

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE FOR LINGERIE & SWIMWEAR PROFESSIONALS

Lingerie

MARCH 2011 / VOL. 02 ISSUE 03
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INSIGHT



**NEWS
REVIEW**

OPINION

**BIRMINGHAM
REVIEW**

**NEW
PRODUCTS**

THE REAL DEAL

Michelle Mone speaks about her latest MJM business venture

DROP STOCK APPAREL

Discover the stocking issues that online retailers face

SHAPEWEAR X-POSED

Trinny & Susannah talk frankly on their developing shapewear brand

UNDERCOVER CHARITY

Learn how you can make a big difference by donating excess stock

EVOLUTION OF MAN

Find out how the male underwear sector is developing for the modern age

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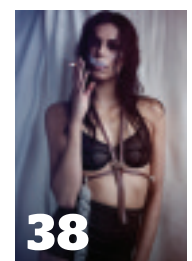
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FOREWORD



When women claim that secretly wish they their men would evolve, the majority are

probably not thinking about their undergarments. But, nonetheless, men's intimate apparel is slowly being dragged into the 21st century.

For too long now, men's underpants have played the poorer brother to women's lingerie, but with the rise of the internet making it easier for men to shop in the privacy of their own home, could this be set to change?

Men's masculinity needs a showcase and, as the breadth of products available to male consumers continues to increase, underwear could just be that platform. With more men now buying for themselves than ever before, this is being

reflected in a improved product offering, with technologically supported comfort, masculine styles and shaping solutions coming to the fore.

As brands, such as Spanx, M&S and HOTmilk, continue to expand into the market, the men's sector is only going one way – up. In the process of re-gaining control over their own sector, men will hopefully re-learn to find pleasure in the underwear shopping experience. After all, if you are going to spend all Sunday in your boxers, why not invest in a really good pair?

In this month's issue of Lingerie Insight, we take a look into how the men's market is developing and the way in which underwear brands are seeking to respond to a changing demand.

KAT SLOWE
EDITOR
kat.slowe@itp.com

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTOR



Gary Hepburn runs a couple of internet based lingerie websites supplying brands such as Lepel, Triumph, Discover Mademoiselle, Penti and Leg Avenue. Hepburn wrote a letter to Lingerie Insight last month describing how some small online retailers are struggling with the industry's current order system. In it, he explains the challenges involved with stocking fashion lines in advance and in trying to judge what you can, and cannot, afford to hold.

MARCH COVER

Photo: Andrew Christian
Models: Corey & Jocelyn
Model wears: style # 9228
Almost Naked No Show Brief
(AW10 collection)
Photographer: Gregory Frye
Website: www.andrewchristian.com



Lingerie INSIGHT

ITP PROMEDIA PUBLISHING

16A Baldwins Gardens, London, EC1N 7RJ, UK
Tel: +44 (0) 20 31 764228
Fax: +44 (0) 20 31 764231

EDITORIAL

EDITOR Kat Slowe,
kat.slowe@itp.com

CONTRIBUTORS
Gary Hepburn, Claire Franks

COMMERCIAL

SALES MANAGER Andrew Martyniuk,
andrew.martyniuk@itp.com

STUDIO

GROUP ART EDITOR Daniel Prescott,
daniel.prescott@itp.com

DESIGNER Lucy McMurray

DIGITAL

CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER

Hitendra Molleti, hitendra.molleti@itp.com

ONLINE PRODUCTION Ernesto Ceralde,
Rose Yorobe

PRODUCTION & DISTRIBUTION

GROUP PRODUCTION & DISTRIBUTION DIRECTOR

Kyle Smith, kyle.smith@itp.com

DEPUTY PRODUCTION MANAGER

Matthew Grant, matthew.grant@itp.com

DATABASE MANAGEMENT Manju Sajeesh,
manju.sajeesh@itp.com

CIRCULATION

CIRCULATION CUSTOMER SERVICE
+971 4 286 8559

Web: www.lingerieinsight.com

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Lingerie INSIGHT

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PLUS SIZE BRAND CURVY KATE CELEBRATES 400 PERCENT GROWTH IN 2ND YEAR OF TRADING

New plus size lingerie brand Curvy Kate has announced sales growth of 400 percent in its second year of trading.

The London-based company, launched in 2009, specialises in bras for the fuller bust (D to K cups). The focus is on 'great fit in fashionable styles', aimed at the 18 – 34 year old market.

Within its first six months of trading, Curvy Kate was stocked by over 100 stores in the UK. The company now has over 500 stockists worldwide, with distribution in 10 countries, including Australia, France, Canada, Germany and Greece.

Curvy Kate managing director Steve Hudson said: "We have been overwhelmed by the response to the brand. It seems we are offering the right product at the right time, despite the economic climate."

He added: "Fuller busted women have very different requirements from a bra. We spent three years before our launch developing the bras and constantly improving the design to achieve the best possible fit. Whilst we have created a fun and fashionable look, it has taken a lot of effort to ensure we give great shape and support, right up to a K cup."

The company has ambitious

growth plans, including the addition of a swimwear collection for Spring/Summer 2012.

The new swimwear range, which follows two years of development by the brand, seeks to incorporate both uplift and support. Colours will be bolder than in the company's lingerie offering, with the collection featuring pink frills, cute button detailing and subtle prints from Curvy Kate's three different collections.

Curvy Kate marketing manager Hannah Houston said: "This has really been a learning curve for the brand as it is our first venture into the swimwear market. We will never release a

product until we have tested it on a range of fit models at every size and so it has taken over two years to get it just right. We believe our product is fashion led, but we would never compromise the fit or function. We also strive to ask our customers throughout development their opinions, which we do through questionnaires and social media.

Hudson added: "We are looking to build on our initial success to create a strong business and a global brand. These are challenging times, but we see huge potential and intend to ensure Curvy Kate becomes a must-have brand for all fuller busted women." ❖

» FOR IMAGES OF THE AW11 COLLECTIONS AND DAILY BREAKING NEWS VISIT Lingerie.com

NEWS REVIEW



♣ **Caprice Lingerie** has announced that it has signed The Only Way is Essex star Amy Childs to be the face of its new collection.

The role will be Amy Childs first big modelling contract, with it rumoured that she has received a five figure salary for the role.

Owner and former model for the line Caprice said: "Amy looks amazing in the collection."

She added: "She has amazing big bambi eyes, healthy curves and an incredible tush."

UAE emirate **Sharjah** has passed a new law that prohibits men from selling lingerie within the Middle Eastern district's stores.

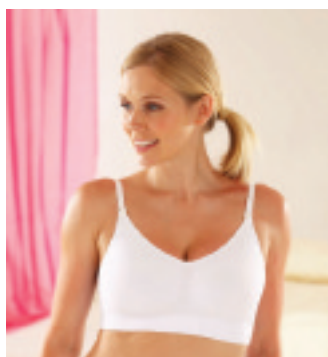
The law, passed by the Sharjah Executive Council, applies to all commercial outlets that sell items and commodities to women.

A Sharjah official told Gulf News that the mandate would be in operation with immediate effect for outlets that sell women's undergarments and lingerie, but that men would continue to be able to sell clothes and other related items.

If You Please has announced that it will be exhibiting the work of 12 students over a year period.

The retailer will pick a winner on the last Friday of each month. The student will have a designer profile written about them on the If You Please blog and will be featured in its monthly newsletter, which goes out to 500 of its customers.

Students who wish to participate can submit their work to info@ifyouplease.co.uk, along with an application form, in which they're required to answer a few simple questions about themselves and their work.



♣ Maternity and nursing lingerie specialist **Emma-Jane** will celebrate its 25th anniversary, this March.

To celebrate the occasion, the brand will be running a competition for its retailers selling online with a £250 prize.

Emma-Jane sales director John White said: "We're inviting all our online stockists to send us a link to the Emma-Jane product page on their website. An independent consultant will view the pages and the stockist who they think most accurately reflects the Emma-Jane ethos of comfort, support and affordability will win a £250 prize to spend with us."

La Perla has announced that it will be working with luxury designer **Jean Paul Gaultier** on a second range, which is to include swimwear.

The new collection, featuring two groups of underwear and two groups of swimwear, will be an extension of the existing partnership which created this year's Spring Summer line.

Urban Outfitters has announced the US launch of new bridal collection BHLDN (pronounced Beholden), featuring lingerie, wedding dresses, jewellery, shoes and accessories.

The range aims to put a unique, modern stamp on the bridal business, with lopsided bows, unfinished hems and disguised decoration, as reported in Women's Wear Daily.

BHLDN launched on Valentines Day via an e-commerce site. The first freestanding store is expected to follow in August. Two to three stores have been planned for 2012, but as many as 50 could open in the US over the next few years.

♣ Maternity brand **HOTmilk** has launched its first range of men's underwear, titled Milk Man.

This will be the first time that the line, created several years ago for promotional purposes, will be launched as a proper collection.

HOTmilk north England sales representative Craig Swinney said: "I think going forward we are going to offer it as a continuity, so it will be ongoing just as basics. We have done a retro style brief and a trunk in several colours."

The Milk Man collection, which will be available this Autumn Winter, seeks to provide classic, 'manly' styling.



♣ Specialist retailer **Bravissimo** will launch a new nationwide retail offering from March 21 2011, called Pepperberry.

The company, which currently specialises in 'lingerie, swimwear, nightwear and clothing for women with bigger boobs', will drop its current clothing offering from March and will be launching the new label in its place.

The first collection will include 60 styles, comprising of dresses, jackets, tops, trousers and skirts and will also include a selection of bags, belts, scarves and jewellery to complement the range.



♣ **Mybluebeach** has announced its support for a new movement within the fashion industry to ban airbrushing.

The brand is one of the few fashion labels to support a strict 'no airbrushing' policy on any of its brand photography, campaign shots or promotional literature.

Mybluebeach founder Lindsey Brown said: "Women of all ages have hang-ups on pictures they see in magazines, and say, 'but I will never look like that.' My response is, 'yes, you can, as we haven't airbrushed anything at all.'"



NEWS IN QUOTES

"The minimiser plus is made much more contemporary for young girls. Kids, in particular, especially those who are now 30 back up to FF - they go to a co-ed and they are so embarrassed."

Gossard and Berlei managing director TONY JARVIS on the launch of Berlei's new minimiser bra.

"I believe that lingerie is not about eroticism, but about self-expression... My work combines both function and sexuality and makes the best of a woman's looks, whilst controlling the body."

London College of Fashion student YUE ZHOU on becoming the February winner of online retailer If You Please's new, monthly Student Showcase competition.

"This year, we will be trying a new thing with Jean Paul Gaultier. The first collection has been very positive. It has received a large amount of press. It is doing very well in stores with what has been going in so far. We know already it will be a big sell through."

La Perla UK distributor Hornvale managing director DOMINIC JAMES talks about the extension of the brand's collaboration with Jean Paul Gaultier to include swimwear for AW11.

"Women of all ages have hang-ups on pictures they see in magazines, and say, 'but I will never look like that.' My response is, 'yes, you can, as we haven't airbrushed anything at all.'"

Mybluebeach designer LINDSEY BROWN explains why the fashion industry should ban airbrushing.

"I think it is a great name, isn't it? Milk Man - delivering in all the right places. I think it says that on the box... 'Delivering daily where it matters most!'"

HOTmilk north England sales representative CRAIG SWINNEY discusses the advertising slogan for the brand's latest collection.

» Something to say? Email info@lingerieinsight.com



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NEWS REVIEW



▲ Britney Spears has been spotted wearing **Marlies Dekkers** and **Bordelle** lingerie in new music video Hold It Against Me, released last month.

The star sported a balconet bra from Marlies Dekkers' AW10 Beautiful Bat collection, inspired by Victorian Vampires and, towards the end, danced onstage in Bordelle's signature Bondage dress.

It is not the first time the star has been caught modelling pieces from either brand. In 2009, during her controversial Circus Tour, she donned custom made products from both designers.

▼ In celebration of its 125th anniversary, **Triumph International** showed for the first time at London Fashion Week last month.

