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INDUSTRY FOCUS: FIBER, YARN AND FABRIC Emerging as a Stronger Fiber, Yarn and Fabric Business in 2025

By Dorothy Crouch *Contributing Writer*

Sourcing and textile trade shows held during the first half of 2024 into the summer were packed with apparel professionals seeking fresh innovations and diversification in fiber, yarn and fabrics along their supply chains. Some of these events set attendance records, celebrating the return of loyal exhibitors and visitors while welcoming new associates who presented alternative sourcing options.

The apparel community heads into 2025 with greater global options in sourcing and fresh ideas that will pave the way for a fortified fashion industry.

California Apparel News asked leaders in fiber, yarn and fabric: *What have been your greatest supply-chain challenges over the last few years and how are you navigating through them, or have you solved these issues and how have you overcome them?*

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TRADE-SHOW REPORT

Western, Glam and Bohemian Dominate at Las Vegas Fashion Week

By Kelli Freeman *Contributing Writer*

The only thing hotter than the weather at **Las Vegas Fashion Week**, held Aug. 17–21, were the apparel brands. Buyers shopped for Immediates through Spring 2025, where Western wear continued to be strong along with cosmic glam, denim, bohemian, leopard and bows.

MAGIC, Project and Sourcing at MAGIC brought together over 2,500 brands at the **Las Vegas Convention Center**. Buyers enjoyed the ease of the blended **Las Vegas Apparel** and **WWIN** shows at the **Expo at World Market Center**. **OffPrice** at the **Venetian Expo and Convention Center** offered great deals. **IFJAG**, held at the **Embassy Suites Las Vegas**, provided jewelry, accessories and holiday gifts.

Not be outdone, **Art Hearts Fashion** and the **MMGNET Group** presented **Style Oasis**, a runway fashion experience at **Resorts World Las Vegas** with a performance by R&B sensation **Macy Gray**.

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Where fashion gets down to businessSM



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Hoffman California Fabrics Celebrates Walter Hoffman's Legacy

Walter Hoffman lived long enough to see his family business reach the century mark before paddling out into the great unknown. The surfing legend passed away this summer at the age of 92 in the midst of celebrations for the 100th anniversary of his family business, **Hoffman California Fabrics**.

Founded in downtown Los Angeles in 1924 by Rube P. Hoffman, who began his career in New York's garment district, the company went on to become a staple in the manufacturing of premium screen-printed and hand-dyed fabrics with surf and Polynesian motifs. Today, the fourth generation of the Hoffman family is still riding the wave of success from its headquarters in Mission Viejo, Calif.

There will be a special surf-inspired remembrance and "paddle out" for Hoffman on Sept. 20 at Doheny Beach and an anniversary celebration Oct. 12 at the **Dana Point Yacht Club**.

Hoffman was a pioneering figure in the mid-century California surf craze and played



HOFFMAN FABRICS FAMILY ARCHIVE
In the wake of its centennial, Hoffman has recently released collaborations with Vans, Rip Curl and Slowtide as well as catering to the needs of amateur quilters.

a crucial role in expanding the business his father founded with tropical and novelty fabrics, including batik from Bali, which became entrenched as a part of Southern California surf style. His passing was widely acknowledged throughout the surfing industry as well as the mainstream media.

Today, some 50 employees presently work at Hoffman California Fabrics making exclusive and copyrighted prints for companies as large as **Ralph Lauren**. In the wake of its centennial, Hoffman has recently released collaborations with **Vans**, **Rip Curl** and **Slowtide** as well as catering to the needs of amateur quilters.

"Our family has always been innovative, and we've always tried to stay that way," Walter's daughter, Robin Hoffman Haack, who serves as CFO, told the California Apparel News. "We've been at the forefront of digitally printing fabrics, which is very eco-friendly, and we were the first in quilting to do that."

And while many manufacturers are eager to collaborate with Hoffman California Fabrics, they also remain something of a closely kept secret in the apparel industry. "A lot of companies we design custom prints for," said Hoffman, "don't want the world to know where they got it from."

—Christian Chensvold

NEWS

PacSun, Paris Hilton Celebrate 'Infinite Icon' With New Collection

California brand **PacSun** and Paris Hilton have launched a new merchandise collection to complement the release of the celebrity's latest album, "Infinite Icon." PacSun partnered with Hilton's **11:11 Media** on the collection.

"Collaborating with Paris Hilton on this collection has been meaningful because of our shared beliefs and commitment to making the world a better place for the next generation," said Brie Olson, CEO of PacSun. "Paris has expressed her deep respect for

PacSun and connection to our brand, and we are equally excited to partner with her on her 'Infinite Icon' album merch collection to offer fans a way to connect with her music through fashion."

The collection was released Sept. 6, the same day as Hilton's 12-track album, and it boasts five styles based on the album's artwork, which was photographed by Brian Ziff. Pieces in the collection were influenced by an updated vision of the Y2K era, a time when Hilton was in demand on the global social and



KEVIN OSTAJEWSKI
PacSun and Paris Hilton are celebrating the celebrity's "Infinite Icon" album release with the launch of a line of complementary merchandise.

club scenes. Both PacSun and Hilton share Southern California roots. The brand is based in Los Angeles, while Hilton was raised in Beverly Hills, Calif., and New York.

Hilton and PacSun's collaboration includes a cropped tank, two boyfriend T-shirts, a baby T-shirt, hoodie and more. Items are available in sizes XS-L and priced at \$25-\$65. Pre-ordering for the collection is available at pac-sun.com, and orders are expected to ship Sept. 23. Hilton celebrated the collection's release Sept. 7 at the PacSun Soho flagship store in New York City, where the first 300 customers to purchase pieces from the line received a branded tote bag.

"I'm so excited to launch this exclusive 'Infinite Icon' capsule collection with PacSun—and it's even more special that it launches the same day as my album," said Hilton, who serves as the CEO of 11:11 Media. "PacSun has been the perfect partner to connect with so many of my fans and to bring the creative universe we created for the album into the world of fashion."—Dorothy Crouch

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Inside the Industry

Element Logic, a leading provider of material handling systems and automation solutions, has partnered with sustainable-fashion brand **Reformation**, known for its vintage-inspired apparel. The project will support the brand's growth as it continues to deliver on its mission to bring sustainable fashion to everyone and serve its growing customer base. "Our collaboration putting this project together exemplifies our commitment to customer satisfaction and our desire to find the right solution for each of our customers," said Krish Nathan, CEO, Americas, of Element Logic. "This project highlights the synergy between innovative technology and sustainable practices, and we are proud to support Reformation's growth." Added Ivan Tchakarov, chief operating officer at Reformation, "This relationship marks another milestone on our journey to scale Reformation and realize our mission."

Fashion Nova founder and CEO Richard Saghian has purchased a building in the heart of the iconic Beverly Hills 90210 zip code for \$118 million. The 175,000-square-foot building was bought in cash from Tishman Speyer and was designed by the renowned architectural firm of Gwathmey Siegel & Associates. The main design feature is a glass storefront rising to the second story, which crowns the entryway, with pivot doors that are the largest in Southern California. The four-floor building will serve as headquarters for Fashion Nova and will debut two groundbreaking concepts. The Nova Social Club will be a private collaborative space for creators, influencers, celebrities and VIP guests, and the Nova Founders Lab will be an incubator-accelerator for emerging brands, designers, creatives and founders across fashion, marketing and technology.

The **12th annual** Metropolitan Fashion Week Los Angeles Closing Gala, presented by *kendi lux*, will take place on Sept. 28 at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library & Museum, promising to be a night of extraordinary history, fashion and entertainment. The gala will feature a one-of-a-kind fashion show presenting fashion masterpieces inspired by "Symphony of Fashion" and created by over 12 international fashion and costume designers. Their works will translate the essence of musical forms, composers, genres, iconic lyrics, movie scores and musical instruments into high fashion, with each piece capturing the rhythm, emotion and harmony of its musical muse. The gala will be hosted by 16-time Emmy Award winner Christine Devine and Metropolitan Fashion Week Founder and President Eduardo Khawam.

FashionNXT, which bills itself as the most iconic fashion event in the Pacific Northwest, has announced its venue this year will be the US Bancorp Tower, or "Big Pink" as it's known, in downtown Portland, the city's most recognizable skyscraper. At 536 feet tall, the 42-story tower is the city's second tallest building and the largest in Oregon by volume, with nearly 740,000 square feet of office space. Recognized by Time magazine and Forbes as one of the nation's premier fashion events outside of New York, FashionNXT 2024 will run Oct. 3-5 and feature "Project Runway" all-star winner Mondo Guerra and celebrity model Crystal Methyd from RuPaul's "Drag Race."

