

# SHOES & ACCESSORIES

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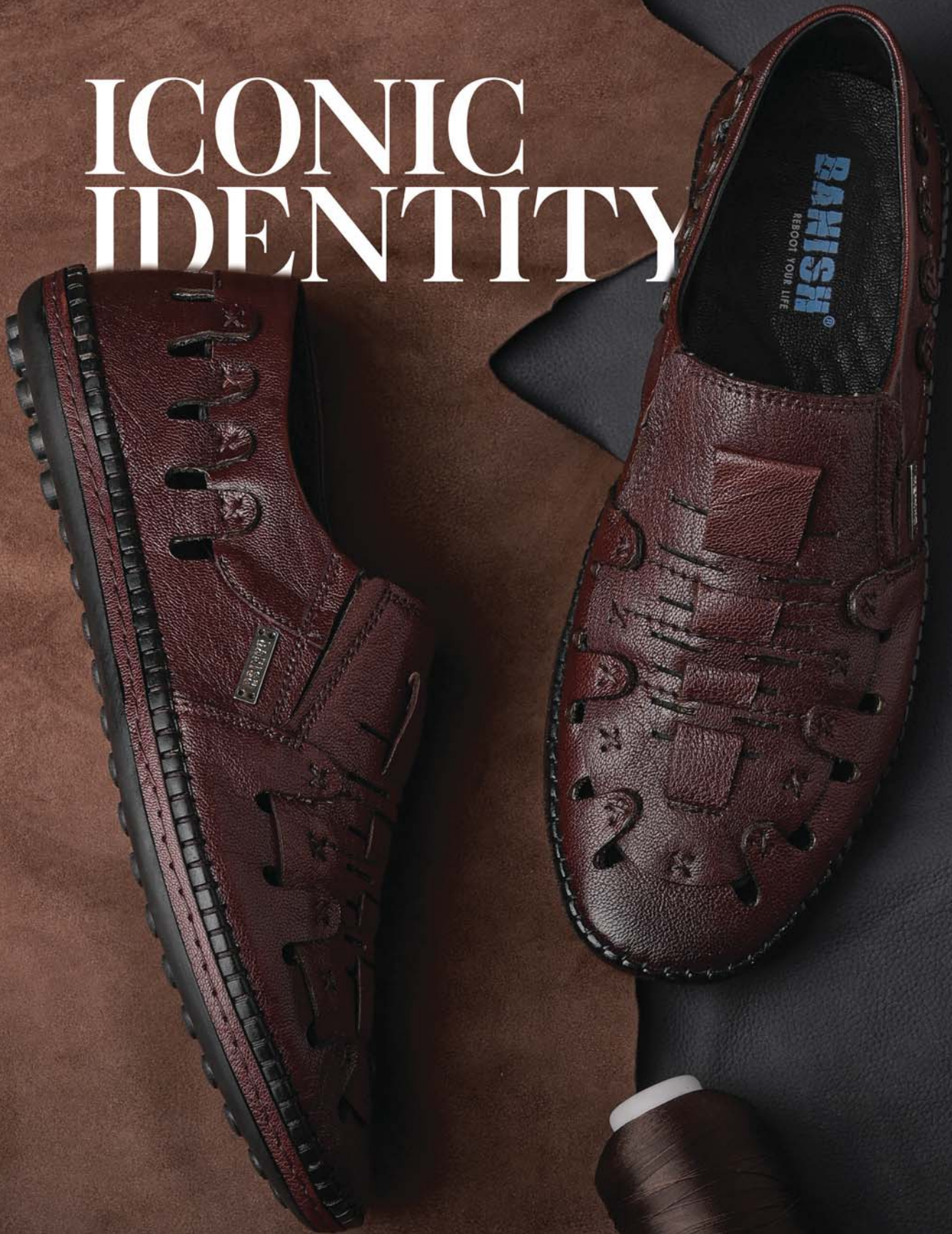
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# Editor's Letter

Dear Readers,

As we head into the summer season, it's time to take a closer look at the latest trends in footwear and accessories. This year, we're seeing a mix of old favorites and new styles that are sure to make a statement.

First up, let's talk about footwear. Sneakers continue to be a popular choice, and this year we're seeing a lot of chunky, retro-inspired designs. These sneakers are not only comfortable, but they also add a touch of nostalgia to any outfit. In addition, strappy sandals and mules are also on-trend this season. These styles are perfect for dressing up or down, and come in a variety of materials and colors.

As for accessories, the trend is all about bold, statement-making pieces. Chunky chain necklaces, oversized earrings, and stacked bracelets are all popular choices. We're also seeing a lot of straw and raffia bags, which are perfect for adding a beachy vibe to any outfit. In addition, hair accessories like scrunchies and headbands continue to be a hit.

When it comes to colors, this season is all about bright, bold hues. From neon greens to hot pinks, bold colors are the perfect way to add some fun to your wardrobe. However, if you prefer a more muted look, neutrals like beige and brown are also on-trend.

Overall, this season's footwear and accessories trends are all about mixing and matching styles to create a unique, personalized look. So whether you prefer chunky sneakers and bold jewelry, or strappy sandals and straw bags, there's a trend out there for everyone.

Happy reading!



AMITABH TANEJA  
Editor-in-Chief



On Cover pic courtesy: Candyskin



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## H&M Opens its third Indore Store in Phoenix Citadel Mall

H&M India, International retailer known for fashion and quality at the best and price in a sustainable way, opens its third store in a new location in Indore at Phoenix Citadel Mall. Spread over 1623.32 square meters designed by the latest interior trends, the store offers a modern and welcoming shopping experience featuring H&M's latest collection at approachable price points starting at Rs. 2299 for kids, Rs. 7399 for Womenswear and Rs. 7499 for Menswear. The new store opening is complemented with exciting collections featuring, Spring/Summer styles along with the latest Men's Linen collection, each of them offering a breadth of interchangeable styles presented in elevated fabrics.

Additionally, as part of H&M's commitment to a more circular and sustainable future, the new store also offers the brand's Garment Collect initiative which allows customers to bring unwanted clothes and textiles by any brand, in any condition, at the store "We have felt right at home since we opened our first store in Indore in 2017, therefore we are very excited to launch our third store in the city! We now will be able to welcome our customers to a new location with an even more elevated and vibrant customer experience in addition to the collections. It is our pleasure to welcome our customers and to offer them added value through fashion and quality at the best price in a sustainable way," said Yanira Ramirez, Country Sales Manager, H&M India.

H&M India is now present in Phoenix Citadel Mall, Nexus Indore Central & Apollo Premier in Indore along with [www.hm.com](http://www.hm.com) and Myntra.



## Mall operators to ring in 7-9% revenue growth this fiscal despite high-base effect of last fiscal

Healthy profitability and low debt will keep credit risk profiles stable

Buoyant retail sales and improved rental yields are expected to lift the revenue of mall operators by 7-9% this fiscal. That would be tantamount to ~125% of pre-pandemic, or fiscal 2020, revenue.