In doing so, Triumph was the first lingerie brand to hold a catwalk show at the UK fashion event, where it exhibited its AW11 Shape Sensation collection.

The new collection consists of four ranges, Sensation, Pure Sensation, Alluring Sensation and Velvet Sensation.



▼ Michelle Mone has announced that she is interested in joining TV show Dragon's Den as a judge in 2012.

The **Ultimo** boss was unable to feature on the programme this year, due to a hectic work schedule and an existing commitment to a separate BBC show.

Mone, who admits to obtaining just four hours of sleep a night, told Lingerie Insight: "I think next year will be the right time if they ask me again. But, right now, I have too much on my plate and I have this show (for the BBC) that I have committed to for three months, so I can't do both."



The **Lane Bryant** 'red bra' commercial, which created massive controversy in the States after it was banned on the ABC network for being too sexy, has been awarded this year's AME Platinum Award for advertising marketing and effectiveness.

The brand cashed in on the clip 'Not What Mom Would Wear' after it quickly became a YouTube sensation, generating millions of hits and inspiring Brandweek.com's most read article for 2010.

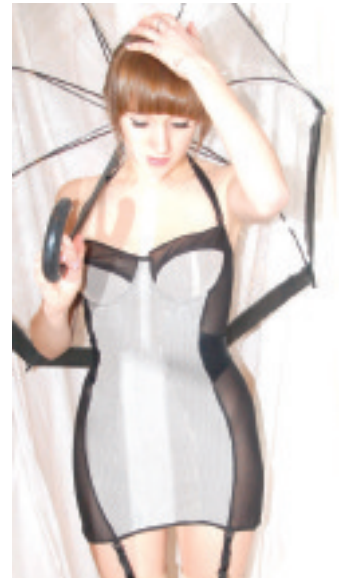
Lane Bryant vice president of marketing Jay Dunn said: "Our red bra ad was never about creating controversy. It was about making the point that plus size women have every right to embrace their curves."

FIRST STITCH CELEBRATING EMERGING TALENT

Jessica Preece is the first winner of If You Please's (ifyouplease.co.uk) monthly student showcase.

Preece has experience working for the likes of fashion designer Hermione De Paula and Bunnies Forever, and has previously worked as a sales assistant in If You Please's Camden Lock boutique.

She is currently taking a year out from London School of Fashion's Contour Design course to work as an intern at Agent Provocateur's London HQ. At the moment, she is working in production and doing PA duties for new head honcho Sarah Shotton, but she will shortly be moving back to designing full time.



» Are you a student or recent graduate and want to be featured in First Stitch? Email info@lingerieinsight.com

STORE ENVY



BORDELLO, Great Eastern Street, London

Bordello is one of the capital's best known lingerie secrets. Opened by Michelle Scarr in 2008, the high end boutique is a haven of all things boudoiresque, with dark red painted walls, quirky antique furniture and European chandeliers.

Brands stocked by the store include Ayten Gasson, Fifi Chachnil, Kriss Soonik, Lascivious, Mint Siren, Bordelle, Damaris, Made by Niki,

Nichole de Carle, Mimi Holiday and Obey My Demand. Other products range from old school erotica books and luxury hand cuffs to frames with vintage playing cards, spelling out LOVE.

And the store staff love their lingerie, with one employee admitting to secretly borrowing her mother's suspender belt at the age of 12. Suffice to say, it didn't fit.

» Got a Store Envy suggestion? Email info@lingerieinsight.com

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VOICE OF THE INDUSTRY

The future of shapewear



CLAIRE FRANKS
sales manager, Patricia Eve

With so many different shapewear brands on the market today and so many different styles to choose from, how can we know which ones really work and which silhouettes actually shape the areas we want to target? If you are only just turning your attention to shapewear, it can be slightly overwhelming.

Shapewear has been growing at huge rates for some five years now; it has been both recession proof and markdown proof. Offering retailers fewer sku's and higher mark ups than tradition lingerie, retailers who backed this product group have enjoyed enormous profitability & return. Gone are the days that shops & stores have a single rail of shapewear pushed embarrassingly to the back of the dept. we should now all treat this product group with the respect and space that it warrants, let's see a Department of shapewear in every store. Be proud of it as it will deliver..

Let's look at the brands that have built the UK market to where it is now: - Miraclesuit offering cut & sew extra firm technology where you

will drop a dress size in 10 seconds. Flexees offering a wide array of garments that sculpt & smooth. Body wrap, Trinny & Susannah and Spanx , offering that Santoni manufactured seam free stitched technology, affording everyday comfort, smoothing and medium body compression.

One thing they all have in common is everyday shapewear in Nude & black, maybe a tiny bit of white if we are lucky. Why do they do this well? It's because these are the colours that sell by far the best, but what comes next & where do we look to the future to understand and predict where this rapidly evolved category is going to maintain its rapid growth for the next 5 years. The USA, well no I don't think so. I think we need to look in our own back yard and turn to Europe. Its fashion shapewear, it is colourful, trend driven and you guessed it, great to look good in too. Now let's be clear, we may well have to compromise results & performance to get the right fabrication and appearance in Fashion shapewear, but the brand that can achieve all the demands would indeed be the winners for the next decade.

NEWS REVIEW



Trinny and Susannah have announced that they will be launching a new range of sports shapewear.

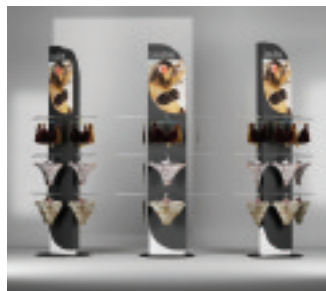
The pair spoke to Lingerie Insight about the new project during a breakfast launch of their new tummy tuck shapewear vest and short pant at Soho House.

Trinny said: "Sportswear, we want to get into - just for working out... It will just be stuff that feels very good to work out in and that looks good, and you can then put a dress over it if you have to run and not have a shower."

LingaDore has introduced a new shop in shop concept consisting of large LingaDore walls and horizontal and vertical LingaDore displays.

The lingerie brand's new shop-in-shop concept seeks to offer a 'fresh and unique way' for retailers to present LingaDore styles.

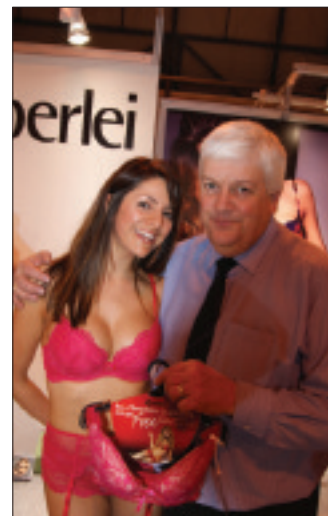
Customers can either opt for the entire concept or for separate units, depending on their preference.



Tightsplease has released the results of its Men in Tights survey, which it conducted on its website in January.

The results revealed that not only do 34 percent of male tight aficionados wear them under their suit to the office, but the majority are happy to pay over £30 for a pair, as long as they are 'soft and luxurious' against the skin.

Female respondents remained unflappable. Only 15 percent of those questioned in the survey admitted that they didn't like the idea of their man wearing tights and a further 37 percent turn a blind eye. But 48 percent said they love shopping for tights with their other half.



Berlei has launched the minimiser plus bra for Autumn Winter 2011, featuring 'modesty flowers' that hide the wearer's nipples.

The product, which incorporates double lamination and a moulded cup, also seeks to reduce the appearance of women's bust by one size.

Berlei and Gossard managing director Tony Jarvis said: "The minimiser plus is made much more contemporary for young girls. Kids in particular, especially those who are now 30 back up to FF - it's a co-ed and they are so embarrassed.

Got a story? Email news@lingerieinsight.com

SPEAKERS' CORNER

DONNA WALKER
sales representative,
By Wishes



NICHOLE DE CARLE
founder,
Nichole de Carle



BERLEI/GOSSARD
managing director,
Tony Jarvis

HOW WAS BUSINESS FOR YOU THIS VALENTINE'S DAY?

“We had quite a good Valentine's. It was about the same as last year.

We used to distribute bags. We always do well on straps and little gifts for Valentine's Day. It has been a bit quiet, but things are continually picking up now.

Christmas is the best time for us. We are not so seasonal and tend to keep going all year round. The padded pant does really well for us throughout the year and we have 900 different stockists now.”

“Bordelle's Valentine's Day was mainly celebrity driven - though I am afraid I can't mention who those celebrities are yet.

We also had a Selfridges re-stock, which just flew off the shelves. Selfridges first stocked us in November, but it re-stocked in January for Valentine's.

We produced special pieces for a lot of the brand's private clients and, overall, I would say that we were very pleased with our business over the Valentine's period.”

“We did okay, but the feedback we had from retailers is that it wasn't a good Valentine's day.

In my experience every other year is a good Valentine's and every other year is a poor Valentine's.

What we do is box clever. We launched Temptress with free stockings in October/November and this offer goes on until May, so it is terrific.

We saw a lot of people put it out on display over the Valentine's period.”

DIARY DATES**1-9th March, Paris, France.**

Paris Fashion Week has come round once again and with Haut Couture Week over and done, it is now the turn of Ready to Wear. A series of French fashion houses, including Lanvin, Yves Saint Laurent, Christian Dior and Louis Vuitton, will present their AW11 collections during the nine day event, alongside a number of renowned international labels.

8-10th March, Cranmore Park, Solihull.

The **AIS Lingerie & Legwear show**, which attracts primarily independent retailers, will feature lingerie, nightwear and hosiery from both mainstream and emerging brands.

9-10th March, The Music Room, London.

The **Textile Forum** describes itself as 'London's most exclusive fashion fabric show.' It is aimed at designers, small to medium sized manufacturers, dressmakers and retail fabric specialists looking for high quality fashion fabrics from UK and European mills. Exhibitors all offer small minimums and many also have stock and short order fabrics, as well as collections for forward order.

30-31st March, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Hong Kong.

This year, **Hong Kong Mode Lingerie** has taken on a new name, Interfilère Hong Kong - Mode Lingerie 2011, in a step taken to highlight the 20-year old 'Interfilère' brand in the region.

30-31st March, Beijing China International Exhibition Centre (CIEC), China.

Intertextile Beijing is a trade fair for apparel fabrics and accessories manufacturers, and suppliers wanting to reach China's north and north-east region.

NEWS FLASH

Lingerie brand **NICHOLE DE CARLE** will be taking part in a new reality TV show this month, called Great British Hairdresser. Nichole de Carle will be featured in the third episode of the show, which launched on E4 on February 28.

The programme documents the successes and failures of ten hairdressers as celebrity stylist, James Brown, puts them to the test to find the best hairdressing talent in the UK.

Few details have yet been released, but we can reveal that Nichole de Carle's models, dubbed the 'Goddesses' will be part of a competition with an animal theme.

For more news visit
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INSIGHT

MOST READ ONLINE



- 1** Kate Middleton negligee goes on sale in London
- 2** Bravissimo launches new fashion brand Pepperberry
- 3** VIDEO: Maison Close burlesque striptease
- 4** Full figure controversy converts into huge profits
- 5** Jacqui Ainsley puts 'oooh' in Boux
- 6** HOTmilk launches men's range
- 7** VIDEO: Lise Charmel celebrates 35 years
- 8** Britney wears Marlies Dekkers & Bordelle in vid
- 9** Third of men wear tights under suit to the office
- 10** My Clever Agency launches Facebook model search

EDITOR'S CHOICE



VIDEO

Triumph AW11 catwalk

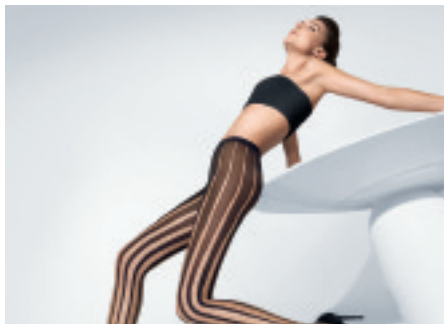
Triumph celebrates 125 years with lingerie's first LFW catwalk show, showcasing its latest AW11 shapewear collection.



