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Trend committee to unveil AW08 forecast at Interstoff Asia Essential

10 Aug 2007

The directions trend committee will unveil its colour, fabrics and prints forecast for autumn/winter 2008 at Interstoff Asia Essential Autumn 2007 in Hong Kong in October, encompassed in the three themes of ‘Ice Eco’, ‘Bobo Craft’ and ‘Techno Fiction’.

"Autumn/winter 2008 announces a season full of contrasts, playing with opposites and combining contradictory references," said Nelly Rodi from the committee. "This season is an invitation to an 'ecological space trip', cast away from monochromatic landscapes. We take note of nature's elements, and we are in quest for soft contacts—delicate wool, organic cotton, brushed mohair... but at the same time we are tempted by the conquest of the future and its darkness: metallic tones, onyx black, compact aspects. It's about mixing past and future. The ability to associate and dissociate nostalgia and the avant-garde, to combine handcraft techniques with new technical improvements in fabrics, prints, and treatments."

She added that fabrics will be inspired by mineral surfaces, with metallic aspects and 'moonstone-like' surfaces, inspired by high-technology.

The directions team is comprised of four global trend-forecasting agencies: Nelly Rodi Agency (Paris), Elementi Moda (Milan), Here & There (New York) and Sachiko Inoue (Tokyo).

Unifi appoints new board members

10 Aug 2007

US-based producer and processor of multi-filament polyester and nylon textured yarns Unifi, Inc. has appointed two new members to its board of directors, effective August 8.

George Perkins, Jr., is chairman of the board and CEO of Frontier Spinning Mills, Inc., a company that he founded in 1996 and G. Alfred Webster is a former executive officer of the company.

Avery Dennison demonstrates ‘Dock-to-Stock’ RFID processing

10 Aug 2007

Avery Dennison will set up a walkthrough exhibit that demonstrates item-level RFID from a simulated manufacturer’s loading dock to a retail store at the Second Annual RFID Journal/AAFA Apparel & Footwear Summit in New York on August 20 – 22, including RFID infrastructure components and software from Vue Technology, and RFID readers and handheld devices from Motorola.

The walkthrough demonstration will begin at a simulated offshore apparel manufacturing location with the production of RFID tags and their application via Avery Dennison Swiftach fasteners to jeans, T-shirts, dress shirts and shoeboxes. The tagged items will then be packaged and a data capture process will electronically associate the tags with the shipping cartons. Items will then be tracked as they leave the manufacturing area and enter a distribution centre, and again from the distribution centre to a retail store’s receiving location.

At the store level, the exhibit will show how inventory is tracked on smart shelves, and how cycle counts for inventory are achieved with the use of hand-held readers and a mobile cart.

At the exhibit's retail store, visitors will be able to see the functionality of Magicmirror, a consumer-facing solution which is said to create an emotional experience for customers, providing a combination of branding, style-guides, fitting room customer service, cross-sell and loss prevention applications. The mirror is said to present information such as colour, size and the total dollar amount of items.

New appointment at SATRA’s China office

10 Aug 2007

Canny Gan is the latest recruit to join UK-based technology centre SATRA’s China office team. With considerable experience of working in a technical capacity and developing business, she has previously worked for the Chinese branches of two well-known European Notified Bodies. Her main role at SATRA will be to develop the company’s testing business with Chinese footwear and clothing manufacturers, particularly within the area of PPE.

Timberland uses Dow Voralast soling system

10 Aug 2007

Dow Footwear Solutions announced at the Outdoor Retailer Summer Market Show that it will now supply its Voralast soling with renewable content to The Timberland Company, for use in the brand's the Mion spring 2008 line of outdoor footwear.

The Voralast R series—an extension of the established Dow range of Voralast soling systems—contains natural oil polyols which result in less energy consumption and fewer greenhouse gas emissions during production, and is said to deliver performance and superior comfort whilst also meeting the increasing demand for environmentally-friendly products that contain renewable raw materials.

In addition to outdoor footwear, Voralast soling systems are used for mid-sole, insole and other soling applications for casual, business and safety shoes.

Demand for weatherometer test soars

10 Aug 2007

Requests for tests to evaluate materials for resistance to fading and weathering have risen dramatically in 2007 according to UK-based SATRA. The technology centre has announced that since having invested in a weatherometer to expand its capabilities in this field, demand for this type of testing has increased 300% and is still rising.