Notably, this will be on a high base of fiscal 2023, when a return to social normalcy after mobility curbs were lifted led to substantial growth in footfalls and a robust 60% rise in revenue to ~116% of the pre-pandemic level.

Additionally, high occupancy levels, solid profitability backed by cost-optimisation measures and strong balance sheets will keep the credit risk profiles of mall operators healthy this fiscal.

A CRISIL Ratings analysis of 28 malls<sup>1</sup> indicates as much.

**Says Mohit Makhija, Senior Director, CRISIL Ratings, "Robust retail sales will help mall operators increase revenue in two ways. One, occupancy of ~95% will translate to better rental rates for new leases. Two, 10-15% of the revenue of mall operators is**

**linked to retail sales via revenue share income<sup>2</sup>, which will increase this fiscal. Additionally, operators will get contractual rent escalations of 4-5% as well."**

The exceptional revenue growth last fiscal was on a significantly weak base. In fiscals 2021 and 2022, revenue stood at 55% and 74% of the pre-pandemic level, respectively, as mall operators had waived off rent and allowed flexible payment terms to tenants in a bid to prevent any major decline in occupancy. As the impact of Covid-19 waned and occupancy increased, average per square feet leasing rate jumped 12-14% in fiscal 2023. The benefits of healthy occupancy and better leasing rates will continue this fiscal as well.

The pandemic also goaded mall operators to reduce costs through efficient manpower planning and optimisation of overheads. That should continue this fiscal as well.

**Says Anand Kulkarni, Director, CRISIL Ratings, "Cost efficiency measures taken during the pandemic are likely to help improve profitability. Operating margin is expected at ~70%**

**this fiscal compared with the pre-pandemic level of 65-68%. Further, improvement in leverage through equity infusion will keep credit risk profiles stable. Continued investor interest in the sector through platforms such as real estate investment trusts (REITs) also bode well."**

Low debt level will translate to comfortable debt to earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation (Ebitda) of ~3 times, and healthy debt service coverage ratio (DSCR)<sup>3</sup> of 1.7-1.8 times this fiscal (similar to fiscal 2023 but a significant improvement from ~1.2 times in fiscal 2022).

Considering the healthy performance of the sector, capex is expected to pick-up over the near to medium term. While a sizeable part of it may be funded by equity from global investors, large debt contracted for new developments will bear watching.

On the flipside, the impact of slowdown in advanced economies, and the manifestation of the lagged effect of repo rate hikes of the past can curtail discretionary spending, including retail sales. This aspect will, therefore, be monitorable.



# Shoppers Stop

## Q4 FY23 Results

- Highest ever Q4 Revenue of Rs 1175 Cr, up 32% YoY
- EBITDA Rs 55 Cr in Q4 FY23 vs (Rs 13 Cr) in Q4 FY22
- PBT of Rs.14 Crs
  - Continued outperformance of our Strategic Pillars
  - First Citizen contributing 77% of Revenue in Offline and 39% in online
  - First Citizen Black Card – ATV 2X and Total Spend 4X
  - Private Brand – Rs.158 Crs up 35% YoY – Contribution 14%
  - Beauty
    - Rs.197 Crs up 29% YoY – Contribution 17%
    - Launched 40 SKU's in Arcelia, Total Portfolio 450+

## FY 23 Full Year Results

- Highest Ever Revenue of Rs.5,066 Crs up 63%
- EBITDA @ Rs.324 Crs
- PBT of Rs.164 Crs (highest ever)
- On our Strategic Pillars
  - Private Brands Rs. 723 Crs up 70% YoY – Contribution 14%
  - Beauty
    - Rs.804 Crs up 54% YoY – Contribution 16%
    - Acquired exclusive Distribution for 15 Beauty Brands
  - Opened 11 Departmental and 12 Beauty Stores during the year. Refurbished 11 Departmental and 5 Beauty Stores during the year. With this more than 60% of Stores will be with new appearance

**Venu Nair, MD & CEO at Shoppers Stop, commented on the Q4 FY23 results,** “I am pleased to share that we have continued to deliver robust sales growth this quarter, which is broad based with a healthy balance of price, volume and mix. This is the highest sales and sales growth with all KPI's consistently improving over period of time. All our Strategic Pillars have delivered this quarter, and we continue our sharp focus on robust growth on each one of them.

Specifically, on our customers, we had over 36 Mn Visits across our offline and Online channels in this quarter, with elevated shopping experience. The Average Transaction Value (ATV) and Average Selling Price (ASP) grew by 6% and 9% respectively.

Our Private Brands Sales grew by 35%, and volume grew by 28%. The Beauty segment grew by 29%.

For the full year our Private brands and Beauty grew by 70% and 54% respectively. We have begun distributing premium Beauty Brands from last quarter. We have added 15 brands with exclusive distribution rights and on boarded 10+ retailers during the year. On Home, we have onboarded Kavindra Mishra (Kavi) as CEO for Home Business and Chief Commercial Officer (External Brands)

Offline expansion is one of our Key Strategy. We opened 11 department stores and 12 beauty stores during this fiscal year. For the quarter, we opened 2 Department and 1 Beauty store. In addition to above, to enhance customer experience, we renovated 11 Department and 5 Beauty Stores. With this more than 60% of our stores will have the new renewed appearance.

## Key financial highlights for Q4 FY23 and fiscal year 2022-23:

Rs in Cr.	Non-GAAP			GAAP		
	Q4FY23	Q4FY22	Growth%	Q4FY23	Q4FY22	Growth%
Sales	1,175	890	32%	916	710	29%
Gross Margin	384	281	37%	396	285	39%
EBITDA	55	-13		179	97	86%
PBT	14	-47		21	-50	
PAT	10	-14		17	-17	

Rs in Cr.	Non-GAAP			GAAP		
	FY23	FY22	Growth%	FY23	FY22	Growth%
Sales	5,066	3,111	63%	3,998	2,494	60%
Gross Margin	1,675	984	70%	1,671	990	69%
EBITDA	324	-27		755	434	74%
PBT	164	-200		162	-140	
PAT	121	-147		119	-88	

Shoppers Stop Ltd. is the nation's leading premier retailer of fashion and beauty brands established in 1991. Spread across 98 department stores, the Company also operates 7 premium Home Stores, 142 Specialty Beauty stores of M.A.C, Estée Lauder, Bobbi Brown, Clinique, Jo Malone, Too Faced, SS Beauty and 23 Airport doors, occupying area of 3.9 M sq. ft.'

