Business Week
09 Apr - 15 Apr

EDANA announces symposium programme

09 Apr 2007

International association serving the nonwovens and related products industries EDANA has announced the programme for its 2007 International Nonwovens Symposium, which will take place in Berlin on May 30-31.

This year the symposium will include 14 papers presenting new innovations and developments in nonwovens technology and markets, raw materials and machinery. Themes will include innovation, web-making, bonding processes, raw materials, web surface treatment, coating/laminating, sustainability and environment, nonwovens production waste as a secondary resource, and 100% post-consumer recycled PET.

A keynote speech will be given by director of research at the Copenhagen Institute of Futures Studies, Carsten Beck, on 'Consequences of the people quake - how demography megatrends are changing the world and the challenges for the nonwoven Industry'.

There will also be a workshop where experts will offer advice on the practical implications of REACH for the nonwovens and related industries.

FKI Logistex delivers new materials handling project

09 Apr 2007

UK-based FKI Logistex has successfully completed a £6 million automated handling system project for Internet shoe and apparel retailer Zappos.com at the company's new distribution centre.

Featuring an end-to-end, integrated solution designed to boost product handling efficiency and capacity and help Zappos.com to meet increasing customer demand, the system encompasses receiving, pre-sort, put-away, picking, packing and shipping.

The new Zappos.com warehouse and distribution site incorporates a variety of FKI Logistex equipment including UniSort IV belt-powered pop-up wheel sortation systems, high-speed UniSort XV sliding-shoe sortation systems, saw tooth merges, Accuzone transfer conveyors and Print-and-Apply Modules.

TNF athlete helps raises money for Scottish Mountain Rescue Team

09 Apr 2007

The North Face (TNF) athlete and mountaineer Mick Fowler has raised vital funds for a Mountain Rescue Team in Scotland through The North Face Summit Series Lecture Tour in conjunction with outdoors specialists Tiso.

£1,483 was raised through Tisos' annual autumn/winter lectures which presented the 'Matterhorn of China – Kajaqiao', focusing on Mr Fowler's 2005 expeditions across China and on the unexplored peaks to the east of the country, as well as his exploratory achievements across the globe over the last 20 years.

Bayer MaterialScience and Nanoledge launch new nanotechnology applications

09 Apr 2007

German producer of polymers and high-performance plastics Bayer MaterialScience, and designer of industrial standard nanotube-based materials Nanoledge, introduced two new nanotechnology applications—a surfboard and skis—at the JEC Composites show held in Paris on April 3-5.

The new and improved sports applications combine Nanoledge's Nano In technology with Bayer MaterialScience's high performance carbon nanotubes Baytubes to achieve a composite with new mechanical and thermal properties.

The end products are not only lighter and more resistant, they are also said to have an extended life cycle.

Rohm and Haas raises specialty monomer prices

09 Apr 2007

US-based specialty chemical company Rohm and Haas has announced that due to the continued rising costs of key raw materials, it is increasing off-list prices for Acrylate and Rocryl specialty monomers, effective May 1, as contract terms allow.

The price of Butyl Acrylate (BA), Ethyl Acrylate (EA), Glacial Acrylic Acid (GAA), and 2-Ethyl Hexyl Acrylate (2-EHA) will all be increased $0.04 per pond in the USA and €30 per metric tonne in Europe, whilst prices for Rocryl 400 Hydroxyethyl Methacrylate (HEMA), Rocryl

410 Hydroxypropyl Methacrylate (HPMA), Rocryl 420 Hydroxyethyl Acrylate (HEA), Rocryl 430 Hydroxypropyl Acrylate (HPA) will be raised by $0.04 per pound in the USA and €90 per metric tonne in Europe.

Friction Free appoints new CEO

10 Apr 2007

New York-based developer and producer of low-friction fibres and fabrics Friction Free Technologies has made several new appointments. Nancy Hanson has been named as the company's new CEO, bringing 25 years of manufacturing, marketing and licensing experience to the role, whilst Amy Mansfield, has been appointed vice president of Marketing/Operations.

Meanwhile, Bob Gunn has retired from the company to start his own consulting business.

