

NEWS



INDUSTRY ADOPTS PRAGMATIC VIEW OVER SINGLE MARKET EXIT

Following the announcement by Prime Minister Theresa May last month that the UK will seek to leave the single market as part of the formal Brexit negotiations with the EU, the majority of fashion industry players have adopted a pragmatic approach, hoping that any negative impact on trade will be minor and short-lived before new trade deals can be put in place.

"Tariffs and additional bureaucracy burdens will hamper the business mood; new processes will need to be implemented, which will take some time to get used to. But in the long term we will find a solution. I hope it does not go back to the times of pre-EU membership, though; we deserve better than that," says Andy Tompsett, head of UK for Merc. "The long-term impact will be a massive shake-up in the way we do things and the way this nation trades. There will be negatives in the short term, but there will be winners and losers. We have to adapt to new times or we will fail."

This is mirrored by Brian Winterbourne, agent for Seidensticker. "Whatever I think about staying or leaving the single market, the decision is now taken and every successful business will just have to change, adapt and move forward," he says. "A business like Seidensticker - trading since 1919 - has seen uncertain times in the past and is currently taking a very supportive and longer term approach to the British market and will not be having any knee jerk reactions to currency uncertainties. Our autumn collection will be increased in price by an average of just 4.8 per cent, and we are confident that our customers will see this as fair and support us."

Juls Dawson, owner of Just Consultancies, also concurs: "I believe in the short term leaving the single market is a bad thing, due to the collapse of the pound and the effect it has on all of my suppliers. Long term, we will have to wait and see, also what additional restrictions and red tape Brexit will have on the import and export of goods. It may mean that mark-ups may go down and/or RRP's up. It may restrict free shipment from some of our brands, and in turn may drive sales towards our more accessibly priced brands," he says.



STRONG PARIS DEBUT FOR RESIDENT SHOWROOM

New Paris-based trade show Resident Showroom won rave reviews for last month's debut edition, held on Rue de la Roquette in the French capital's buzzing Bastille district during Paris Men's fashion Week.

Launched by Jacket Required founders Mark Batista and Craig Ford, a private showroom for around 15 brands on Monday to Thursday was followed by a three-day trade show with around 40 names.

"Resident Showroom far exceeded our expectations," says Mark Batista, pointing to the strength of both the event's brand list and visitors. Alongside names such as Garbstore, Hancock and Barbour, Japanese brands included Masterpiece and Tiesay. Leading Japanese stores Beams and United Arrows were among the attendees, as well as the likes of Colette, Mr Porter, Selfridges, 14oz, Firmament and Oi Polloi.

The next edition will run alongside Paris Men's Fashion Week in June.



FILIPPA K APPOINTS NEW CEO AND CHAIRMAN

The board of Filippa K has appointed Kristofer Tonström as new CEO, taking over the role from Anna Lönnestedt, who has been interim CEO since September 2016. Lönnestedt will continue in the newly created position of range & supply director.

Simon Griffiths has been appointed new chairman of the board. The resigning chairman, Eric Persson, CEO of Novax, will remain a board member.

Tonström has many years of experience leading international brand driven organisations with a focus on innovation, marketing and sales, having most recently been CEO of Omega Pharma Nordic AB where he has built one of the Nordic region's largest and fastest growing health and beauty companies.

Griffiths, meanwhile, has substantial experience working internationally with strategy and business development at EQT and Bain & Company.



WESC APPOINTS NEW CEO

Joseph Janus, former CEO of WeSC America, has been appointed chief executive officer of WeSC Worldwide with a primary focus on directing the strategy for sales and distribution as well as marketing and PR.

In addition to his current role of overseeing all US operations, Janus will now lead the entire organisation, working closely with the Stockholm based head of design, head of production and sales team. He will continue to work primarily from WeSC's New York office and will assume overall responsibility for directing the brand's a/w 17 sales efforts together with the sales team in Stockholm. "I am very excited about my new role as CEO for the WeSC group," says Janus. "I strongly believe the efforts we have made in the US market in elevating WeSC's brand positioning and distribution will translate very well to our worldwide market."



JOULES SUPPORTS YOUNG ENTERPRISE CAMPAIGN

British lifestyle brand Joules has, through its partnership charity The Prince's Trust, completed the first Leicestershire youth Enterprise programme.

