** and brought a more customized approach to swim trade shows.

For more in-depth accounts and styles from Miami Swim Week, see pages 3, 8 and 9.

STYLE ON THE SAND

During Miami Swim Week, the fashion set descended upon the swim-style capital to see fresh looks in Swim and Resort 2020. Once the sun set on days spent at trade shows including SwimShow, Hammock, Cabana and newcomer Destination: Miami, fashionable crowds headed to the runway for Paraiso, Art Hearts Fashion and the launch of Nu Wave Swim. For additional runway coverage, see pages 6–7.

SIMON SOONG

Baes and Bikinis

INSIDE

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Amazon Prime Day Breaks Company Records

Amazon said that it broke its records during the retail giant's recent Prime Day 2019, which was held during a 48-hour period from July 15 to 16. During the sale, Amazon sold more goods to its Prime Members than it sold during Black Friday and Cyber Monday combined, according to the Seattle-headquartered retail giant.

The company declined to state Prime Day revenues in a July 17 statement, but it was estimated that it made \$6.1 billion, which represents an increase of \$2 billion over Prime Day 2018, according to market research firm **IgnitionOne**.

During Black Friday 2018, American shoppers spent \$59.6 billion, a figure that includes physical retail and digital retail, according to estimates by **GlobalData Retail**. Online sales on Black Friday took in \$6.22 billion in online sales, according to **Adobe Analytics**.

During Prime Day 2019, Amazon offered discounts to its Prime Members, which ranged from 50 percent off electronics to 40 percent off vitamins and 15 percent off apparel from the company's house brands including **Lark & Ro**, **Amazon Essentials** and **Goodthreads**.

Prime Day 2019 made a lot of waves, as

Target and **Walmart.com** produced sales to compete against Amazon's sale. Walmart.com offered consumers free shipping if they spent more than \$35 during the sale. Target offered a Summer Faves Sale, which featured kids' T-shirts starting at \$4, men's tees starting at \$5 and women's tees starting at \$6.

Amazon Prime Day was influential enough where it was possible to take a chunk of business from the important Back-to-School season, said Jeff Van Sinderen of financial-services firm **B.Riley FBR**. "Prime customers anticipate this event, and it unleashes some serious demand, including

for Back-to-School. I think most retailers are painfully aware of it," he said. "As long as Prime Day continues to gain momentum, 'I think it might become a permanent change to the landscape, where it pulls forward and compresses a significant piece of Back-to-School business. That business would otherwise have gone to more traditional retailers.'"

Sales were not the only Amazon news made during Prime Day. Amazon warehouse workers protested poor working conditions with a strike at the retail giant's warehouse in Shakopee, Minn. Amazon employees in Germany also participated in a strike.—*Andrew Asch*

Gerber Technology Announces New Executive Appointments

Moving forward with a more customer-centric strategy as it continues to build its position as a leader in innovative integrated technologies and services, Tolland, Conn.'s **Gerber Technology** announced the promotion and hire of new executives.

"Speed and agility have become crucial to success," Gerber Technology Chief Executive Officer Mohit Uberoi said in a statement. "In all the industry sectors we support, technology has become a key enabler in realizing the promise of Industry 4.0. The changes in our leadership team will enable us to sharpen our focus and innovation



Melissa Rogers



Karsten Newbury



Ken Litman

and agility to support our customers."

Formerly serving as **Autodesk's** vice president of subscriber platform engineering and also its senior director of cloud business platforms, Melissa Rogers has accepted the role of Gerber Technology's senior vice president and general manager for the company's software

business. With more than 20 years of leadership experience, Rogers will be responsible for the growth of Gerber's integrated suite of software.

Senior Vice President and General Manager for Software Karsten Newbury will now lead increased focus on digitization as Gerber's chief strategy and digital officer, a newly created role. The position will require Newbury to drive company-wide digital transformation and manage customer-driven initiatives including Gerber's new subscription-based offering (SaaS), IoT-enabled devices, the digital micro-factory concept, and other integrated hardware

and software initiatives.

With 25 years of IT experience, Ken Litman was appointed as Gerber's vice president of information technology after serving as **manrolandGoss Web Systems'** senior director of IT. In his new role, Litman will cultivate innovation through digital projects.

"We are fortunate to expand the skills and knowledge of our leadership team," Uberoi said in a press release. "These leadership changes will help us build on our past successes, drive innovation, and expand our integrated software and hardware portfolio."

—*Dorothy Crouch*

U.S. Unemployment Is Up, But Wages Are Up Too

The U.S. economy got some mixed news this week. First-time unemployment claims rose this week, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. But median weekly earnings of full-time, salaried workers also increased, according to a statement from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

On July 18, the Labor Department announced that initial claims for unemployment insurance for the week ending July 13 was 216,000, which was an increase of 8,000 over the previous week.