PPR to take over Puma

10 Apr 2007

France-based retail and luxury goods company PPR has entered into an agreement, through its subsidiary Sapardis, with Mayfair Beteiligungsfondsgesellschaft ImbH to acquire its 27.1% stake in German sports brand Puma for €330 per share in cash excluding the 2006 dividend of €2.5 per share, implying a total consideration of €1.4 billion. Following this acquisition, PPR intends to launch a friendly takeover offer in cash on the remaining outstanding Puma shares at the same price of €330 per share.

The management board of Puma is said to fully support this transaction and intends to recommend the offer after a review.

Commenting on the transaction, Francois-Henri Pinault, chairman and CEO of PPR, said, "I am delighted to have reached an agreement with Mayfair supported by Puma which creates the basis for a combined future for our two groups. This friendly transaction represents an exciting development for PPR and a milestone in our strategy of profitable growth."

Jochen Zeitz, chairman and CEO of Puma AG, said, "As we continue the execution of our Phase IV strategy, we are convinced that PPR's proposal is a unique opportunity to get additional long-term support to achieve our global targets and our mission to become the most desirable sportlifestyle company in the world."

The transaction is subject to EU antitrust clearance and other customary conditions and regulatory approvals expected by beginning of June.

Chinese brands set to shine in Beijing

10 Apr 2007

Chinese brands are set to take centre stage at the Beijing Olympics next year following the announcement that footwear manufacturer Aokang has been named as the official supplier of leather goods for the games.

Meanwhile, Li-ning has been named the official partner and supplier of sportswear and footwear for the Swedish Olympic team and delegation for both the Beijing and Vancouver Olympics, making it the first Chinese brand to become an official sponsor of a foreign Olympic team.

Huntsman to present new soling solutions for athletic footwear

10 Apr 2007

Huntsman Polyurethanes will return to SIMAC later this month with a brand new portfolio of soling solutions.

The company will launch two new additions to its Avalon range at the show—Avalon AST and Avalon ABEP—which have been specifically designed for the casual and athletic shoe markets and are said to provide high performance soling ingredients that are easy to process and can significantly simplify manufacturing techniques.

Huntsman will also present a special preview of its new Avalon Light range—a new TPU solution that is said to offer significant performance benefits in terms of fluidity and colour distribution. A key advantage of the new range will be its capacity for 'direct on' application, meaning footwear companies can mould the sole and apply it to the shoe's upper in a single step.

Spira Footwear files lawsuit against USATF and IAAF

10 Apr 2007

US producer of athletic footwear with spring technology, Spira Footwear has filed a lawsuit against the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) and the United States Association of Track and Field (USATF), the governing bodies for track and field both internationally and in the USA. The suit alleges that the application of IAAF and USATF Rule 143 which bans spring technology for competition constitutes a violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act and a restraint of trade.

Spira, which owns the patent rights to the WaveSpring technology in footwear, alleges that the USATF rules prohibiting spring technology has effectively prohibited its ability to gain market acceptance of its technology as most elite runners will not compete in Spira products for fear of disqualification or sanction by the USATF.

The IAAF rule requires that shoes for competition be submitted for approval to the IAAF's technical committee. Spira alleges that it followed the IAAF guidelines by submitting its shoes for approval in September, 2006. Despite repeated requests for a determination of its legality, Spira has yet to be provided with a response.

In order to bring attention to its perceived unfairness of the rule, Spira launched a 'Banned in Boston' campaign in 2006 offering $1 million to any runner who wins the Boston Marathon in the 'banned' shoe and runs the risk of disqualification.

Fila names new management team

10 Apr 2007

Fila Korea Ltd and its holding company Global Leading Brands House (GLBH) have named a new executive management team for Fila.

Yoon-Soo (Gene) Yoon, chairman and CEO of Fila Korea, who led the acquisition along with former Fila CEO Jon Epstein, will become chairman of GLBH and Fila. He has been associated with the Fila brand since 1984 when he served as the company's first footwear sourcing agent in Korea.

Mr Epstein, who played a pivotal role in facilitating the Fila sale to Fila Korea and GLBH has served in senior sales and management roles with adidas, Fila and Le Coq Sportif. In his new capacity, he will oversee global product development, sales and marketing for the brand. He will also serve as the company's president of Fila USA, Inc.

Joining Mr Yoon and Mr Epstein as president of GLBH and Fila is Y.C. Cho who most recently served as president of Fila Korea. He will relocate from Seoul, Korea to Sparks, Md. where the company's US operations are based. In his new role he will oversee global operations and finance for the company.