SATRA can now assess a number of different materials for weathering including textiles, leather, coated fabrics, rubber and plastics which are commonly used in the leathergoods, furniture, footwear, marine, aerospace and automotive industries.

Demand for weatherometer test soars

10 Aug 2007

Bite, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Crocs, Inc. has now incorporated Crocs' proprietary closed cell resin material Croslite in the footbeds of selected Bite lines. Available for spring 2008, the company has officially unveiled the new products at the Outdoor Retailer Summer Market, which is currently taking place in Salt Lake City, USA.

The Adventure 3-in-1 Series sandals will be the first Bite products to feature Croslite, which offers lightweight, anti-microbial, waterproof, and odour-resistant properties.

Danner launches "breathable solutions" at OR

10 Aug 2007

US-based designer and manufacturer of work and outdoor footwear Danner, Inc.—a subsidiary of LaCrosse Footwear, Inc.—has launched a new range of breathable footwear and accessory solutions at Outdoor Retailer in Salt Lake City, pairing its new Dri-release Exo Edge technical hiking socks with the breathable Exo Edge multi-sport shoes and Formation light hikers.

The new Dri-release Exo Edge technical hiking sock is said to dry four times faster than cotton or wool, using a patented blend of soft and natural Merino wool and synthetic fibres.

The Exo Edge multi-sport shoe is a new lightweight style, created to provide full footwear support. The heel chassis is built to function as a ventilator that enforces breathability and allow airflow through the mesh upper to the heel chassis, for increased toe-to-heel breathability. Additional external and internal components are perforated for continued breathability.

The Formation Hiker also features a new lightweight platform, styling and enhanced breathability options.

Sino-UK trade rises 20%

09 Aug 2007

According to statistics released by UK customs, Sino-UK trade volume reached £6.732 billion in the period January to April this year, up 20.26% over the same period in 2006.

UK imports from China increased 23.15% to reach £5.649 billion, whilst its exports to China totalled £1.082 billion, a 7.02% increase.

Textiles and garments accounted for £750 million of total imports from China during the period in question.

Rayonier names new board member

09 Aug 2007

US-based cellulose fibre producer Rayonier has appointed V. Larkin Martin to its board of directors, effective August 6.

A managing partner of Martin Farm and vice president of The Albemarle Corporation, Alabama, Ms Martin is also chairman of the board of directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta and a member of The Cotton Board.

Veltex Apparel secures organic cotton rights

09 Aug 2007

US-based Veltex Corporation has secured exclusive rights to a major supply of organically grown cotton from India and as a result Veltex Apparel will now offer 100% combed cotton ring-spun T-Shirts and a golf shirt made with the new supply combined with Kwick Dry moisture wicking technology.

Commenting on the deal, Javeed Matin, CEO, stated, "We are pleased to have found an excellent supply of this highly sought after commodity. In addition to our T-Shirts we will soon be adding garments across our general merchandise and licence-based lines in both the promotional products arena and our retail supply business."

Europe and Japan boost Polo Ralph Lauren results

09 Aug 2007

US-based apparel designer Polo Ralph Lauren Corporation has posted improved results for the first quarter boosted, according to chairman and CEO Ralph Lauren, by strong performances in Europe and Japan.

Net income improved 10% to reach $88 million compared with $80 million in the first quarter of the prior year, whilst net revenues increased 12% to $1.07 billion from $954 million.

Wholesale sales increased 17% to $574 million, compared with $491 million whilst retail sales improved 9% to $450 million; however, licensing royalties decreased 8% to $46 million from $50 million last year.

NZ set to abandon origin labels for apparel

09 Aug 2007

According to a statement from New Zealand's Green Party, the country's government is mulling plans to abandon country of origin labelling for footwear and clothes.

"Consumers will be alarmed by government plans to dispense with the requirement that clothes and footwear carry country of origin labels identifying where they have come from, once 'residual tariff' issues have been resolved," said Green Consumer Affairs spokesperson Sue Kedgley.

According to the statement the Prime Minister claimed the only reason New Zealand has mandatory country of origin rules for clothing and footwear was because of residual tariffs and that these rules will go when tariffs are removed.

Everlast posts strong Q2 results

09 Aug 2007

US manufacturer and licensor of sporting goods, apparel, and footwear Everlast Worldwide Inc. has posted strong financial results for the second quarter.