The event took place on 26 January in Leicester and lasted for four days. Eleven young entrepreneurs from Leicestershire attended, receiving training across a number of different areas including strategy, financial planning and marketing.

The aim of the Enterprise programme is to help youngsters turn their big ideas into business reality. Following the workshop, young people will begin to write their business plans and work with The Trust to start up in business. They are then matched with an experienced business mentor for 12-24 months who will hone their skills, advise them on strategy, finance and other considerations, and ultimately support them in their journey.



STRONG OPENING FOR JACKET REQUIRED

Jacket Required continued to cement itself as a leading show in the buying calendar last month, as it welcomed a strong buyer turnout from both the UK and internationally. The show presented a roster of over 200 brands at The Old Truman Brewery including Wrangler by Peter Max, Eat Dust, Gant Rugger, Hunter and La Paz.

Making its show debut was premium footwear label Loake. "It's definitely been the right move for us," explains Tom Turton, UK sales manager. "It gives us that platform to reach premium menswear stores that we might not have been able to otherwise, and just in the first day we've got six or seven potential new accounts." Returning label Gloverall, meanwhile, had an equally positive reaction from buyers. "I can say without doubt, this has been the best first day we've ever had since we started showing here," says James Hall, UK sales manager.



RETAIL JOBS DECLINE

The end of 2016 saw the number of jobs in the retail industry decline according to the British Retail Consortium's Employment Monitor, as employers hired fewer seasonal staff and cut down overtime hours. "While the end of the year remains the busiest time for workers in retail, the figures are consistent with the long-term trend of retailers reducing the number of hours being worked to adjust to big structural changes in the industry," says British Retail Consortium chief executive, Helen Dickinson.

"In the last quarter, seasonal overtime was scaled back much more than in previous years, reflecting the relative fall in importance of Boxing Day relative to pre-Christmas spend and Black Friday. We also saw some retailers reduce temporary seasonal staffing levels earlier than in previous years," she adds.

NEWS IN BRIEF

MESSE DÜSSELDORF TRANSFERS GDS TO IGEDO
Messe Düsseldorf, owner and organiser of German footwear trade show GDS, has integrated the event into the portfolio of its subsidiary, Igedo Company. The show will be held for the last time at the Messe Düsseldorf site from 7 to 9 February, with Igedo organising and relaunching the show with a new concept at Düsseldorf's Areal Böhler venue in late August/early September.

Over the past few years GDS and its sister show Tag it! have been elaborately redesigned in close cooperation with the shoe sector, but failed to fulfil the expectations of both the organisers and industry. Werner Matthias Dornscheidt, president and CEO at Messe Düsseldorf, attributes this to the changes in the shoe sector: "The sector has radically changed over the past few years and the pace has picked up again. The major event that GDS has been for over six decades no longer seems to be the right format for the current challenges within the shoe sector. For this reason we are now taking consistent action with new responsibilities and a new venue," he says.

SHARE OF NEXT DAY DELIVERY GROWS

Latest data from IMRG and MetaPack reveals that the typical delivery timeframe appears to be shrinking, with next-day delivery services now accounting for a greater share of online orders.

In 2016 next-day delivery was selected as the carriage option for 31 per cent of online retail orders, up from 26.8 per cent in 2015. Over the same period, the share of orders using economy services fell from 45.5 per cent in 2015 to 38.9 per cent in 2016.

The data has also tracked a notable shift in when the bulk of Christmas peak deliveries fall. In 2014 the monthly growth in order volumes between November and December was +27.7 per cent; in 2015 it was +14.3 per cent, but in 2016 it was just +4.5 per cent. This is largely explained by Black Friday falling earlier in 2016 (25 November), whereas it was 28 November in 2014 and 27 November in 2015, and the fact that with previous years' experience retailers have been extending this pre-Christmas sales period even earlier into November. In 2014 and 2015, although the orders were taken late in November, many of them would actually have been fulfilled in early December.

NICK REED TO JOIN MOSS BROS

Nick Reed is to join high street tailoring specialist Moss Bros, as buying director. Reed, who joins from Charles Tyrwhitt, will be tasked with driving sales growth across all channels, particularly in the development of the brand's online business.

Following another set of positive trading results posted last week, Moss Bros. has ambitious growth plans for both its high street stores and digital platform. Reed's experience in online buying will strengthen the Moss Bros. product offering across all channels, whilst his creative flair will ensure the brand continues to build presence in the men's tailoring market.