Adidas and Reebok distribution in the USA consolidated

10 Apr 2007

The adidas Group is to consolidate the adidas brand's apparel distribution centre in Hebron, Kentucky, its footwear distribution centre in Spartanburg, South Carolina and the Reebok brand's apparel distribution centre in Memphis, Tennessee, and its footwear distribution centres in Stoughton and Norwood, Massachusetts, into new facilities in Spartanburg, South Carolina, by autumn 2009. The decision aims to develop an integrated distribution network which will strengthen the group's competitive position and contribute to the synergies created by the integration of adidas and Reebok.

The facilities in Memphis and Hebron are expected to remain in operation until autumn 2008, whilst the facilities in Stoughton, Norwood and Spartanburg are expected to remain in operation until autumn 2009.

US distribution centres not affected by the consolidation include Reebok's Sports Licensed Division facilities in Mattapoisett, Massachusetts, Indianapolis, Indiana and Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the Rockport Company facility in Lancaster, Massachusetts, and the Taylor Made-adidas Golf facility in Carlsbad, California.

The strategy will affect approximately 375 adidas and Reebok jobs at the apparel distribution facilities in Memphis and Hebron and at footwear distribution facilities in Stoughton and Norwood. Adidas employees currently in Spartanburg will move to the new site a few miles away.

Polymer Group appoints new CEO

11 Apr 2007

US producer of nonwovens Polymer Group, Inc. has named Veronica Hagen as chief executive officer and a member of its board of directors, effective April 23.

Ms Hagen has over 25 years of operations and global industrial market experience with large, international public companies. Since 2004, she has held the position of president and chief executive officer of Sappi Fine Paper North America, a $1.4 billion division of the South African-based company involved in the pulp and paper industry, Sappi Limited.

Prior to working for Sappi, she served in various executive roles with aluminium producer Alcoa Inc., where she was the first woman to serve as a business unit president.

PGI operates 21 manufacturing and converting facilities throughout the world.

Beneteau and DSM Dyneema team up

11 Apr 2007

Sailing yacht builder Beneteau has entered into a co-operation with Netherlands-based DSM Dyneema. The agreement aims to improve the sailing performance of Beneteau yachts through the use of next-generation running rigging made with Dyneema ultra-strong, lightweight polyethylene fibre. The high performance rigging, produced by Corderie Henri Lancelin, will be used in the majority of performance cruising sailboats built by Beneteau.

Compared with standard ropes made from polyester, rigging made with Dyneema is said to provide increased strength at lower weight. This enables ropes to have a

smaller diameter for easier handling. Furthermore, by minimising weight above the waterline, sailing performance can be enhanced. This new rigging reduces stretch by a factor of three compared with polyester ropes, resulting in greater control and less energy absorption. Wind energy can also be largely converted into hull speed instead of being absorbed by the rigging.

Another benefit of the Dyneema fibre is said to be its durability. The high-modulus polyethylene fibre is highly resistant to abrasion, chafing, bending fatigue, UV light and salt water, producing a reliable rig with long service life. The smooth material also allows free running of the ropes.

To celebrate the co-operation, a Beneteau First 34.7 yacht rigged with ropes with Dyneema and skippered by Jimmy Pahun will compete in the Spi Ouest race in La Trinité-Sur-Mer, France.

Ever-Glory seeks accreditation for new fabric testing centre

11 Apr 2007

Chinese apparel manufacturer Ever-Glory International Group, Inc. has requested national accreditation for its new fabric and accessories inspection and testing centre. The company submitted a laboratory accreditation application form to CNAS (China National Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment).

With the company's recent expansion of production capacity and product lines, the new, 400m2 centre now incorporates 'state-of-the-art' testing machines and devices imported from Germany, the USA, the UK and Hong Kong.

According to the company, the in-house facility enables the company to better manage operational risk and increase client confidence in order to develop additional business relationships.

Ever-Glory expects to receive accreditation during the third quarter of 2007, after which it hopes to expand its international markets on the strength of its testing standards.

Gerber Technology makes new appointment

11 Apr 2007

US-based developer and manufacturer of integrated software and hardware automation systems for the sewn products and flexible materials industries Gerber Technology has appointed Richard Farb as strategic PDM/PLM account manager. He will be based in New York City reporting to Jonathan Smith, sales manager, PDM/PLM products, North America.