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TREND REPORT

Atlanta Apparel: Oct. 15–18, 2024



Just Black Denim

For Spring/Summer '25, consumers will favor dusted pastels and tinted dark tones for the calm and comfort they instill. Purposely seeking out simple designs in restful, reassuring colors, shoppers will gravitate towards pieces that inspire optimism and boost their mood. Styles will elevate classic, everyday pieces and continue to integrate iconic, nostalgic details that feel comfortable and familiar. Western styles, ruffles, and bubble hems will continue to trend, while sleeve and collar details will emerge as new points of focus.

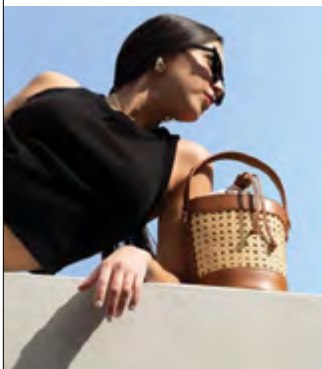
APPAREL TRENDS

- Elongated vests
- Retro t-shirts
- Halter and tailored tube tops
- Crochet dresses and tops
- Retro and sleeveless slip dresses and Boho blouses
- Volume, printed maxi dresses
- Bermuda & Baggy Style Denim
- Maxi Skirts
- Bubble Hems



Vest by Flora by Alexandria

ACCESSORY TRENDS



Bag by BC Handbags

- Beaded and pendant necklaces
- Bold cuff bracelets
- Earscape sets
- Square and rectangle sunglasses
- Raffia bags
- Minimalist bucket bags
- Top-handle and half-moon bags
- Curated hardware belts
- Printed scarves and floral headbands

FOOTWEAR TRENDS

- Everyday pointed sandal
- Maximal gladiators
- Penny loafers
- Mod-low heels
- Retro runners
- Espadrilles



Bag by Jen & Co., shoes by Diba True

TRENDING COLORS



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FASHION



Oliver Logan Delivers on Eco-Focused Comfort in Denim

Oliver Timsit has spent nearly two decades in the apparel industry focused on the denim supply chain, and, in 2020, he applied this experience to founding **Oliver Logan**, a Los Angeles clothing brand that prioritizes the responsible production of comfortable pieces. The dominant theme of blending sustainability with wearable denim for all seasons led Timsit to focus on classic designs that endure beyond trends.

“Our approach to trend and trend relevant is that of approachability and timelessness rather than [seasonal styles],” said Timsit. “We focus on two things—comfort and making sure our product is approachable. When we look at inspiration and trend, we look at it in a way of how can we redesign this product in a way our customer can wear it.”

Ecological production is at the core of making Oliver Logan garments. Timsit’s previous work afforded deep knowledge regarding the challenges to making denim responsibly. The brand is made using more-responsible materials such as organic cotton and recycled fabrics, and Timsit partners with factories that rely on responsible washing and low-impact dyes and prioritize lower water usage, fewer pesticides and less energy consumption.

“I saw the waste of the actual process. I knew there had to be a better way to do it,”

Timsit said. “We’re almost at price parity regarding raw materials—the recycled version versus the non-recycled version. Our fabric mills constantly bring us new technology and new ways to use recycled fibers whether it be cotton or polyester.”

Reducing the environmental impacts of manufacturing Oliver Logan is only one component of Timsit’s sustainable mission. The factories that produce the brand boast ethical production practices, fair wages and safe working conditions.

“Supporting workers and paying fair wages was always important to us and part of our sourcing process,” noted Timsit.

Oliver Logan remains an approximately 90 percent direct-to-consumer operation at oliverlogan.com, yet it’s growing its wholesale endeavors from its current count of 400–500 boutiques, according to Timsit, who revealed the company relies on the San Francisco–headquartered wholesale marketplace **Faire**. Timsit emphasizes his commitment to responsibility during the brand’s wholesale expansion.

“We’re not going to design a new product just because wholesale is asking for it,” said Timsit. “It’s got to be something that fits into our approachability, our timelessness and making a classic product that can live in your closet for years.”—*Dorothy Crouch*



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What have been your greatest supply-chain challenges over the last few years and how are you navigating through them, or have you solved these issues and how have you overcome them?

Fiber, Yarn and Fabric

Continued from page 1

Nicole Bivens Collinson
Managing Principal, Operating
Committee, International Trade and
Government Relations Practice
Leader

Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg, P.A.



We have worked with several textile and apparel companies during the supply-chain crisis, the imposition of tariffs on the major apparel supplier, China and the implementation of the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention

Act. These actions have forced brands and retailers to know the content of their apparel from “dirt to shirt.”

Companies have been challenged to know their supply chain and get reliable data with bona-fide supporting documentation of the origins of their cotton fiber, yarns and fabrics. The tariffs and the UFLPA shifted significant production out of China into Vietnam, Cambodia and Mexico especially. U.S. Customs and Border Protection, however, has continued to focus on UFLPA enforcement on goods from these countries as well.

Many importers have invested hundreds of thousands of hours in personnel time and monitoring systems to have more visibility throughout the whole supply chain. Systems range from documentation storage to predictive relationship software that CBP may be using and even DNA and isotope testing of apparel products to determine the genesis of the cotton fiber.

Companies that cannot guarantee their tier 2, 3 or 4 suppliers’ goods comply with U.S. law are removed from the chain. Other countries are now implementing similar laws to the U.S. with respect to Chinese cotton, and previous segregation of supply chains for different markets is becoming less effective. In addition, other issues are now creeping into the challenge for sourcing managers as environmental conditions surrounding the manner in which the inputs are sourced and the goods produced are increasing.

Meredith Boyd
Chief Product Officer
UNIFI, makers of REPVEVE



One of the greatest hurdles has been the movement of products—both raw materials and finished goods—due to disruptions in global shipping and production slowdowns. This has led to longer lead times, increased and volatile freight costs, and unpredictable delivery schedules.

To navigate these challenges, UNIFI has

increasingly focused on leveraging our regional production chains to ensure that customers are quickly able to get the products they need closest to their geographies of production. In regions like the Americas where trade compliance and speed to market is of particular concern, our vertical production has ensured that we can produce key, compliant articles critical to the textile industry as well as for national security.

For our REPVEVE recycled polyester production, we carefully manage all processes from incoming waste feedstock to finished yarn including enhanced, functional performance products. This assures our customers where they are choosing our products that they will have consistency and security in supply, quality and pivotal advancements in innovation.

By adopting these strategies, we have become more resilient, building greater flexibility into our operations and those of our customers and reducing vulnerability to global supply-chain disruptions.

Massimo Callegari
North America Manager
ISKO



One of our greatest supply-chain challenges at ISKO has been enhancing sustainability while maintaining style and performance. The shift toward more-sustainable practices involves reducing waste and finding valuable al-

ternatives to virgin materials. This process is complex and requires significant investment in research and development.

Developing new processes and sustainable solutions is not something that happens overnight. It takes years of dedicated effort and innovation to create materials that meet our high standards for both aesthetics and functionality.

ISKO has been working toward sustainability for decades, allowing us to be ahead of the curve in many aspects. By investing in cutting-edge research, collaborating with industry partners and continuously refining our processes, we have been able to overcome many of these challenges.

We have also adopted a circular approach to design, focusing on recycling and reusing materials wherever possible, a case in point being RE&UP. By using next-gen materials to make our fabrics, we reduce waste significantly and create products that are not only stylish and durable but also environmentally responsible.

Joe DiGirolamo
Director of Sales
Thermore



Time heals all wounds, which was our only consolation for things we had no control over like ports opening and closing. But we did implement improvements on the things we did have control over.

In particular, we increased our communications, spent more time forecasting and really focused more on planning in general. That’s paying off even though, now, our supply-chain movement is back to pre-pandemic functioning.

Andreas Dörner
General Manager
RE&UP

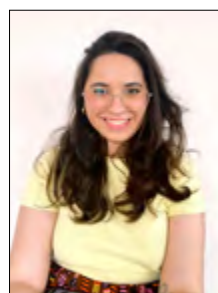


One of the greatest challenges we face at RE&UP is navigating the complexities of the recycling industry, which is driven by innovation but often progresses through trial and error. The recycling of textiles, in particular, has significant logistical and technological limitations. In 2023 alone, over 100 million tons of textile waste were generated globally, yet only 1 percent of this waste was recycled. Nearly 90 percent ended up in landfills or was incinerated.

This alarming scenario, where planet conservation and resource preservation are at critical risk, poses a significant challenge that the textile industry cannot ignore. As a society, we owe it to ourselves to do better. With increasingly stringent legislations and policies being implemented in this field, it is imperative that we act now to develop sustainable solutions.

Being part of SANKO, a group with a 120-year history, provides us with the knowledge, technology and global reach necessary to address these challenges effectively. Leveraging this experience, we are committed to developing processes that truly change the industry paradigm. Our aim is not just to innovate but to also create scalable, sustainable practices that can be adopted across the globe. The time is ripe for change, and the industry is ready to collaborate.