GALLERY

Paolita LFW party

The high end swimwear brand celebrates its SS11 collection hitting stores with a party at London club Ora.



COLLECTION

AW11/12 Wolford legwear

The popular lingerie and legwear brand aims for 'figure hugging and feminine with baroque panache' in its latest Autumn Winter collection.



NEWS

La Perla works with Jean Paul Gaultier on swimwear

The two big luxury names extend their SS11 collaboration to a second range for AW11, featuring lingerie and swimwear.



LINGERIE TWEETS

« Lady Gaga looks amazing wearing OMD lingerie in her new music video "Born This Way" :) xx"
@ObeyMyDemand

"Looking for a vintage glam location in Paris for photoshoot next week..anyone suggest..old theatre, bar? Somewhere that won't cost the earth?"
@tallulahlove

"Adrian Chiles has designed a range of undies based on his fav football team - what do you think pant lovers?"
@JockeyPants

"Isn't it funny how the level of noise from the figleaves marketing department lowers as lunchtime commences.xx"
@figleaves_chell

BRINGING THE LINGERIE INDUSTRY TOGETHER




26th May 2011
The Savoy London

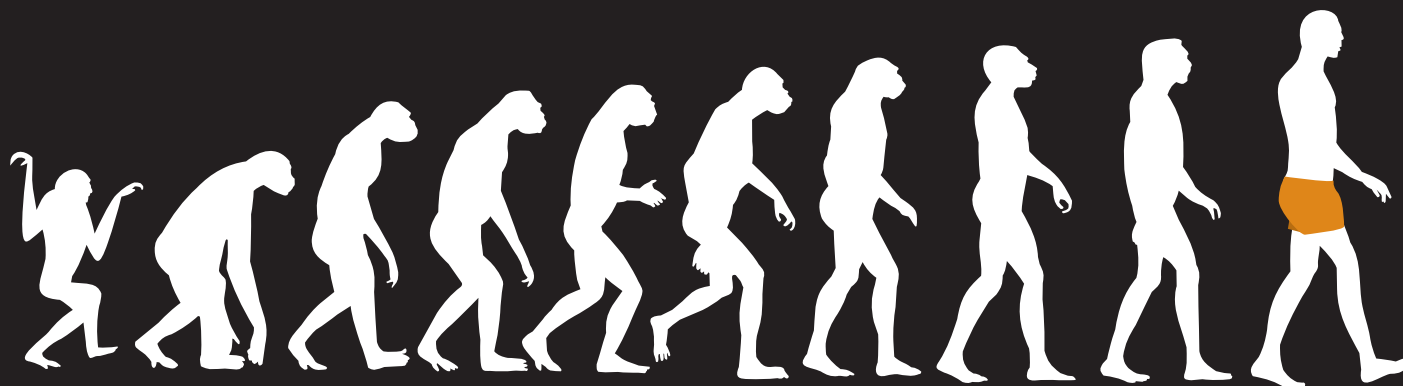
Raising funds for Retail Trust and
Fashion Textile Childrens' Trust

ENQUIRIES:

Contact Helen Nicell on 020 8358 7253
Email: hnicell@retailtrust.org.uk

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EVOLUTION OF MAN

MAN MAY SEEM SET IN HIS WAYS, BUT IS HE SECRETLY EVOLVING UNDERNEATH? WE TAKE A LOOK BEHIND THE CHANGING SHAPE OF MEN'S UNDERWEAR TO DETERMINE HOW BRIGHT THE FUTURE REALLY IS.

Briefs or boxers, thongs or shorts; the breadth of men's underwear products is only going one way - up.

Colour has returned to the sector and shapewear, a booming sector for women, has now become a key staple in many men's wardrobes.

Australian brand AussieBum is a perfect example of this. The company has taken off in recent years and sales of its Wonderjock product have soared.

AussieBum sold 50,000 Wonderjocks in its first week and, last year, the brand's name was the seventh most searched term online in America.

The Wonderjock, designed in 2006

as the 'male answer' to the Wonderbra, aims to lift the bum and enhance the crotch area. Sean Ashby formed the concept five years after he founded his company, which originally produced only swimwear.

Media and communications director Claire Delzechi says: "Five years after we started the company, we started asking our customers what they wanted. A lot of the guys said, 'what we want is something that makes us really manly and Sean said, 'okay, I will create the male version of the Wonderbra then... Our servers crashed. Everyone went crazy."

In November 2010, AussieBum decided to upgrade the Wonderjock and designed the WJ Pro. It was an immediate success for the company, which launched its products in Harrods last December.

AussieBum also sells its products through the online medium, a strategy that has proven both timely and profitable for the brand.

"Before the internet," Delzechi says, "men would often rely on their wives or the girlfriend to buy them underwear. The secret of the brand is that they can buy it by themselves. Before, people were afraid of purchasing on the internet. That has changed now.

"We launched in Harrods in Decem-

ber. Some customers like to go have a feel for the product. The internet part is growing and is a big part of our business."

The brand now sells its products to a wide selection of customers, ranging from teenagers through to family men and older gentlemen. This year is the brand's 10th anniversary and it is planning a series of celebrations across the globe. It is continuing to innovate with different colours and styles, and last year released a collection of underwear made from banana fibre, called the banana range.

But, AussieBum is not the only male shapewear brand out there. A number of brands have recently begun to see the potential in the sector. M&S launched a man enhancing pant this year and shapewear name Spanx has also chosen to enter the men's market.

Spanx brand manager Fiona Prentice says: "Spanx for Men has been a very successful launch and men are starting to think differently about Shapewear for men. During the lead up to Christmas, Spanx for Men was the best selling brand on Selfridges website. Men's business in Harro also had massive growth, so it's not just Shapewear."

Spanx for Men initially launched with exclusive distribution, but is now rolling out in 2011. Harro also



ALAN, 27

Style: Risque/Conservative

Brands: CK, 2 Wink, AussieBum, Hugo Boss

What is you view on the current men's underwear offering? "I think it is extensive. There is a lot now compared with how there used to be, particularly in department stores and online."

Would you ever try shapewear? "I don't think I'd need to. I wouldn't get fat."

Do you believe internet retail is a positive development? "I do buy online. It's great. You can just buy a load and then you are done."

launching a webshop this year and the company predicts good growth through department store and independents.

"Mens underwear is coming into the modern day through demands from consumers," Prentice adds. "Bright colours, shapewear as it has never been seen before – it's really evolving."

Athletic underwear brand Iqoniq founder Curtis Arrendell agrees. It is looking to develop in both areas with its newest collection.

Arrendell says: "The male segment is quite diverse in our opinion, and we have as said basic to work/gym un-

derwear styles, to package enhanced underwear, giving a boost to the men's package. It seems that some brands even take it a step further, implementing butt cheeks in underwear and even build in well endowed genital shaped front. Besides that the waistband has become an important tool to communicate a message, but also your brand, colour or even style.

He adds: "A decade ago it seemed like there was only the Calvin Klein underwear style. However, things have changed drastically."

In the next year, Iqoniq will be launching many different styles of

underwear, ranging from briefs to boxer shorts. The brand believes in bold prints and interesting waistbands, such as you can buy in your 'standard everyday underwear' at every high street shop. But, for its more 'special and high quality material underwear', which customers don't mind paying a bit more for, it will provide lots of vibrant colours and prints, with a waistband that seeks to communicate more about the wearer and the brand. It will also have an optional 'lift-up' version, which seeks to enhance the male genitals in a 'natural way' and provide the customer with that 'extra boost.'

1
HOM briefs from the brand's SS11 Black Addict collection.



BEN, 31

Style: Conservative

Brands: CK, River Island, George by ASDA, Ted Baker

What is you view on the current men's underwear offering? "I think it is sufficient."

Would you ever try shapewear? "No, because I am happy with what I normally buy."

Do you believe internet retail is a positive development? "It is a good alternative to wondering round the high street. I would consider it."

"This should be seen as a nice playful & fun attribute to our underwear," Arrendell says.

Mark Revill is sales representative for Triumph, which is also the holding group for men's underwear brand Sloggi. He also considers bright colours to be an ongoing trend, though he emphasizes that is a look that is preferred by the younger customer.

"Colour has played a big part in the look of men's underwear," he says, "but only for the last few years when brands like CK and Borg have introduced bright block panelled garments and colour flashes on waistbands, which then evolved into novelty prints. Primark and own brand labels were soon to follow suit but this colour surge is only aimed at your 16 - 29 year olds,

as older consumers feel safer with the basic masculine colour spectrum."

The key area for advancement in underwear at the moment, according to Revel, is technology, an area he claims is only being driven faster by a growing demand for shapewear products. This is becoming increasingly apparent as the product begins to filter through from the high end brands to the high street, thereby making it more affordable to the everyday consumer.

"Change will be driven by technology," he adds. "Shapewear will be more commonplace and I do believe that the brief will have made a comeback and the fitted short will be knocked into second place. All it will take is for the hipster short to get briefer and it will evolve into an actual brief, but white

black and marl grey will still be the top three selling colours once the younger trend for brights fades."

Jockey UK sales director Gavin Sinclair agrees that technology has a key role to play in the evolution of the sector. According to Sinclair, fabric composition and technology are both becoming increasingly important within the men's underwear market.

"Men are now more aware of the technical features and benefits of certain fabrics through other garments, such as sportswear and outerwear," he says.

This is one reason why sports underwear specialist Jockey has developed Jockey Sport using Tactel and Coolmax, along with the new generation of 3D Innovations (AW11), which uses

2

Briefs by Triumph men's brand Sloggi



JACK, 43

Style: Conservative

Brands: Armani, CK, Abercrombie & Fitch

What is you view on the current men's underwear offering? "I think men are less conscious about underwear than women. There are really only two styles."

Would you ever try shapewear? "No - I don't need to. I wouldn't get myself in a situation where I need to rely on underwear."

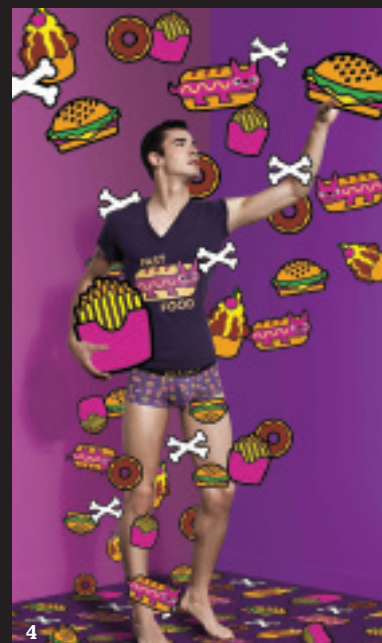
Do you believe internet retail is a positive development? "I wouldn't be able to do it. I prefer being able to look at the product in the box."

3

HOM boxers from the brand's SS11 Black Addict collection.

4

T-shirt and trunks from HOM's AW11 Burger collection.





5

cotton, modal and lycra together with groundbreaking fabric engineering.

And over the next decade, Sinclair believes the technology will only continue to get more advanced.

He says: "[In 2020], expect more of the same in respect of advances in fabric technology and construction, together with continuing contemporary design influences taken from the current trends of the time."

Technology truly seems to be the buzz word of the moment. Founded in April 2007, Equmen also specializes in scientifically designed advanced men's undergarments and accessories, bringing the body-optimizing undergarment concept into the men's arena. Equmen is a high-performance men's underwear range that is designed to immediately improve how men look and feel on a daily basis.

Equmen's range, led by the recent launch of the Core Precision Under-shirt, is a male version of shapewear, designed with men's health and style needs in mind. It has reportedly been a major success in Europe, picked up

celebrity stylists, businessmen, actors and athletes alike, and is already showing strong traction across the globe.

The patented Helix-Mapping System, which is embedded in every garment, seeks to merge physical therapy insights with state-of-the-art sportswear engineering to improve posture, provide core support and visibly streamline the body.

Equmen spokesman Michael Flint says: "Advanced garment technologies are used in the activewear market to help improve athletic performance... We have leveraged these capabilities to engineer garments that can improve men of all shapes and sizes, whether they want to make a confident impression at work, dress for a special occasion, or simply improve everyday ergonomics."