But those employed saw their wages increase for the second quarter of 2019, according to a statement released by the BLS

on July 17.

Median weekly earnings for America's 117.6 million full-time wage and salary workers was \$908 in the 2019 second quarter. That was 3.7 percent higher in a year-over-year comparison to the same quarter the previous year.

The BLS broke down wage gains by gender and race. For the 2019 second quarter, women had median weekly earnings of \$814, or 81.4 percent of the median of \$1,000 for men.

Median weekly earnings of white workers was \$933, Asian workers \$1,152, African-American workers \$724 and Hispanic workers \$696.—*A.A.*

Calendar

July 21

Project NY

Javits Center
New York
Through July 23

NY Men's

Javits Center
New York
Through July 23

MRket

Javits Center
New York
Through July 23

Designer Forum NY

London Hotel NYC

New York

Through July 22

California Marketplace

Los Angeles Convention Center
Los Angeles
Through July 24

July 22

NY Women

Javits Center
New York
Through July 24

Texworld USA

Javits Center
New York

Through July 24

DG Expo Fabric & Trim Show

New York
Hudson Mercantile
New York
Through July 23

There's more
on ApparelNews.net.

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

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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SwimShow Launches New Features While Remaining a Trusted Resource

By Nicole Martinez Contributing Writer

This year's **SwimShow**, which took place July 13–16 at the newly revamped **Miami Beach Convention Center**, demonstrated the show's stature among legacy brands. Despite increased competition from other events, some of which were held alongside it in the same venue, SwimShow held its own. Organizers managed to incorporate some of their competitors' trendier tactics while catering to their longstanding clientele, who perhaps prefer a time-honored trade-show format over a curated, heavily **Instagram**-focused event.

"We're in a completely renovated building, and the layout has completely changed, generating a lot of positive feedback among our brands and buyers," said Judy Stein, the longtime organizer of SwimShow and executive director of the **Swimwear Association of Florida**.

Along with the updated format, SwimShow has incorporated several experience-oriented components into the event. A wellness section offers massages, beauty treatments and demonstrations; provides activities such as yoga classes and interactive games; and the creation of **Nu Wave Swim**, a multi-day platform, helps brands showcase their collections in an experiential setting.

"We felt there was a missing element to do something on a more intimate scale," Stein said of the decision to launch Nu Wave Swim, which includes the participation of a variety of influencers, including Seth Browarnik, the founder of the Miami socialite platform **World Red Eye**. "We feel that Nu Wave Swim brings back the excitement, particularly at a moment when influencers are creating buzz and excitement for brands."

Across the board, many of the brands at SwimShow are adapting to the industry's thirst for more-intimate, curated experiences while considering how seasonal shifts and increased demand for inclusive sizing is revolutionizing fashion on a global scale.

Showing its Cruise 2020 collections, **Manhattan Beachwear** showcased brands such as **Trina Turk**, **Kenneth Cole** and **Ralph Lauren** as well as its private label **La Blanca**. Lindsey Shumlas, the newly appointed chief executive officer, discussed the lines' expanded offerings, such as Trina Turk's launch of an inclusive-sizing model, ranging from **XXS** to **XXL**.

"We're focused on body positivity and inclusivity, offering the same pricing and avoiding dumbing down the style of each look," Shumlas said. Trina Turk showcased its Seychelles-inspired swimsuits, rich with texture and dimension,



Gottex booth



A Trina Turk style at Manhattan Beachwear



Trina Turk at Manhattan Beachwear

in retro peacock, orange and berry hues.

Shumlas noted that the company made several key investments to ensure its success at SwimShow this year. "Overall attendance is up for us, and we believe it's because we upgraded our booth and invested in more marketing and public relations around the event," said Shumlas. "In prior years, we had a smaller, more closed-off booth, and this year we created an open-plan format that's more inviting."

Legacy brand **Gottex** made similar adjustments to encourage a more inviting format, offering a classroom-style pre-

sentation within their booth in lieu of a runway show. "This format gives us an opportunity to work closely with our customer, creating the ability to get targeted feedback on each of our styles," the company's incoming president, Karen LeFrierie, said.

Other retailers are noting that seasonal shifts are affecting their business and forcing them to get creative regarding how they might better service their customers. "Winter is being prolonged, and that's having an impact on retailers," said Rose Montoya, the creative lead at **Dippin' Daisies**. Rod Beattie, the creative director of **Bleu/Rod Beattie**, noted that he's responding to the shift by offering an "Early Cruise" line, which delivers in early December.