# METRO completes Rs 2,850 crore deal with Reliance Retail to sell its India Cash & Carry business

The deal includes all 31 wholesale stores operated by METRO Cash & Carry India and the entire real estate portfolio to RRVL. German retailer METRO AG on Thursday announced the completion of the sale of its Indian cash & Carry business to Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd(RRVL), which holds the retail empire of Reliance Industries Ltd. The deal includes all 31 wholesale stores operated by METRO Cash & Carry India and the entire real estate portfolio (6 store-occupied properties) to RRVL, said Metro AG in a statement.

“METRO India will complement Reliance Retail's retail network in the future,” it said. As per the deal, “all METRO India stores will continue to operate under the METRO brand during an agreed transition period.” However, it also added, “For METRO employees and METRO customers, there will be no noticeable changes for the time being.” METRO and RRVL in December 2022 announced a deal for the acquisition of German firm's wholesale operations in India by billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led firm for Rs 2,850 crore. The deal will help Reliance Retail strengthen its dominant position in India's mammoth retail sector, which is one of the fastest-growing markets globally. Commenting on the development METRO AG CEO Steffen Greubel said: “With today's successful closing of the

sale, METRO India will open a new chapter in its journey. We are convinced that Reliance as the new owner, with its local expertise, will successfully lead the business into the future.” He also thanked METRO's Indian employees for their hard work and commitment over the past 20 years and wished them for a new chapter.

METRO will continue to build on its growth momentum and take further steps to achieve its mid- and long-term ambitions. “In addition to the reduction in net debt already realised in Q1 through the reclassification of the Indian business as “Asset held for sale” ( 0.15 billion), cash proceeds of 0.3 billion will further reduce METRO's net debt (the total effect on net debt is, therefore, more than 0.4 billion) and will support METRO's sCore strategy implementation,” the statement said. RRVL is the holding company for the retail operations of Reliance Industries. For the financial year ending March 31, 2023, Reliance Retail's revenue from operation was Rs 2.30 lakh crore. The company is focusing to expand its distribution network across geographies as well as a product offering in the Consumer Brands business. METRO is a leading international food wholesaler, operating in more than 30 countries. In the financial year 2021/22, METRO generated sales of 29.8 billion Euros. SOURCE: PTI



## American footwear giant Crocs' Q1 FY23 revenue up 33.9% YoY

### INSIGHTS

- Crocs has reported Q1 FY23 revenues of \$884.2 million, a 33.9 per cent YoY increase, driven by growth in DTC and wholesale revenues.
- The company's gross margin improved to 53.9 per cent, while income from operations rose by 98 per cent YoY to \$234.9 million.
- Crocs expects to see revenue growth of approximately 6-9 per cent YoY in Q2 FY23.

Crocs Inc, a leading American footwear company, has reported consolidated revenues of \$884.2 million in the first quarter (Q1) of fiscal 2023 (FY23), an increase of 33.9 per cent from the same period last year, or 36.2 per cent on a constant currency basis.

In Q1 FY23, the company's direct-to-consumer (DTC) revenues, which includes retail and e-commerce, grew 33.5 per cent, or 35.1 per cent on a constant currency basis, while wholesale revenues grew 34.2 per cent compared to Q1 FY22, or 36.9 per cent on a constant currency basis, the company said in a press release.

Gross margin also showed improvement in Q1 FY23, with a 53.9 per cent increase compared to 49.2 per cent in the same period last year. The adjusted gross margin was 54.2 per cent compared to 53.9 per cent in the prior year.

Crocs' selling, general, and administrative expenses in Q1 FY23 increased to \$241.4 million from \$206.2 million in the same period last year. However, selling, general, and administrative expenses as a percent of revenues rose to 27.3 per cent from 31.2 per cent in the prior year.

Income from operations in Q1 FY23 rose by 98 per cent year-on-year (YoY) to \$234.9 million, with an operating margin of 26.6 per cent, compared to 18 per cent for the same period last year. This was due to higher gross margin and significantly less Heydude acquisition expenses. Adjusted income from operations also rose by 40.8 per cent to \$247 million, with an adjusted operating margin of 27.9 per cent.

Diluted earnings per share in Q1 FY23 was \$2.39 compared to \$1.19 in Q1 FY22. Adjusted diluted earnings per share increased 27.3 per cent to \$2.61 compared to Q1 FY22.

The Crocs brand revenues increased 19 per cent YoY, or 21.6

per cent YoY on a constant currency basis, to \$648.8 million, with wholesale revenues increasing by 19.3 per cent YoY, or 22.4 per cent YoY on a constant currency basis. DTC comparable sales increased 19.2 per cent YoY.

North America revenues reached \$351.3 million, a 10 per cent YoY increase, or 10.3 per cent YoY on a constant currency basis. Asia Pacific revenues were \$140 million, showing a 46.1 per cent YoY increase, or 54.8 per cent YoY on a constant currency basis. Europe, Middle East, Africa, and Latin America (EMEALA) revenues of \$157.5 million increased 21.2 per cent YoY, or 25.1 per cent YoY on a constant currency basis.

Heydude Brand revenues for the first quarter were \$235.4 million, with wholesale revenues at \$167.9 million and DTC revenues at \$67.5 million.

Looking ahead, the company expects to see revenue growth of approximately 6-9 per cent YoY in the second quarter of FY23, resulting in revenues of approximately \$1,026 million to \$1,049 million at current currency rates. Adjusted operating margin is expected to be approximately 26 per cent, with adjusted diluted earnings per share of \$2.83 to \$2.98, the release added.

For FY23, Crocs expects consolidated revenue growth to be between 11-14 per cent compared to FY22, resulting in revenues of approximately \$3,945 million to \$4,045 million at current currency rates. Revenues for the Crocs brand are expected to grow between 7-9 per cent on a reported basis, while revenues for the Heydude brand are expected to grow mid-20 per cent on a reported basis.

"Our exceptional first quarter results are a testament to the strength of our brands. The Crocs Brand grew 19 per cent as we see a strong consumer response to our new clog and sandal introductions. The Heydude brand is gaining momentum and experienced outstanding DTC growth," said Andrew Rees, chief executive officer. "We are raising our 2023 revenue growth outlook to now be 11 per cent to 14 per cent, resulting in revenues of approximately \$4 billion, reflecting our confidence in our ability to continue to gain market share, deliver best-in-class profitability, and generate strong cash flow."



## Essentially Rubber - Lamborghini Performance Footwear

Leading-edge designs and applications showing how elastomer materials contribute to all aspects of life and lifestyle in the 21st century

Seattle, Washington - The concept shoe from Mossawi Studios, based in Seattle, is designed to appeal to those interested in fashion, design, and automotive industries. 'What-If Lamborghini did high-end performance footwear' celebrates the 60th anniversary of the iconic sports car brand by transforming Lamborghini's sleek lines and iconic details into a unique and stylish shoe design. The futuristic design features intricate details such as neon lights and vents, similar to those found in the luxury sports car, providing a unique and innovative look. The project offers a fresh take on footwear design, bringing together the elements of high-end fashion and automotive design.