Mr Farb joins the company with more than 25 years of sales and marketing experience in the apparel industry, including five years as CEO of The Edge, a manufacturer of casual clothing.

Yue Yuen posts improved results

11 Apr 2007

Said to be the largest manufacturer of athletic and casual footwear in the world, Hong Kong-based Yue Yuen, a subsidiary of Pou Chen Corporation, has reported net consolidated operating revenue of $322.752 million for March and net consolidated accumulative operating revenue of $944.229 million for the first three months ended March 31.

Net consolidated sales reached $1.379 billion for the month and $4.303 billion for the three-month period.

Outlast keeps you cool... and your drink too

11 Apr 2007

It appears that temperature regulation has moved into a new sphere... drinking. Having reported on Dryarn's move into the beverage cooling market last week, it appears that other textile technology developers are also seeing the potential in hitting the bottle. Another name usually associated with the sportswear market, Outlast Europe, has now introduced a new temperature-buffering label, the Cold Wrap Label, which is said to deflect heat from your hand to keep beverages colder for longer.

The label is composed of Outlast material and a lamination of clear polyester to metallised polyester, creating a barrier between the container and your warm hand. It can be applied to a variety of materials including, but not limited to, paper, cardboard, glass and metal.

China International Textile Industry Fair opens

11 Apr 2007

The eighth China (Qingdao) International Textile Industry Fair opened in Qingdao on April 9. Sponsored by Shandong Textile Industry Office, China International Chamber of Commerce, Shandong Branch, Shandong Association of Apparel Industry, Qingdao Haiming International Exhibition Corporation, Qingdao General Textile Corporation, and Asia Economic and Trade Development & Promotion Centre, the show covers a broad range of textile goods.

Lasit launches new rotary fibre laser marking system

12 Apr 2007

Lasit, USA has introduced its newest generation RotoTab, a compact, desktop rotary dial table fibre laser marking system suitable for engraving and marking coated and uncoated materials such as leather, plastics graphite, rubber, textiles, and paper.

The fully enclosed Class One system is delivered complete with a fibre laser, galvo scan head, computer, and FlyX and FlyCad software which supports both vector and raster engraving of graphics, logos, alphanumerics, barcodes, 2D Data Matrix, and serialised numbers. The software also includes diagnostic capability for remote troubleshooting.

New Oeko-Tex criteria implemented

11 Apr 2007

Following a three-month transition period, the new criteria for the Oeko-Tex Standard 100, which have applied since the start of the year, became mandatory on April 1. As a result, the dye Disperse Orange 149 can no longer be included in any certification process as it contains the banned 4-aminoazobenzene. The Oeko-Tex laboratory tests for carcinogenic arylamines will also be extended to include analysing un-dyed polyurethane materials as, in the past, test results have proved positive for free carcinogenic amines which could be attributed to certain qualities of PUR.

The rules on the use of phthalates have also been tightened. Limit values for three particularly problematic softeners—DEHP, DBP and BBP—have now also been set for textiles worn close to the skin in Product Class II. Legislation in 2006 banned these three substances from all babies' toys, regardless of whether they were intended to be put in the mouth or not. The phthalates DINP, DNOP and DIDP remain within the scope of testing for Product Class I.

Positive Q1 response from UK retailers

11 Apr 2007

A new study from financial and business adviser Grant Thornton UK LLP has revealed that the majority of UK retailers issued positive or neutral trading statements for the first quarter of 2007. This suggests that the difficult retail environment experienced over the past few years may have finally abated.

The research revealed that 44% of all listed retailers issued positive trading statements for the first three months of the year compared with 33% in 2006 and 25% in 2005. 46% issued neutral statements leaving only the remaining 10% issuing negative statements.

Furthermore, only six profit warnings were issued during the quarter, down from nine in the same period in 2006.

74% of retailers experienced an increase in like-for-like sales, up from 50% in the first quarter of 2006.

JEC Composites Show breaks records

11 Apr 2007

Visitor numbers at the JEC Composites Show, held in Paris on April 5-8, increased by 7.2% to 27,336 visitors compared with last year's event with 65% of those attending coming from overseas. More than 1,000 companies exhibited at the event, 70% of which were international firms.

Products included a wide range of composites including thermosetting materials, thermoplastics and resins and fibres.