Raissa Hannon
Sales Manager and Print Designer
Kalimo



One of the most significant challenges we’ve faced in our supply chain has been the sharp increase in materials pricing. To effectively tackle this issue we’ve shifted our focus toward identifying and

forming strategic partnerships with local supply sources.

This approach has proven to be highly effective as it allows us to manage better and mitigate the impact of fluctuating prices and helps us uphold a consistent cost structure for our clients. We’ve been able to ensure that there are no unexpected price differences during our clients’ production processes. Additionally, this strategy enables us to maintain the same reliable delivery times for their fabric orders. These efforts have been instrumental in preserving our clients’ trust and satisfaction, reinforcing our commitment to delivering high-quality fabrics and providing stable and dependable service amid a challenging market environment.

Dr. Carmen Hijosa
Founder and Piñatex Inventor
Ananas Anam



Our most significant supply-chain challenge has been establishing the supply chain itself. As specialists in producing textiles from waste pineapple-leaf fiber, a material that has only recently gained traction in com-

mercial use, we faced the task of building much of the supply chain from the ground up. Collaboration has been key, and it has been critical to work with those specialized in the area of natural fibers.

However, this challenge has also presented us with a substantial advantage. It has allowed us to carefully select partners who align with our values and ethos, ensuring close collaboration at every stage. While building our supply chain from scratch, we have benefited from this close collaboration across the supply chain to ensure that our materials are produced using the most efficient methods available.

A key benefit of building the supply chain from such an early stage is that we have achieved greater traceability for our products, having worked closely with everyone from our partner farms all the way to our manufacturing partners.

Michelle Lea
Chief Marketing and Sustainability
Officer
NILIT



During the past few years accelerating sustainability and reducing our environmental impact have been imperatives for NILIT. We became laser focused on both product development and process improvement

to rapidly enhance our internal performance as well as the premium Nylon 6.6 products we craft for our mills, brands and retailers. Our most recent Impact Report documents the environmental goals we have achieved as well as our priorities for the future. Our

➔ **Fiber, Yarn and Fabric** page 8



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What have been your greatest supply-chain challenges over the last few years and how are you navigating through them, or have you solved these issues and how have you overcome them?

Fiber, Yarn and Fabric

Continued from page 6

SENSIL product portfolio has grown significantly to include many new products that address textile-specific environmental concerns such as expanding recycled content, reducing waste and emissions, preserving water, and increasing apparel circularity.

We have made great strides through collaboration with our employees and supply-chain associates as well as with pioneering partnerships that create more-sustainable options for our customers. We recently announced our partnership with Samara Eco, the Australian enviro-tech innovator, to establish a state-of-the-art Nylon 6.6 textile-to-textile enzymatic recycling facility in Southeast Asia. This partnership will ramp up Nylon 6.6 recycling to make a substantial impact on the industry's use of recycled content, reducing reliance on virgin materials and providing a more beneficial alternative for the incredible volume of apparel that is discarded in landfills each year.

Chris Leyes
Chief Operating Officer
Cocona Labs | 37.5 Technologies



The greatest supply-chain challenges we have encountered over the last few years were mainly due to COVID-related factory closures, raw material availability, extended lead times and the movement of freight around the world. We addressed these issues through working tirelessly with our supply-chain partners to ramp up capacity.

We also invest in the buildup of an extremely robust raw material, work in the process and finished goods inventory pipeline, and establish partnerships with several Free Trade Zone Warehouses in the key geographic regions around the globe in which we operate.

Dave Maslen
Chief Customer Officer
The New Zealand Merino Company



Through our ethical and traceable wool programs, ZQ and ZQRX, we hold strong relationships at every stage of the supply chain—from fiber to finished product. While essential for preserving the integrity and value of our wool, these connections really show their power in challenging times.

Brands with decades—or centuries—of experience struggled to predict their fiber needs during COVID. We shifted very quickly from the immediate post-COVID period with companies throughout the value chain struggling for materials to the oversupply we're still managing today.

Closer to home, our growers are also battling global economic pressures with the added stress of being small family-owned businesses. No one has come away unscathed; however,

working with brands, supply-chain partners and growers that value deep bonds and partnerships over surface-level transactional relationships has been part of the solution.

We have relieved overcommitted brands by shifting fiber to other contracts. We've worked with existing supply-chain partners and onboarded new ones to increase the volume of ready-to-use ZQ and ZQRX fabric and yarn available quickly for designers. Crucially, we've worked with our grower community to preemptively manage our supply while it's still on the sheep's backs.

Mustafain Munir
President
CYCLO



In Bangladesh, rising energy costs and an inconsistent power supply have been our biggest challenge. We have invested in renewable-energy solutions to stabilize power costs and improve sustainability; however, the inconsistency issue will prevail until the national power supply increases and stabilizes.

The rise in misleading environmental claims and fraudulent certified material has led to decreased customer trust and decreased selling prices as recycled cotton and other sustainable materials are competing more directly with virgin/non-sustainable materials that are wrongfully certified. An increase in overall transaction certificates caused a backlog and delays in issuance.

In response, we have strengthened our traceability and transparency efforts through blockchain-based digital passports such as AWARE and engage in partnerships such as Textile Exchange and Fashion For Good.

Shipping delays from China have led to inventory shortages specifically for synthetic fibers. We have increased order allocation to more expensive local producers and are working with them to diversify their product range.

The rise in interest rates has significantly raised the cost of borrowing, causing liquidity issues that affect our ability to secure materials in bulk at competitive prices, delaying orders further.

David Sasso
Market Consultant
Buhler Quality Yarns



Buhler and Samil Spinning's greatest challenge has been unpredictable demand. This issue is larger than any single company can solve, but there are ways to cope with this problem.

Increases in flexibility with lower minimum order quantities and enhanced fiber-processing capabilities allow for more agile response to fluctuating demand.

An expanded business approach looks beyond direct customers. Selling as a supply chain rather than just a spinner affords a more holistic view of the market and new opportunities.

Focus on innovation creates value and excitement through new products. Innovation in many cases does not have to lead to lower pricing. This strategy aims to differentiate the company and potentially create demand rather than just responding to it.

Carolina Sister Cohn
Global Marketing Leader for Textiles
Naia Eastman



Naia Eastman was born in 2019. The biggest challenges came from the complexity of educating the industry—from supply-chain partners to brands and end consumers—about the transformative potential of innovative, sustainable materials, especially in the initial phase of our journey.

To overcome these obstacles, we have emphasized transparency and certifications, which validate our sustainable practices and build trust in the supply chain. Collaborations with mills, brands and designers are key and allow us to communicate our story directly to consumers. By partnering with brands, we ensure that our fibers, such as the GRS-certified Naia Renew, integrate seamlessly into collections, allowing us to tell a complete sustainability story that resonates with consumers.

We also support educational initiatives such as working with design schools to foster a deeper understanding of sustainable textile solutions among future designers. This approach helps create a ripple effect throughout the industry, making responsible fashion accessible to all and gradually shaping a more sustainable and transparent textile industry.

Tina Stridde
Managing Director
Aid by Trade Foundation



Demand is growing for textile raw materials whose origins can be traced seamlessly along the entire value chain. Transparency is the order of the day to comply with legal requirements at the international level as well as to meet the demands of an increasing number of consumers.

The success of our sustainably verified cotton and cashmere fibers confirms this trend. We are making an essential contribution to the transformation of raw-material and textile production. This success is no accident. Transparency is the fundamental principle of the AbTF standards. Our corporate partners can be assured that fibers verified in accordance with Cotton made in Africa, The Good Cashmere Standard or the new Regenerative Cotton Standard meet the highest requirements.

In addition to independent third-party audits at the raw-material production level, we also ensure full transparency in the supply chain. For CmiA and RCS cotton, the Hard Identity Preserved system guarantees complete traceability back to the

growing region based on the Sustainable Cotton Tracker system. The platform from TextileGenesis ensures the correct further processing of GCS cashmere, enabling every order to be traced back to the producer. DNA markers developed by Haelixa provide another option for reliably identifying the GCS-verified fibers in the product.

The comprehensive transparency ensured in this way guarantees that yarns, fabrics or textiles only contain verified fibers of our standards. Only textiles produced with these fibers may ultimately bear the CmiA, GCS or RCS logos.

Katie Tague
Senior Vice President of Global Marketing and Sales
Artistic Milliners



One of our significant initiatives to address the challenges of the last few years is the concept of near-shoring. We have strategically established production facilities closer to our main markets such as the Star

Fades International wash-and-finishing facility in L.A. and the recent acquisition of VF's Dickies de Parras S. de RL de CV facility in Parras, Mexico.

By having production facilities in close proximity to our main markets, we have enhanced agility and responsiveness, reduced transportation costs, and improved overall efficiency. These facilities have allowed us to streamline processes, manage inventory more effectively and meet customer demand in a timely manner.

Furthermore, we have invested in technology and digital solutions to enhance visibility and transparency across our supply chain. Real-time tracking systems and data analytics have enabled us to optimize operations, minimize disruptions and ensure a resilient supply-chain network.