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## Prada posts strong first quarter performance

"Prada Group has had a positive start to the year. Over the course of the first quarter, China returned to be an engine of growth, driving a solid sales rebound in Asia Pacific. Our priority for the year remains increasing store productivity, focusing on retail execution. Meanwhile, we will continue to invest behind our brands, our stores, and our infrastructure for the growth of tomorrow. The ever-evolving macro and market backdrop requires us to be vigilant, but we see benefits in accelerating these investments, if conditions remain supportive", commented Andrea Guerra, Group Chief Executive Officer of Prada.

### First Quarter Results

In the first quarter of 2023, the Prada group posted a net revenue increase of 22%, as compared to the same period of last year, reaching 1.07 billion euros. Moreover, Prada's retail channel recorded a sales growth of 23% in the first quarter of the current year to 953 million euros, year-over-year, "driven by strong like-for-like and full-price sales".

The company underlined the high desirability of both Prada and Miu Miu brands, despite the uncertain economic environment. In fact, Prada brand's retail sales were up by 21% at constant exchange rates, while Miu Miu's retail sales rose by 42% in this period, on a comparable basis to the same period of the prior year.

The group's retail sales grew by 22% in this period, led by China's return to growth at the end of 2022, as well as a solid performance in Southeast Asia, and by 55% in Japan, due to the company's "recent investment in the retail network, solid domestic demand, and increased tourism flows", on a comparable basis to the first quarter of last year.

In Europe, Prada's group retail sales were up by 28%, driven by tourism and local consumption. Meanwhile, growth in America was moderate in the first quarter of 2023, at 5% year-over-year, and the Middle East registered a growth of 15%, "albeit in moderation versus the previous quarter".

At a group level, in the three months to the 31st of March, the leather goods segment grew by 14% at constant exchange rates, the ready-to-wear segment by 38%, and the footwear segment by 20%, as compared to a similar period of the previous year.



Pic Courtesy: REUTERS/Andrew Kelly



Pic Courtesy: SHAWN HUBBARD @SHAWN\_HUBBARD / WMD

## Under Armour reports solid fourth quarter

"I'm honoured to lead this iconic brand, and I'm pleased that Under Armour delivered fiscal 2023 revenue and earnings results that were in line with our previous outlook. Fiscal 2024 will be a year of building for the brand. I am prioritizing significantly amplifying global brand heat; delivering elevated design and products, with a focus on Sportstyle, footwear, and women; and positioning us to drive better sales growth in the United States", commented Under Armour President and CEO Stephanie Linnartz.

### Fourth Quarter Results

In the three months to the 31st of March, the company's revenue amounted to 1.4 billion US dollars, reflecting a growth of 8% (of 10% currency neutral), on a comparable basis to the same period of last year. It's noteworthy the performance of the footwear segment in this period – growth of 27% year-over-year that added to 378 million US dollars – while apparel revenue was up by 1%, reaching 889 million US dollars, and accessories revenue declined by 1% to 96 million US dollars.

By distribution channel, in the last quarter of fiscal 2023, Under Armour's wholesale revenue grew by 10%, totalling 909 million US dollars, and its direct-to-consumer revenue increased by 3% to 454 million US dollars, as compared to the same quarter of fiscal 2022; concerning the latter, the company highlighted that e-commerce revenue rose by 6%, representing 46% of the total direct-to-consumer business in the quarter.

In the fourth quarter of the last fiscal year, the company registered a revenue increase of 3% in the North American region, which amounted to 862 million US dollars, while international revenue was up by 16% (by 21% currency neutral), reaching 526 million US dollars, on a comparable basis to the similar quarter of the previous fiscal year. Within the international business, revenue grew by 14% in the EMEA region (by 20% currency neutral) and by 24% in the Asia-Pacific region (up by 31% currency neutral), but decreased by 8% in the Latin America region (down by 13% currency neutral).

Under Armour's fourth-quarter gross margin narrowed by 310 basis points to 43.4%, as compared to the same quarter of fiscal 2022, "driven primarily by higher promotions, mix impacts related to higher footwear revenue, and adverse effects from changes in foreign currency".

In the last quarter of fiscal 2023, the company's net income was 171 million US dollars, or diluted earnings per share of 0.38 US dollars, on a comparable basis to the net loss of 59.61 million US dollars registered in the same quarter of the previous year. Accordingly, adjusted net income totalled 84 million US dollars, or adjusted diluted earnings per share of 0.18 US dollars.

### Full Year 2023

Under Armour's revenue reached 5.9 billion US dollars in the twelve months to the 31st of March 2023, up by 3% (by 6% currency neutral) as compared to full year 2022.

The Baltimore-based company's net income amounted to 387 million US dollars, or diluted earnings per share of 0.84 US dollars, during the last fiscal year, on a comparable basis to a net income of 222 million US dollars, or diluted earnings per share of 0.47 US dollars, recorded in the prior fiscal year. Accordingly, adjusted net income totalled 266 million US dollars, or 0.58 US dollars in earnings per diluted share.

### Fiscal 2024 Outlook

For fiscal 2024, Under Armour is expecting flat to up slightly revenue over this past year and diluted earnings per share between 0.47 US dollars and 0.51 US dollars.





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## Aldo Group signs licencing deal with Ted Baker

Aldo Group will take over the design, production and distribution of the ABG-owned brand footwear and handbags in the US and Canadian wholesale market, as well as in Ted Baker's direct channels, including tedbaker.com and Ted Baker shops worldwide. The Canada-based footwear group will work closely with Ted Baker's London-based global design team to produce "premium" collections beginning in spring 2024.

"We have chosen The Aldo Group for this distinctive British lifestyle brand because of their dedication and commitment. They bring unmatched expertise in footwear and handbags, and we are confident that through this partnership, Ted Baker will continue

to deliver the expert design and high-quality products for which the brand is known and loved", commented Jarrod Weber, Group President Lifestyle, Chief Brand Officer at Authentic.

"We are excited to partner with Authentic, the leading global brand-builder and brand powerhouse", added Jonathan Frankel, President of Aldo Product Services at the Aldo Group. "This relationship will unlock the full potential of the Ted Baker brand in the footwear and handbags categories. Ted Baker is a significant partnership for us and as we start our journey together, we plan on drawing from the brand's vibrant DNA, combining fresh and innovative concepts, to bring the brand to the forefront of the market", he concluded.

## Skechers to acquire its Scandinavian distributor



Pic Courtesy:  
WORLDFOOTWEAR.COM

Sports Connection – which comprises 58 Skechers retail locations, several e-commerce solutions and over 1 600 wholesale customers – is expected to become a wholly-owned subsidiary of Skechers. Its goal will be to continue to drive the company's growth in the Nordic countries of Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Greenland and the Faroe Islands. Founded in 1994, the Scandinavian distributor has been Skechers' exclusive distributor in the region since 2005.