Sustainable development in textiles assessed

12 Apr 2007

A new book entitled Ecotextiles: The Way Forward for Sustainable Development in Textiles has been released by Dublin-based research company Research and Markets. It features 23 papers from the Ecotextile 2004 Conference held at the University of Bolton, UK.

Part one deals with recycling and use of waste as raw materials in areas such as clothing and carpet manufacture. Part two discusses sustainability and eco-design with papers on improved design, use of sustainable fibres and manufacturing techniques. Part three reviews sustainable development and renewables, including discussions on topics such as composites made from textile waste. Part four considers waste management in areas such as dyeing and effluent treatment and part five assesses new technologies, including new fibres and finishing techniques.

Net income increases 61% at Levi Strauss

12 Apr 2007

American jeans and casual wear manufacturer Levi Strauss & Co. has posted improved financial results for the first quarter ended February 25.

Net revenues reached $1.04 billion compared with $968 million for the same quarter in 2006, a 7% increase.

Net income increased 61% to $87 million from $54

million, whilst gross profit increased 7% to $498 million compared with $465 million.

Zumiez sales increase over 50%

12 Apr 2007

US-based specialty retailer of action sports related apparel, footwear, equipment and accessories Zumiez Inc. has posted total net sales of $28.3 million for the five-week period ended April 7, 53.7% higher than the $18.4 million reported for the five-week period ended April 1, 2006. Comparable store sales increased 17% versus a 14.3% increase in the same period a year ago.

Puma ends licence agreement in South Korea

12 Apr 2007

Having failed to settle the terms of an extension to its agreement with its current licensee in South Korea, German sports brand Puma AG will serve the South Korean market directly through its 100% subsidiary Puma Korea, effective January 1, 2008. The current licence agreement will expire with on December 31.

With the new subsidiary Puma hopes to accelerate its regional expansion of its long-term company development plan. The South Korean market represents one of the largest markets for Puma's distribution in Asia.

New workwear exhibition launched

12 Apr 2007

Worth an estimated £430 million in the UK alone, the corporate clothing, workwear and PPE (personal protection equipment) industry makes around 32 million garments every year. However, in spite of the industry's stature, until now there has been no dedicated exhibition for buyers to source the latest developments in clothing and equipment. In response to this gap in the market, Ocean Events is establishing a new event, The Workwear & Corporate Clothes Show, at the NEC, Birmingham, UK, which will be held for the first time on April 2-3, 2008.

Featuring over 100 exhibition stands, catwalk fashion shows and demonstrations, the show is planned to be stylised and experiential, creating a professional, resourceful yet enjoyable forum for effective business exchange.

Commenting on the new show, Lorne Cheetham, managing director of Ocean Events said, "Nearly half the UK's working population wears some form of uniform to their place of work, it is therefore essential for buyers and suppliers to have a visual platform to showcase their innovations in design, textile technology and new product development."

Italian Trade Commission sponsors NanoBusiness 2007

12 Apr 2007

The Italian Trade Commission of New York will sponsor the NanoBusiness Alliance Conference taking place on April 15-17 in New York City.

The conference, taking place for the sixth time, will feature presentations by business leaders from several sectors where nanotechnologies play an important role such as advanced materials, next-generation electronics, medical diagnostics, and water filtration.

The Italian Trade Commission, which will have an exhibit space at the conference, aims to raise awareness of the Italian market, which has been rapidly developing and gaining attention. Italy has been witnessing intense R&D activities in nanotechnology, spanning wide-ranging applications from structural and functional materials and instrumentation, through energy and life sciences to biomedical applications.

Lotto expands business in Brazil

13 Apr 2007

Italian sporting goods company Lotto Sport Italia has signed a new licensing agreement with São Paulo-based football apparel specialist Filon Confecções Ltda, under which Filon will produce and market Lotto performance and sportswear products across Brazil. The agreement will run until December 31, 2009, with the possibility of extending this for a further three years.

It is also likely that, in addition to the regular Italian-style ranges, new products specifically designed for the Brazilian market will be introduced.

Lotto hopes that the deal will lead to sales of approximately $20 million as well as helping to raise the profile of the Italian brand in the South American country.

Anumber of prominent Brazilian footballers already wear Lotto products including Cafu, Dida, Doni and Amauri.

Restructuring leads to new appointments at Arkema

13 Apr 2007

France-based chemicals company Arkema is reorganising its Vinyl Products business segment by

splitting its Chlorochemicals and PVC business unit into two separate business units: Chlorine/Soda and PVC. The other two business units, Vinyl Compounds and Pipes/Profiles (Alphacan), remain unchanged.

