Business Week
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Management changes at Ploucquet

20 Nov 2006

Germany-based specialist manufacturer of laminates, coatings, finishing processes and membrane systems Ploucquet Holding GmbH has made several managerial changes.

Martin Friedrich, who has been a member of the board since 2003, has been appointed chairman of the board of management at Ploucquet and will be responsible for production, research and development, personnel, sales and marketing of the company.

Udo von Reinersdorff has been named as managing director finance and accountancy, controlling, information technology, buying and logistics.

Meanwhile, Gerhard Havranek, managing director marketing and sales, is resigning by mutual agreement with the company.

The newly appointed chairman, Mr Friedrich, commented, “The Ploucquet Group has now completed the financial restructuring of the past years and with the new management formation will concentrate on strengthening and expanding its core competences in the areas of functional textiles (with the brand Sympatex), technical textiles and garment textiles (linings, fabrics).”

Headquartered near Munich, Germany, Ploucquet has approximately 400 employees world-wide. It currently operates at three international locations with a distribution network in 21 countries. It includes Sympatex Technologies GmbH as one of its subsidiaries.

Higher revenues at McRae Industries

20 Nov 2006

Manufacturer of work, western and military boots McRae Industries, Inc. has reported consolidated net revenues from continuing operations $68.85 million for fiscal 2006, a 10.3% increase compared with the $62.4 million reported for fiscal 2005. This improvement has been attributed to continued fashion trend demand for western and work boots products, which was partially offset by reduced requirements for military combat boots for the US Government.

Net earnings amounted to $3.39 million compared with $1.57 million. Net earnings for fiscal 2006 totalled $3.39 million versus $3.44 million last year.

Consolidated gross profit from continuing operations climbed to $19.2 million for fiscal 2006 compared with $14.7 million. This was attributed to increased net revenues and a greater proportion of higher margin Western boot products in the overall sales mix.

The company’s military boot unit, which manufactures and distributes military combat boots primarily to the US Government, as well as foreign governments, and selected commercial surplus outlets, posted net revenues of $19.8 million compared with $26.8 million for fiscal 2005. This decline was primarily attributable to reduced military combat boot requirements for the US government and the expiration of a military boot contract with the Israeli government.

Clariant to cut costs

20 Nov 2006

Swiss specialty chemicals company Clariant International Ltd has announced that it is to increase its focus on value creation by reducing the company’s cost structure, cutting net working capital and strengthening its performance. At a total estimated cost of CHF500 million ($402.96 million), the initiatives will include a 10% reduction in the site network, resulting in the loss of approximately 2,200 jobs and reducing its number of products by at least 25%.

These initiatives are the result of a wide review over the past six months of Clariant’s strategy, organisational effectiveness, portfolio components and operating practices.

Clariant plans to build on its strengths in colours, surfaces and performance chemicals. The group’s four divisions – Textile, Leather & Paper Chemicals; Pigments & Additives; Masterbatches, and Functional Chemicals – are to be supported by increasingly centralised and efficient group functions, including sourcing, supply chain management and site services. Clariant began centralising these areas last year and considerable potential is seen to reduce costs further by more effective purchasing and by pooling expertise. This will necessitate closing numerous sites over the next four years, with the main focus in Europe. It will cut costs further across the group and reduce jobs by 10% by the end of 2009. Clariant currently employs approximately 22,000 people, down from approximately 28,000 three years ago.

New initiatives will also be launched across the group to boost growth in fast-growing markets in Asia, particularly in China and in India, where Clariant already has substantial operations. The primary focus will be on

creating additional capacity to meet expanding domestic demand, with exports to other regions of secondary importance.

The number of products Clariant sells will be reduced by at least 25%. The company has already reduced products in its textile dyes business, where the portfolio has been cut from approximately 3,000 products to about 500 products over the past year.

Nike appoints new board member

20 Nov 2006

Nike Inc. has appointed media executive Johnathan Rodgers to the company's board of directors. Mr Rodgers is president and CEO of TV One, a cable channel that currently serves approximately 33 million households and offers a range of lifestyle and entertainment-oriented programming for adult African- American viewers.

He started his career as a writer and reporter for Sports Illustrated.

Since 2001, Mr Rodgers has served on the board of Procter & Gamble Company as a member of its Innovation and Technology Committee.