"With the planned acquisition of our long-serving and successful distributor in Scandinavia, we are welcoming the Sports Connection team more closely into the Skechers family. We are looking forward to further broadening our reach in Europe by combining the team's local expertise with our worldwide capabilities and financial resources", stated David Weinberg, Chief Operating Officer of Skechers USA.

"We are proud of the progress we have made growing the Skechers brand as a distributor partner. We have built the infrastructure to support our vast direct-to-consumer and wholesale presence across the Nordics, and this new structure will allow us to leverage our efforts for additional growth in the future. We innately understand how the brand delivers its dynamic collection of styles and signature comfort technologies for every age and activity", commented Peter Jørgensen, CEO of Sports Connection, who will now serve as country manager for Skechers in all Nordic countries.

## Farfetch launches Reebok's partnership



Pic Courtesy: FARFETCH

The partnership had been announced in 2022 following Reebok's acquisition by Authentic Brands Group from adidas. The brand's European e-commerce sites were thereby re-platformed by Farfetch Platform solutions to drive growth for Reebok "by expanding its luxury collaboration offerings globally".

The wholly-owned Farfetch company New Guards Group (NGG) is heading the partnership. Particularly, a new division has been formed to operate the Reebok brand and accelerate opportunities for NGG brands' sportswear and sneaker categories, namely NGG++. With over 20 years of experience, Cristiano Fagnani, previously Chief Marketing Officer of NGG, will serve as CEO of this new division.

"NGG++ is now operating Reebok across Europe, overseeing marketing and e-commerce operations, as well as driving wholesale distribution", he explained, emphasizing that the division "has the vision to redefine the space between sport and culture to empower movement".

José Neves, the luxury e-tailer Founder, Chairman and CEO added that "Reebok has great potential to expand into the luxury space, reigniting its loyal customer base and capturing the imagination of a new luxury global audience". "Under the astute and energetic guidance of Cristiano and the NGG++ team, we believe this partnership will unlock huge value for the brand and for Farfetch", he concluded.

## Zalando launches virtual fitting room pilot

Zalando's virtual fitting room allows customers to create a 3D avatar by entering their height, weight, and gender, so they can try on different sizes of jeans from various brands (22 items), with a heatmap indicating where the item sits tight or loose. This trial follows two already successful pilots with selected items of clothing from Puma and Zalando's private label Anna Field, which were tried out by more than 30 000 customers.

"Our goal with these pilot campaigns is to learn and understand how customers engage with this new technology so we can develop a seamless scalable solution for the future. We can already see that customer engagement with these campaigns increases and, in fact, around half of the customers try more than one size on the avatar," explains Stacia Carr, Vice President of Size and Fit at Zalando.

"We want to support the industry as it continues to adopt and leverage 3D digital design software and workflows to produce fashion. These processes generate digital assets necessary to scale a virtual try-on experience", she added. The company highlighted that the retailer is the only European fashion e-commerce platform to effectively have an in-house team dedicated to sizing and fitting.



# STEP UP

YOUR SHOE GAME WITH OUR PREMIUM SHOE CARE PRODUCTS, DESIGNED TO KEEP YOUR FAVORITE KICKS LOOKING FRESH AND POLISHED





## Deichmann to invest 500 million euros by the end of the year

Concerning its store network, Deichmann is planning to open around 200 new stores around the world, with a "particularly strong growth" planned for Italy – pointed out Heinrich Deichmann, Chairman of the Management Board – "where around 30 new stores will be opened as part of the ongoing expansion programme". Additionally, its franchise partner Azadea Group, a Lebanese group focusing on the Middle East and Africa, is due to open the first stores in Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia this year, following the successful market entry in Dubai in 2019, Kuwait in 2020 and Qatar and Oman in 2021/22.

The group also announced that 450 stores groupwide will be modernized by the introduction of a "new store design concept with a modern look, a spacious feel, soft colours and plenty of room for sports articles", with a sneakers display of brands such as adidas, Nike, Puma, FILA, Reebok, Asics and Skechers. "Sport is still one of our focus topics", he added.

Furthermore, the expansion of its omnichannel strategy is also in the pipeline for 2023. For instance, the German-based retailer is planning to expand its digital foot measuring device that helps determine shoe sizes more exactly to all its stores. Currently, this service is only available at around 120 stores in Germany.

At last, Deichmann will continue expanding its brand portfolio. "We have seen the success of new brands as part of our portfolio. For example, our range now also includes selected models of the popular New Balance brand", commented Heinrich Deichmann, while revealing that Rieker and Airwalk models will become a "new addition" to the company's range.



These investments for 2023 follow record results achieved last year. In 2022, Deichmann's sales grew by 17.4%, year-over-year, reaching 8.1 billion euros. This "positive development was driven by growth at the own stores and online shops, as well as successful acquisitions, for example in the USA", reads the company's statement. In Germany, the group's sales amounted to 2.5 billion euros last year, up from 2.1 billion euros in the prior year, with like-for-like sales growing by almost 9%.

## Puma reports solid performance

"Our Q1 growth was a strong start to 2023. In line with our strategy to be the best partner to retailers, we grew our wholesale business in a challenging environment and further strengthened our performance credibility with strong growth in our strategically important performance categories. Our significant growth in DTC demonstrated Puma's continued brand momentum globally, including North America and Greater China", commented Arne Freundt, Chief Executive Officer of Puma.

### First Quarter Results

In the first quarter of 2023, the company's sales increased by 14.4% currency adjusted (ca) and as reported, amounting to 2.18 billion euros, on a comparable basis to the same period last year.

Puma reported that despite high inventory levels, its wholesale revenue grew by 12.4% (ca) year-over-year in the first three months of the year, reaching 1.72 billion euros. DTC sales, instead, rose by 22.5% in the homologous period

to 465.5 million US dollars. Breaking this last channel, sales in owned & operated retail stores were up by 17.3% (ca) while e-commerce sales rose by 32.7%, as compared to the same period of 2022.

In the first quarter of the current fiscal year, Puma's sales in the EMEA region increased by 25.4% (ca), adding 883.8 million euros to the total revenue, on a comparable basis to the same quarter of the prior year. Thanks to "a return to growth in Greater China for the first time in two years", the Asia Pacific region also recorded a sales growth of 27.5% year-over-year in this period.

In the Americas region, first quarter sales stood at 827.9 million euros, down by 0.8%

(ca), due to a decline in North America despite a strong performance in Latin America. "The decline in North America was due to a lower sell-in to the Wholesale distribution channel, particularly to off-price retailers, as a result of high inventory levels in the market", detailed the company.