Considering these changes, most brands at SwimShow continue to see the value of attending the event as an opportunity to touch base with their customers, even if the weekend doesn't end with confirmed orders. "We see the most accounts here," said Meredith Glasser, vice president of sales at **Anne Cole**. In addition to meeting with **Macy's**, **Dillard's** and **Lord & Taylor** along with smaller Caribbean and Mexican accounts, Glasser noted they also had 10 promising walk-ins.

Skipping other trade shows in favor of spending all of her time at SwimShow, Christina Espino, owner of the Texas-based **Glow Tanning & Boutique**, mentioned that she decided to attend the event for its "exclusive focus on swimwear."

"I feel that they have more brands to choose from and they're presenting brands I've never seen before, which is what I strive to offer my customers," she said, noting that she intended to write as much as \$30,000 worth of orders by the end of the show.

Considering the continued strength of SwimShow's platform and its decision to refresh its branding and programming, it's unlikely to feel the effects of seasonal shifts and increased competition. "I really feel like they've injected new energy into the show, and we'll definitely keep coming back," said Beattie. ●

RETAIL

Experiential *Continued from page 1*

Cota by Skingraft.

Located at the **Row DTLA** campus of boutique retail, restaurants and creative office spaces near downtown's Arts District, Cota by Skingraft will rely heavily on experiential retail, Chris Cota said. This sort of retail is focused on retailers developing experiences for consumers, which range from pop-ups and trunk shows to producing galleries and parties.

Concept retail is growing more popular in all categories of selling products, according to Chris Cota.

"The only way for traditional retail to work is it has to be more experiential," he said. "We see this space not only as a store. It's an events space. It's a gallery, a showroom and a gathering spot. [Retail] has to go beyond selling racks of clothing. It's about selling consumers on a concept."

The 2,000-square-foot Cota by Skingraft space will focus on offering a revolving slate of independent fashion brands such as **Bel Kazan**, **Blackfist**, **No>Liste** and **Blamo Clothing**. There will also be a gallery section where a new artist will be featured every six to eight weeks.

When a new creative partner enters the space, Cota by Skingraft will produce an event, which will feature performance art as well as DJs playing underground music. Eventually, Cota by Skingraft vendors are slated to give public talks about their brands at the shop, while Skingraft will maintain a permanent space of 500 square feet in the store. Retail price points will range from \$35 for a cap to \$20,000 for art. Core price points will range from \$200 to \$400.

"This is Skingraft growing up," Chris Cota said. "This way we can support other artists and play off them in a more interesting way."

A destination for retail consumers

Multi-brand retail with an experiential edge is nothing new in Los Angeles. The influential **Fred Segal** boutique compounds started pioneering it in the 1960s and 1970s. Now, a refreshed concept of experiential retail is gaining traction across categories in retail, such as **Macy's** roll out of 36 experiential-focused shop-in-shops it refers to as "Story."

In May, Raan Parton, a co-founder of the Los Angeles-headquartered **Apolis** brand, opened the experiential retail-influenced **Free Market** in Denver within a 12,000-square-foot space located in the Lower Downtown neighborhood. The space launched to offer fashions in sections Parton refers to as "footprints" as well as pop-up experiences from new brands.

"There's a lot of pressure on retailers to do something more with their four walls," Parton said. They thought there was an opening in the market for a new store of development.

The Los Angeles brand **Jenni Kayne** currently runs a home-lifestyle-goods section at Free Market, while Melbourne, Australia's **Aesop** brand features a skincare footprint and New York City apparel label **AYR** runs a women's contemporary fashion environment. Parton and his partners didn't want to stop with apparel and lifestyle retail—they wanted to offer a destination for customers.

During a visit to Free Market, guests will find James Beard Award-nominated chef Kelly Whitaker's restaurant **Brutø** and a coffee counter named **BØH**. Eventually, the shop will also provide space for galleries, performance stages, panel sets and classrooms.

Free Market opened in Denver because an opportunity for a space opened up, but Parton feels that the idea of creating an experience for consumers has legs. In early 2020, he's going to open a 2,800-square-foot space in the **Runway Playa Vista Center**, which is located a short drive away from **Los Angeles International Airport**.

Retail's remix

Experiential retail has its roots in a reaction against mass-marketed products, said Shaheen Sadeghi, chief executive officer of Costa Mesa, Calif.-based **The Lab Holdings**, which developed and ran specialty retail centers **The Lab** and **The**

Camp. Looking for alternatives to mass-marketed goods took on a certain urgency for him when he served as president of the surfwear brand **Quiksilver** in 1990.

Department stores were consolidating and some were going out of business, leaving surf brands slighted by losing business from these partners. Sadeghi took a risk and decided to develop a solution.