Hibbett's third quarter sales up 17.2%

21 Nov 2006

US sporting goods retailer Hibbett Sporting Goods, Inc., has reported a 17.2% increase in third quarter net sales. Net sales reached $129.7 million, compared with $110.6 million for the same quarter last year. Comparable store sales increased 7.1%. Net income for the period grew 21.5% to $9.9 million, compared with $8.2 million.

Net sales for the 39-week period to the end of October increased 13% to $360.9 million, compared with $319.4 million for the comparable period last year. Comparable store sales increased 2.8% for the first nine months.

Net income rose 7.3% to $25.5 million, compared with $23.7 million for the same prior year period.

Hibbett opened 20 new stores and closed two during the third quarter, bringing its store base to 590 stores.

US embassy highlights women entrepreneurs in Ethiopia

21 Nov 2006

US Embassy Charge d'Affaires Ambassador Vicki Huddleston hosted a 'mini' trade fair on November 18, for some of Ethiopia's leading women entrepreneurs. The event showcased products such as textiles, leather, handicrafts and home furnishings.

The purpose of the event was to highlight the success of female-owned enterprises in Ethiopia today, and to promote the importance of entrepreneurship among women in the country.

Approximately 30 entrepreneurs took part in the fair, designed to bring together women leaders in business and professional life to seek common ground and search for solutions to common problems.

New report considers options for sustainable fashion industry

21 Nov 2006

A new study produced by the University of Cambridge has set out proposals for a sustainable clothing industry, including new business opportunities for retailers and manufacturers.

Written by researchers at the university's Institute for Manufacturing, the study includes a model for the ideal consumer, who would drive environmentally beneficial changes in the clothing industry–for example, by buying fewer clothes, washing them less frequently and recycling them more often. Currently, consumers in the UK spend about £780 per head per year on textiles and clothes, amounting to about 2.15 million tonnes (35kg per person). Of this, just one eighth is sent for re-use through charities whilst the rest is discarded.

The report also proposes actions that the UK government and businesses could take to encourage better practice while remaining profitable, such as more fact-based information for customers. Proposals for retailers, based on separating profit and growth from increasing material flow, include the re-introduction of once-common services such as clothes repair and maintenance–which retailers could use to develop new revenue streams; the active promotion of garments designed for repair; and offering fashion upgrades.

Other proposals in the study include research into technological developments that would allow clothes to be refreshed without washing, sort clothes efficiently and recycle new fibres, and improve the infrastructure for clothing collection.

Lija increases staff by 280%

21 Nov 2006

Canadian women's golf and sportswear company Lija, owned by designer Linda Hipp, has announced that it

has recorded a three-year corporate staff growth rate of 280%.

Founded in 1997, the company stated that it is continuing to increase its corporate and sales staff to meet rapidly expanding demand for the company's golf and sportswear brands.

The brand's expansion has been recognised and the company was recently named amongst Canada's 100 fastest growing companies, for the second consecutive year, by Profit magazine. It has achieved organic annual sales growth of at least 50% for the past seven years. It also recently began selling into the UK, Australia and Japan.

Linda Hipp was also named as one of Canada's top female entrepreneurs.

Puma partners with Detroit Ignition

21 Nov 2006

Puma North America is to partner The Detroit Ignition, the newest club to join the US Major Indoor Soccer League (MISL), as its official uniform and apparel provider. The agreement gives Puma exclusive branding for all on and off-field player apparel, including match uniforms, game-day warm ups, travel suits and training gear.

Puma entered a four-year agreement to be the official ball supplier of the MISLin October. The Detroit Ignition is the first club from North America's professional indoor soccer league to establish an apparel partnership with the company.

LaCrosse Footwear wins Calgary fire boot contract

21 Nov 2006

US branded work and outdoor footwear company LaCrosse Footwear, Inc. has been awarded a supply and delivery contract for its Gunnison Bunker Boot for Canada's Calgary Fire Department.

The contract for the boot–which is manufactured at the company's ISO-9001 certified manufacturing facility in Portland, Oregon, USA–commences immediately for a one-year term with nine optional years. The first order is expected to be fulfilled as early as December 31.

The Gunnison boot has been designed to provide better strength and thermal protection while reducing weight. It is certified to National Fire Protection Association (NFPA-1971) standards and the upper is constructed from a combination of 7.5oz leather/Defender material and 750 Kevlar/Nomex, rather than the traditional all leather upper.