Puma's gross margin for the three months to the 31st of March declined by 70 basis points from a similar period in 2022 to 46.5% due to "the ongoing industry-wide promotional activity, higher sourcing and freight costs as well as unfavourable currency effects", partially offset by price adjustments, a favourable geographical and distribution channel mix.

The company posted as well that its operating result (EBIT) declined by 10.5% in the first quarter of the current financial year to 175.5 million euros, with EBIT margin coming in at 8.0%, as compared to the same three months in 2022.

Puma's first quarter 2023 net income, in turn, totalled 117.3 million euros, decreasing by 3.4% as compared to the same quarter last year, with earnings per share amounting to 0.78 euros (1Q 2022: 0.81 euros).

### Outlook

"We consider 2023 to be a year of transition. In line with our expectations, the year has started with pressure on gross profit margin and profitability. For the second quarter, we expect low to mid-single-digit sales growth due to high inventory levels in the trade and continued headwinds in the market. For the full year, we confirm high single-digit sales growth and EBIT of 590 million euros to 670 million euros. With our continued momentum we are fully on track to normalize our inventory levels and to achieve our full-year guidance", reported Arne Freundt.







## Pentland Brands appoints new Chief Operating Officer

Pentland Brands has announced Abhy Thomas-Joseph as its new global chief operating officer (COO). Abhy joined Pentland Brands in 2012 and was appointed global IT director in 2018. The following year, his role expanded to include the digital and innovation functions, where he established a new global digital strategy for the brand portfolio, growing their digital sales by 40% and significantly increasing their reach and engagement in a digital world.

Abhy joined the Executive team in January 2022 as the President Asia Pacific, with responsibility for leading the brand, commercial, and operational teams across the region. In this role, his accountabilities also included leading the data, innovation, logistics, supply chain, technology, and transformation functions globally. Thomas-Joseph joined the executive team in January 2022, as President of the Asia Pacific region. In addition to this leadership role, as the new COO, he is also expected to oversee the company's global operating model while future-proofing its supply chain and logistics operations.

"Abhy will take ownership of our global operating model and ensure we're set up to be simpler and more efficient in how we work with our customers, suppliers and partners. He'll also build strategic vendor partnerships, drive vendor-led innovations, future-proof our supply chain and logistics operations, and use data and technology to power business growth. This is a natural transition for Abhy given his existing global responsibilities and leadership impact in the organisation", commented Chirag Patel, Chief Executive Officer at Pentland Brands.

Thomas-Joseph will succeed Jon Godden, who will be leaving the business in June after 16 years with Pentland. "I'd like to personally thank Jon for his leadership and support, most recently guiding the business through the global pandemic. His calmness and professionalism, always keeping perspective and remaining resilient, were critical in helping us to navigate those challenging times", added Patel.



## Indonesian footwear exports expected to contract

In 2022, Indonesian footwear exports totalled 7.74 billion US dollars, increasing by 25.12% on a comparable basis to 2021 and by 8.96% as compared to 2020.

"We saw quite tremendous growth last year. [...] But buyers' orders started to drop in mid-2022", commented Aprisindo's Executive Director Firman Bakri to the business newspaper Investor Daily, pointing out that orders from key markets such as the US and some European countries have declined sharply.

Data from the World Footwear 2022 reiterates that the North American country is the main market for Indonesian footwear exports, but highlights that shipments to China have enjoyed the greatest increase over the last five years (by 142% to 656 million US dollars in 2021).

He added that this declining trend is expected to last until 2024, as the domestic market cannot absorb exported goods, given their different characteristics. "Our exports are premium products, whereas the domestic market is non-premium products, so they cater to different segments", said Firman.

## Bangladesh: leather exports register a small growth

According to the Export Promotion Bureau of the Government of Bangladesh, the country's total leather exports totalled 919.7 million US dollars in the first nine months of the current fiscal year, up by 2.56% from the same period last year and down by 12.35% from the strategic target set for the period of 1.05 billion US dollars.

Leather footwear exports amounted to 534.2 million US dollars in the first three quarters of the year, representing roughly 58% of the total exported. This figure indicates, however, a decline of 0.88% as compared to a similar period in the prior year, falling short of the strategic target set of 597.5 million US dollars by 10.59%. Finished leather exports also declined in these nine months by 19.50% year-over-year to 93.2 million US dollars, down from the strategic target set of 131.6 million US dollars by 28.91%.

On the contrary, leather goods exports rose by 20.77% from July through March, adding 292.3 million US dollars to the category's total revenue, on a comparable basis to the same period in the previous fiscal year. Still, the performance of this segment remained below the strategic target set for the period of 320.6 million US dollars by 8.85%.

The data also shows that in the first nine months of the current fiscal year, other footwear exports increased by 5.73%, reaching 358.3 million US dollars, as compared to a similar period last year. Like the aforementioned segments, it also failed to meet the strategic target set for the period by 5.45% (378.9 million US dollars).



## European footwear production drops in the last 4 decades

The big picture has significantly changed since 1985. At that time, over 35% of world footwear production was based in Europe, particularly in countries such as Italy (525 million pairs produced), Spain (205 million pairs), France (198 million pairs), Germany (171 million pairs) and the UK (136 million pairs). But in the past four decades, European production has fallen and these five countries, together, have lost more than 900 million pairs of shoes. Portugal has held out, with its footwear production increasing by 36% in 2021 to 76 million pairs since 1985.

Although there has been much talk of reshoring or nearshoring in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, that is, the return of production to their countries of origin or close by, official figures do not seem to support this trend. According to the data of the World Footwear Yearbook, the footwear industry remains heavily concentrated in Asia.

Indeed, since 2011, production in China fell by 6.8% to 12 billion pairs (global share of 54.1%), production in India has increased by 17.7% to 2 600 million pairs, by 68.9% in Vietnam to 1 360 million pairs and by 54.7% in Indonesia to 1 083 million pairs (latest data made available by the World Footwear Yearbook concerning the year 2021). It is noteworthy, still, the fact that China's relative weight in footwear production is progressively shifting in favour of other Asian players.

Outside Asia, footwear production in countries such as Brazil and Mexico also fell in the last decade: together, they produced in 2021 less 76 million pairs than in 2011. In Europe, the decline in production was of around 7% in the last decade. There are notable exceptions, however. Germany's footwear production was up by 77.4% to 55 million pairs in 2021. Portugal increased production in more than 15 million pairs of shoes (growth of 24.6%).

In the international scene, emphasis also on the growth of the Turkish footwear industry. In the last decade, this country's production grew by 191.0% and now reaches 547 million pairs (2021).