Jeff White, spokesman for men's US underwear brand Andrew Christian, considers that technology is part of producing 'sexy' underwear.

"What we are really noticing with our designs," he says, "is that the technical functionality is what men want

along with looking sexy. Each of our technical innovations helps us break down the traditional stereotypes of men's fashion."

Andrew Christian is currently looking to expand the variety of products that it offers, as well as where it offers them. As White speaks, the brand is looking for the next location to open more Andrew Christian Boutiques, including entering new markets in the United States and across the world.

5
Andrew Christian briefs from the brand's AW10 collection



ZACK, 29

Style: Conservative

Brands: CK

What is you view on the current men's underwear offering? "I don't really go shopping. I just buy Calvin Klein from TK Maxx.

Would you ever try shapewear? "If Calvin Klein made it, I might, because I have a big bum."

Do you believe internet retail is a positive development? "I don't use it at the moment but online, I suppose, would be easier."



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BERNIE, 35

Style: Conservative

Brands: H&M

What is your view on the current men's underwear offering?

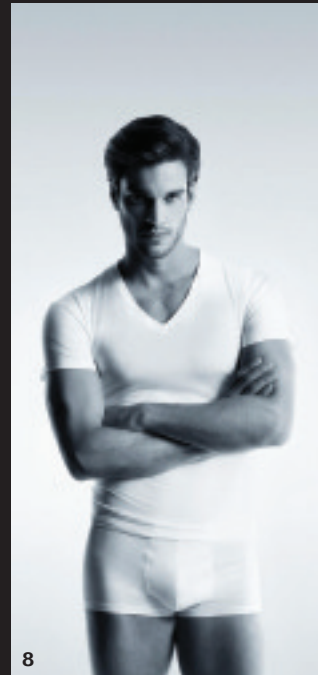
"Sometimes the styles are a little dull and I don't always like all three boxers in the packet.

Would you ever try shapewear?

"No, because I think shapewear would make me feel uncomfortable."

Do you believe internet retail is a positive development?

"Not really - I like to have a look. I hate shopping, but if you don't look then you might have to do it again."



"A decade ago," White says, "men were forced in to lifeless underwear and ill fitting underpants that did not do justice to their needs or wants. Today, a man's underwear is as important as the brand of jeans that a man is wearing... because what a man wears matters to his lovers. No one wants to see a man in droopy underwear. Sexy is in season."

Boutiques are not the only medium through which the company sells its products. The brand also has a big online presence. Internet retail, or e-commerce, in the sector has taken off over the past decade as male consumers seek a means to shop which ensures privacy and does not entail hours of traipsing through busy high streets.

White adds: "The internet makes our product available in every corner of the globe, which is great. Of course there are those customers out there who do not like to shop for underwear in public, so it lets them have a certain degree of anonymity while shopping."

Andrew Christian and AussieBum are not the only underwear brands to be fans of e-tail. In fact, the majority of brands are experiencing a surge in their online sales. Triumph's Mark Revill claims that the medium has had a huge impact on the way in which men shop.

He says: "The internet has had a huge impact on the way men purchase underwear. Men are creatures of habit and when worn out will replace their underwear with exactly the same thing. The internet is a quick and easy place for men to look for the best deals and, with consumers being time poor, it is the easy alternative to spending precious hours on the high street."

"Men also feel more free to purchase the odd risque garment on the web which they would never purchase on the high street. It has also given 100's of international brands a window which they wouldn't normally have had."

Regine Weimar, general manager of HOM, part of the Triumph Group, is in agreement that men's shopping habits are gradually changing and that the internet is playing a big part in this.

Weimar says: "It's a fact: most men do not like to shop. But they are still interested in buying the products and the brands. So, the internet is for them the best alternative, quick and easy, because it meets the consumer where he wants to shop. The average basket men spend on the internet is high and they also look for high end brands, so it's more about convenience than prices."

HOM is currently seeking to work with young artists to develop its men's

underwear offering. It is also working on a collaboration with a mystery French couture designer, who the brand claims has a 'totally different look and interpretation on men's underwear.'

Over recent months, the company has succeeded in gaining market share even in countries such as France, which are showing an overall decline in men's underwear sales. Contrary to previous years and perhaps due to the spread of the internet, men are now purchasing the majority of their own underwear, no longer leaving it to mothers or wives to shop for the items. In so doing, men are effectively re-taking control of the sector.

"This matter has been evolving definitely with the generations," Weimar says. "We are seeing now up to 60 to 70 percent of the younger generation buying their underwear. As men's attitude towards fashion is changing, male consumers are becoming more interested and more daring in their choices." And, how will the sector have evolved by 2020?

"The trend is definitely going for virility and masculinity," she adds. "Elegant seduction, though, is still fashionable and shapewear will become more interesting." ❖

6 Jockey trunks from the brand's 2011 3D collection

7 Andrew Christian briefs from the brand's AWIO collection.

8 T-shirts and trunks from Hanro basics range



THE REAL Deal

WHEN ULTIMO FOUNDER MICHELLE MONE LEFT SCHOOL AT THE AGE OF FIFTEEN, FEW COULD HAVE GUESSED WHAT SHE WOULD EVENTUALLY ACHIEVE – THAT IS, OTHER THAN MONE HERSELF. THE MJM BOSS, WHO SAYS SHE NEVER DOES ANYTHING UNLESS SHE DOES IT BIG, TALKS EXPANSION, LOSING HER OBE IN A TAXI AND HOW A FRAUDSTER CHEATED HER OUT OF £1.5 MILLION.

“I only get about four hours sleep a night, because I can’t sleep,” MJM founder and Ultimo designer Michelle Mone says. “I’m a bit like Maggie Thatcher.

“Every day I eat, sleep and breath Ultimo.”

That commitment is something which has held the 38 year old, mother of three in very good stead. Mone now runs a business which manages eight separate brands: Ultimo, Miss Ultimo, Adoire Moi, Ultimo Swimwear, Ultimo Shapewear, Michelle for George, Diamond Boutique for Tesco, Ultimo Couture Evening Wear and – very soon - Ultimo Beauty.

Her future success must have seemed very unlikely when, at just 24 years old, she was made redundant from her job running beer label Labatt for Scotland.

“I left school at 15,” she says. “I ran Labatt for Scotland. When I got made redundant, I just came up with the idea of Ultimo and it took me three years to invent it - the gel filled bra. So, I never ever imagined I would be in the fashion world to be honest.

The concept for the company was formed when Mone attended a dinner dance, wearing what she describes as ‘a very, very uncomfortable Wonderbra.’

“I just thought, why should women have to go through all this pain for just a wee bit of gain?” she reveals.

The concept of the gel filled bra was born. And, despite the fact that Mone had never been on even a single design course of fashion programme, this was the product on which her brand was founded.

“To be honest with you,” she says, proudly, “I could wipe the floor with any designer and I have never been to college or uni... I have got a real, I suppose, talent for it and I just love it.”

Mone has no intention of resting on her laurels. Her desire to be the biggest and the best is driving her to expand her range of offerings to eveningwear and lifestyle products, including candles, perfume and body products. The couture evening dresses will soon be launching in Debenhams, whereas the beauty items are set to be released in November. Retailers have not yet been confirmed but Mone considers it likely that they, also, will be stocked by the department store.

Mone’s relationship with Debenhams is obviously close and, as she seeks a retail partner for the launch of a new series of stand alone stores, it could be a strong contender for the role.

“I always imagined when I came up with the Ultimo first invention that I don’t ever do anything small. I wanted it to be big. I think we have only made it halfway just now for what is about to come in the next couple of years, which will be a chain of Ultimo shops.

“I hope to partner with someone

I think in retail, because we are not retailers. I don’t claim to know absolutely everything. We should stick at what we are good at.

“It might well be Debenhams,” she adds. “I haven’t really gone into it yet - that is going to be the future.”

Despite her ambition, the Ultimo chief executive does not look to have a store on every high street and aims, instead, to create a chain more intimate and ‘special’ boutiques.

“It would certainly be covering the UK and Ireland,” she claims. “I think [La Senza] has got too many, to be honest, and there is a lot of rubbish in there as well. I mean in location and stores, I think they have got too many. [I want something that is] just small and special, and accessible.”

Eventually, Mone hopes that Ultimo will be known as a lifestyle brand, like ‘Jo Malone or the white company.’ But, while their diversity might be something that she hopes to emulate, she is determined that her brand remains unique. She intends this to be reflected not just in her product offerings but in the entire process of their production and prides herself on creating each item from scratch.

“I believe that no one can be as in fit,” she says, “no one can be as in quality... We don’t just open up a chain of lingerie shops and go to a supplier, pick from the showroom and say, ‘I will have a thousand of them, two thousand of them, put our label on it.’

1
MJM Group
founder and
designer Michelle
Mone

We don't do that. We invent and we fit, and we make our patterns right from scratch."

This perspective is echoed even in the inspiration of Mone's designs. She rarely studies other designer's lingerie, instead gaining ideas from her environment – whether it be the couch she is currently sitting on or her favourite pair of Louis Vuitton shoes. This desire to be different appears a key drive in not just Mone's business, but her personality. It even extends to her discernment of her sex.

"I think there are very, very few women that own lingerie brands," she says. "Most of them men and I always think, what on earth does a guy know about a bra?"

"Does he wear it? He heads it up.

Can he wear it? Does he know what needs to change? Not unless he dresses up at weekends."

There is a certain charming incongruity present in the way Mone perceives herself, from her innate need to be different through to a strange lack of belief in her exceptional qualities. This is never more apparent than when she talks about her choice to model her own brand, a move she took after losing weight, which she claims was undertaken in order to launch Ultimo's real woman campaign.

After all, ask most people on the street whether they would perceive Michelle Mone to fit under the term 'real women' and the majority would likely be astounded.

But, despite her claim to be unique,

Mone still considers the title to fit. Sitting there in the bar of The Dorchester, make-up free and, quite frankly, gorgeous, it is difficult not to argue and so the question is put to her.

"I'm not a supermodel," she responds. "I'm not a model. I'm a real woman, I have got boobs. I've got hips.

"I don't see myself as [a celebrity]. I suppose it is because I am kinda, I suppose, unique. I am not a typical business woman that wears the typical pinstripe suits. I am, I suppose, for a businesswoman, more fashionable, glamorous and all the rest of it, so I'm not the typical what there is out there. And I love to be that way. I love to be different."

She adds: "I did [the shoot] and, you know, it has never been done by a boss before, but I am passionate about our stuff, so why not?"

"It was really nerve racking, but it went all over the world, the front cover of stockbroking magazines and it was everywhere. It was good. I am glad I did it, something I will tell my grandkids about when I'm older."

The real women photo shoot will take place this month and will feature 24 people, discovered via a Facebook and Twitter campaign. Twitter has become an increasingly important part of the brand's marketing in recent months. In fact, tweets by Mone, covering everything from the 'rescue' of a Celtic footballer's baby, her possible appearance on Dragon's Den and the loss of her OBE in a taxi, have made headlines in the tabloid papers.

While the Twitter account was set up by Mone's marketing team over a year ago, she has only become heavily involved in recent months and seems amazed by the level of response.

"I just started off tweeting to talk about bras and the business, and I didn't realise how many people out there wanted actually to talk to me," she says. "I have now, I think, got about 30,000 people and I only really started getting into it a few months ago... They are interested in what I am doing, which I found bizarre, but they are.

"I do spend time getting back to them all and I think that is important.



2

2
MJM Group
founder and
designer Michelle
Mone

I think there are a lot of celebrities that are on it that only get back to celebrities.”

It is not really that much of a surprise that Mone is fond of Twitter when it was arguable the social medium which that responsible for the recovery of her OBE - and a large stash of jewellery. Just two days after she received the award from the Queen, it was abandoned in a taxi, when the driver drove off before Mone had time to remove her luggage.

“The only reason for [the tweet],” she explains, “was that I shared a taxi that day, because of the tube strike and the guy in the taxi said, ‘I follow you on twitter’. I went, ‘oh, really?’