Net revenues increased 24% to $12.2 million, up from $9.8 million in the same period in the previous year, boosted by a 28% increase in sporting goods sales to a record $8.7 million. Operating income grew 36% to $2.1 million versus a year-ago level of $1.6 million.

Nilit America Corporation appoints new president

08 Aug 2007

Israel-based manufacturer of nylon 6.6 Nilit has appointed Ron Mangrum as president of Nilit America Corporation, the company's North American fibres and plastics division. He joins the company from Unifi where he worked for 17 years and most recently held the position of general manager responsible for manufacturing, sales, and customer service.

Nilit produces nylon 6.6 and microfibre yarns which are used for both knitwear and spandex covering applications for legwear, bodywear, intimate apparel, and activewear.

Fibers and Textiles segment boosts results at Toray

08 Aug 2007

Japan-based Toray Industries, Inc. has posted improved consolidated results for the first quarter ended June 30, boosted by improved sales in the company's Fibers and Textiles segment.

Overall net sales increased 7.7% compared with the same period a year ago to reach ¥385.8 billion ($3,129 million) driven by growing sales in the Fibers and Textiles segment and Plastics and Chemicals category. Operating income also rose 5.1% to reach ¥19.5 billion ($158 million), led by a strong performance in the Environment and Engineering segment and Plastics and Chemicals division.

Improved results at Gamma Holding

08 Aug 2007

Netherlands-based manufacturer of textile-based products Gamma Holding N.V. has reported improved results for the first six months. Turnover at the group edged higher to reach €394 million from €393 million in the first half of 2006, boosted by strong performances in its Gamma Technologies and Exotic Fabrics divisions.

Gamma Holding develops and manufactures textile-based products and employs approximately 6,700 staff In 41 countries.

New president named at Graphite Design

08 Aug 2007

Kenzo Imamura has been named director and president of the US operations of Japan-based graphite golf driver shafts manufacturer Graphite Design.

Formerly managing director of Administration for the company's world headquarters in Japan, he has been with Graphite Design for more than ten years. Prior to joining the company, he worked for Toray, which supplies composite materials used in Graphite Design's high performance shafts.

Mr Imamura succeeds Akio Karashima, who will return to Japan to be closer to family after three years based in San Diego.

Established in Japan in 1989 and in the USA in 1997, Graphite Design is said to be one of the world's three largest golf club shaft manufacturers.

Sportswear and intimate apparel boost results at Warnaco

08 Aug 2007

New York-based designer of swimwear, intimate apparel, sportswear, menswear, and jeanswear The Warnaco Group, Inc. has reported a 4.4% increase in net revenues for the second quarter ended June 30, boosted by strong performances in its sportswear and intimate apparel categories.

Total net revenues rose 4.4% to $465.1 million compared with $445.6 million in the prior year period whilst gross profit margin increased to 38.5% from 35.3%.

Revenues for the company's Sportswear Group increased 15.1% to $192.9 million, and the Intimate Apparel business posted a 6.1% increase in revenues to reach $160.5 million. On a slightly less positive note, Swimwear Group revenues declined 11.8% to $111.8 million.

The company's brands include Speedo, Warner's, Lejaby, Body Nancy Ganz, Chaps, Ocean Pacific swimwear, Nautica swimwear, Michael Kors swimwear and Calvin Klein men's and women's underwear.

Faytex and NanoHorizons team up

08 Aug 2007

US-based nanotechnology company NanoHorizons, Inc., and producer of footwear moisture management fabrics Faytex Corp., will officially unveil a new exclusive partnership at the upcoming Summer Outdoor Retailer show under which Faytex will now use NanoHorizon's SmartSilver anti-microbial/anti-odour nanotechnology in its Dri-Lex shoe lining material. The company has already started working with triathlon equipment developer Zoot Sports to incorporate the material into its new footwear line.

SmartSilver is engineered at the nanoscale to impart permanent high performance anti-odour/anti-microbial properties to natural and synthetic fibres and fabrics without compromising fabric design or integrity.

Sales rise 6% at adidas Group

08 Aug 2007

Germany-based adidas Group has reported a 3% rise in currency-neutral group sales for second quarter and a 6% increase for the first half year.

During the second quarter, group revenues grew 3% on a currency-neutral basis, driven by a strong sales increase at brand adidas as well as underlying sales growth in the TaylorMade-adidas Golf segment. Reebok sales, however, declined.