Additional safety features of the boot include a broader ASTM certified steel toe, a Crosstech protective fabric lining and a stitchdown, thermo-moulded heel counter for comfort and added stability. The Gunnison was the first LaCrosse boot to offer the puncture protection of the company's Flex-Shield midsole, offering more lightweight, flexible puncture protection then a traditional steel midsole and additionally does not transfer heat or cold.

LaCrosse has also developed the Gunnison to include the new Vibram Olympia Fire & Ice outsole to provide improved traction on icy and frozen surfaces. The outsole resists the chemical changes that take place in a traditional outsole after being rapidly heated and cooled. The Gunnison also includes comfort fit features, from resoleable stitchdown construction to a tapered upper design with pull straps for easy entry.

The Calgary Fire Department employs over 1,000 fire fighters.

Nike ends orders with soccer ball manufacturer over labour concerns

21 Nov 2006

Nike, Inc. is ceasing orders with its hand-stitched soccer ball supplier, Saga Sports, based in Sialkot, Pakistan, due to the factory's failure to correct significant labour compliance violations. As a result, Nike is limiting its supply of hand-stitched soccer balls for the foreseeable future. According to Nike, it is engaging with a diverse group of governmental, non-governmental and industry stakeholders to secure support for the affected workers and jointly explore sustainable, fresh approaches to local manufacturing and social enterprise models in Sialkot.

"This contract factory has persistently broken its commitments and irrevocably breached its trust with us; most importantly, the factory has failed its employees," said Nike CEO and president Mark Parker. "Rather than continue with Saga, we have decided to limit our supply of hand-stitched soccer balls as we are developing new sources with factories committed to upholding our standards and treating workers fairly."

While Nike continues to source apparel in Pakistan, the company currently does not have other soccer ball vendors in Sialkot able to absorb production under conditions acceptable to the company. Soccer teams and leagues sponsored by Nike will not be affected by the decision. It will continue to work with several existing contract factories in China and Thailand to supply hand-stitched and machine-stitched soccer balls, which already supply a significant portion of Nike's total soccer business.

Eurobike and OutDoor expand

21 Nov 2006

Plans to extend Friedrichshafen's exhibition venue in Germany, have been approved, meaning that there will now be additional exhibition space at the international bicycle trade show, Eurobike, and European OutDoor trade shows. The €50 million project will increase the space from 15,000 m2 to 85,000 m2 and includes two new 6,300 m2 exhibition halls, plus a new entrance and additional car parking.

European outdoor companies join drive to protect the environment

22 Nov 2006

A number of European outdoor sports companies have now joined the "1% For the Planet" club. The club, which now has 50 European companies amongst its members, comprises businesses that have committed to positive environmental change by donating at least 1% of their annual turnover to environmental organisations worldwide.

The European outdoor sports-related involved are: Magic Project (distribution of ski and snowboard accessories); Nordisk Fiskeutstyr (fly fishing shop); Skim Sea Kayaks (kayak manufacturer); Finisterre (technical apparel for surfers); Loose-Fit Surfboards; Where Wise Men Fish (fly fishing travel agency); TYF group (travel and outdoor equipment); El Alto (ethically-sourced, socially responsible outdoor clothing made in Bolivia); Expedition Guides (climbing and trekking guides); Surf-Lines (outdoor shop); Mountaingirl (guiding instruction for women); Moah (snowboard clothing); and the Progression ski school.

1% For the Planet was co-established in 2001 by Yvon Chouinard, founder and owner of outdoor clothing and sports gear company Patagonia, which is well known for its environmental awareness. It currently boasts a worldwide membership of over 450, which all display the 1% logo on their products and marketing material. Companies can also join at a brand level and contribute 1% of the revenues of a particular brand.

BASF and Dow to conduct feasibility study for European TDI facility

22 Nov 2006

BASF AG and The Dow Chemical Company have announced plans to conduct a joint feasibility study for the construction of a state-of-the-art production plant for toluene diisocyanate (TDI) and precursors at one of their integrated sites in Europe. The plant would have an annual capacity of 300,000 metric tons and would be the world's largest such facility ever built. The study will take into consideration factors such as location, technology and infrastructure. Should the project prove viable, the facility would start operations in 2011.