“My bag was in the front of the taxi and I got out the cab, and he drove off with my bag. Then, I just thought, this guy... So then I kind of sent him a message, saying, ‘are you still in the taxi? He’s gone away my bag.’

“Luckily, 24 hours later, he handed it into the police station.”

While, for most people, leaving their recently received OBE in a taxi would probably rank at the top of their list of life’s biggest errors, Mone is not most people. Her success may be big but, apparently, so are her mistakes. While an OBE is arguably priceless, she claims her worst mistake led to the loss of £1.5 million. The alleged case of fraud occurred almost a decade ago, when Mone was seeking a distributor for her brand in the US.

“It was, probably, nine years ago when I gave the distributorship to a company in America for Canada, America and Australia and they were serial fraudsters that I didn’t know about,” Mone says.

“There was the editor of an industrial magazine... and she highly recommended them. She said, ‘they are my best friends’. She stayed at their flat in Canada and she knew they were serial fraudsters, so she must have been getting a cut of the money or something.

“They ran away with £1.5 million of our money,” Mone claims, ‘and we are still suing them in the courts of Canada to this day. The Canadian courts, if you are not Canadian, are so slow. But



“We are actually the hottest brand in lingerie. I can’t think of any other brand that is hotter than us, to be honest. Can you?”

it was actually the best mistake I have ever made, as well, because it made me grow up very fast and I will never ever make that mistake again.”

And Mone is also willing to help other people from making her mistakes, whether it be through Twitter or in an interview. However, budding lingerie entrepreneurs beware - while her advice might be helpful, it isn’t particular encouraging.

“It’s a highly, highly competitive market and I think it is getting worse, she says. “I think for the next number of years retailers are looking to cut back on brands and do a lot more on their own. It would be tough to start, not unless you are doing something different. Because anyone can make a brand at the price of a prawn sand-

wich now.

“It wasn’t as competitive when I started out. I would hate to be starting out now. I just think the whole clothing/lingerie market for the next number of years is going to find it really tough, unless you have got inventions, unless you have got a point of difference and you are different from everyone else.”

With wholesale profits in excess of a million pounds last year, a point of difference is certainly what Ultimo appears to have and its success is a topic on which Mone feels keenly.

“I think a lot of people should watch out,” she says. “We are actually the hottest brand in lingerie. I can’t think of any other brand that is hotter than us, to be honest. Can you?” ♣

3
*MJM Group
founder and
designer Michelle
Mone*

DROP STOCK APPAREL



LINGERIE INSIGHT SEEKS TO PROVIDE A PLATFORM FOR ITS READERS, WHICH IS WHY WE WANT TO HEAR ABOUT THE ISSUES THAT CONCERN YOU ON A DAILY BASIS. FOR THIS REASON, WE HAVE CHOSEN TO PUBLISH A LETTER THAT WE RECENTLY RECEIVED AND HAVE PUT THE TOPIC TO OTHERS WITHIN THE INDUSTRY TO OBTAIN THEIR OPINION.

Dear Lingerie Insight,

“Recent years have seen a big move to the internet for all sorts of retailers. The internet offers the ability to shop from the warmth of your own home, its environmentally friendly as you don’t need to get the car out to go to the shop and it has the benefit that you can shop 24 hours a day, seven days a week, potentially from any supplier worldwide.

- 1** KnickersRus website
- 2** KnickersRus founder Gary Hepburn

With this in mind, five years ago I decided to branch out into setting up as an internet lingerie retailer and formed KnickersRus.com. KnickersRus is one of hundreds of small to medium sized online lingerie retailers, many of who struggle to compete for business with the big online players such as Figleaves, but benefit from being able to offer good customer service and treat each customer as an individual.

When I set up the company, I was really pleased with the interest and support I got from some of the big manufacturers/wholesalers, such as Lepel, Triumph, Discover Mademoiselle, Blue Moon and Penti, many of which actively encouraged this new venture, as at the time there were not many internet suppliers around. Even in those early days, I realised that it wasn’t going to be easy, as most of the stock arrived packed on hangers to be hung in shops rather than in plastic bags or small boxes, which would be better for mail order type business.

This meant that hours of staff time were taken up in taking the items off of

hangers and repackaging them for storage in warehouse shelving and subsequent posting to customers. The other big problem that I soon realised was that the lingerie business planned and worked months ahead, so it was necessary often to decide on lingerie ranges, stock levels and colours, six or nine months in advance of it being available to supply to customers.

This, coupled with so many bra and brief styles, and sizes, meant there were so many different items to be held for each lingerie range. Often, certain sizes run out early and other sizes were difficult to shift, leaving some disappointed customers and, on the other hand, a lot of redundant stock. Still, five years on and having seen a few manufacturers in trouble over the period, the industry does not seem to have moved on and modernised to best support the modern and smaller internet retailer.

I have been looking in recent months to refocus the KnickersRus.com business and look for a drop ship wholesaler, so that the company does not need to carry so much stock and can offer an enhanced range of products.

However, there seems to be a lack of drop shippers who offer quality products or, if they are out there, they are difficult to find. My plea to the lingerie industry, therefore, is to think of the smaller internet retailer, consider your packaging, look at ways of changing the way that smaller companies are supplied and consider offering drop shipping services. I would be interested in hearing from any company who is able to assist and can be contacted at gary@knickersRus.com.

Gary Hepburn
managing director,
KnickersRus.com



Internet retailers' opinion



Lingerie Please buying and marketing manager Nicola Pringle on how the company got involved in drop shipping:

"We do a lot of drop shipping, so we can have a larger range on the site and offer more styles and sizes.

The suppliers we have got at the moment are pretty good at the doing it. We will do AW and SS, but most of the products on the site are back orderable. We will order a bulk of stock in and it will go straight out.

We get a lot of excess stock. We have been going five years and we have only recently started doing this.

We tried it first with Tights Please and we found it worked quite well, and it is great having something that is available to pre-order.

We will get the order and they will send it to us. They do have a minimum order to abide by. We sell brands such as Wonderbra, Gossard, Triumph and Sloggi."

Fox and Rose co-founder Alexandra Miro on why she buys pre-season:

"We don't drop ship because we like to offer a good customer service and

they want next day delivery.

We buy large orders with our wholesalers before the season starts. At the end of the season, there is a risk that you will have left over stock. With most of our buys, there is always that option.

With a lot of the stock that we buy, it is continuity. But with things like Mimi Holiday, it is quite fashion led. If something sells particularly well, there isn't necessarily that excess stock. A lot of young designers make to order, so they don't have a lot of excess stock.

We haven't gone down the [drop shipping or supply to order] route. We feel you have to make that outlay on stock. When we do deal with suppliers, we do want to work with suppliers who operate on that basis because it puts us on a level playing ground.

When we speak to wholesalers, the main thing for us is that they know what sells online. There are definitely things that sell really well online, often the more eye catching items.

At that beginning point, it is good to have the right sales person. For a lingerie company, it would be good if they could employ people who have experience and can provide that advice.

For smaller retailers online, there is a lot of discounting that goes on. When you are detailing with very fashion led labels, it is difficult, because these designers only go to production a couple of times a year.

It is a lot easier to deal with a larger lingerie company. If we take the risk and outlay on stock, then it is fair if everybody is in the same situation.

Flexibility is really important and you get that with larger wholesalers, but not so much with the younger designers."

3. Lingerie Please website

4. Fox & Rose website





MioDestino founder Colleen Murphy on why drop shipping is detrimental to the industry.

“This is a view that we have heard expressed before by some smaller retail companies but, at Mio Destino, we feel that this sort of shift would impact both customer service capability and the wholesale supply chain, having a long term detrimental impact on the success of brands.

Increasingly, customers are demanding higher levels of customer service. Same day delivery service has been introduced in some parts of the UK by the Royal Mail. E-tailers need to be able to respond to the impulse shopping. We have found that customers who walk into a boutique to buy a garment, or more particularly who buy online, are not prepared to wait for their purchase. Additionally, what harm will be done to a brand label where customers try to buy their product from a retailer who does not have it in stock? The customer may be sold the item and then told that the product will be with them in a few days or weeks. If the brand has had a run on the item and cannot, in fact, supply the garment then there will be a lot of time and effort wasted. There will also be an unhappy retailer and customer, who may choose not to buy from the retailer or the brand again. We feel that having stocked inventory is the only way

to provide the service levels customers are demanding.

We feel that changing from seasonal buying would act as a barrier to entry for new, young designers who are the life blood of the industry and who should be encouraged and supported by retailers.

They would be expected to fund the whole design and manufacturing process and then, additionally, to incur extra costs, like larger brands, in managing smaller orders and the inherent costs of storing their stock. They would also be operating in a very high risk and highly geared environment, which could leave many of these young designers in a precarious predicament.

There would be no barrier to entry into the retail market, which could mean an overall degrading of the retail sector, client care and reduced esteem for the brands involved. A splintering of the retail sector may well occur. Designers could find that instead of dealing with a manageable group of buyers who buy once or twice a year in substantial quantities, this would fragment. Brands may find that they were then faced with a reduction in orders from their regular clients as competition increased. The traditional retail clients may choose not to buy from brands in future, as they felt that the strategy of no minimums or buy as you sell is detrimental to the retailer’s own business. Those retailers

could then choose to favour wholesalers who remained with the industry norm.

There are also economic and environmental reasons why this changed system is less appealing. Apart from increased management of a more cumbersome system, for both the wholesaler and the retailer, there would be additional costs in packaging and postage. In an age of austerity and increasingly environmentally aware customers, a change to the norm would seem inappropriate and could lead to a backlash from end users. Who would pay these additional costs? Would the designer brand be expected to swallow the costs or the retailer or maybe the customers? Additional costs in a difficult marketplace for many would be unpalatable for all.

What would happen to buyers and their inherent skills of determining the direction of the market? They would be superfluous as retailers would only buy when you sold.

At Mio Destino we have found that our year on year success has come from our ability to maintain quantities of stock so that, when we make a sale, we can send it the same day. This leaves the customer with a good impression of the Mio Destino brand and of the fashion brands we sell. This is what customers demand now and we also feel that we are supporting our designers. Why should designer brands take additional risks whilst the retailer takes few or none?”

Figleaves.com lingerie buyer Denise Fraser on why she would not choose to remove the middle man.

“Figleaves.com never commits to volume up front. Generally, we will give the supplier a seasonal estimate, so this isn’t a problem for us.

Figleaves.com would not take this approach, as removing the middle man would infer that our customers would receive the figleaves.com brand experience. We also cherry pick items that are suitable for our customer base.

Figleaves.com is happy with the way it operates. The only time it may change things up would be to drive new traffic to the site i.e. a catwalk project or new lingerie designer preview.”

5

MioDestino website

6

Online lingerie giant Figleaves’ website

The brands' offering

WE TAKE A LOOK AT THE DIFFERENT STOCKING OPTIONS PROVIDED BY A FEW OF THE BIG BRANDS.

Panache

If you are a lingerie retailer, you can apply to open an account with Panache. The opening order has to be a minimum of £500, payable on a pro-forma basis. Orders after that have no minimum order value, but anything less than £100 (excl VAT) will incur a £5 carriage charge.

Orders can be placed direct to the customer service team or via the sales representative.

For the brands' one off fashion colours and lines, the company has order cut off dates, as they are made to order. Any Panache customers wanting to order these fashion items after cut off must wait until all the customers who ordered pre-cut off have had their orders delivered. Then, the company will sell to anyone who hasn't ordered already if there is stock available. As a general rule, the company very rarely has 'one shot' ranges

Core stock that is available all year round can be ordered anytime. Panache does believe that some of its small internet customers place a weekly order with it, once they have received orders themselves. However, it claims that it is down to the retailer to specify to its customer when the

delivery should be expected. It does not direct despatch - it only despatch to its customers, who then must send the products on to theirs.

Its aim for deliveries is to deliver all orders within five to seven working days from placing the order, subject to availability

Chantelle Group

Chantelle aims to deliver all orders within five to seven working days from placing the order, subject to availability

For seasonal products, it does not apply strict order windows but it aims to have the orders for AW11 complete by the end of March - retailers are able to order within the season subject to availability.

