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- » HOME
- » NEWS
 - Manufacturing
 - Retailing
 - International
 - News Briefs
 - » Trade Shows
 - Fashion News
- » FASHION
- » FEATURES
- » L.A. FASHION WEEK
- » PEOPLE & EVENTS
- » SPECIAL SECTIONS
- » CALENDAR
- » BLOG
- » INDUSTRY INDEX
- » CLASSIFIEDS
- » ABOUT
- » TABLE OF CONTENTS
- » SUBSCRIBE

NEWS / Trade Shows

TEXT SIZE: A | A | A
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Steady Business at Texworld, Attendance Up 22 Percent



BUSY SHOW: Montreal-based S. Sinman Textiles reported one of its best shows in "a long time."

by Alison A. Nieder, Executive Editor
January 20, 2012

NEW YORK—Steady signs of the recovery were evident at the Jan. 16–18 run of **Texworld USA**, held at the **Jacob K. Javits Convention Center** in midtown Manhattan.

"They're giving us [sample] orders right on the spot; they didn't want to wait," said Freddy Enbom, president of Montreal-based fabric supplier **S. Zinman Textiles**. "I haven't had a day like this in a long time—and we've been doing shows like this for 15 or 20 years."

For years, S. Zinman was a lining resource, but as the economy changed, the company expanded its offerings to include high-end fabrics. The next step for the company is a line of home textiles.

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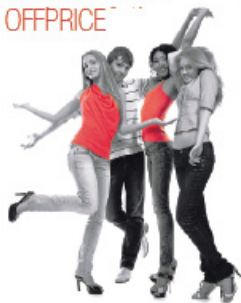
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"We try to adjust to the customers' needs because we carry almost 4 million yards of inventory," Enbom said, adding that minimums can be as low as 25 yards. "Of course, we would be very happy to have a 25,000-yard order."

Warren Zaretsky, vice president of sales for Los Angeles knit mill **Mansfield**, was similarly optimistic, noting that his business, overall, is rebounding—particularly for domestic suppliers.

"Our wish came true," he said. "When yarn prices started escalating, there was a panic, and some manufacturers came into the domestic market with a strong feeling of interest. [The fabrics are] the same as China, but the quality is better and the delivery is better, so why not pay an extra 25 cents? You'll always lose with the guy who supplies **Walmart** and [**JC**]**Penney**, but we tend to go with the contemporary market and better juniors."

Zaretsky said novelties were doing particularly well, including strings and fabrics with surface interest. Performance fabrics for the yoga market have also been popular. One of the companies buying Mansfield's performance activewear fabrics is **Destination Maternity**, which, Zaretsky said, the company met at a previous Texworld.

Los Angeles-based knit mill **Laguna Fabrics** has also been seeing interest in novelties.

"You have to stay one step ahead of the juniors market," said Laguna representative Suki Kang, who added that companies are looking for domestic fabric resources to help shortened production lead times.

"A lot of people are coming in and saying, 'We're building back the domestic business,' which is great news."

Mansfield and Laguna were part of the **Lenzing Innovation Pavilion**, organized by Austrian fiber maker **Lenzing** and featuring a mix of international and North American fiber and fabric suppliers. The North American contingent included **Buhler Quality Yarns**, **Fessler USA**, **JH Textiles**, Mansfield and Laguna.

Among the manufacturers and retailers shopping the show were **J.Crew**, **Chico's FAS**, **Macy's**, **Lord & Taylor**, **Marc Jacobs**, **Converse**, **Urban Outfitters**, **Victoria's Secret** and **Next UK**. California attendees included representatives for **Guess**, **Laundry**, **Bella Dahl** and **Juicy Couture**.

Kerry Jolna, president of **EMJ Apparel Group**, was at the show looking for fabrics for EMJ's Bella Dahl label, which relaunched about one year ago. Today, the brand is in 600 retailers, including **Bergdorf Goodman**, **Bloomingdale's**, **Nordstrom**, **Kitson** and **E Street Denim**. Designed and made in Los Angeles, Bella Dahl is also selling in Japan, Europe, Canada and Australia.

"Right now, we're moving so fast with so many things going on," he said.

The Bella Dahl collection includes jeans and tops in “super-soft” fabrications and “unusual wash treatments,” Jolna said, pulling a Bella Dahl lightweight denim shirt with a buttery hand from a tote bag.

Betsey Franjola, a designer with Juicy Couture, was at the show for a day and a half. (She said a coworker was at **Première Vision Preview** the previous week.) Although she said Texworld’s timing is a bit early for Spring ’13, she walked the trend forum and met with several mills.

This was the 12th edition of Texworld USA and featured 162 exhibitors from 14 countries. Although the January show is typically smaller than the Texworld USA show in July, this edition drew 3,363 verified attendees, according to organizers, who said this season’s attendance increased 22 percent over last year.

This season, the show was held concurrently with the **NRF Annual Convention & Expo**, organized by the **National Retail Federation**. The timing proved fortuitous, said Stephanie Everett, vice president of **Messe Frankfurt USA**, which organizes Texworld USA. Everett said **Talbots’** executives were attending NRF and decided to check out the offerings at Texworld, as well.

Growing sourcing section

Another plan is to grow Texworld’s Apparel Sourcing pavilion, according to Everett. This show, the pavilion featured 22 exhibitors, including nine from China.

Everett said several international associations—including groups from Japan, Hong Kong, Africa and Turkey—were exhibiting or walking the show, with plans to bring several companies to exhibit in July.

“If we can get 10 to 20 from each group, we can really build a non-Chinese [component at the show],” she said. “Our goal is to get Apparel Sourcing as a stand-alone show,” she said.

First-time exhibitor **Hedel Enterprises** was part of the Apparel Sourcing pavilion, showing a line of activewear.

Sales Manager June Han said most people she met with were looking for fabric resources, not finished garments. Hedel is headquartered in Canada, with a factory in China. “We are new to North America,” Han said, adding that the company primarily produces for European companies.

Also showing in the Apparel Sourcing pavilion was **Intertek**, the product-testing and compliance company.

Eduardo A. Palomo, senior client manager, said he was getting a lot of inquiries at Texworld about the company.

“They’re wondering what we do,” he said. “Most people know about our testing. Most of the traffic we had [on the second day of the show] was about our ISO platform.”

Intertek's ISO platforms help companies develop systems to manage quality control or environmental practice.



TREND FORECAST: For many designers, the Texworld USA trend forum was their first stop at the show.

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