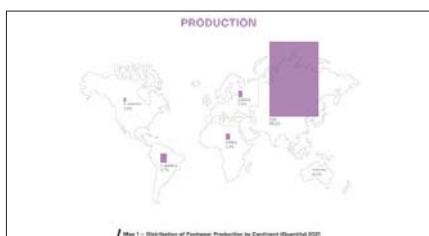


PHOTO & CONTENT COURTESY:

<https://www.worldfootwear.com/yearbook>

## APLF confirms homecoming



APLF LEATHER MATERIALS+ FASHION ACCESS

The last edition of APLF, held between the 13th and the 15th of March at the Dubai World Trade Centre, brought together 314 exhibitors and 15 national pavilions, attracting more than 5 000 visitors from 92 countries. David Bondi, Senior Vice President of Informa Markets Asia and a Director of APLF recalled that Dubai is "easily accessible from the American, European, as well as the Asian subcontinents", which undoubtedly contributed to "the international nature of the trade show".

Nonetheless, according to the organization, the confirmation of the return of the trade fair to Hong Kong in the next year's edition, from the 19th to the 21st of March, was met with much "relief and enthusiasm" by the attendees.

Still, this 37th edition of the event was already marked by the comeback of Chinese suppliers and buyers, offering visitors the opportunity to take advantage of the business platform traditionally offered to the leather and fashion sectors by APLF. Commenting on the trade fair, Fernanda Schwade, the CEO of the Brazilian Liderkoll, said that it was "a very productive experience for us as we were able to connect and network with quality contacts from across the globe".

The participation in the third Global Footwear Executive Summit (GFES), which addressed some pressing issues concerning the future of the leather industry, as well as in the seminars organized by Leather Naturally, Lanxess, GIZ (the German Society for International Cooperation) and Santoni, were also some of the highlights of this 2023 edition.



## APLF ASEAN returns to Bangkok in October

The decision follows the successful last year's event, in which more than 200 exhibitors and 4 000 buyers came together under the same roof within the ASEAN bloc. Comprised of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, this region is the third-largest economy in Asia after China and Japan and fifth worldwide.

It is, therefore, "an attractive destination for leather exporters since 2.5 billion US dollars' worth of all types of leather are imported by this bloc, not far behind the 3.27 billion US dollars imported by China in the same period", highlighted the organization, pointing out that the COVID-19 pandemic drove the relocation of Chinese companies to its neighbouring countries.

APLF has already advanced that the 2023's edition will target the same critical buyers' group by focusing on joining hide traders, tanners, manufacturers of handbags and footwear, brand manufacturers, and small leather goods and auto interiors exhibitors. Moreover, in line with the trade fair's tradition, a series of seminars on topical and technical subjects, practical workshops and educational conferences are expected to take place.

The second edition of the APLF ASEAN will be supported by national leather and footwear associations, such as the Thai Tanning Industry Association (TTIA) and Vietnamese Leather, Footwear and Handbag Association (LEFASO), to "ensure that the fair is actively promoted" between their members.



## Portuguese footwear industry to invest 50 million to be the most modern in the world

The FAIST project - Agile, Intelligent, Sustainable and Technological Factory - involves an investment of 50 million euros, under the Recovery and Resiliency Plan (RRP), in the field of Mobilization Agendas, and "has as its main goal to provide and empower this industry with innovative technologies, processes and sustainable materials, increasing the responsiveness to market demands and continuing making the Portuguese footwear and leather goods industry the most modern in the world", said Florbela Silva, coordinator of the project.

The consortium led by the company CARITÉ and technically coordinated by CTCP consists of 44 co-promoters, including 14 footwear and leather goods companies, 9 component companies, 15 companies of technological basis and 6 associative entities of the scientific and technological interface.

Florbela Silva recalls that is underway "the modernization of processes and new products to make the Portuguese industry more agile and competitive, the most modern in the world". For this, the sector will invest "in the development of robotized and automated production processes, management software and production control, in parallel with the development and production of new types of ecological and sustainable products". This way, it will be possible for "Portuguese footwear and leather goods companies to expand their range of products".

On the other hand, to optimise production efficiency, the sector "ought to increase its degree of specialization, reducing the waste of energy and resources with an



indispensable greater qualification and training of human resources". At last, "the dissemination of these technologies throughout the sector will be ensured by a structured and innovative communication programme", allowing it to achieve international scale.

One of the most critical areas - continued the coordinator of the project - concerns the "attraction of technology-based companies, with tradition and experience in other industries, to develop new equipment and induce disruptive industrial processes, more efficient and with increased production capacity". Therefore, the FAIST Agenda will "invest in the Portuguese companies' capability to produce equipment goods and

foster innovative processes, thus reducing the share of imports of these technologies and increasing opportunities for the national industry with impact on the growth of skilled jobs".

In the view of Florbela Silva, the "implementation of this project will significantly boost the Portuguese footwear and leather goods cluster, increasing its degree of specialization both in the production of new products, as in equipment goods and processes". As a result, "important increases in the agility of response to markets and sustainability will be achieved, supported by technology and intelligence, with high differentiation and international projection".

## Capri Holdings appoints Mahesh Madhavan to the Board of Directors



Madhavan has joined the company's Compensation and Talent Committee, as well as the Governance, Nominating and Corporate Social Responsibility Committee. "It is an incredible privilege to join Capri Holdings Board of Directors. Capri Holdings is comprised of three iconic brands, and I am proud to be a part of the group's continued success. I look forward to working with the Board to help Capri continue to execute on their growth strategy globally", he said.

The newly appointed director has been with Bacardi for more than 25 years. Before becoming the spirits' company CEO in 2017, he held several leadership roles in different geographies, including Regional President - of Europe, Regional President - of Africa, Middle East, South & Southeast Asia, Managing Director - of India, South & Southeast Asia and Managing Director - Thailand and the Philippines.

"Mahesh's tremendous global experience leading and growing a consumer goods company with an extensive portfolio of brands and labels will bring a fresh perspective to our Board. The Board and I believe that his operating expertise and deep understanding of international markets will be instrumental as we continue to focus on driving growth and delivering value for our shareholders", commented John D. Idol, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Capri Holdings.

As a result of this appointment, Capri Holdings Board is again comprised of eight directors.



## Pakistani footwear exports on the rise



In the first eight months of the current fiscal year\*, leather manufacturers' exports totalled 401.6 million US dollars, which suggests a decline of 4.92% from the same period of the last fiscal year. Additionally, in this period, Pakistani tanners shipped 7 200 square-metres of finished leather, worth 113.9 million US dollars, down by 27.71% in volume and 15.18% in value, as compared to the similar eight-month period of fiscal 2021-2022.

### Footwear

From July 2022 through February 2023, the Asian country exported a total of 16.4 million pairs of shoes, generating a revenue of 124.5 million US dollars. These figures indicate a growth of 37.80% in volume and 19.99% in value, on a comparable basis to the same period of the previous year.

Breaking down by segment. In the first eight months of the current year, Pakistan exported 7.36 million leather footwear pairs, worth 101.3 million US dollars, up by 43.55% and 21.75% from the same months last year - hence, leather footwear exports accounted for roughly 81% of the total value exported in the footwear category.