Andrea Venier
Managing Director
Officina39



Around two years ago we faced a raw-materials crisis coupled with a sharp rise in transportation, packaging and energy costs. These pressures were entirely new for us, and we had to adapt quickly. Logistics remains a major

challenge, particularly with ongoing disruptions like the Red Sea closure, which continues to put pressure on our operations. We operate in a complex, interconnected yet fragile world where even small events can have far-reaching impacts—the ripple effect. To address these challenges, we've focused on improving our planning across raw materials, production and logistics. This has been key to navigating the difficulties of recent years.

We need to develop a new model that restores balance. While this transition will be

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Bead Your Garment in the USA: More Affordable Than Imported, Faraj Beading—America's Best-Kept Secret

You may think you know everything there is to know about running your fashion business: You know next season's color palette, what's checking and what's flopping, and the metrics on every social-media post. But you may not know that the finest beading embellishments are available right here in the U.S., and that's because there's only one place that does it.

Faraj Inc. was born 100 years ago in Damascus, Syria, and today operates a 20,000-square-foot facility in Paterson, N.J., where it's been headquartered since 1986. In this age of global commerce, Faraj Beading is something of a secret in the garment industry, offering state-of-the-art design and beading options most believe are only available overseas. But those who try Faraj Beading instantly make it their go-to source, which is why this best-kept secret of fashion embellishing can honestly boast to having embellished tens of millions of garments.

The *California Apparel News* caught up with owner Zackary Faraj to put an end to all the secrecy and learn the amazing story of this unique fourth-generation family business.

CAN: You are a one-of-a-kind option for apparel companies, and yet many don't even know you exist.

ZF: That's true. They don't know there is a company in the United States that can do very affordable mass-production beading at this level. It simply doesn't exist in the vocabulary of many designers in the fashion industry so that if you showed them a garment and asked, "Can this be beaded in the U.S.?" they would say you're out of your mind. And yet it was made by us, so such a thing as Faraj Beading does very much exist!

CAN: So you really are the one and only?

ZF: Do an internet search for "beading in the United States" and you might find an old lady sitting at home, but I guarantee we're the only one who can do it at an affordable and large scale.

CAN: How did you get to such a distinguished position?

ZF: After college I wondered what to do but soon realized I already had all this knowledge about textiles and embellishments through the family business. I personally started with handbags and one-of-a-kind jackets in SoHo in the '70s and '80s for a place called The Gallery of Wearable Art.

CAN: "Wearable art" is an interesting term because you certainly bring an artistic sensibility to what you do.

ZF: I love the industry; it's in my blood. When I window-shop or see people on the streets of New York, it reminds me of my childhood. I'm very blessed to be doing something I enjoy so much and can spend 12 hours here and not even realize it.

CAN: At your level of expertise, what do you consider a challenge?

ZF: Simple: to offer domestic garment manufacturers a way to create something dazzling, sparkling, and eye-catching for the least amount of money. When someone shows me a \$5,000 designer garment with intricate and unique embellishment, I look at it and laugh and say, "How can I make that for \$3?" I've accumulated so many techniques, and my mind is always on how to make things beautiful, affordable, and quick to produce.

We have our own patented and exclusive threadless-beading processes you can't get anywhere—not just domestically but anywhere in the world. Our customers are in every department store in America, and now on Home Shopping Network some brands

are bragging, "This is made with Faraj!" They're putting our name on their tags with things like "Decorated in the USA by Faraj Beading." So even after all these years we keep getting new forms of recognition, and people continue to discover the uniqueness of what we do.

CAN: What trends are you catering to right now?

ZF: Right now daywear and resortwear manufacturers want to use beads but not something glittery like gold, silver, pearls, or crystals. Right now the trend is more for earth-, stone-, island-, and wood-type embellishments.

CAN: And all people need to get started working with you is a design?

ZF: They don't even need that. You can just email us a sloper of the part you want to bead—say, a collar, sleeve, or front—and send us your fabric yardage and we will slope, cut, and bead that part and send it to you to sew with the rest of the garment. All this makes the entire process extremely fast, efficient, and economical so they can be working on other things. Our many decades in the New York garment district taught us to be fast, efficient, quality-oriented and on top of our game. These days people need to respond quickly to fashion trends, and they don't want to carry inventories. Going domestic with us means you can get what you need this week, then more the next and not have to carry inventory, doing only what you need as you need it.

CAN: There's an old saying that you can get services good, fast, and cheap but you only get to pick two. But you say you offer customers all three.

ZF: That's right, and the only way you'll know for sure is to give us a shot. When for some reason a company is hesitant that we're the best option for them, we say, "What have you got to lose? We'll make your sample for free." And the ones who are most hesitant usually become our biggest customers.

CAN: Why is it so important to you that your services be affordable?

ZF: Because after all these years I understand what American garment manufacturers go through to stay in business, and I don't want to add any more burden on them. They can take something basic and simple and I can give it an elaborate, jazzy look for just a few dollars. And you can stay in the United States, using machines that have become faster, more reliable, and less expensive. And the software today is so easy to use, allowing us to do more and more-different things.

CAN: What's the best way to get started working with you?

ZF: There are many ways to work together, but the fastest way is to upload your garment on our website, farajbeading.com, and we'll show you some virtual designs. The more information you give us the better. Do you want floral or geometric embellishments, and how much do you want to spend per garment? We guarantee you'll be amazed at what we can offer.

CAN: Is there a minimum-order size?

ZF: If you're just starting out and are only cutting 20 garments, certain beading might cost \$5 per garment. But once you get to larger quantities, it'll come down to \$3. We take a risk when doing smaller orders and just cover our expenses. But we want to support emerging designers and once they start with us, we're confident that soon they'll be doing 1,000 garments at a time.



Zackary Faraj



Beads and laser combination



Light, no-prong pearls

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What have been your greatest supply-chain challenges over the last few years and how are you navigating through them, or have you solved these issues and how have you overcome them?

Fiber, Yarn and Fabric

Continued from page 8

challenging and will certainly have significant consequences for the industry, it also presents an opportunity. It's a challenge that must be met with awareness and a shift in perspective, one that prioritizes available resources and real needs. Our goal is to be part of this change, and we are continuously working to make a meaningful contribution to this transformation.

MeiLin Wan
Vice President of Textile Sales
Applied DNA Sciences, Inc.



Ongoing disruptions in global shipping have led to delays, impacting delivery schedules and potentially leading to inventory shortages or production delays. Lack of available shipping containers has exacerbated delays and added logistical complexity, affecting our ability to transport goods efficiently. Increases in shipping costs over the past few years are likely to continue, placing additional

financial strain on operations and impacting pricing strategies.

Partnering with established groups like Indus Apparel enables us to leverage their existing infrastructure and market presence in regions like Pakistan, Egypt and Jordan. This can help reduce reliance on long-distance shipping and minimize delays.

By working closely with in-country partners, we are better positioned to handle local challenges, streamline logistics and respond more rapidly to market demands. This localized approach can also lead to cost savings and more-efficient supply-chain management.

Deploying our CertainT Traceability Platform globally and at scale with major players in the cotton industry provides a strong proof point for our technology solutions. By offering DNA tagging, isotope and genomic testing, we provide a one-stop-shopping solution that helps clients be more efficient and responsive in spite of supply-chain challenges.

Sherry Wood
Director of Merchandising & Design
Laguna Fabrics



Laguna has shifted to multisourcing strategies and built more regional supply chains. We are reacting to market trends and continue to provide our brands with quick deliveries and competitive pricing. We are also leveraging

real-time tracking and inventory management as erratic shifts in consumer demand during the pandemic led to overstocking or understocking issues.

Laguna is investing in forecasting tools, enabling greater flexibility and adaptability to changing consumer patterns. Laguna is focused on a more-sustainable and transparent supply chain working with our brands to comply with environmental and ethical standards. We are working on greener logistics, reducing our carbon footprint and adopting circular supply-chain practices. Being a domestic mill enables us to avoid many of these supply-chain challenges, which is a great benefit for our brands. Laguna will continue bringing innovation, better data visibility and planning to overcome any future disruptions. ●

**Responses have been edited for clarity and space.*



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TECHNOLOGY

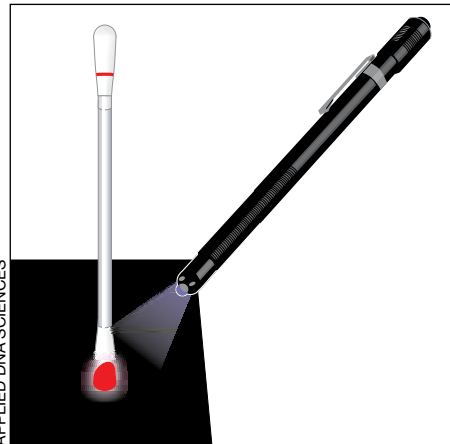
Applied DNA Sciences and NATco Global Team Up to Fight Counterfeiting

As if the challenges of the apparel industry weren't great enough, counterfeit goods remain a growing problem. But forces are aligning to develop new technologies that fight for authenticity and the preservation of legitimate goods for consumers and the bottom line for brands. **Applied DNA Sciences** has forged a new partnership with Los Angeles-based **NATco Global**, a leading product-identification and packaging company, in the development of its CertainT authentication technology.