As a general rule, it also very rarely has 'one shot' ranges

Gossard/Berlei

The minimum initial order from retailers is £300 (£1000 for a stand), but for repeat orders this comes down to just 15 units. The company does aim to be flexible where possible.

While its current stock levels are low, due to an 'incredibly successful AW11', Gossard/Berlei does seek to maintain stock throughout the season for its continuity products. There is, however, likely to be greater availability in Spring Summer.

Berlei will consist of 80 percent continuity items and Gossard - though a fashion brands - also incorporates a continuity line.

Gossard managing director Tony Jarvis admits industry lead times could benefit from being addressed and that the system is not yet perfect.

Triumph

Triumph and Sloggi require a minimum order value of £1,000.

They do, however, offer flexible terms which can be discussed on a one to one basis with trade customers. They do not offer drop shipping.

DB Apparel

DB Apparel has a minimum opening order value in place of £ 500. Once an account has been opened with the minimum order value, however, accounts can then place orders to their requirement.

Hornvale

Hornvale works on an order basis ranging from £1200 to £5000. Certain styles are readily available throughout the year, but a big proportion (around 80 percent) is seasonal stock.

Hornvale does deal with internet retailers but prefers to have a significant presence on the sites that it works with. Current internet stockists include Pret-a-Porter and Gift Library.

DASH DIRECT WHOLESALE'S KELLY MINHINICK ON THE DIFFICULTIES ASSOCIATED WITH DROP SHIPPING.

"We do not do dropshipping and have no future plans to do so. We get a lot of potential customers who ask if we do dropshipping, and choose not to use us because we do not. We also have some customers who know we do not offer dropshipping, but still try to utilise us in the same way - only ordering the products once they have received orders for the items. To be dropshippers would require us to hold vast numbers of stock items in large quantities, which at the moment is not a financially viable prospect.

We, like many companies, are having to keep a tight control of our cashflow and we have our own issues with suppliers not always being able to supply the products that they offer due to low stock/unavailability."





Shapewear
X-POSED

YOU MAY REMEMBER **TRINNY WOODALL** AND **SUSANNAH CONSTANTINE** FROM THEIR PRIME TIME TV SHOW ON THE BBC, BUT WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE PAIR SINCE? THE PAIR TALK FRANKLY TO **LINGERIE INSIGHT** ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN THEIR SHAPEWEAR COLLECTION AND REVEAL WHY THEY HAVE RECENTLY BEEN SPENDING ALL THEIR TIME IN ISRAEL.

Meeting Trinny Woodall and Susannah Constantine is an intimidating prospect. Having watched them torture people on TV for many years in BBC show *What Not to Wear*, a visit to the hairdresser's seemed in order and the day's outfit didn't consist, for once, of the sole item to remain outside the laundry basket.

Yet, the first thought to pop to mind on perusing the pair - at the launch event for their new tummy tucker vest and shape up shortie - is not fear of judgement. It is, instead, a rather random reflection on how much of the pair's success could simply be down to the extreme contrast in their personal body shapes, even more apparent in 'real life' than in their TV appearances.

For those not familiar with the show, which aired on UK TV from 2001 to 2005, Trinny is extremely tall and slim and, at London's Soho House, she towers above all others in attendance. Business partner Susannah, however, is on the curvier end of the spectrum, possessing a figure more in line with the current fifties, *Mad Men* trend.

The TV personalities are by no means oblivious to the huge disparity and its ability to appeal to women possessing a wide range of different body types. In fact, they are refreshingly open about everything regarding themselves and their personal brand.

"People aspire to be Trinny and they identify with me," Susannah says. "That's how it works."

But isn't the hourglass figure in fashion at the moment?

"Yes, I know. I'm so thrilled," she says. "Finally, I'm in fashion - it's fantastic. Big tits. Big ass. Great. About b****y time too, actually."

Both women are a perfect advertisement for their brand and the different uses to which it can be put. Susannah is currently wearing the shapewear, as she claims she does every day, whereas Trinny, who is not quite such a regular wearer, will usually don her products to work out or attend red carpet events.

"I have got them on now," Susannah

"The all in one body smoother is on my body. The tummy tucker has been my saviour... There are a lot of dresses I can't get into without wearing them."

says. "The all in one body smoother is on my body. The tummy tucker has been my saviour... There are a lot of dresses I can't get into without wearing them."

Trinny, despite her ultra slim frame, agrees.

"I'm slim," she says, "but if I ever wear a dress like Susannah wears - those tight dresses - I have a long back and a saggy ass. But, if I wear the bum tummy thigh lifter, it lifts my ass, so it looks like my waist is shorter."

"I wear the tummy tucker vest when I work out," she adds, "because it covers my gusset and I just like to cover my gusset."

In fact, Trinny is such a fan that the outspoken businesswomen have decided to launch a new sportswear range. The line will feature a development of the newly launched tummy tuck vest and a shapewear legging, to be introduced this June.

Trinny says: "We are going to take the tummy tuck vest and make that into a slightly sportswear range, because I think when you work out, especially Pilates and yoga, if you wear something fitted and pulling you in, it motivates you to do well and, if you wear something big and baggy, it makes you feel...well, big and baggy."

While, Trinny may use them for working out in, the new leggings were originally developed as a solution for larger women, who don't feel confident wearing the clinging garment.

"We were in Australia last year and using leggings a lot," Trinny said. "It's a key staple now. It's not going to go away. But, when you bend, you see the flesh and, I said, 'you know, we need a legging that is so f****g supportive that it gives every size the opportunity to feel safe to wear a legging.'"

The two women use their observations of 'real women' often garnered

through their TV shows, to inspire designs for their shapewear brand. Their latest project takes place in Israel and involves taking twelve men and women from the street, dressing them up, learning about their lives and placing them on a catwalk. Susannah claims it is like providing 'four years worth of therapy' in one day.

But it is not purely altruism that drives the pair. While they may enjoy giving women back their confidence (after, possibly, breaking it down), they fully realise the business sense in what they do.

Fifty percent of Trinny and Susannah's business is now international, a big evolution from the ten percent with which they first started seven years ago. The brand now sells in '29 to 30 countries,' a large part of which is down to where they sell their TV shows.

"The show is like an advert," Trinny says. "It advocates everything we believe in. We use the shape underwear in the show. We don't say it is ours, because that would be inappropriate."

"I think when you are starting a new product, usually you have to spend a tremendous amount of money making a place in the market, but we have a name and we have enough people that know us, and we sell our TV shows in 30 countries around the world, so wherever we sell those shows we realise we have a presence, so we can sell in the product."

She adds: "Series one will come out in March [in Israel] and then you wait a year, because you need a penetration. That's when you bring in product. You don't want to bring it in too early. You need to have established a name."

Susannah agrees with her business partner and her claim that most of their value lies in their television presence which, while no longer as huge in the UK, seems to be gaining impressive

1
Trinny & Susannah publicise the launch of their latest Original Magic Knicker products

momentum globally.

"I would say our value is more in the TV side, because it takes so much money to market a product from day one," Susannah says.

"Obviously, the money shot is the fact that we have been on TV. We are faces and people will trust what we say, so we say something is good and people will know."

There is a lot more competition in the areas of both shapewear and TV makeovers than when the two started out in their careers. While this is obviously something Trinny and Susannah are obviously aware of and are managing largely to overcome, they cannot help but put in a little dig at the UK's latest makeover guru.

"It is not just like we are some guy who has put his name on a bra or a pair of underpants, like... (she hesitates) Gok Wan," Susannah says. "We wear our product, we designed our product,

we are involved, we know the kind of women who will wear our product. We have used it on our shows time and time, and time again."

"[Shapewear] is like our makeover shows," Trinny adds. "When we started makeover shows, we were the only ones and then people see it is an interesting market, and get in there."

One aspect that Trinny and Susannah believe differentiates their brand, and which they pride themselves on, is the quality of their product. They also like to emphasise that they were one of the first brands to produce seamless shapewear. The items are not manufactured in China, but in Belgium, with a company called Cette. The pair first met with the brothers who run the company seven years ago in rather strange circumstances.

"There was Jean Marc and his brother, and we sat down this table – very polite Belgians – and we discussed

moist gussets, you know not sweating in your vagina. It was the weirdest f****g conversation."

As for where the brand will head into the future, not even Trinny and Susannah seem to know for sure, but even TV channels, such as QVC, could potentially provide a retail platform for their shapewear products.

Susannah said: "I think it is a whole different way of presenting, you know, the QVC way of presenting, I would literally be there in my g-string, showing before and after the knickers."

The two women don't mince their words and Trinny doesn't feel the need to end things on a different note, describing their target market with characteristic bluntness.

"It is not women who want to go and wear sexy underwear to screw a man that night and don't mind a VPL, because it is going to be sexy. It is not for that kind of woman." ♦



2

Trinny and Susannah at the launch of their Original Magic Knickers Range in 2009

2



Undercover Charity

RIGHT NOW, WITH TIGHT MARGINS AND MANY BRANDS STRUGGLING TO KEEP THEIR HEADS ABOVE WATER, IT IS EASY TO FORGET THE OTHERS WHO ARE SUFFERING. LI INVESTIGATES A FEW OF THE LINGERIE BRANDS THAT HAVE CONTINUED TO GIVE TO CHARITY OVER THE PAST YEAR, DISCOVERS THE DIFFERENT WAYS IN WHICH COMPANIES CAN HELP AND LEARNS WHERE THE LINGERIE YOU DONATE ENDS UP.

When Eveden chose to donate 7000 bras to charity early this year, it was only the latest in a series of brands to choose this method to dispose of its excess stock. But, why are brands choosing to donate their left over product and is it purely an altruistic decision?

Eveden head of marketing Anne-Marie Manley explains the reasoning behind its charitable donation to the Breast Talk Bra Appeal.

Manley says: "It's very hard to give an exact figure, but we think [we have given] about 150 bras per box, which would mean over 7000 bras so far.

"Many samples are produced in the design and grading process to ensure that our product is on trend, commercial and fits and supports really well. We hold staff sales on a regular basis, but will always have product remaining. Eveden Limited tries to be very environmentally aware, so to send the bras to landfill is not an



option. Therefore, we looked for a way to dispose of the samples and benefit the community at the same time.

Manley adds: "Breast cancer is something that has probably touched the lives of most of us in some way and it seems very appropriate as a lingerie producer to donate bras to the Breast Talk Bra Appeal."

Eveden hopes that the donations will be ongoing. Yet, the question has to be asked – how does giving away 7,000 plus bras help women with breast cancer?

The answer is, it doesn't - that is, it doesn't by itself. The money actually trickles down to the end charity through a number of different organisations.

BreastTalk.co.uk's Bra Appeal is the first receiver. The charity, which is celebrating its 5th birthday this year, has raised over £5,000 for Breast Cancer Campaign since its conception in 2006, with founder Carol Tromans hoping to reach £10,000 by the end

1
A woman mans a lingerie stall at a Tripoli market.

2
A young girl who has benefited from the SuhoG project

of 2011.

The project was started by Tromans, owner of advice and shopping website BreastTalk.co.uk, whilst she was clearing out a few of her old bras.

At first, Tromans was unsure over where to send the bras, as UK charity shops do not tend to accept underwear. However, after considerable research, Centrepont agreed to take the bras and hand them out to homeless women around the UK.

The team at BreastTalk.co.uk got together and put up a Bra Appeal page on the website and started collecting bras. Tromans claims the

response was 'amazing'.

With the publicity already generated, other avenues were quickly discovered. Girl Guides groups received bras to teach young girls about bras and the importance of wearing the correct size and style. Students took boxes of bras on missions and trips to third world countries. Homeless charities received bras to use as handouts and schools used the bras in lessons to teach girls about bras and boobs.

During 2010, BreastTalk.co.uk used the bras collected to raise money for Breast Cancer Campaign and to help

women in poorer countries. The Bra Appeal got together with BCR Textiles in the West Midlands, who buy the bras and send them to third world countries for other women to use.

In 2011, Tromans hopes the appeal will go from strength to strength.