As part of this restructuring, several new appointments have been made. Frédéric Marot-Achillas has been named group president PVC business unit, Denis Tual, becomes group president Chlorine/Soda business unit, and Gérard Robert will take over as industrial director for the Vinyl Products business segment.

The company also announced the launch of a new website entirely dedicated to Pebax polyether block amides, from its range of high-performance technical polymers. With properties such as lightweightness, flexibility and elasticity, it can be used in a variety of applications ranging from sports equipment to electronics.

The company operates in more than 40 countries and has 17,000 employees.

Arco launches Timberland Pro workwear range

13 Apr 2007

UK-based safety equipment and workwear supplier Arco has teamed up with Timberland Pro, a division of footwear, apparel and outdoor gear company The Timberland Company, to develop a casual, functional workwear collection.

Items include T-shirts and polos with Coolplus moisture wicking properties, multi-pocketed trousers with extra reinforcements in more vulnerable areas, sweatshirts, fleeces and hooded tops through to soft shell windstoppers and Gore-Tex parkas for protection from wind and rain.

With an annual turnover in excess of £200 million Arco's products include personal protective equipment, clothing including front- and back-of-house career wear, footwear, gloves and workplace safety and hygiene products.

New climbing apparel products launched by Cassin

13 Apr 2007

Experienced climber and technical advisor Patrick Edlinger has collaborated with Italy-based alpine apparel company Cassin to develop a new clothing line. The range features more than 40 pieces, and fabrics include Cordura, Meryl, stretched cotton, canvas and denim.

The Rock Trail pant for men is designed for long walks and mountain conditions. The use of Cordura Bi-stretch offers comfort whilst the knees are preformed and trouser legs are flared to allow for all types of shoes.

The Right Step pant for women is said to provide freedom of movement and comfort while the Sasha pant has a low waist, reinforced knees and belt loops.

The company combined cotton and Lycra to offer both elasticity and stability and a carbon lapping treatment to produce a softer feel In its Piton T-Shirt.

Cassin has also brought out a new line of sweatshirts for extra thermal protection and functionality, using materials such as Thermobond and Schoeller ripstop combined with NanoSphere for added warmth and comfort.

Iconix wins infringement case

13 Apr 2007

US-based owner, licensor and marketer of a range of brands Iconix Brand Group, Inc. has received a favourable verdict in its litigation case against Sweet Sportswear, Hubert Guez and other parties.

The jury found in the company's favour on all of the claims it pursued, and against the defendants on every counterclaim asserted. The jury also found that all of the defendants acted with "malice, fraud or oppression" with regard to the company's claims, and intentionally infringed its Bongo trademarks. It was awarded approximately $45 million in damages.

Based upon the multiple findings of malice and wilfulness, a punitive damages phase of the trial will begin shortly. There will also be a subsequent proceeding in which the court will determine whether treble damages should be awarded for the trademark infringement claims. Many of these claims are subject to contractual and statutory fee-shifting provisions, entitling the company to recover its fees and costs.

Lower full year revenues at ADS

13 Apr 2007

Canadian technical textiles manufacturer ADS Inc. has posted sales of $10.1 million for its fourth quarter ended January 28, almost flat with the corresponding period last year. Sales for the full year were $48.9 million compared with $57.2 million in the preceding year. This decrease was said to be primarily due to a more competitive market for the installation of geomembranes and a lack of international opportunity for the distribution of geosynthetic products, affecting the company's revenues by $4.7 million. The footwear industry's migration to Asia also negatively impacted the company's sales by more than $800,000 during the year.

For the fourth quarter it recorded a loss of $2.7 million compared with $817,000, as a result of a $2.5 million goodwill impairment. For the year, the company recorded a net loss of $1.7 million compared with net earnings of

$2 million for the same period in the preceding year.

American Eagle posts 35% sales increase in March

13 Apr 2007

US clothing, footwear and swimwear retailer American Eagle Outfitters, Inc. has reported total sales of $271.4 million for the five weeks ended April 7. This is a 35% increase compared with the $201.6 million reported for the five-week period ended April 1, 2006.

Total sales for the year-to-date increased 27% to $437.7 million, compared with $344.7 million for the corresponding nine week period in 2006.