The Lab, which opened in 1993, focused on community areas where people could hang out, as well as having smaller, nontraditional retailers. The Camp opened in 2002 with a focus on sustainable goods and organic foods. Both focus on localization, personalization and not homogenization, Sadeghi said. The current era is a boom time for small, crafts-focused businesses familiar to Lab Holdings.

"A lot of people are unhappy with how **Amazon** has given competition to department stores," Sadeghi said. "But it has also opened up gates for small businesses and handcrafted brands to flourish."

Sadeghi forecasts that experiential retail is not a passing trend, with the spirit of discovery keeping it alive. At his properties, leases are kept relatively short at two-to-five-year intervals, allowing new retailers to open, offering a refreshed look. Lifestyle malls, which have grown in popularity, also prioritize keeping their mix of retailers and tenants fresh.

The mall market continues to be troubled, said Paco Underhill, the founder of consultants **Envirosell Inc.**, and the author of books such as "Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping." Experiential retail is no panacea.

"If you ask someone to solve all of a mall's problems by pouring pixie dust and calling it experiential retail, then it is a lost cause," Underhill said. However, experiential retail offers something highly valuable. "Experiential retail starts a process of interacting with people and understanding the market you are serving. It starts a conversation." ●



Opening day at Cota by Skingraft on July 14

A black and white photograph of a city street at night. In the background, there are palm trees and a building with a sign that reads "Hilton Grand Vacations". The foreground shows light trails from moving vehicles on a road. Overlaid on the image is large, bold, white text.

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Mega Fashion Club Says Its Mega Wrap Will Live Large

The activewear market continues to grow on a foundation of well-known styles such as leggings, sweats, racer-back tops and track jackets.

Entrepreneur Megers Frierson said that he had a fresh angle on activewear looks with his new Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., brand, **The Mega Fashion Club**, which produces the Mega Wrap jacket. Frierson has been pitching it as a garment that can make workouts more comfortable.

The Mega Wrap features a detachable front mesh panel, which—when unzipped and removed from the rest of the garment—leaves the wrap resembling a cape. Despite the popularity of superhero movies, Frierson said the Mega Wrap is not specifically for athletes with seemingly superhuman abilities. Rather, it's intended to alleviate common issues that consumers experience with activewear.

Without its front panel, the Mega Wrap offers a unique style, Frierson said. It can also give the wearer a chance to avoid overheating but without having to stop a workout to remove an entire layer. When the wearer removes the front mesh panel, the jacket feels lighter.

Frierson, who has worked as a telecommunications engineer and an events producer, mulled over the idea for the Mega Wrap in 2017. He proposed the design to his son, Megers Frierson Jr., who works as a fashion designer. After the younger Frierson gave his approval and recommended factories to make samples, the entire family became involved with the project. The senior Frierson's wife, Loretta, contributed to the brand's designs. His niece, Katrina Diggins, made sketches and patterns, and his daughter, Megen Frierson, helped with marketing.



COURTESY OF THE MEGA FASHION CLUB

With a group effort, the Friersons expanded the idea for the Mega Wrap into a collection. The jackets are reversible and available in color pairings such as black and salmon and blue and lime. They also feature several pockets for keys, phone and wallet. The Mega Wrap also comes in different styles, some of which offer oversized or fitted hoods, while others feature a camouflage print.

Additional looks include bodysuits for women, which feature a silhouette similar to a one-piece bathing suit, with one style offered in a shoulder-less cut. Women's tops are offered in sports-bra, racer-back and crop-top cuts. Leggings come in a variety of styles ranging from those bearing the brand's logo to a floral print in fluorescent colors.

Men's styles include compression pants, rash guards, sweatpants and hoodies as well as tank tops and T-shirts, which feature the brand's Mega logo.

Competition for the activewear dollar is unrelenting, but there is a lot of room for brands trying something new, said Nicole Pollard Bayme, a stylist and founder of the company **Lalaluxe**, located in Los Angeles. Function is an important part of activewear. It is primarily made for exercise. Compression fabrics used in activewear, for example, flatter a wide range of body types, she said. "There's no limit

for styles in athleisure. It is because of the fabric. You can do anything with it," she explained. "Designers are really experimenting with what the public will wear."

Prominent market researchers at Port Washington, N.Y.-based **The NPD Group** forecast that activewear will be one of the prime areas for fashion-business growth in the next two years, said Marshal Cohen, NPD's chief industry analyst. "The future success of the apparel industry will rely on categories that 'act' active but look to fashion," he said in a statement on July 16. "Consumers are craving fashion but don't want to sacrifice the comfort and convenience for activewear that they've grown accustomed to."