"I still can't believe that we can do so much good with old bras that would have ended up thrown away on a landfill," Tromans says.

BCR Global Textiles supplies bra banks to various shops and collection on behalf of numerous charities. Its main charity partnerships include the Breast Cancer Campaign and The Meningitis Trust.

The company will collect the bra banks and donate the products' worth to the charity of the retailer's choice. Charities will receive £1 for every kilo of bras collected.

BCR Global Textiles contracts manager Lynne Tims says: "We do have some bra companies that get involved – Bravissimo have bra banks in their stores.

"It's a means to raising money to charity. People donate bras that would otherwise go into landfill. They will be sold in mix bales of other things to Africa.

The items will usually be sold to wholesalers, who will then trade them cheaply in large markets on the continent. There is a shortage of bras in Africa due to their relatively high cost of production and the general low income of the populace, and the business is 'a huge tool for generating money.'

"We are a commercial business," Tims says. "It sounds very cold hearted when we say we sell them, but we sustain employment in this country. It's completing the circle. Because, in the countries are selling to, we are sustaining employment there too.

"Yes, you can give to charity, but then you also have to foot the bill of transporting it out there, etc... If triumph brought 20000 bras to breast cancer campaign, they wouldn't know what to do with them. They bring them



to us.

She adds: “[These bras] lay in storage for years. We have bras that my nan wouldn’t wear, which come through the system. For a long time, they will just store them. Once a year, one of the big companies will call up and say we have eight palettes of bras which are discoloured, no use. It is through people like Carole that that gets about. Prior to that, they would end up in landfill.

BCR Global Textile is not the only option for brands seeking to be rid of excess stock. Triumph recently donated 10,000 bras to a world record breaking bra chain attempt in aid of the Worcestershire Breast Unit Campaign.

The 2nd Skin Lingerie Bra Chain seeks to raise thousands of pounds for the charity, which aims to raise £2.5 million to fund the establishment of a new, dedicated Breast Unit at Worcester Royal hospital, for use by women and men across the county with breast related issues.

Triumph UK marketing and communications manager Purminder Mondair said: “Triumph are delighted to be supporting 2nd Skin Lingerie’s endeavours to raise funds for the record-breaking attempt at the world’s longest bra chain.

“We hope we can go some way to helping them achieve this goal, while raising much-needed funds in the fight against breast cancer.”

The attempt will take place at Pitchcroft racecourse in Worcester on July 31. Organisers need 200,000 bras to successfully beat the existing world record.

Last year, Marks & Spencer (M&S) staff tied over 3,000 bras strap-to-strap along the two mile length of the Humber Bridge in aid of Break Through Breast Cancer.

HOTmilk also has a charity programme and has formerly given stock to charities Knickers4Africa and, more recently, the SuHoG project.

The lingerie was distributed to women in need in Kenya. Items were specifically sent to the Ugwunja community in the Siaya district, where



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they were donated to teenage girls, the poor and the elderly. Items were also donated to SuHoG’s project for street girls in Kroo Bay, Sierra Leone.

SuHoG Project (Support Home of God Project) was established in 2001 and is an international charity that supports impoverished communities in rural African countries of Nigeria, Kenya and Sierra Leone.

HOTmilk co-founder and director Lisa Ebbing says: “At HOTmilk, we know how small things make a big difference, and lingerie is certainly in that category. We feel strongly about empowering women, giving them options and helping them to regain their femininity.

“For some, this is achieved by simply gifting nursing lingerie to women in difficult financial circumstances - the practicalities of this pregnancy and breastfeeding become much simpler and they look and feel fantastic too. Or, by giving lingerie to women who have none, which - incredibly - alters their status in many African villages and can determine whether or not they will be spared sexual assault... When and where we are able, we give, to make a difference.”

Oxfam is one of the few charities to have its own recycling facility.

Oxfam PR manager Stuart Fowkes says: “We have got our own recycling and sorting facility, based in Huddersfield, called waste saver.”

Bras tend to go to Africa, because they can’t be sold in Oxfam shops. Typically, the charity sells into markets there, so it acts as a kind of wholesaler. The money it receives then goes into Oxfam’s programme work.

There is no shortage of options for brands or retailers seeking to make a difference and not all projects have to take place in October for Breast Cancer month. After all, cancer, starvation and poverty are diseases that occur all year around.

Excess stock may only arise four times a year, but next time you decide to send outdated products to landfill, maybe this will be the moment to pause and question the alternatives. ♣

3
A bra bank manufactured for external use

4
Women find bras, in, places such as Africa, expensive and in short supply

5
A bra bank manufactured for use within a retail environment

6
A lingerie stall in a Lebanese market (Image by Cris Bouroncle)

BORN Lascivious

WITH TWO FACTORIES AND FIVE MEMBERS OF STAFF, LINGERIE BRAND LASCIVIOUS HAS COME A LONG WAY FROM WHEN FOUNDER **CHLOE HAMBLÉN** USED TO SEW PIECES IN HER BEDROOM. THE CREATIVE DIRECTOR TALKS **LINGERIE INSIGHT** THROUGH THE BRAND'S SUCCESS, ITS CELEBRITY CLIENTELE AND THE NEW AW11 COLLECTION.



Why did you choose the name Lascivious?

I never had the inclination to name the brand after myself. I prefer to be out of the spotlight and wanted something we could create a solid brand from. The name has a playful lustful origin and just describes our products beautifully. We're not about a coquettish or girly version of female sexuality- 'Lascivious' is about strength and provocative empowerment, which is the direction we take our designs.

You appear to have become a popular choice for celebrities and fashion magazines. Why do you think that is?

Our products are aspirational and edgy. We design deliberately fashion forward, unique pieces and are lucky that these have been picked up by great fashion magazines and celebrities.

Which celebrities have worn the Lascivious brand?

We prefer to be discreet about our clients, as I believe that people are just people and everyone should be entitled to buy sexy lingerie discreetly. However, celebrities that have worn our lingerie publicly include Rihanna, Kylie, Britney, Claudia Schiffer, Christina Aguilera,

Elisabetta Canalis and Lara Stone.

How do you feel that Lascivious has evolved over the past five years?

The growth of the brand has been huge - and I really feel this is our year. We've grown from me designing and making in my bedroom, to the brand employing five full-time members of staff and working with two British factories. The brand has a global reach, which has grown to include Selfridges, Coco De Mer, Victoria's Secret Boutique stores in the States and the very best high-end luxury lingerie stores all over the world. We were involved in the set-up of the Lingerie Collective Boutique - a store showcasing the very best of independent, fashion forward lingerie brands, and continue to work with the most talented creative's across a range of areas, from our new SS11 collection, shot by Rankin, to design collaborations and innovative new projects.

What has been your biggest challenge and your greatest mistake to date?

As a small, independent brand, capital is always scarce. We don't have investment and everything has to be achieved working on a shoe-string

budget. We have had stores close owing us money, and have in the past been too trustful of people who have subsequently behaved in an unscrupulous way. You hope that you learn from these mistakes, and set in place structures which minimise the risks involved.

Where do you hope to be in five years time?

I would like for the brand to continue the upward trajectory we've enjoyed thus far, expanding into new markets such as the Middle East and Asia. It would also be great to win one of the industry awards we've been nominated for, such as the UKFT Export Award or WGSN Global Fashion Award.

Have you any plans for expansion in the near future and, if so, what are they?

Our stockists continue to grow quite organically, but I really want to focus our attention on our web sales, which obviously produce a higher sales margin than wholesale trade, but also afford us the opportunity to really connect with our clients. We have a lot of exciting and innovative plans involving the site.

How has the current climate affected your plans for the business?

We have enjoyed a really successful few years of growth despite the economic climate, however it has made the idea of opening a physical shop-space less appealing in the short-term. We are going to concentrate on growing our website which carries far fewer financial risks.

What was the inspiration behind your latest AW11 collection?

Our AW11 collection was inspired by dark street scenes during winter. We have worked with a muted colour palette, and have focused on texture and shine to give the collection depth. All of our components are a sexy gun-metal colour and we've punctuated the collection with chain detailing, beautiful French lace and glittering Swarovski

crystal. It's a sleek, mature collection with the twists you would associate from a provocative brand such as Lascivious.

What are your favourite pieces and why?

We've produced a basque in the Josefine collection for AW11, which is absolutely stunning. It features a beautiful, delicate eyelash-lace and is incredibly flattering on the body, but we've worked hard to ensure it still looks modern; using cut-outs and strategic panelling to create an amazing shape. I also love our new tassel collection, Kasia, which features chain detailing and a fabulous waistcoat which can be worn in the bedroom for a playful showgirl look, or as outerwear for an unusual statement piece. We have also improved classics such as Midori and Kitty, which continue to sell faster than we can produce.

Why did you first decide to create a lingerie brand and how did you get started?

I have always loved lingerie, and stud-

ied contour at De Montfort University, gaining work experience with brands such as Agent Provocateur, Myla and La Perla along the way. I was very fortunate to be offered a job by Marlies Dekkers after graduating, and it was an amazing experience working for such an exciting label. However, after a few months it became clear to me that what I really wanted to do was create my own label. It was a big decision, but I relocated back to the UK, and that autumn, Lascivious was born.

If you have any advice to pass on to young, aspiring designers, what would it be?

Do not underestimate the dedication, work, blood, sweat and tears it takes to achieve. Get as much experience as you can and be prepared to work really hard for very little financial reward for a considerable length of time. Try to get your core skills to a high standard, be systematic, methodical and highly organised. Creativity is obviously vital, but you also need to be business-brained if you want to achieve commercial success. ♣

1
A set from Lascivious' new Autumn Winter 2011 collection.

2
Lascivious founder and designer Chloe Hamblen



2

Midlands

MISSIVE

LINGERIE INSIGHT BRINGS YOU EXHIBITOR FEEDBACK FROM THE MODA TRADE SHOW, WHICH TOOK PLACE AT THE NATIONAL EXHIBITION CENTRE (NEC) IN BIRMINGHAM, FROM FEBRUARY 20 TO 22.



EXHIBITOR OF THE SHOW: Berdita Lingerie

Berdita Lingerie wins exhibitor pick for Moda due to his innovative business model. Unfortunately for him, we are now going to let all the rest of you know what it is.

Lingerie Insight originally stopped by Berdita Lingerie's managing director Michael Critien's stand after our attention was arrested by an absolutely enormous bra (52 back), just one cup of which was the size of both our heads.

"There is a shortage for our size products," he says.

"We do continuity products and they are basics. People need to buy them. They are leaving the fashion products and colours to one side now."

He adds: "We are above what we were doing two years ago. We had a dip during the recession, but now we are out of it, yet other companies here are still in the recession and are going bust."

Berdita Lingerie currently sells into 200 shops in the UK, online and in Europe, America, Canada and Australia. According to Critien, demand for the larger back sizes is huge, particularly from areas such as North America. The brand is now also moving to larger back and larger cup size models, in an attempt to show its products 'in the real world.'

The online side is growing rapidly, with the company's return rate at less than one percent due to fitting videos, etc. on its website. Its products are particularly suited to online retailers, as it keeps a huge amount in stock (60 sizes up to 52F and 720 combinations) at its warehouse and orders will often reach the recipient within 24 hours.

"Because we carry it in stock, they don't have to," he says. "They order it today and it reaches them tomorrow. The minimum order is only £25.

"[Other companies] should stick to what they are doing and go bust," Critien adds, "and leave us to what we are doing, making money. We certainly don't want them moving into our territory - no, no."

NEW EXHIBITOR RESPONSE: Kooney, Else, Lingerie Pod, Baci and LELO

Kooney - UK & Europe operations manager Letitia Le Moignan

"We would be interested in doing the next Moda. It has all gone quite smoothly, though [right now] it is very quiet.

It is good training for me, getting engaged with Moda, itself, and getting the name out there.

We are definitely looking for stockists. We have got some appointments. One, particularly, is very big.

There are a lot of online retailers. It is more online to be honest. We obviously want to get in stores, as well."



Else - UK agent Sophia Pizey

"I think it's good because all the big brands are here and it's nice to combine fashion and lingerie. It's great they have done this little corner of designers, as well. It's a good replacement for Harrogate - I think it's better to have it in the Midlands."