The CertainT platform is a multi-proof point system that consists of DNA-based technologies to enable secure supply-chain traceability. The platform is grounded in over 15 years of Applied DNA's expertise in the development of DNA-based forensic-authentication solutions for secure labeling and packaging for the textile and apparel industry. The goal of the new partnership is to offer apparel and textile brands advanced DNA-based solutions that provide rapid and reliable authentication in order to combat counterfeiting, enabling brands, retailers and their supply chain to discern genuine products from fakes.

The system uses a unique DNA sequence that is carefully formulated and embedded into a product's packaging or labeling. This DNA sequence acts as a signature that is almost impossible to replicate. The sequence is combined with an encrypted optical reporter, known as the Beacon, and is designed to remain inactive and invisible under normal conditions.

To activate the Beacon, the CertainT Beacon swab is used, which contains a



To activate the Beacon, the CertainT Beacon swab is used, which contains a matching DNA sequence. Once activated, the Beacon emits a signal that can be detected using a UV light.

matching DNA sequence. Once activated, the Beacon emits a signal that can be detected using a UV light. This illumination indicates that the product is genuine and that the DNA markers are present. The system allows for quick and reliable verification of product authenticity, which is crucial for both retailers and their supply-chain partners.

"Secure labels and packaging serve as the primary defense for your brand," said Paul Gneiser, regional vice president of business development for NATco. "Having a reliable means to verify the authenticity of your products is vital. By leveraging CertainT, we eliminate uncertainty and empower you to swiftly and affordably secure your products."—*Christian Chensvold*



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TRADE-SHOW REPORT



Boc Style LLC



Katrin Santore



She + Sky



Stylive



Umgee

Young Contemporary Is the Highlight of Offerings at Las Vegas Apparel

There was a good turnout at ANDMORE's Las Vegas Apparel, co-located with Womenswear In Nevada for the second time, at the Expo at World Market Center Aug. 18–21. Buyers were thrilled with the ease of the show and busy getting their last-minute orders in for Fall, Back-to-School and game day.

Young contemporary brands showcased product from refined bohemian stone, brass and gold-plated jewelry from San Fernando Valley, Calif.–based **Katrin Santore** to elevated loungewear from Los Angeles–based **Stylive**. Knits ran from basics to fun, colorful, chunky sweaters with sassy sayings and plenty of metallics, sparkles and bows for Holiday. Long

dresses, party wear and short baby dolls were in demand.

“We shop across the board, but I’m looking for that contemporary vibe, what’s on-trend, style fits for women that aren’t sized junior,” said Monica Redman of **TeaElla** in Overland Park, Kan.

Los Angeles–based **She + Sky** displayed plaid dresses, sequined skirts, sweaters adorned with bows and a shimmer pleather short for Holiday priced at \$15.88.

Dallas-based **Boc Style LLC** featured a front-button black and white rayon short shawl jacket with fringe priced at \$34.

A bestseller for the basic laid-back knit line **Be Stage**,

made in Los Angeles, was the striped rust baby-doll drawstring hoodie priced at \$15.

Umgee, designed in Los Angeles, offered a lightweight ribbed-velvet basic top in gray, green, rust and honey in S–2X that could be dressed up or down, priced at \$18.88.

“Opening up on the Sunday before all the other major shows is a fantastic way to start the week, and we had the CommentCon education series for buyers here for the first time, hosted by video-commerce and live-selling platform **CommentSold**, which brought additional buyers to the show,” said Caron Stover, ANDMORE SVP, apparel.



Bella Amore



Dolcezza



Jennifer Grace



Shannon Passero



UbU Clothing

Art and Fashion Meet at Womenswear in Nevada

Early orders were written at Womenswear In Nevada, co-located with ANDMORE's Las Vegas Apparel Aug. 18–21 at the Expo at World Market Center. “We typically stay open a day later than other markets, so for us this was definitely exciting to try something new,” said Melissa Montes, WWIN vice president. Buyers had high praise for the ease of venue, brand quality and amenities.

Bold, sophisticated prints; an array of textures; blousy, feminine garments; and linens and knits were key along with glamorous lounge and party wear from San Diego–based brand **Jennifer Grace** and hip, bohemian styles from Los An-

geles–based **Origami Apparel**.

Not to be missed was the globally known world’s only blind muralist John Bramblitt, who was painting pictures in the foyer. Bramblitt is part of **Made 2 Inspire** at Forty Fort, Penn.–based **UbU Clothing**, blending art and fashion with one-of-a-kind reversible jackets starting at \$74. “Part of the money helps support artists and their causes,” said UbU owner Joe Leggo, whose son Joey is also one of the artists.

“After 30 years I found a new line in the first five minutes. That’s never happened,” said Debra Sarault, owner of **Betsy’s of Ligonier** in Ligonier, Penn., referring to Canada-designed

Shannon Passero. “It was the most exciting thing I saw—knitted sweaters and jackets with repurposed denim trim, mixed media, unique and artisanal,” noted Sarault. The Lenora Pullover was priced at \$55. Sarault also placed an order at Montreal-designed **Dolcezza**, another brand turning heads with a colorful artist-inspired golf collection.

Ventura, Calif.–based **Kiki Sol** offered a multicolored ruffled V-neck, three-tiered sundress sized S–XXL, priced at \$31.

The olive wide-leg linen pocket pant with asymmetrical buttons and tailored vest, priced at \$66, was a top seller at Italy-made **Bella Amore**.



Brangio



J Good-In Inc.



Joyful Jewelry Inc.

IFJAG Welcomes an Array of National and International Exhibitors

The latest edition of the International Fashion Jewelry & Accessory Group, held at the Embassy Suites Las Vegas hotel Aug. 17–20, drew buyers from the United States, England, Germany and Norway.

Some 180 national and international exhibitors filled three floors offering everything from large, beaded earrings to pearl necklaces; both dainty and chunky bracelets; headwear and scarves; handbags; boxed jewelry; hair products; and holiday gift items.

South El Monte, Calif.–based **J Good-In Inc.** show-

cased jewelry, candles and scented shower steamers priced at \$3.

It was an easy show for handbag and accessory buyer Wendy Turner from the family-owned chain **Martin’s Family Clothing** and **Wakefield’s** in Anniston, Ala. “I’m looking mainly for new items, trends—anything that’s going to drive business,” said Turner.

The selection from Fairfield, N.J.–based **Joyful Jewelry Inc.** included three-row natural-stone bracelets priced at \$7.

New exhibitor **Brangio**, based and designed in Los Angeles and Italy, offered a collection of purses, accessories and “Great Gatsby”-inspired apparel. Priced at \$88, the vintage varsity jacket with mixed fabric zip-up included a romantic-picture print.

IFJAG incorporated in 1997 catering to major retailers and wholesalers. “Now we take in major retailers, wholesalers, boutiques, online retail and catalogs,” said Don Valcourt, IFJAG executive director, who added that the show is launching a new edition in Charlotte, N.C., in May 2025.

A portrait of Gino Clark, a middle-aged man with short grey hair and glasses, wearing a dark suit, light blue shirt, and striped tie. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a dark, blurred cityscape at night with colorful bokeh lights in shades of blue, red, and orange.

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AIMS360



Samsung SDS Cello Square



Trends by David Tupaz Couture



Tukatech



Trendscopes

Collaboration and One-Stop Shopping at Sourcing at MAGIC

Sourcing at MAGIC, held Aug. 19–21 at the Las Vegas Convention Center, was the place to be for fashion brands, businesses and sourcing professionals to connect and collaborate with a community of global manufacturers, suppliers and service providers. More than 1,250 companies representing 29 countries and regions from Africa to China, India to Peru, Southeast Asia to the U.S. and Canada exhibited. Sessions included technology use in the fashion industry, artificial intelligence and how to incorporate it into a business, innovations in sustainability, fashion entrepreneurship and a fashion tech pitch space designed to support up-and-coming businesses.

The Sustainability + Social Good Gallery featured sustainable exhibitors verified by **Hey Social Good**.

The Sourcing Trends initiative launched this season, unpacking trends going into 2025. “We’re partnering with **Fashion Snoops** to create trend reports and trend resources for our attendees,” said Andreu David, vice president, Sourcing at MAGIC, who added, “We work alongside them on coming up with the trends for the following season. It’s downloadable

for attendees and it’s being packaged as **MMGNET Group** so it’s our own trend report,” said David.