The Mega Fashion Club will make its trade-show debut at **Active Collective**, which runs July 31-Aug. 1 in Anaheim, Calif. Retail price points for the line range from \$19.99 for men's T-shirts to \$325 for the Mega Wrap. The brand has been primarily sold through its direct-to-consumer channel, www.megafashion.club.

—Andrew Asch



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MIAMI SWIM

Paraiso Offers Distinctive Brand Experiences in Prime Miami Beach Locations

Now celebrating its second year, **Paraiso Miami Beach** boasted more than 30 runway shows and a new pop-up-shopping experience, the Paraiso Bungalow, during its July 11-14 run. Produced by **Funkshion**, a major longstanding player during **Miami Swim Week**, Paraiso Miami Beach offered an exclusive platform to some of swimwear's most recognizable brands while adding credibility and visibility to a slew of emerging independent designers.

Runway events, scattered at a number of venues throughout the city, were the biggest draws. Brands like **Aguaclara** and **Wildfox**

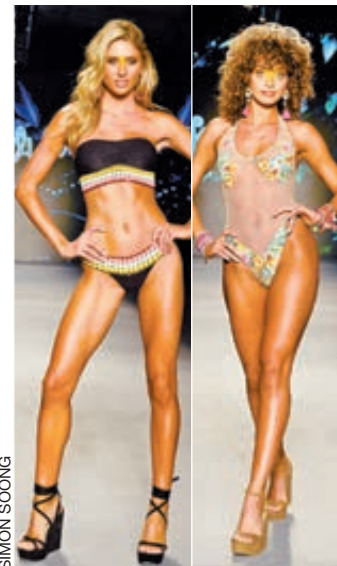
offered an assortment of styles and shapes, and Paraiso also presented an opportunity for guests to become immersed in an exciting variety of collections while enjoying dance and musical performances that preceded certain shows, such as **Luli Fama**.

Under the Paraiso Runway Tent, located in Collins Park, dance and musical performances also enhanced some of the designers' shows, while the event moved to the **W South Beach** for **Badgley Mischka's** show, where models splashed in the lap pool wearing the brand's signature minimal elegance.

—Nicole Martinez



Badgley Mischka



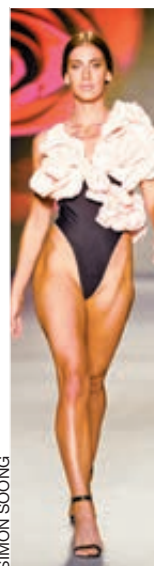
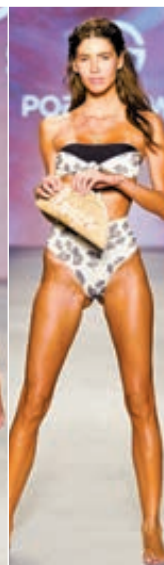
Luli Fama



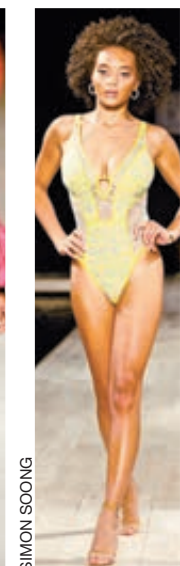
Natasha Tonic



Poemă Swim



Baes and Bikinis



Becca Swim x Kendra Scott



Monday Swimwear



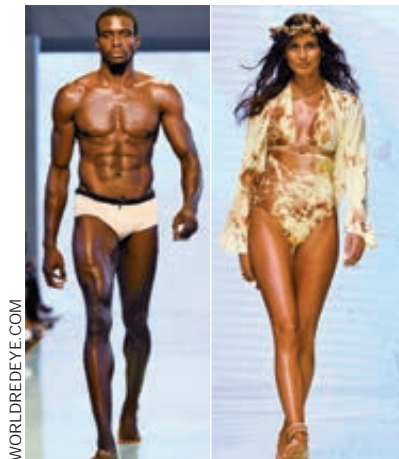
Nu Wave Swim Unveils a New Approach to Miami Swim Week Runway Shows

Debuting July 11 and closing July 14, **Nu Wave Swim** served as **SwimShow's** runway-event foray at **Miami Swim Week**. The multi-day, experiential platform, which was held at the **Miami Beach Botanical Gardens**, featured activations by notable brands including **Red Carter**, **Bleu|Rod Beattie**, **Vitamin A** and **Tori Prayer**. The weekend capped off with a collective runway show by emerging brands **Revival**, making its Miami Swim Week runway debut, and **Charmosa**.