Lingerie Pod - director Trudy Murphy

"We have had a lot of enquiries, mainly from boutique shops."

Baci - PR Sarah Parmenter

"It's been brilliant, we are getting lots and lots of interest from all kinds of retailers, both online and on the high street. Buyers are loving the way that the packaging is flipping back and forth, so there is the image on the front and the back... I don't think anyone else is doing that."

LELO - country manager Vicky Cunningham

"It's a great experience for us. The brand is eight years old, but this is our first exhibit in a lingerie show. We are launching our inaugural loungewear and lingerie range here. This is a great way to get Lelo as a brand in front of a broader audience.

I think this collections area is a great place for us to be. We are right by the catwalk and people are specifically coming to this area to look for new brands... We want to get the whole Lelo brand established in some beautiful, high end lingerie boutiques."



NEW PRODUCT OF THE SHOW: HOTmilk's Milk Man

HOTmilk's new men's underwear collection Milk Man received attention at Moda for a number of reasons.

The first was its slogan, 'delivering daily where it matters most', another was the washing instructions (just drop on the floor and it will magically return to your draw to be worn again), and the last was the male model posing in the trunks at the brand's stand.

As one exhibitor, situated opposite, said: "I love it. I am going to thank the organisers. People are coming to the stand and staying for ages in order to look at him."

Successful marketing ploy aside, the Milk Man collection, which will be available this Autumn Winter, seeks to provide classic, 'manly' styling and is reportedly very comfortable. Indeed, HOTmilk's male model had only good things to say about the product.

"It is very comfy," he said. "Comfort is very important, like you wouldn't believe."

BLIND CORNER

we ask a series of exhibitors to provide anonymous feedback on the February trade show.

"I think it feels bigger, like there is more here, but it also feels quieter because everyone is spread out a bit.

On a social level, I think it is awful. I hate Birmingham. Harrogate's much friendlier, more pleasant and quaint. So, good and bad.

I'm northern, so I had a lot more buyers come to Harrogate, because obviously it's more local for them. Down here, it's a bit more southern."

"We were a bit worried, obviously. Sales are not great in the shops, so we were not really getting the initial orders at the beginning of the year.

Some buyers want to make sure they get their selection right, because the budget is so tight.... But a couple of reps I just spoke to said they were really happy with the feedback.

Ours key buyers don't really come to Moda anyway. We have seen all of our key accounts already. They come to our show room in London and they have got their one to one there.

I think I am seeing someone from John Lewis on Tuesday morning, but I think she is only coming to see one of our new developments."

"This is our second time here. Last August, we had great success with the swimwear. We are very pleased with the response we had and opened eight new accounts.

We are never going to do mass distribution - it is our wish to have 60 to 70 retail outlets in the UK. Yesterday (Sunday) was okay. Today, we have had several visitors, though we haven't had anything

on paper yet."

"I'm really, really pleasantly surprised. Today we have had some international visitors from Sweden and Poland, and some Indian people as well.

I used to go to Harrogate and it was like pulling teeth out without anaesthetic.

I would recommend this to anyone."

"It is a very good platform for presenting the brand. It has so far been a good show and the signs going forward are positive.

But, I wish they would turn the music down. It is very loud and non-stop. I also don't really think there is the synergy Moda would wish to believe between lingerie and fashion.

I think we should have our own lingerie show. A fashion model is not the same as a lingerie model. 98 percent of our customers are dedicated lingerie shops."

"I am hoping today is going to get better than it has been so far. Sunday was better than expected. Maybe it is bigger at the back - it is quiet.

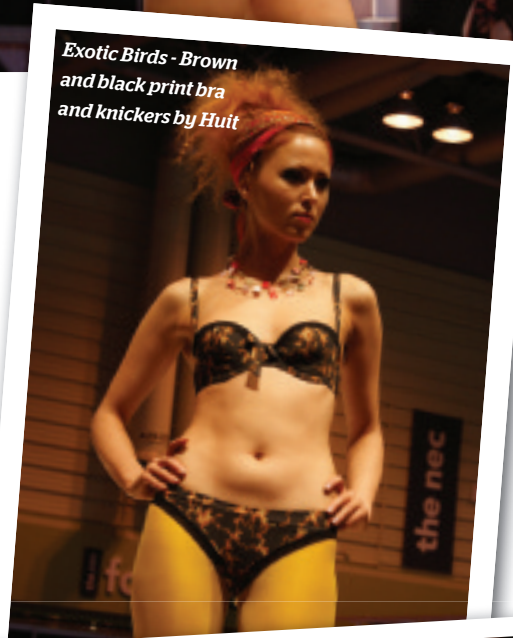
B****y hot, but they fixed that. They don't have wifi, which is just a bit annoying. However, it is so much more convenient here than in Harrogate."

"It was really busy yesterday and it is just as busy today. I think it is handy where we are.

I would like to see D+ models on the catwalk, as a good third of brands do D+ now. I assume it is because the same models do the fashion as do the lingerie catwalk."



Winter Sun - Pink swimsuit and floral pareo by Maryan Melhorn



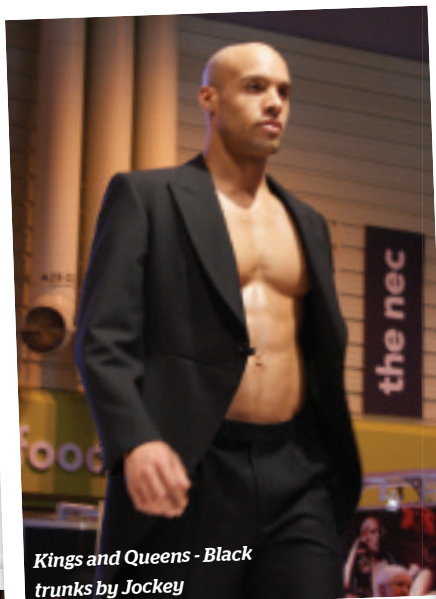
Exotic Birds - Brown and black print bra and knickers by Huit



Purple Haze - Plain purple bra and knickers by Panache, mauve black lace detail bra and knickers by Panache, purple trunks and t-shirt by Mey Bodywear

CATWALK SHOWCASE

LI brings you a gallery showcasing a few of the key looks from Moda that will be hitting stores this AW11.



Kings and Queens - Black trunks by Jockey



Flapper Girl - Beige bra and knickers by After Eden



Exotic Birds - Grey and pink print bra and knickers by Gossard



Masked Beauty - Mauve bra and knickers, and Caressence nude set, by Simone Perele, white with pale pink lace detail bra and knickers by Passionata



Winter Sun - Polka dot and floral print bikini and knicker by Moontide



Kings and Queens - Golden beige shaping body with black lace detail by Triumph



Sweet Dreams - Pastel pink vest and knickers by Charnos, pastel pink set with beige leggings by Charnos, over-knee socks by Falke, scarf by Xcessories



Gothic Angel - Lejaby, Hush Hush and Marties Dekkers

Key Styles: Gothic Angel, Exotic Birds, Flapper Girl, Sweet Dreams, Purple Haze, Masked Beauty, Winter Sun, Kings & Queens

OBJECT OF *Desire*

» **MINT SIREN AW11 COLLECTION BY JOSEFINE WING**

This latest look, from designer brand Mint Siren's AW11 collection, is inspired by woodland and elves, and could spark the most indulged person's fantasy.

A leather Capriole under bust harness, which includes adjustable underbust straps and an adjustable neck strap, features alongside the Conifer wire bra and high waist brief, made with silk jersey and fine netting. Both Conifer pieces incorporate ribbon loops, which

hold a detachable Mint Siren leather and ball chain tag.

Finally, a Celebrian braid on trigger hook completes the outfit. This is made from soft wool and silk filament, with leather cuffholds binding the end.

RRP: (CAPRIOLE UNDER BUST) HARNESS) £73, (CONIFER WIRE BRA) £84, (CONIFER HIGH WAIST BRIEF) £84, (CELEBRIAN BRAID) £34

✦ **MOLLY BY CLEO**

Molly is a brand new plunge shape in the Cleo collection for AW11, with padded cups for comfort and support all the way up to an H cup. It comes in a plum/berry colourway and features blurred spots for that hint of fun.

RRP: £40

Contact: **Panache, 0114 241 8888**
cleo-lingerie.com



NEW PRODUCTS
Lingerie Look

✦ **BRIDGET BY CHARNOS**

Bridgette, from Charnos' AW11 range, teams gold and ivory embroidery with deep black paper-touch fabric, detailed with elegant pin-tucking. The range is finished with oversize gold bows and is available in a choice of underwired or padded balcony, mini and French brief.

RRP: bra, £36, brief, £19

Contact: **Charnos, 0115 983 6000**
charnos.co.uk



✦ **TYRA BY ATLANTIS**

Tyra is a new product from Atlantis for AW11, which claims to increase the bust by one cup size. It comes in pink with black lace trim and is available up to a DD cup.

RRP: £40

Contact: **Panache, 0114 241 8888**
atlantis-lingerie.com

✦ **NADIYA BY LIVECO CORSETTI**

The Nadiya white chemise slip by LiveCo Corsetti features soft cups, a floral lace front panel and detailing to the rear. Adjustable shoulder straps and a tie back complete the piece. The set comes with a thong.

RRP: £25

Contact: **Dash Direct Wholesale Lingerie,**
0175 289 8191
sexy-lingerie-wholesale.co.uk



✦ **LINGERIE POD BY MURPHY AND PAGE**

Murphy and Page launched its debut product, Lingerie Pod, at this year's Moda. The Lingerie Pod is a lightweight, protective pod that aims to fit neatly into a weekend bag or travel case. It is designed to prevent lingerie and swimwear from being dented, plucked or squashed when a woman travels. This season, the lingerie pod is available in Vintage Red or Pure Purple.

RRP: £49.95

Contact: **Murphy and Page, 0789 491 1546**
murphyandpage.co.uk



SHOWCASE / SWIMWEAR



SONNET II BY PAOLITA

The Sonnet II halterneck style seeks to provide support around the bust, removing the need for underwiring.

A matching 'shorti' is also included in the collection, which comes in blue, red and black and white.

RRP: top, £56, bottom, £54, shorti, £74

Contact: **Paolita, 0207 593 0096**

paolita.co.uk

TWILIGHT BY LEPEL

The Twilight swimsuit by Lepel Swimwear (AW11) is heavily influenced by 1950s style, but seeks to incorporate a touch of millennium glamour with the addition of large rhinestones along the bust line and tie at the side features. The collection includes an underwired top, pant, triangle top and suit.

RRP: £45

Contact: **Lepel, 0115 983 6000**

lepel.co.uk



AVA BY PANACHE SWIMWEAR

For AW11, Ava is available in a smoke blue plunge swimsuit with tummy control. The moulded cups help shape the bust as the power net in the front panel pulls in the tummy. The balconnet bikini has a centre front diamante triangle and detailed rouching with matching low rise pant.

RRP: £48

Contact: **Panache, 0114 241 8888**

panache-superbra.com

SWIMSUIT BY MARYAN MEHLORN

This swimsuit, featuring glamorous gatherings and an extravagant neckline, is the highlight of Maryan Mehlorn's SS12 collection preview. In her latest collection, designer Mehlorn has chosen to focus on creating 'extravagant' back solutions with sophisticated neckline variations for swimsuits and bikinis, as well as new, exclusive diva cuts for one pieces.

RRP: £179

Contact: **Intimates Lingerie,**

0158 024 1111

maryanmehlhorn.de

V NECK WRAP BIKINI SET BY KOOEY

The latest collection from Kooey features bold styles and fashion-forward cuts. It incorporates separates and one-piece swimwear, as well as resort wear, including kaftans, cover-ups, pants and t-shirts.

Sizes range from XS-XL in a wide variety of styles to suit every body type.

Swimsuits are made from a pre-treated Lycra in an attempt to ensure the distinctive prints have the best resistance to colour fading.

RRP: £105

Contact: **Kooey, 180 088 4160**

kooey.com





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