"Although this is an early-stage feasibility study, we believe that the world's top two chemical companies can create a world-class TDI facility that has outstanding economic and technological competitiveness," said Pat Dawson, business vice president, Dow Polyurethanes. "This facility would support the future growth plans of Dow's performance businesses, while ensuring our competitiveness to meet increasing customer demand for TDI in Europe."

"With this approach BASF solidifies its commitment to the global TDI market by evaluating additional production capabilities," said Jacques Delmoitiez, president of BASF's Polyurethanes division. "By combining the strengths and expertise of both companies, we continue to improve our ability to serve the needs of our customers and thus helping them to be more successful."

Lanxess divests textile processing chemicals business

22 Nov 2006

Germany-based specialty chemicals company Lanxess is divesting its textile processing chemicals business as previously announced. All the activities of the Textile Processing Chemicals (TPC) business unit outside of North America are to be acquired by Dutch investor Egeria and business unit management. The included business has sales of about €130 million and employs 330 people.

Under Armour signs Senior Bowl Title sponsorship

22 Nov 2006

US-based branded apparel, footwear and accessories Under Armour, Inc. has signed a multi-year title sponsorship of the US Senior Bowl. Coming on the heels of the company's designation as an authorised supplier of footwear to the NFL, this partnership with the country's top college-level talent is the next step in the company's on-field commitment.

The Senior Bowl annually features 100 of the best senior collegiate football players and top NFL draft prospects on teams representing the North and South. Coaching staffs from two NFL teams oversee each squad, and the game and its practices will be televised by the NFL Network.

Over 560 former Senior Bowl players are currently active in the NFL, and the 2006 NFL Pro Bowl rosters featured 26 former Senior Bowl players. Over the past six years, the Senior Bowl has featured an average of 11 NFL

first-round draft choices each year with 95% of players in the game making active NFL rosters. The 2007 game will be played January 27 at Ladd-Peebles Stadium in Mobile, Alabama.

Adidas players debut new footwear models

22 Nov 2006

David Beckham has officially debuted his new, specially developed adidas football boots. The new +Predator Absolute is called “Swerve”, inspired by Beckham’s ability to curl the ball around the freekick wall. The boot is a part of the sixth generation of Predator football boots exclusively designed and developed with and for the player. The swerve lines dominate the shoe from heel to toe and the boot features white, silver and gold colouring.

The David Beckham +Predator Absolute “Swerve” will be available at selected retailers from November 27 onwards at a retail price of €200.

Various other international football players will officially present the new adidas +F50 Tunit football boot in UEFA competition matches, November 21-3. The football boot is the second generation of the football footwear concept Tunit, which allows players to customise, adapt and tune their boots to different weather and pitch conditions.

The boot features a new design graphic and new colours. The screwing mechanism between studs and chassis has been updated, the material has been altered and the pattern and construction of the upper and lace cover have been moderated to improve fit and ball handling.

2,650 visitors at Interstoff Rossija Autumn

22 Nov 2006

Interstoff Rossija Autumn, the third international trade fair of apparel fabrics and accessories, took place in Moscow IEC Crocus Expo, October 17-19. 78 exhibitors from Germany, Italy, France, Austria, Turkey, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, China and Russia presented their products and 2,650 visitors were registered at the event.

According to the show’s organisers, more than 60% of visitors claimed to be attending the fair in order to find new suppliers, improve existing business relationships and place new orders. The majority came from various regions of Russia and CIS (Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Bashkortostan).

Trend themes for autumn/winter 2007/2008 were revealed to be Enchantment, Indigenous, Enthusiasm and Androgynous.

Seminars included ‘What determines consumers’ choice of garments?’ and ‘How to work with catalogues of international fabric producers’ and workshops included ‘Fashion Kaleidoscope’.

The next edition of Interstoff Rossija will take place February 27 to March 1, 2007.

Climate protection strategies from Bayer

22 Nov 2006

The Bayer Group has been focusing on climate protection and is continuing its activities to improve its greenhouse gas performance. The company has welcomed the goal of current government negotiations in Nairobi to achieve a successful global climate protection policy once the commitment period defined in the Kyoto Protocol has ended in 2012. By reducing direct greenhouse gas emissions since the beginning of the 1990s by around 70%, it has already exceeded the targets of the Kyoto Protocol and the German Bundestag (which were to reduce emissions by 25% to 2005 and 50% to 2020).