In a pristine white tent that featured

transparent walls that revealed the gardens' lush, verdant backdrop, some swimwear labels featured barely-there suits with high-cut bottoms and eyelet, cutout, and cross-stitching details that remain trending across bikini, high-waist and one-piece styles.

Other brands incorporated a fairy-goddess aesthetic, with whimsical flower crowns, slit leather skirts and braided ankle jewelry. Additional details on the runway included hand-dyed tie-dye patterns, single-color suits and textured elements such as braiding.—*Nicole Martinez*



Charmosa



Parke & Ronen



Gottex



Revival



Tori Prayer



Vitamin A



Red Carter and Bleu|Rod Beattie

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Today's connected consumers have information at their fingertips and constantly search for value, environmentally friendly products, and an "experience" when buying a product. Gone are the days when consumers were limited by whatever was available in their local stores. Now more than ever, brands need to work harder to win consumer spend.

Labels and packaging play an integral part in this dynamic as they are the first point of contact between brand and consumer. How a product is labeled and packaged not only communicates its cost and information about where it was made but also its quality, value, and potentially the brand's story. Designing labels and packaging that not only perform in the supply chain and in-store but are also manufactured efficiently is important to avoid paying more than is needed and wasting raw materials that often just end up in the landfill, further damaging the environment.

Forty years experience in the labeling and packaging industry gave ITL the expertise to develop intelligen™, its award-winning product engineering solution ensuring labels and packaging perform properly, are cost effective, and environmentally friendly.

Reengineering to Enhance Performance

As the first point of contact with the customer, packaging and labels play an integral part in ensuring brands make a good first impression. If the packaging or label isn't fit for the purpose and aesthetic of the product and either easily damages whether in-store or in-transit, the customer may associate the brand with being cheap and low quality, leading to distrust of the brand and deterring the consumer from purchasing the product in the future.

By reengineering the packaging and label, ITL ensures they are fit for the purpose, aesthetically pleasing, and of high quality. As a result, brands can better connect and communicate with their consumers and offer that important experience customers look for when purchasing.

Reengineering to Reduce Cost

ITL's intelligen™ solution also

helps to reduce a brand's costs on labeling and packaging through material rationalization, manufacturing excellence, and optimized finishing. By making small changes to a label and packaging design, without compromising on performance, aesthetics, or quality, raw-material utilization is maximized, waste is minimized, and as a result the cost of production is reduced.

intelligen™: One Solution, Three Benefits

Brands such as U.K. High Street



Retailer Debenhams recently used intelligen™ for its Principles range and said that "without compromising the branding or the overall 'look and feel' of our Principles program, intelligen™ provided a more cost-effective solution by maximizing material usage and minimizing waste and cost. We saved 5 percent to 10 percent on cost of production and reduced our paper consumption, which also gave us a sustainability piece to highlight."



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TRADE SHOW REPORT

Destination: Miami Creates a Customized Experience for Fresh, International Brands

By Nicole Martinez *Contributing Writer*

Hosted at the **Faena Bazaar** during **Miami Swim Week July 13–16**, **Destination: Miami** made a colorful debut in a space that has welcomed pop-up museums, galleries and fashion retailers. Destination: Miami aimed to set itself apart from the concurrent trade shows with a vibrant splash of over-the-top décor. Bright fuchsia and turquoise hues made their mark among marble and velvet seating and stands accentuating each brand's offerings.

Destination: Miami, a new offshoot by **UBM Fashion** that is meant to complement its popular **Coterie** shows in New York, builds upon the company's mission to create value with small, satellite events. "We're a place of discovery, and the atmosphere sets the tone to rethink each of the brands," President Danielle Licata said. "Most of the brands here are global and relatively unknown within the United States."

To bring the show to market, Licata enlisted a multipronged marketing strategy that included heavy digital and public-relations outreach, drumming up support among already notable labels such as **Caroline Constas**, **Adriana Degreas** and **Anais**. By opening day, buyers from **Bergdorf Goodman**, **Barney's** and **Moda Operandi** had popped into the show, along with boutique owners from far-flung locales such as St. Barths and Monaco.

Event organizers also partnered with Colombian fashion retailer **St. Dom**, which carries an assortment of it-girl Colombian

brands in boutiques in Cartagena and Bogotá and also produces its own private label. St. Dom Director and co-founder Maya Memovic noted that the partnership initiated St. Dom's first foray at Miami Swim Week.

"We're testing the market with our private label along with inviting the brands we work with to come to Miami and represent themselves before a new roster of buyers," she said, adding that she was pleased with the pace of traffic and caliber of buyers at the show.