Looking at technology’s evolving role in the fashion industry, the Fashion Technology Hub included service providers **Kornit Digital**, **Planiform** and **WoongJin Inc.**

Patented technology by Los Angeles–based **Tukatech** aims to eliminate the guesswork and waste in fashion design. “Some 98 percent of samples are thrown in the garbage,” said Ram Sareen, chairman and CEO of Tukatech. “Most of our clients don’t make a sample—everything is done digitally,” said Sareen, who added, “We help the industry not make the garments and then sell them but to sell the garments first and then make them. We have about 1,200 companies today who don’t make any samples or inventory—they do everything digitally.”

Seoul, South Korea–based **Samsung SDS Cello Square**, a digital freight-forwarding platform, was showing solutions for small- and medium-size companies that need ocean and air rates as well as fulfillment solutions on all logistics services. “A lot of companies right now are kind of having trouble

getting freight from overseas, so we help them get customs clearance and everything they need to get the commodity here,” said David Hahn, national sales manager for Samsung SDS America.

Los Angeles–based **AIMS360** was exhibiting its enterprise resource planning system, which allows a brand to run the back end of its business from soup to nuts. “Everything from the moment a style comes alive and you’re ready to sell, we handle the customer management, order management, inventory management, warehouse management, electronic data interchange, picking and packing, shipping, production, cut and sew, garment dye,” said Shahin Kohan, AIMS360 president, who noted that any brand that is an importer or producer can use the software to run its business.

Hangzhou, China–based **Trendscopes** is a marketing intelligence platform that allows clients, mostly fashion-related brands, to collect competitive data. “We do that so clients can analyze the market and know what’s trending and what’s not,” said Miaomiao Wen, co-founder and CTO.



blueb.



For Her NYC



Jaded Gypsy



Hidden Jeans



Macy Gray



Airstream

MAGIC Women’s Delivers Romantic, Glam and Western Wear

Western and romantic bohemian styles dominated MAGIC Women’s, held Aug. 19–21 at the Las Vegas Convention Center, where over 650 trend-driven and young contemporary brands showed Immediate, Holiday and Spring 2025 lines. Sophisticated prints, ultra-feminine sheer materials, puffed-sleeve knits, metallic denim, leopard prints and bows were on-trend.

The Western trend was great news for Irvine, Calif.–based **Boot Barn**, with over 400 stores that carry core denim styles from core Western vendors yet also some fashion denim. “We’ve always been Western, and that is why our business is doing so well right now—we aren’t just getting our true returning customer but also the customer who wants to be on-trend,” said Kristen Barnes, senior buyer for wovens, dresses

and skirts, who added, “We’re also excited to pick up items with bows, bow details, lace, little florets and leopard—leopard’s everywhere for Holiday.”

“In terms of denim, the biggest trend we’re seeing is the barrel jean. They’re going to be big for Spring 2025,” said Jordan Rudow, vice president of MAGIC.

Los Angeles–based **Hidden Jeans** checked two boxes with its cheetah-print barrel jean priced at \$36.

For cosmic glam, the poly/cotton and Lurex utility bomber jacket with multiple pockets from New York–based **For Her NYC** fit the bill, priced at \$79 with a matching skirt at \$49.

Greenville, Texas–based **Jaded Gypsy** offered a romantic 100 percent ruffled high-low top with tattered crochet detail,

priced at \$88.

Los Angeles–based **blueb.** had the cowgirl look with its fringe designs and a denim skirt-front skirt with short in the back, priced at \$21.80, and a cotton cowgirl embroidered crop top at \$19.50.

On the first night of market, the MMGNET Group and Art Hearts Fashion presented Style Oasis: A Fashion Runway Experience at Resorts World Las Vegas. Hosted by the **Zouk Group** and sponsored by **Airstream**, the event featured three different runway presentations showcasing fashion, footwear and accessories brands with Las Vegas flair. Guests were also treated to a special performance by **Grammy Award**–winning R&B sensation Macy Gray.



Last Tango



Morrison Denim



Driftwood



Aratta



Day Dreamer

Project Women’s Excites With New Denim Looks and Holiday

Project Women’s, held at the Las Vegas Convention Center Aug. 19–21, showcased over 180 young contemporary and contemporary brands including **Free People** and **Steve Madden**.

Denim continued to be strong with styles such as The Fly Girl from Los Angeles–based **Morrison Denim**. “It’s two vibes in one—a wide leg convertible cuff that you can snap up giving two different looks,” said owner Renee Watson of the style, priced at \$78.

New York–based **Driftwood** displayed a collection of

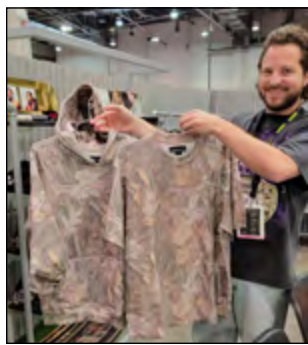
whimsical denim including “our infamous Farrah Flair jean with hallucination embroidery and matching blazer priced at \$95 and pant at \$82,” said Brianna Vinokur, sales and merchandising, for the brand.

The Lurex sparkle duster by **Last Tango**, made in Los Angeles and priced at \$49, was on-trend as was the bohemian-style Valencia maxi shirt duster with a denim mineral wash top and mesh flower appliqué bottom with embroidery from Temple City, Calif.–based **Aratta**, priced at \$89.

Vintage-inspired T-shirts from Los Angeles–made **Day Dreamer**, whose Grateful Dead blooming-flowers raglan in radiant watermelon jersey was priced at \$40. Handmade and dyed shawls and ponchos from Laguna Beach, California–based **Spain in America** were priced at \$28.

MODRN STUDIO, sourced and made in Los Angeles, offered interchangeable tops and bottoms, separates and sets. French terry shorts in 100 percent cotton with velvet drawstrings and stainless-steel cord stops were priced at \$57.

TRADE-SHOW REPORT



Primitive Apparel & Skate



East Side Golf



PARASUCO

Project Men's Propels Upcoming Season's Top Trends

Project Men's, the intersection of sports, street and fashion, was held at the Las Vegas Convention Center Aug. 19–21 and showcased 510 brands including **Adidas Skateboard**, **Nike SB**, **New Balance** and **FIFA**.

Denim reigned supreme with brands such as **G-Star**, **Mavi** and **Prps**. New York-based **Tripp NYC's** denim shredder bondage pants, priced at \$81, caught the eye.

"You can't deny the influence of sports in tailored, traditional sportswear and streetwear," said Edwina Kulego, vice president, international and men's fashion for the MMGNET Group. Case in point: the 20-patch, fully loaded motocross vibe Moto Hoody from legendary Canadian denim brand **PARASUCO**, priced at \$140.

New York-based **East Side Golf** held

private showings in a skybox. Its mesh-lined nylon windbreaker was priced at \$66.50.

Returning women's buyers Jade Quigley and Beatrice Perron from Quebec, Canada-based **La Maison Simons**, with 17 stores across Canada, came looking for "anything that makes a statement and that is super interesting for our customer to come into the stores and be impressed with what we have," said Perron. She added that "sometimes picking a few pieces from a men's collection is really interesting and makes an impact." Perron ordered the heavyweight camouflage T-shirt and hoodie with embroidery and screen printing from San Fernando Valley, Calif.-based **Primitive Apparel & Skate**. The hoodie was priced at \$42.50, the T-shirt at \$20 and a mesh short at \$30.



Tripp NYC



FIFA



D&L Apparel



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OffPrice Attracts International Buyers and Offers Best Deals

Retailers had the opportunity to see, touch and purchase the best deals in the business from women's and juniors to men's, children's, accessories and beauty/gifts at OffPrice, held Aug. 18–21 at the Venetian Expo and Convention Center.

"The number-one vendor I purchase from at OffPrice is **Selini NY**. They have great accessories, bow ties, wallets and umbrellas," said Arman Ariane, owner of **Xerxes for Men** in Claremont, Calif.

Best-selling items for Chicago-based distributor **D&L Apparel** included lifestyle name brands such as **Levi's**. "One reason we look forward to exhibiting is the constant flow of new accounts we open. It's important for us to showcase our brands in person

for both new and old accounts, and the OffPrice show allows us to do so," said Brandon Cooperman, owner of D&L Apparel, who noted that the company tries to offer items at 75 to 90 percent off retail.

"Boys' cotton/poly graphic T-shirts were our best-selling products," said Albert Choueka, owner of the New York-based **Tuff Cookies**.

OffPrice saw an uptick in international buyers this year. "With this momentum, we're already looking forward to February 2025, where we plan to deliver even more opportunities for our exhibitors and buyers to connect and grow their businesses, said Tricia Barglof, VP for OffPrice and business operations.

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In Decorated Apparel, Dimeo Checks All the Boxes for Quality, Cost, and Compliance

In Mexico, nothing's more important than *la familia*, and this is perfectly embodied by Dimeo, a 30-year-old manufacturer whose extended family includes 150 employees at its Guadalajara headquarters. Fernando Villalever founded the business along with his mother at age 16.