One example of process innovations in the Group is an energy-saving process already introduced in Germany and China to manufacture chlorine for plastics production. This is based on the oxygen depolarised cathode method and brings energy savings of 30%. The company sees the use of sustainable raw materials and biomass as offering possibilities for future markets that will reflect the challenges of climate change. And the key forward-looking technologies of biotechnology and nanotechnology can be used to utilise renewable energy sources more effectively.

Bayer has received several awards from independent bodies for its climate-related performance. Last year, The Climate Group conferred its first Low Carbon Leaders Award on the company, which was one of only five enterprises in the world and the only German company to win this accolade. And in 2006 Bayer was once again included in the first global climate protection index, the Climate Leadership Index, which was set up in 2004 by investors of the Carbon Disclosure Project. In this index Bayer was honoured as ‘best in class’ and as best company in the chemical sector.

Nike ends contract with Saga Sports

22 Nov 2006

Nike has announced that the company is ceasing orders with its hand-stitched soccer ball supplier, Saga Sports, based in Sialkot, Pakistan, due to the contract factory's failure to correct significant labour compliance violations. As a result, the company is limiting its supply of hand-stitched soccer balls for the foreseeable future. It is engaging with a group of governmental,

non-governmental and industry stakeholders to provide support for affected workers and to explore sustainable, fresh approaches to local manufacturing and social enterprise models in Sialkot.

CEO and president Mark Parker said, "This contract factory has persistently broken its commitments and irrevocably breached its trust with us; most importantly, the factory has failed its employees. Rather than continue with Saga, we have decided to limit our supply of hand-stitched soccer balls as we are developing new sources with factories committed to upholding our standards and treating workers fairly."

The company had discovered widespread unauthorised outsourcing of its products from Saga facilities, resulting in the production of Nike soccer balls inside homes in the Sialkot area. Nike has a long-standing policy against such practices because of the potential for using under-aged workers and the inability to ensure safe working conditions in home-based settings. The company also found numerous labour, environmental and health and safety compliance violations within Saga's facilities, including serious allegations by trade union representatives and other employees of worker harassment, wrongful termination and inaccurate payment of wages. The Fair Labour Association, in a recent unannounced audit of Saga unrelated to Nike's investigation, found similar violations.

While the company continues to source apparel in Pakistan, the company does not currently have other soccer ball vendors in Sialkot able to absorb production under conditions acceptable to the company. Soccer teams and leagues sponsored by the company will not be affected by the decision. For its retail partners, it is working to mitigate any shortfalls between supply and demand. Nike will continue to work with several existing contract factories in China and Thailand to supply premium hand-stitched and machine-stitched soccer balls.

New Creora swimwear/lingerie developments for MarediModa

22 Nov 2006

Elastane brand Creora, developed by Korean company Hyosung Corporation, will focus on new developments for swimwear and lingerie at the MarediModa show, November 28-30, Cannes.

The company will present Creora H-350, an elastane designed to be blended with polyester for sublimation prints in swimwear and for new performance in underwear. The high heat resistant elastane is said to deliver improved wash fastness in blends with disperse dye polyester, avoid loss of power retention when over dyed and is reported to be chlorine resistant.

French mill Sofileta produces swimwear, intimate apparel and active sportswear fabrics using the elastane. Sales manager for Sofileta Jacques Chiartano believes that it offers: “Good colour fastness which enables us to offer a wide range of fabrics in polyester/Creora H-350 blends.”

The company will be presenting a family of fine denier elastane yarns specifically developed for higher gauge warp and circular knit machinery designed to produce lighter weight fabrics. The resulting fabrics are soft, sheer, and featherweight, but with power, for underwear that fits well and feels comfortable.

Creora H-100D is a new black elastane which delivers blacker black fabrics and garments. Created by the addition of black colouring in the extrusion phase of the elastane, it is spun into the fibre to maintain the black longer. It is said to have good wash fastness, and ensures garments/fabrics deliver a deep black colour even when stretched by eliminating the grin-through effect.

Creora H-450 is a low heat settable elastane, which is ideal for heat-sensitive fabrics such as cotton, rayon, bamboo, wool and silk; and can be used for swimwear, intimate apparel, sports, and underwear, especially with polypropylene.

Payless and Exeter launch new women's athletic shoes line

23 Nov 2006

US companies Payless ShoeSource and Exeter Brands Group, a wholly- owned subsidiary of Nike, have teamed up to launch a new brand of women's athletic shoes, Tailwind, which is said to combine contemporary fashion appeal with technical performance.