Many of the brands at Destination: Miami have a large online following but aren't quite tapped into the U.S. consumer market. **Juan de Dios**, a 2-year-old swimwear line launched by Maria Valencia, came to the show specifically because it offered an exclusive platform. "I wrote orders with **Shoppop**, **Bergdorf Goodman** and **Bloomingdale's**, and I wasn't doing business with these stores before," she said.

Aisha Bennett, a buyer at **Mitchell's Stores**, chose to attend the event to meet with the brands she can't catch at the larger market trade shows in New York. "I like that the legwork has been done for me with a curated selection of brands," she explained. "As a buyer, it's wonderful to know that someone else has gone through the vetting process for me." Most importantly, however, Bennett will come back to Destination: Miami for its ability to stay ahead of the curve.

"These are all brands that people aren't tapped into yet," she said. "As a buyer, you want to be on the pulse." ●

SUSTAINABILITY

Swim Week's Swim the Globe Adds a Sustainable Component

During its third installment, **Swim the Globe**, which was held at the **Sagamore South Beach** July 11–14, hosted an eco-friendly component during **Miami Swim Week**. While the brand is still young, its founders, Jennifer Sclafani and Jeffrey Lubin, are hoping to build an inclusive platform.

"The events that people want to attend are all-encompassing, and the platform that we have in our hearts and minds is better for the planet," Sclafani said. "We're still building ourselves as a show, but we love that many brands we work with are moving in that direction."

When considering how to remain current with constantly shifting trends, the pair thought about how sustainability is moving into the mainstream. Part of the solution was incorporating a sustainable component to their event.

"The industry is slowly transitioning through steps such as using recyclable bags and packaging," Lubin said. "A lot of designers are conducting research into adding sustainable products."

Founded by a group of media representatives and entrepreneurs including Vasiliki Karlin, founder of **Naked Botanicals**, and media professional Christiane Roget, **Sustainable Swim Week** launched under **Swim the Globe**. After participating in Miami

Swim Week for the last four years, Karlin saw an opportunity to promote sustainable fashion after recognizing the demand for these products.

"This show was filled with people who were far more engaged. It wasn't just about coming to see the fashion—it was the work behind it. It was amazing to see people interested in this issue and hearing the feedback," Karlin said. "It's not completely about fashion, but people are more conscious about doing something to help the world through their passion."

With brands such as Miami's **Seven Seas Swimwear**, Ontario-based **Archipelago Swimwear** and **Mabi Swimwear**, which is headquartered in London, Sustainable Swim Week was a welcome addition. Kacie Schweikhardt, owner of **Pure Lorraine**, is a Santa Barbara, Calif.–based representative that works with sustainable apparel brands from around the globe and was excited to begin focusing on partnerships within the Americas as she sees changes in the marketplace.

"People are trying to move production a bit closer to home, which is one way of being more sustainable," she said. "Nobody is perfect, but brands are taking steps to move in a better direction, whether its social responsibility or organic materials without the use of toxic chemicals."—*Dorothy Crouch*

Hammock Creates a Swim-Week Space for High-End and Emerging Brands

By Nicole Martinez Contributing Writer

Marking its second year at the **1 Hotel**, Hammock's decision to host its event at the eco-conscious space on Miami's Collins Avenue may have had something to do with an industrywide shift toward sustainability. "Brands are trying to be more globally conscious and using sustainable materials in their merchandise," Hammock's management said. "The hotel's aesthetic perfectly aligns with Hammock."



Hammock show floor

This year, Hammock opted to change its typical in-room format by moving to the hotel's sunlit atrium for its Miami Swim Week run July 13–15. There, higher-end brands showed off their wares in an environment more akin to a traditional trade show than Hammock's usual setup. In addition, show organizers hosted daily VIP



luncheons, featuring informal presentations by participating brands and held an event celebrating **Lolli Swim's** 10th anniversary.

This year's Hammock welcomed 800 attendees, among whom were a variety of notable buyers, according to show organizers. Representatives from **Bloomingdale's**, **Revolve** and **Saks Fifth Avenue** were in attendance, and exhibitors felt Hammock did an excellent job of blending established brands with emerging newcomers.

"Personally, I switched to Hammock because it was a friendlier experience," said Simon Southwood, vice president of **Sauvage**, a brand specializing in swim and resortwear with



Sauvage

singularly European-inspired prints. "Traffic here is okay, but it's definitely important to have appointments. You can't rely on walk-ins," he said. Still, Sauvage wrote several orders at the show and is confident the walk-ins will convert into sales.

Marc Merklen, who founded **My Fashion Agent** and additionally heads up its sales and marketing efforts, was pleased with the turnout and quality of buyers at Hammock. "I have increased the amount of brands I bring along with me every year,

and next year I'll bring double the amount of brands because business exploded," said Merklen. Among other brands, Merklen showcased **Calarena**, a 12-year-old swimwear line launched out of Corsica known for its simple cuts and romantic details such as braided belts and well-placed hardware.