During the first six months, group revenues increased 6% on a currency-neutral basis, driven by sales growth in the adidas segment, the inclusion of an additional month in the Reebok segment versus the prior year and underlying sales increases at TaylorMade-adidas Golf. On a reported basis, however, TaylorMade-adidas Golf revenues declined, negatively impacted by the divestiture of the Greg Norman Collection wholesale business.

"In the first six months of 2007, we have built on the tremendous success of the prior year," commented adidas AG Chairman and CEO Herbert Hainer. "Ongoing strength in key performance categories has driven solid top-line growth at adidas and like-for-like sales increases at TaylorMade-adidas Golf. We have made important investments at Reebok as we continue to implement our strategies to bring the brand back to the top of its game."

Puma CEO appointed to the board at Harley-

Davidson

08 Aug 2007

Jochen Zeitz, CEO and chairman of German sportswear brand Puma AG, has been appointed as a member of the board of directors at US motorcycle manufacturer Harley-Davidson, Inc.

He is the first European manager to ever join the board.

Nike names new VP

07 Aug 2007

Nike, Inc. has appointed Ron McCray as vice president and chief administrative officer, reporting to president and CEO Mark Parker.

Mr McCray joins the company from the Kimberly-Clark Corporation, where he worked from 1987 and most recently held the position of senior vice president of Law, Government Affairs and chief compliance officer.

He succeeds Lindsay Stewart, who is retiring after more than 26 years at Nike.

DuPont to celebrate 40 years of Tyvek at A+A

07 Aug 2007

DuPont will mark the 40th anniversary of Tyvek at the A+A show in Düsseldorf, Germany, in SeptemEverlast agrees to settle Hidary suitber.

A 100% recyclable, lightweight, water-resistant and breathable nonwoven material, Tyvek offers protection against exposure to various hazardous substances. Garments made from the material are now used in many sectors including the emergency services, manufacturing, laboratory, clean room and other industries where chemical and/or biological protection is required.

ECCO appoints new technical field representative

07 Aug 2007

Danish shoemaker ECCO has named Ed DiStefano as the company's technical field representative to oversee the company's newly launched training and outreach programmes for green-grass and off-course golf retailers across the USA.

A PGA member, Mr DiStefano will work with ECCO's corporate staff and sales representatives to increase brand awareness and sales through promotions such as demo days, clinics and in-store events as well as helping to train retail staff in the features and benefits of ECCO's materials, fit system and direct-injection manufacturing process.

Clariant posts improved sales

07 Aug 2007

Swiss specialty chemicals producer Clariant has reported improved sales for the first six months of 2007, with a 5% rise in local currency terms and 6% in Swiss Franc terms compared with the first half of 2006. Sales rose to CHF4.336 billion ($3.647 billion) from CHF4.081 billion, with continued strong demand across all divisions.

Profitability at the company's Textile, Leather & Paper Chemicals Division was said to have been strongly impacted by raw material price increases and significantly weakened markets for the leather business.

Bayer posts improved sales

07 Aug 2007

Germany-based chemical and health care company The Bayer Group has reported continued improvement in the second quarter and first half of 2007. Sales grew 22% in the second quarter to reach €8,217 million from €6,736 million and improved 22.4% for the first six months to achieve €16,552 million, up from €13,527 million in the same prior-year period.

The company's high-tech materials business Bayer MaterialScience saw sales expand 3% to €2,623 million in the second quarter, whilst the Coatings, Adhesives, Sealants business unit posted a 7.9% increase and the Polyurethanes business unit saw sales edge 0.9% higher.
The group achieved its highest sales in Europe, where revenues rose 22.8% to €3,697 million. Business in Germany expanded 13.1% to €1,199 million, while in North America sales were 17.4% above the prior-year quarter at €2,140 million. Sales in the Asia/Pacific region gained 23.3% to €1,308 million, whilst the Latin America/Africa/Middle East region saw sales climb 27.5% to €1,072 million.

Everlast agrees to settle Hidary suit

07 Aug 2007

US-based designer and manufacturer of boxing- and fitness-related sporting goods Everlast Worldwide Inc. has entered into a settlement agreement with Hidary Group Acquisitions, LLC and Hidary Group Acquisitions, Inc, which provides for the dismissal, with prejudice, of Hidary's lawsuit against Everlast, which sought to block Everlast's pending merger agreement with Brands

Holdings Limited. According to the terms of the settlement, among other things, Everlast has agreed to limit the discovery it may take from Hidary in connection with certain stockholder litigation, and Everlast agreed to publicly reaffirm its board's commitment to comply with its fiduciary responsibilities, as set forth below.