The agreement is a multi-year deal, with Exeter designing and producing the styles, Exeter and Payless jointly launching the brand, and Payless serving as the exclusive retailer.

Tailwind will launch with six styles featuring cushioning gel and support technologies designed by Exeter in collaboration with the Nike sports research laboratory. The brand will be available from spring 2007.

Ferrini sponsors Spyker F1 Team

23 Nov 2006

Dutch shoe and apparel manufacturer Ferrini B.V., a licensee of Quick Sports International B.V., has become an official sponsor of The Spyker F1 Team for the 2007 Formula One World Championship.

As a result of this agreement, the two organisations will develop a merchandise range named ‘Spyker by Q’ and race boots and team shoes under the Q-Label. As part of

the deal, Quick Sports will also hold strategic Q-branding on the Spyker F1 Team race car and race overalls during the World Championship.

Zoggs continues to sponsor Guildford City Swimming Club

23 Nov 2006

Surrey-based swimming brand Zoggs is continuing to sponsor amateur swimming at the Guildford City Swimming Club in the UK. The sponsorship deal, which includes supplying the club with swimming kit and financial support, has been on-going for the past three years.

The club has three locations: The Spectrum, Aldershot Garrison Pool and City of London Freeman's School and is said to be one of the top clubs in Great Britain. In 2005 it won the National Speedo League South Title for the first time.

Zoggs develops swimming goggles and equipment for all ages and proficiencies. The brand was initially established in Australia in 1992, when it launched its first UV protective goggles. The company's portfolio now includes goggles, swimwear, equipment and training aids, swim caps, sun protection, water confidence and games.

U.S. Screen Print launches new textile printers

23 Nov 2006

U.S. Screen Print and Inkjet Technology has launched two new Fast T-Jet printers that can print on light and dark textiles as well as non-textiles.

The Fast T-Jet 3 can print 30-70 light shirts per hour and features a bulk ink system; an extended print bed capable of printing two shirts at once; exhaust fans; a push pad control panel; and a print cycle counter. It can print on an area up to 12.5 inches x 22 inches.

The Fast T-Jet Blazer can print 40-90 light shirts per hour and can print on an area up to 16.5 inches x 48 inches. It is said to print a standard size T-shirt in approximately 45 seconds.

Wenzhou textile and footwear exports rise

23 Nov 2006

According to officials, the Chinese region of Wenzhou has posted a rise in the value of textile and footwear exports during the first ten months of 2006, in spite of the anti-dumping duties imposed by the EU.

The value of the region's textile products grew by 24.3% to $981 million, compared with the same period of last year. Footwear exports by 30.11% rose to $1.7 billion.

Asics files lawsuits over trademark infringements

23 Nov 2006

Athletic footwear and technical active sports apparel and accessories brand Asics America Corporation (Irvine, California) and Asics Corporation Japan (Kobe, Japan) have filed two separate lawsuits in the US District Court, Central District of California, the first against Target Corporation (Minneapolis) and Mossimo, Inc. (Santa Monica) and the other against Target Corporation, Blue Marlin Corporation (San Francisco) and Roma Atletica S.R.L. Unipersonale (Rome). Both lawsuits are for trademark infringement, unfair competition, trademark dilution and false advertising.

Asics is seeking permanent injunctions against the named companies to prevent any future sales and distribution of shoes that bear a stripe design similar to its trademark-protected stripe design. In addition, the company is seeking damages, including profits and legal fees.

The company discovered that Target is currently selling the Roma Atletica Gawain, the Mossimo Gareth and the Mossimo Gryph shoes in its stores and on its website. These shoes are said to display stripes that are 'confusingly' similar to its well-known stripe design.

Decrease in Q3 revenue at Perry Ellis

23 Nov 2006

Casual apparel, activewear and swimwear designer Perry Ellis International, Inc. has reported a decline in revenue for the third quarter ended October 31.

Revenues totalled $213.2 million, a 3.1% decline compared with the $220 million reported in the comparable period a year ago. Net earnings totalled $8.2 million compared with $8.1 million for the corresponding quarter last year.

Total revenues for the nine-month period ended October 31 were $598.3 million, compared with $635.5 million, a 5.9% decline versus the 2005 period.