Today, he boasts the title of CEO and awaits the onboarding of his two children when they graduate from university. In an age of logistical challenges, frustrating timelines, and increasing costs, Dimeo checks the three crucial boxes: fast, good, and affordable.

The company has worked with major retailers in the U.S. apparel industry, specializing in the embellishment of tees, polos, and sweatshirts. It also produces garments for marketing companies and uniforms for industry.

California Apparel News recently interviewed Villalever to learn what makes Dimeo an ideal solution for U.S.-based fashion brands.

CAN: Your specialty is decoration. What does that include?

FV: The most important is screen printing, followed by embroidery, sublimation, DTG, DTF, textile vinyl, heat transfers, and embossing. Every decoration technique is available for all our products, and our machines are the most advanced in the world.



ROQ ECO: 16 stations, 14 colors

CAN: What makes you so good in tees and sweatshirts?

FV: Two things: one is the cost and second is the availability. We always have at least 4 million blanks in our inventory sitting and ready to be printed, from the low end to the highest Supima cotton. We have the same quality as high-premium brands.

CAN: Is there a minimum-order size?

FV: Our MOQ for special orders is 1,200 pieces per color and style, but we can start at 600 pieces. We can generally make samples in eight days. The delivery time for orders also depends on other factors required for the project, but the turnaround time is very fast for simple orders.

CAN: Considering all the logistics challenges right now, working with you must be much more convenient for companies in the U.S.

FV: Air freight from Asia is costly, but we do it almost daily from here. We can

fly orders to Tijuana and then transport them to L.A. by truck for a competitive cost. The final LDP cost is often less than domestic manufacturing within the United States.

CAN: What about duty fees and taxes?

FV: The TMEC agreement means that cotton from the U.S., Canada, and Mexico can be imported with no duty fee or tax, so it's like buying domestically. There's certainly no agreement like that with China.

CAN: What else makes you the best solution in your specialty?

FV: We're simply the best choice regarding timing and cost. We're less expensive than options from Asia with the same quality or better. We're also well known for making T-shirts for political campaigns, the uniform industry, corporate promotions, and marketing.

CAN: Do you feel like American companies are unaware of the quality, cost, and convenience of doing business with Mexico?



Dimeo Apparel Group headquarters

FV: Definitely. We're 100 percent compliant on all environmental and ethical production matters, which is crucial for many customers. This proves the reliability of our company and sets us apart from others in the industry. When some companies lower their cost, they do so without concern for social responsibility, making their employees work extra shifts or not paying for health insurance. We're respectful of all that, and this is the most important thing for many of our customers. We pass every audit and are very proud of that fact.



Style #GR-OKAY-BODY 2

CAN: How should prospective customers reach out?

FV: Email is the easiest way to contact us, and then we can set up a Zoom conference or even a personal visit to our facilities. Please message us at direccion@dimeo.mx, visit www.dimeoag.com or call +52 33-3576-6170 and simply tell us what you need.



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TRADE-SHOW REPORT



Messe Frankfurt's editions of Texworld and Apparel Sourcing Los Angeles as well as Printsources at the California Market Center catered to attendees interested in sustainability—as long as their other demands could be met. Jared Maziarz of Lion Button (left) leads a customer through his offerings and Thomasine Dolan leads "The Rise of Next-Gen Bio-Based Materials" panel.

Eco Options Are the 'Cherry on Top' at L.A. Texworld, Apparel Sourcing

By Dorothy Crouch Contributing Writer

The West Coast edition of **Messe Frankfurt's Texworld and Apparel Sourcing Los Angeles** as well as **Printsources** at the **California Market Center** blended textile manufacturers and suppliers with a comprehensive roster of the shows' Textile Talks. Guests attended the Los Angeles events, which debuted in July 2023, from regions including the local Los Angeles area, the Pacific Northwest and East Coast, Colorado, New York, Texas, Japan and Australia.

The Textile Talks educational seminar series included panel discussions including "State of Play: An Update on Legislation Impacting the Fashion Industry" and "Sourcing 2024: The Second Half," in addition to the trend presentation "Fall/Winter 2025/26: Inspirations on Color, Trend, Textiles and Apparel from **Doneger | TOBE**." During "The Rise of Next-Gen Bio-Based Materials" discussion, moderator Thomasine Dolan, director of materials, innovation and design at the **Material Innovation Initiative**, led a panel composed of Megan Beck of **Rheom Materials**, Alissa Baier-Lentz of **Kintra Fibers**, Sara Pink of **von Holzhausen** and Amanda Turner of **etti-tude** at the Aug. 13–14 event.

"The best thing about all the Texworld shows is Textile Talks," said Dolan. "Eileen Small [market development, fashion and apparel textiles at Messe Frankfurt] always puts together interesting people and relevant topics, and they're always well attended."

According to Baier-Lentz, sustainability remains important to brands, but it must be offered in addition to other solutions.

"Sustainability is nice to have. But we've seen some big market indicators that show sustainability isn't enough to cut it nowadays. You have to outperform the existing materials—at Kintra we do—and you absolutely have to show a clear path to price parity," explained Baier-Lentz. "You need to demonstrate it to the brands and their tier 1 and tier 2 suppliers, and be able to show that it's not only easy to integrate but you're going to get them wins."

Attendees at the show agreed. Traveling to Los Angeles from **LYDG** in Kirkland, Wash., Alice Chen, senior product manager, and Kata Kékedi, senior design and innovation lead, were prioritizing hand feel and wearability.

"It's all about the comfort," said Chen. "And sustainability."

If a sourcing partner is able to deliver comfort, hand feel and affordability, in addition to sustainability, Chen and Kékedi said they would be more willing to collaborate.

"Everyone wants to have a say in fabric innovation and sustainability—it's almost a competition of who can come up with the next thing," Kékedi said. "Sustainability is always the cherry on the cake. If that is a choice, we feel better about it."

Chen and Kékedi were drawn to **California Love** by the Fallbrook, Calif.-based **Nalini Asha Design Studio**, which features hand-painted graphics from Nalini Asha Biggs.

"My love for what I do comes through," Biggs said. "People are connecting with the handcrafted art of it."

Another concern for attendees was minimum-order quantities as this issue can prove challenging for startups and emerging designers.

"Many are conscious of cost and what it would take to develop a button," said Jared Maziarz, the New York-based national sales manager for **Lion Button**, which boasts sustainable products. "We try to alleviate some of that pressure. If they don't meet the MOQs, we do have a small surcharge of \$45, which is pretty fair and reasonable."

Whether a brand is a startup or established label, Dolan remains optimistic regarding sustainable growth. In addition to leading the bio-based materials panel, Dolan organized and managed the Next-Gen Innovation Hub, an installation featuring ecological offerings from select exhibitors.

"I like having the innovation hub here because I think the Texworld shows, in general, are more mainstream," Dolan said. "This is where more mass-market places are shopping, and that is important to me and all these innovators to get things moving."



Attendees learned about sustainable options at the Next-Gen Innovation Hub (left) and unique designs from Nalini Asha Biggs of Nalini Asha Design Studio

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The Sky Is the Limit for SMBs With Cloud-Centric DigitBridge

End-to-end digital commerce operations system DigitBridge is a rare offering in the crowded software-as-a-service market due to its deep roots in the fashion industry and all-in-one platform. Four-year-old DigitBridge was founded by Petersen Zhu, a veteran of the fashion industry, who is backed by a career spanning more than 30 years.

Zhu leads the company as chief executive officer with Bolan You, co-founder and chief technology officer. Zhu has served as president and chief executive officer of Vibes Base Enterprises Incorporation, an El Monte, Calif., manufacturer and wholesale operation, since 1995, while You has worked with Monrovia, Calif., electronics accessories online retailer eForCity.com.

"Over the years I realized e-commerce is totally different than the wholesale business," explained Zhu. "In wholesale, you need some technology and software, but those needs are more crucial in e-commerce. I have used a lot of different software to meet the requirements of e-commerce, and there are so many integrations. I had to hire a lot of people, and we developed our own proprietary in-house system to satisfy meeting these e-commerce requirements."

A Breakthrough to Serve SMBs

The mission to support the fashion industry with an all-in-one digital-commerce solution is personal for Zhu, an entrepreneur who understands the challenges of surviving in the apparel business while growing a small- to medium-size business and investing in the construction of an ecosystem through seamless data management.

"For the small- to medium-sized companies, if you don't have enough resources for IT expansion, it's hard to have success in today's digital commerce world," Zhu said. "D2C is a smart way for them to go, but you have to have the operations platform to help with that, especially when you have very little money and not enough IT people."

DigitBridge's founders want to exceed the digital-commerce needs of SMBs with a single solution within a SaaS landscape filled with companies that offer

only piecemeal products.