Under the settlement agreement, the board of directors at Everlast remains free to consider unsolicited acquisition proposals. Additionally, as Everlast has previously disclosed, there is no agreement between Everlast and Hidary that would prohibit Hidary from commencing a non-coercive tender offer for Everlast's shares.

AWI/AWS merger nears completion

06 Aug 2007

The integration of Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) and Australian Wool Services (AWS) is nearing completion, almost three months late.

According to AWI chairman Ian McLachlan, after months of drawn-out negotiations, AWS has settled its liability issues with the UK-based IWS Pension Fund, which allows for the integration to finally proceed.

"The contract outlining the purchase of AWS assets by AWI has now been signed by the chairmen of both companies and subject to AWS shareholder approval on August 28, the two companies will be fully integrated during September," Mr McLachlan said.

He added that AWI would be buying assets owned by AWS including the Woolmark brand. "Under AWS, the value of the Woolmark brand and its current licensing business has been declining. As an industry, we need to adapt significantly to meet the international challenge to survive and thrive in the highly competitive apparel market. This integration will be instrumental in propelling Australia's wool industry into the global market. AWI is well-positioned to turn the current situation around and lead the Australian wool industry into a prominent position, but this will take some time given the current state of the business," he said.

Unifi to close US facility

06 Aug 2007

US-based producer and processor of multi-filament polyester and nylon textured yarns Unifi, Inc. is to close its Kinston, North Carolina facility, which produces partially orientated yarn (POY) for internal consumption and third party sales.

The company will now purchase its commodity POY needs from external suppliers for conversion in its texturing operations, although it will continue to produce POY at its Yadkinville, North Carolina facility for its specialty and premium value yarns and certain commodity yarns. Approximately 260 employees will be affected by the closure of the Kinston facility.

Meanwhile Unifi has appointed Stephen Wener as chairman and "acting" CEO. He has served as president and CEO of Dillon Yarn Corporation since 1980 and replaces Brian Parke.

Giorgio Armani enters the soccer field

06 Aug 2007

Better known for catwalk couture rather than a muddy football pitch, designer Giorgio Armani has entered the field of soccer through a new deal with Chelsea Football Club. Under the three-year agreement, Armani will create the club's new official suits for the entire first team squad, management and backroom staff.

The team's new off-field wardrobe comprises a single-breasted, two-button navy blue crease resistant lightweight wool gabardine suit, with flat-front, straight-legged trousers and a fitted jacket with pronounced 'Roman' shoulder line. These will be worn with pale blue cotton shirts from the Armani Napoli range. Players will also get a new club tie, a navy blue polo shirt, which can be worn as an alternative to shirt and tie, a dark brown mock croc belt and brown suede half boots.

Nike opens new flagship store in Beijing

06 Aug 2007

Reflecting strong growth momentum in one of its largest markets and its rapidly expanding retail presence across China, Nike opened a new flagship store in Beijing on August 3.

Commenting on the opening of the new outlet, Nike brand president, Charlie Denson, stated, "China is one of Nike's biggest growth opportunities, and one of the most dynamic retail markets in the world. As we head toward the Olympics, we're extending our brand leadership, deepening our consumer relationships and building what we expect soon to be a $1 billion business and Nike's second-largest market in the world."

The new Beijing store is the largest of approximately 3,000 Nike retail destinations now open in China.

Crocs to acquire Bite Footwear

06 Aug 2007

US footwear designer and manufacturer Crocs, Inc. has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire US comfort and supportive performance shoe and sports sandals Bite Footwear for $1.75 million in cash, plus a potential earn-out of up to $1.75 million based on Bite hitting certain earnings targets over a three-year period.

Crocs plans to incorporate its proprietary closed cell resin material, Croslite, into Bite's product collection, further expanding the material into new categories. In addition, Bite's OrthoSport product line will complement and expand Crocs RX medical line.

Commenting on the proposed acquisition, Ron Snyder, president and CEO of Crocs, said, "Over the past ten years Bite has created a portfolio of exciting and innovative footwear products that we believe will be a terrific compliment to our existing business. Similar to Crocs, Bite Footwear utilises patented technology to provide consumers with comfort, support and functionality across several target markets. We are confident that between their R&D and design capabilities and our global manufacturing base and retail distribution network we can take this brand to the next level."