PSGMEA demands government support for sporting goods industry

23 Nov 2006

Pakistani soccer ball manufacturers and exporters have

called on the government to provide funds to support research and development in the sporting goods industry.

Speaking at the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry, chairman of the Pakistan Sports Goods Manufacturers' and Exporters' Association (PSGMEA), Professor Sheikh Safdar Sandal, urged the government to increase research and development funds–similar to those provided for the country's footwear and textile industries–to give a necessary boost to the sporting goods industry. He also requested special incentives packages for the industry.

He added that investment to modernise the industry is required in order to adapt to a general change in production from hand-stitching to machine-produced soccer balls.

In the fiscal year 2005-06, Pakistan exported sports-related goods worth $348 million compared with the prior year. Exports of soccer balls alone totalled $235 million.

Rieter sells cabling, twisting and texturing machine activities

23 Nov 2006

Swiss supplier of integrated textile equipment Rieter is selling its cabling, twisting and texturing machine business retroactively, effective October 31, to France-based Co-Martin.

The new owner has experience in the man-made fibre business and has taken over all of Rieter's activities located in Valence, France. No financial details of the sale have been disclosed.

The Rieter subsidiary in Valence employs 153 staff and achieved turnover of approximately €50 million in 2005.

Meanwhile, a strategic review of the company's chemical fibre activities located in Winterthur, Switzerland, is still under consideration. A decision is expected in the next few weeks.

Bayer MaterialScience to open polymer innovation centre

23 Nov 2006

Bayer MaterialScience AG is to establish a new development centre for high-quality polymer materials in Dubai. The facility will be the first in the region to have access to a wide range of opportunities to offer technical services, development of new applications, and training for customers and employees.

The centre will be set up in the existing offices of Bayer MaterialScience in Dubai and is scheduled to open at the start of 2007.

In 2008 it will relocate, together with the newly-founded polyurethane systems house joint venture BaySystems Pearl, to a new, integrated Bayer MaterialScience site in Dubai. The new centre will include a high-quality showroom and an office complex for technically trained employees from all of Bayer MaterialScience's Business Units in the region, which include polyurethanes, polycarbonates, coatings, adhesives, sealants, and thermoplastic polyurethanes.

Global Shoes to run concurrently with GDS and GLS

23 Nov 2006

As of 2007, the Global Shoes & Accessories fair is being rescheduled to run at the same time as the GDS and GLS events in Düsseldorf, Germany.

The fair will feature volume producers of women's and men's athletic and fitness shoes, including handbags and leather accessories. Symposiums on logistics, law, production, quality management and national information will also be held at the event.

The shows will take place on March 9-11 and September 14-16, 2007, with trade visitors also entitled to visit GDS and GLS.

Columbia Sportswear to sponsor US bobsled and skeleton athletes

24 Nov 2006

US outdoor apparel company Columbia Sportswear is to supply jackets, trousers, hats and fleeces for more than 90 athletes, coaches and staff for the upcoming second Geoff Bodine Bobsled Challenge, be held in Lake Placid, New York, from January 4-6, 2007.

US bobsled and skeleton athletes will also wear Columbia clothing at international competitions in North America and throughout Europe.

The event will feature drivers piloting specially made bobsleds down Lake Placid's icy chute to raise money for the Bo-Dyn Bobsled Project. The project is a non-profit organisation that sponsors and promotes the design, technology, engineering and manufacturing of bobsleds made in the United States for use in international competition. The initiative, started in 1992 by Nascar driver Geoff Bodine, has built American-made bobsleds for United States athletes competing in the World Cup, world championships and Olympic winter games.

ASAP and E.C.O. to take place together

24 Nov 2006

The ASAP Global Sourcing and Global E.C.O. trade shows will be held together for the first time in February next year.

Held twice a year, the ASAP trade show features manufacturers of men's, women's and children's apparel, and textiles and leather from all over the world. The E.C.O. Global Tradeshow brings together buyers and sellers of organic, fair trade and sustainable apparel, furniture, body care and textiles.

The two events will take place on February 12-15 at the Venetian Ballroom in Las Vegas, USA.

Over 52,000 visitors at Yarn Expo

24 Nov 2006

Over 52,000 visitors from 97 countries attended yarn and fibre trade fair Yarn Expo, held in Shanghai on October 25-28. 18% of visitors were from overseas. 66 companies exhibited at the fair, which ran concurrently with Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics.