Dryarn plays its part in Sahara marathon

13 Apr 2007

A number of athletes at the Marathon des sables, held in Morocco on March 23 to April 2, wore apparel featuring Dryarn made by Italian synthetic fibres, polymers and chemicals company Aquafil.

45 Italian athletes took part in the race including Marco Olmo, whose clothing was made from the fibre, and Mario Malerba.

Dryarn is ultralight and 100% recyclable, offering performance and comfort. Lightness and resistance are necessary features for clothing worn by marathon runners and its thermal insulation properties help runners to a stable body temperature with protection from both cold and heat.

New technical gear from C.A.M.P.

13 Apr 2007

Italian outdoor equipment company C.A.M.P. has launched new larger and lighter backpacks for mountaineering and alpinism with variable capacity packs as well as new backpacks and accessories for trail running.
The CAMPack Trail Pro offers ventilated shoulder straps, designed to reduce friction on the neck, a side strap that can be adjusted whilst running and an elasticated compression cord which allows volume reduction from 20 litres to ten litres. The range also offers reflective bands.

The CAMPack Big Waist Bag is designed to fit all the necessary items for running and can be fixed onto a shoulder strap or waist belt. It has effective load balancing and is equipped with an elasticated compression cord.

The CAMPack Small Waist Bag and Shoulder Mesh Pocket are functional accessories for backpacks that are accessible while running and are suitable for snacks and other small items.

Gerber Technology presents new products at Spesa Expo

13 Apr 2007

Connecticut-based developer and manufacturer of integrated software and hardware automation systems for the sewn products and flexible materials industries Gerber Technology will launch several new products under the theme ‘Tomorrow’s vision. Today’s reality’ at Spesa Expo in Miami on May 8–10.

The newest additions to the Gerbersuite product line will be featured including Fashion Lifecycle Management; WebPDM; and AccuNest.

The company will also introduce the Infinity 85 which offers faster plotting than previous models and can be used to remotely monitor ink and paper levels. It features a new 350 ml bulk ink supply which can save an estimated 15% on ink costs and decrease down time due to ink out. It is said to be quiet, easy to install and require minimal floor space.

The GERBERcutter XLc7000 is an automated system and offers low cost of ownership, accuracy and ease of use. It cuts a variety of materials up to two metres (79 inches) wide at compressed material heights up to 7.5 centimetres (2.95 inches).

The new GERBERspreader XLs50 is designed to spread woven or knit materials from either rolls or flat-folded packs and provides consistent spread length and alignment of fabric edges which enables parts to be nested closer to the beginning, end and edges of the spread, eliminating end loss and optimising material utilisation. It also features an ergonomic design for material loading and unloading and a graphical user interface.

The Taurus X Series leather cutter with Pivex technology cuts automotive interior parts from leather quickly and accurately. The Pivex knife eliminates over cuts and heel cuts on most parts. Its high-speed reciprocating action, in conjunction with the high friction table surface, minimises hide movement, ensures precisely cut parts and enables users to cut custom notch shapes including internal and external notches.

BASF to rebrand 150 polyamide types in Europe

13 Apr 2007

Between April 1 and December 31, German chemicals company BASF will restructure its polyamide product line

in Europe, which will include the rebranding of approximately 150 polyamide types in the Ultramid, Miramid and Capron brands and adapting their distribution channels.

Most of the Capron grades will now be incorporated into the Miramid or Ultramid product lines, resulting in the termination of all existing contracts with Capron distributors. After a transition period of about six months, the corresponding Capron types will be purchased directly from BASF.

All of BASF's polyamide grades will continue to be available and the re-branding will only change the names and distribution channels of the products involved, while their properties and specifications will remain the same.

Lenzing opens second viscose fibre plant in Asia

13 Apr 2007

Austria-based manufacturer of man-made cellulose fibres The Lenzing Group's new viscose fibre plant in Nanjing—part of a joint venture with Nanjing Chemical Fibre Co., Ltd (NCFC)—is now operational. This is the second viscose fibre plant the company has opened in Asia and the sixth production site for the fibre globally. The company now produces 560,000 tons of cellulose fibres per annum.

Lenzing holds a share of 70% of the facility, with NCFC holding the remaining 30%. The capacity of the new plant is 60,000 tons although expansion is scheduled in alignment with market development. Investment in the facility was approximately €65 million.