"We have built a platform to provide SMBs with the tools that they need: new technology, automation features, and a new business model," said Zhu. "Since we are building a new ecosystem, the most important thing is to have a

modern data-management platform. Based on that, you can build workflow process automation and real-time digital connection and data analysis, which is fundamental for digital commerce."

Fashion entrepreneurs often start their businesses by fulfilling many duties, which often include responsibilities in which they don't have a background. The cloud-based DigitBridge technology

provides the capabilities of multi-channel integrations and open API into a single platform. This single product helps to resolve challenges related to DTC fulfillment and content management while also including tools such as back-office functions and integration. DigitBridge also offers digital B2B tools for clients that wish to pursue wholesale-only. Zhu notes that entrepreneurs can utilize different tools within the single solution as their businesses grow.

"We have an all-inclusive solution, but the enterprise resource planning is the hub, and our omni-channel ERP means you can do traditional wholesale," Zhu explained. "We have the full automated flow for e-commerce. We have the warehouse management system to handle DTC, and we have the product information management system to handle the content creation. We also have the commerce central hub to handle orders with real-time digital connections with every channel."



DigitBridge is an all-in-one software solution created to support small- to medium-sized clothing businesses.

Elevating Fashion E-commerce to the Next Level

DigitBridge serves customers whose businesses cover a number of different categories. The company counts among its clients Julianne Bartolotta and Heritage Workwear. When powered by the DigitBridge platform, the companies have the potential to experience exceptional growth.

"We have one customer that had a \$2 million business two or three years ago and now they're doing more than \$40 million," said Zhu.



The DigitBridge platform offers a comprehensive suite of tools to accommodate business growth.

Many of DigitBridge's clients are entrepreneurs who want to distinguish their businesses from brands that sell through mass e-commerce merchant channels by raising their companies to a premium profile. DigitBridge seamlessly leads fashion-brand owners into the promised land of superior digital commerce.

"We use workflow mapping to help our customers build a catalog of their creations that follows the rules of each channel," Zhu explained. "Whether apparel companies want to sell on Amazon or eBay, or a high-end department store, or a wholesale marketplace, it is a lot of work. We make it simple."



digitbridge.com
sales@digitbridge.com

Resource Guide

Fashion Buildings Cooper Design Space

860 S. Los Angeles St.
Los Angeles, CA 90014
(213) 627-3754

www.cooperdesignspace.com

Instagram: @cooperdesignspace

Constructed in 1924 for clothing manufacturer Milton G. Cooper, the Cooper Building has maintained a strong connection to the garment industry through its historic use and design. Acquired by Stanley and Anita Hirsh in the 1970s, they transformed it into a Fashion District icon. Now known as Cooper Design Space it remains in the Hirsh family, committed to the fashion industry and offering a variety of studio, office, and showroom spaces within a single, dynamic location at the corner of Los Angeles and Ninth streets. It is home for many of Los Angeles' most creative premium fashion brands and individuals. Visit Cooper Design Space at LA Market Week featuring Brand Assembly, Oct. 7-9.

Fashion District Dimeo

dimeoag.com

Founded by Fernando Villalver, Dimeo is a 30-year-old manufacturer of T-shirts, polos, caps, and hoodies specializing in the embellishment of garments. It is well known for making tees for political campaigns, the uniform industry, corporate promotions, and marketing. Due to its Guadalajara location, "we're simply the best choice regarding timing and cost. We're less expensive than options from Asia with the same quality or better," says Villalver. The company is also 100 percent compliant on environmental and ethical production matters.

Line Apparel

lineapparel.com

admin@lineapparel.com

Based in the heart of Los Angeles, Line Apparel's creative design team delivers on trend merchandise for its retail partners, private companies, and online stores. Line Apparel provides quality garments through superior design and globally recognized sourcing. The company maintains industry-leading standards through its fabric innovation, dedication to sustainable practices, and state-of-the-art fit technology. Line Apparel's team of experienced sourcing managers work with global suppliers to create premium fabrications starting from yarn to the finished product to maintain consistent quality and focus on every aspect of the production process.

The Evans Group

www.tegmade.com

The Evans Group (TEG) is a reputable LA-based fashion development and production house catering to both established and emerging designers. The company operates an acclaimed vertically integrated facility in the Arts District of Los Angeles, crafting patterns, samples, and small-volume productions. As a premier cut and sew manufacturer, TEG specializes in bringing client designs to life with precision and excellence. For a comprehensive launch experience, services include design, fabric and trim sourcing, marketing, and mentorship. Since its establishment in 2005, TEG has assisted close to 4,000 clothing brands, generating over 30 year-round living-wage jobs.

Finance Milberg Factors, Inc.

www.milbergfactors.com

Milberg Factors is a leading factoring and asset-based lending (ABL) business, and one of the largest private, commercial finance firms in the United States. Headquartered in New York City, the company maintains regional offices in Los Angeles and North Carolina, and serves clients ranging in size from \$5 million to over \$500 million in sales—including manufacturers, wholesalers and service providers. Milberg Factors, Inc. specializes in Factoring, Receivables Financing, A/R Management, and Credit Management. Led by a thriving, third-generation management team, Milberg provides the financial resources that clients need, based on an entrepreneurial philosophy and set of values that have remained constant for over

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White Oak Commercial Finance, LLC

www.whiteoaksf.com

White Oak Commercial Finance, LLC (WOCF), formerly Capital Business Credit/Capital Factors, is a global financial products and services company providing credit facilities to middlemarket companies between \$1 million and \$30 million. WOCF's solutions include asset-based lending, full-service factoring, invoice discounting, supply-chain financing, inventory financing, U.S. import/export financing, trade credit-risk management, accountreceivables management, and credit and collections support. WOCF is an affiliate of White Oak Global Advisors, LLC, and its institutional clients.

Suppliers Artistic Milliners/Star Fades International

www.starfadesinternational.com

The Artistic Milliners ecosystem is the conglomerate of the future, an expansive suite of solutions representing the intersection of a digitally-forward ethos for responsible design, manufacturing, sourcing and renewable energy. Along with Star Fades International, the L.A.-based custom wash and finishing facility, the company's global footprint includes Artistic Energy, Artistic Lab, Soho Incubator in New York and now Artrmill, a pivot into the premium wovens space. The custom-designed plant is equipped with leading-edge European machinery and can produce 2.2 million yards of fabric across multiple fabrications, blends and finishes. Artrmill signifying the next echelon of innovation and technological advancement for AM.

Fabric Merchants

www.fabricmerchants.com

Fabric Merchants is a leading wholesale fabric supplier based in Los Angeles. Its customers benefit from the tens of thousands of yards brought into its warehouse weekly. The company imports better designer fabrics from Europe and delivers fashion apparel fabric basics and trending seasonal prints on a daily basis. Fabric Merchants inventory is constantly changing and is fashion focused, ensuring that it deliver current and next season's desired fabrics to the market. The company supplies fabric stores and services many designers and manufacturers on its wholesale website where customers can shop for fabrics in 5-, 10-, and 15-yard cuts as well as larger quantities on all. Fabric Merchants has been delivering one-of-a-kind fabrics to customers for 25 years and pride themselves on excellent customer service and fast shipping times. Located just minutes east of DTLA in Boyle Heights with free parking. Open Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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Technology DigitBridge

digitbridge.com

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In 2020, CEO and co-founder Petersen Zhu, CTO Bolan You, and a team of engineers got together to start building DigitBridge in response to their realization that the need to be operationally efficient and present across different sales channels was clear. They also quickly realized that existing software was both cost-prohibitive and unnecessarily complex. Their resulting product is tailored for the savvy SMB consumer-goods brand manufacturer, distributor, wholesaler, and retailer. It's an affordable, holistic solution that allows companies to work from anywhere, do business everywhere, and connect with everyone—both digitally and hands-on.

Trade Shows ANDMORE's Atlanta Apparel

lasvegas-apparel.com

Atlanta Apparel is the largest apparel market on the East Coast, offering thousands of contemporary women's, men's, children's, and accessories lines all together in one location at one time. Seven markets throughout the year feature an expansive—and growing—product mix, including contemporary, young contemporary, social occasion, bridal, resortwear, fashion jewelry, fine jewelry, shoes, handbags, and more showcased in permanent showrooms and temporary exhibition booths. The next market, October 15-18, 2024, offers a wide range of Spring/Summer '25 collections as well as the industry's top footwear and accessory brands. Details and 2025 market schedule can be found at www.Atlanta-Apparel.com.

IFJAG

info@ifjag.com

www.ifjag.com

IFJAG trade shows feature fashion jewelry and accessories from around the world with over 100 manufacturers or direct importers showing exclusive designs to IFJAG's unique venue of private showrooms which offer buyers a professional environment. The upcoming show is in Orlando, Fla. running Oct. 21-23 at the Embassy Suites Orlando. Preregister at the IFJAG website. New exhibitors who would like to participate in the show are welcome. Buyers are offered complimentary lunch and local transportation reimbursement.

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We are a downtown LA based dress manufacturer and have the following opening:
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