While Hammock may not necessarily focus on branding its event as a trade show, Alessandra Bell, the founder and creative director of the London-based showroom **Coco Nauticals**, said it was apparent to her. "Hammock is positioned for emerging brands, and it's the first platform to state that ground," she said. "Customers are looking for what's fresh and new and don't want to be seen wearing what everyone else is wearing. Trade shows need to make more room for emerging brands if they're going to service that market." ●

Cabana Makes a Big Move at This Year's Miami Swim Week

Now celebrating its fifth year at **Miami Swim Week**, **Cabana** debuted in a new location during its 2019 run July 13–14. Outgrowing its intimate oceanfront tent—swapping it out for the newly renovated **Miami Beach Convention Center**—Cabana aimed to remain an intimate, highly curated experience. This year, Cabana leaned into Resort collections, offering a mix by hundreds of emerging as well as recognizable brands.

"I come from a retail background, and I understand what consumers are looking for, and right now they're looking for resortwear that goes hand in hand with their swim looks," said Janet Wong, chief executive officer of Cabana. "I think a lot of swimwear brands realize that having resortwear that goes with their swim line gives them a much stronger point of view. Since brands themselves are moving in that direction, we thought it made sense for our show."

As is customary to their business model, Cabana added about 15 to 20 percent new exhibitors to their floor this year. Notable buyers included **Net-a-Porter**, **MyTheresa** and **Matches Fashion**.

Most buyers and exhibitors lauded the move to the convention center as a major upgrade from years past. Cindy Khang, the owner of the New York boutique **Azalea's**, gushed over the new location. "The addition of more bathrooms and steady air conditioning is great," said Khang, who

typically attends Miami Swim Week specifically to visit Cabana. Searching for pieces that retail around \$250, Khang and her colleague, buyer Rebecca Lee, were drawn to bright colors and animal prints. "I think overly muted and basic suits are pretty much over," Lee noted.

By contrast, Kirin Pandher, the director of sales and merchandising at **Cynthia Rowley**, wistfully reminisced about Cabana's prior location on the beach. "I actually miss the tent. I feel like it was more intimate and stylized," she said. "It created a buzzy vibe that felt more like a trade show." Nonetheless, Pandher insists that the show is a "tight-knit community" of brands, and it remains a consistent, dependable event for doing business, as she lined up appointments with **Saks Fifth Avenue**, **Shopbop** and **Everything but Water**.

At the booth for Irvine, Calif.'s **L*Space**, Sales Director Debby Martin and Creative Director and founder Monica Wise enjoyed the atmosphere, which afforded opportunities to forge a deep connection with buyers.

"We were looking for a more intimate setting, that resonated better with the experience of wearing our swimwear," Martin said. "They make conscious decisions about the brands they show, and it feels handpicked."

Now in their third year exhibiting at the show, the



The L*Space booth

L*Space team raved about the pace of the event. "Traffic has been phenomenal. We've been packed every hour with three rows of buyers," Wise said, noting that visitors were drawn to their pointelle-rib-textured suits, primed to ship in early August.—Nicole Martinez

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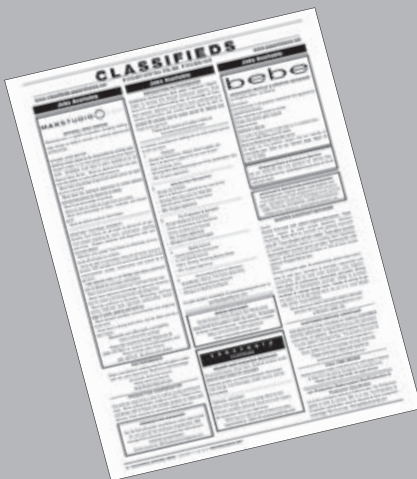
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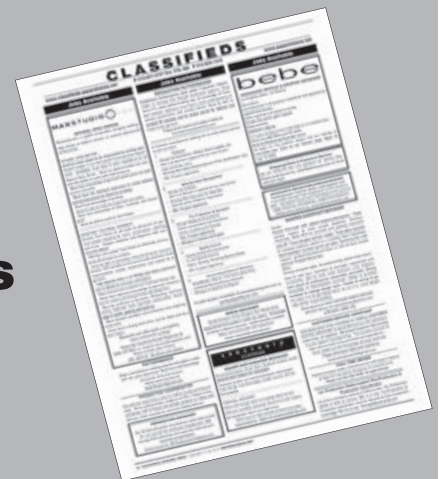
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