The next fair will take place March 22-24, 2007, at the China World Trade Centre in Beijing.

DuPont sponsors Health & Safety '07

24 Nov 2006

US chemical company DuPont is to sponsor the Health & Safety '07 exhibition– to be held in Surrey, UK, in February, which has been designed to enable those responsible for the health and safety of their workforce to access suitable products and services locally, whilst keeping up-to-date with industry developments.

Dates announced for Vietnam Fabric & Garment Accessories Expo

24 Nov 2006

The Vietnam Fabric & Garment Accessories Expo, will take place in Hanoi, from April, 17-19 next year.

The show will focus on a wide range of products and services ranging from garment machinery and CAD/CAM cutting systems through fasteners and zips to dyes and chemicals. Fabrics will include leather, man-made fibres, micro-fibres, cotton and silk.

It is hoped that the event will attract importers, exporters and manufacturers from all sectors of the textile machinery industry.

Dow to sell VAM plant in Brazil

24 Nov 2006

US-based The Dow Chemical Company is to sell its vinyl acetate monomer (VAM) manufacturing facility located in Cabo, Brazil, to Brazil-based JB Group. The sale is said to be part of Dow's on-going strategy to improve its global competitiveness.

Commenting on the transaction, Philippe Raynaud de Fitte, business vice president, chlor-vinyl and VAM at Dow, said that operations at the Cabo facility do not fit with Dow's model of integrated production–where raw material supply, manufacturing facilities and downstream derivative demand are all accessible and provide competitive advantage.

Under the terms of the transaction, employees of the Cabo facility, along with equipment and site-specific assets, will transfer to the JB Group. Following the completion of the transaction, Dow will continue to serve as the local distributor of VAM from the Cabo plant.

VAM is a key ingredient in emulsion polymers, resins, and intermediates used in products such as adhesives, coatings, textiles, and acrylic fibres.

SATRA makes management changes

24 Nov 2006

UK-based research and technology centre SATRA has made two management changes.

Alan Drage has been appointed team head of marketing. Mr Drage joined SATRA straight from school before leaving to work with a large footwear manufacturer. He then worked for Chamberlain Phipps for 20 years, during which time he helped to develop the company's export business in countries including India, Europe and the Far East. He returned to SATRA in 2000.

Jake Locke, who joined SATRA in 2004 as head of publishing and publicity, has been promoted to the position of business manager. As part of the company's management team, he is responsible for all aspects of corporate communications to members and clients and to the international press and media.

Barbour adds Thermolite to autumn/winter range

24 Nov 2006

UK country clothing company Barbour has added Thermolite insulation to two of its garments in its men's autumn/winter 06/07 collection. The Newfoundland quilt jacket and gilet are wadded with Thermolite, to provide high levels of lightweight warmth, loft and softness without bulk. The garments are produced using what is said to be a unique fabric created by Barbour, using Thermolite micro-insulation supplied by PEG of France, quilted with a super-fine 47g calendared outer and lining.

Pyro launches new textile printer

24 Nov 2006

Singapore-based brand Pyro, part of AVS Technologies, has launched a new textile printer, Pristine, with direct textile printing capability.

It is said to be suitable for a wide range of textiles, including woven and knitted cotton, flax, silk, polyester and towel. It prints in CMYK configurations up to a maximum printing width of 1600mm. It has resolutions of up to 1440 x 1440 dpi, printing speeds of up to 28m2/h and an automatic take-up system. A belt transportation system is also included to help to ensure that textiles are laid flat and fed properly for optimum printing results. Other features include a roll to roller feeding device with tensioner, an air heater and an adjustable head height of 5mm to 15mm.

Footjoy launches golf shoes with Boa Lacing

24 Nov 2006

US-based golf shoe company FootJoy has launched a new Boa Lacing System for its ReelFit golf footwear range. The lacing system is more commonly used for ski and snowboard footwear.

The collection features adjustable steel micro-cable and a dial system designed to prevent any change in fit during a round of golf.

The shoes are made from waterproof ECL Pittards leather, leather linings, cushioned PU fit-beds, and GelCollar with IntelliTemp cooling.

The Boa Lacing System was developed by US-based Boa Technology Inc.

It is said to improve the fit of performance footwear and other products that require controlled closure as the tightness can be controlled.