The other footwear segment also registered a significant increase in this period, shipping 8.95 million pairs, worth 22.65 million US dollars, up by 33.98% in volume and 14.35% in value, as compared to the prior year. On the opposite trajectory, in this period, the canvas footwear segment recorded a decline of 7.75% in volume (80 thousand pairs) and 24.64% in value (540 million US dollars), year-over-year.

## Brazilian footwear exports slowdown

According to the Brazilian Footwear Industries Association (Abicalçados), last month, the South-American country shipped 11.67 million pairs of shoes worth 108.6 million US dollars, down by 11.4% in volume and 2.5% in value, on a comparable basis to March 2023. Abicalçados' Executive President pointed out that this decline follows the slowdown in the global economy, which "with high inflation rates, undermines the growth of manufacturers of discretionary consumer goods".

Overall, the association estimates that a total of between 857 and 863 million pairs will be produced throughout the current year, growing by 1% to 1.7% over the last one. However, unlike what happened in 2022, in which the increase in production was driven by exports (+3.6%), now it should be boosted by domestic consumption.

The coordinator of Market Intelligence of Abicalçados, Priscila Linck, says that the return of China to international markets following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, as well as the world's high inflation, will most likely cause footwear exports to fall. So, "the expectation is that we reach a positive index in the sector production between 1% to 1.7%, therefore above the Brazilian GDP growth projections, today at 0.9%", she concludes.

But overall, in the first quarter of the year, Brazil exported 38.44 million pairs of shoes, generating 328.44 million US dollars. These figures reflect a decline in volume of 5.7% and an increase in value of 2.4%, as compared to the same three months of the previous year.

Haroldo Ferreira warned once more on the increasingly tougher international competition following the reopening of China's economy after the removal of COVID-19 restrictions, along with the drop in the cost of international freight. Last year, the Brazilian footwear industry benefited from the demand from close-by countries at the expense of Asia.

### Main Destination Markets

In the three months to the 31st of March, exports to the US, Brazil's main market, suffered notably as a result of the abovementioned global slowdown as well as the growth in the level of inventories. In particular, the country shipped 2.9 million pairs of shoes worth 56.87 million US dollars, which indicates a decline of 51.5% in volume and 35.9% in value, on a comparable basis to the same period of 2022.

Argentina remained the second destination market for Brazilian footwear in the first three months of the year, purchasing 3.23 million pairs of shoes worth 55.32 million US dollars. These figures reflect a 1.4% increase in volume and 52.8% in value year-over-year.

Spain, which surpassed France in this ranking, figures in 3rd place. In the first quarter of the current fiscal year, Brazil exported 5.75 million pairs of shoes to the European country generating 17.8 million US dollars, up by 265.6% in volume and 272.2% in value, respectively, as compared to the first quarter of 2022.

## Crocs launches customization programme for bulk orders



"Our customization programme allows teams, schools, and companies alike to design clogs and Jibbitz charms that are a unique representation of their organization", explained Adam Michaels, Executive Vice President & Chief Digital Officer of Crocs.

So, with a minimum order of 24 units each, customers can select a colour or graphic for the clog, and then choose to upload an image or logo to the base or backstrap of the style. Jibbitz charms can be customized in a similar way, added the company in the statement. This service is currently only available in the US.

"As a digital-first brand, we focused on making the Customize Your Crocs experience simple and engaging. We believe this type of footwear customization is truly unique and is an incredible opportunity for personalization", he concluded, as Crocs looks to continue building on the high demand for its products, which has led the company to reach record annual revenue in 2022.



## US footwear prices increases continue to cool off



Source: [footwearnews.com](http://footwearnews.com)

Following the Federal Reserve's ninth consecutive rate hike to tap down inflation and the trajectory of the latest Consumer Price Index by the US Bureau of Labour Statistics, - which shows that consumer prices rose by 5% in March, the smallest 12-month increase since May 2021, from February's 6% and January's 6.4% year-over-year growth - footwear retail prices increases continue to slow down.

Retail footwear prices rose at a decelerating rate in March, up by 0.3% as compared to the same month in 2022. In particular, men's footwear prices were down by 2.3% in this period, women's footwear prices were up by 1.7% and kids' footwear prices increased by 2.2%, year-over-year. According to the Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America (FDRA), these modest retail price increases for footwear come as input costs continue to rise faster.

"Year-to-date average landed costs of footwear imports are up 8.8% with year-to-date average hourly wages at shoe retailers up 22.4%", said Gary Raines, chief economist at FDRA to Footwear News. "Input costs rising faster than retail prices suggest tighter margins, an issue that may be a key factor for the market in 2023", he warned.

## Michael Jordan's sneakers sold for a record 2.2 million USD

The pair of black and red Air Jordan 13s were worn during Game 2 in Salt Lake City, which the Bulls won 93-88 after losing Game 1, with Jordan scoring 37 points, in the season that came to be known as "The Last Dance". Sold for 2.2 million US dollars at Sotheby's in New York, the game-winning shoes became the most expensive ones ever to sell at an auction, exceeding the 1.8 million US dollars paid for the Nike Yeezys by Rares, a collectibles investment platform.

"Michael Jordan game-worn sports memorabilia has proven time and time again to be the most elite and coveted items on the market. However, items from his 'Last Dance' season are of a greater scale and magnitude as seen with our record-breaking sale of his Game 1 jersey in 2022", stated Brahm Wachter, Sotheby's head of streetwear and modern collectables prior to the sale. Jordan's Game 1 jersey from the 1998 finals fetched 10.1 million US dollars at a Sotheby's sale.

The Air Jordan 13 sneakers were the star in a sports memorabilia sale, which included items worn by athletes such as Tom Brady, Kobe Bryant and Roger Federer. But several other Jordan items were included in the two-part auction, with a game-worn 1998 Bulls jersey and a pair of 1985 Air Jordan 1s netting 508 million US dollars and 127 million US dollars, respectively. The buyer isn't known.



# ON THE RADAR

Here we uncover our sizzling selection of "Hot Picks" – a handpicked assortment of products that are turning up the heat in the market.

BY **DIPIKA CHOPRA**

## COACH BAGS WE'RE LOVING THIS SEASON



Looking to add a pop of colour to your wardrobe this season? Look no further than COACH, with bright and bold hues like sunny yellow, tropical orange, hot pink and turquoise, these bags are sure to make a statement wherever you go.

Get ready to turn heads this season with the hottest arm candy in town - Coach's Tabby bag! These versatile bags come in a range of quirky and playful colors that are sure to add some personality to any outfit.

Whether you're a fan of bucket bags, totes, crossbody bags or mini bags, we have picked the best bags from COACH's stunning collection, curated to offer you the best in style, quality, and exclusivity.

Upgrade your style game this season with Coach's colorful collection!



## ADIDAS ORIGINALS AND BAPE

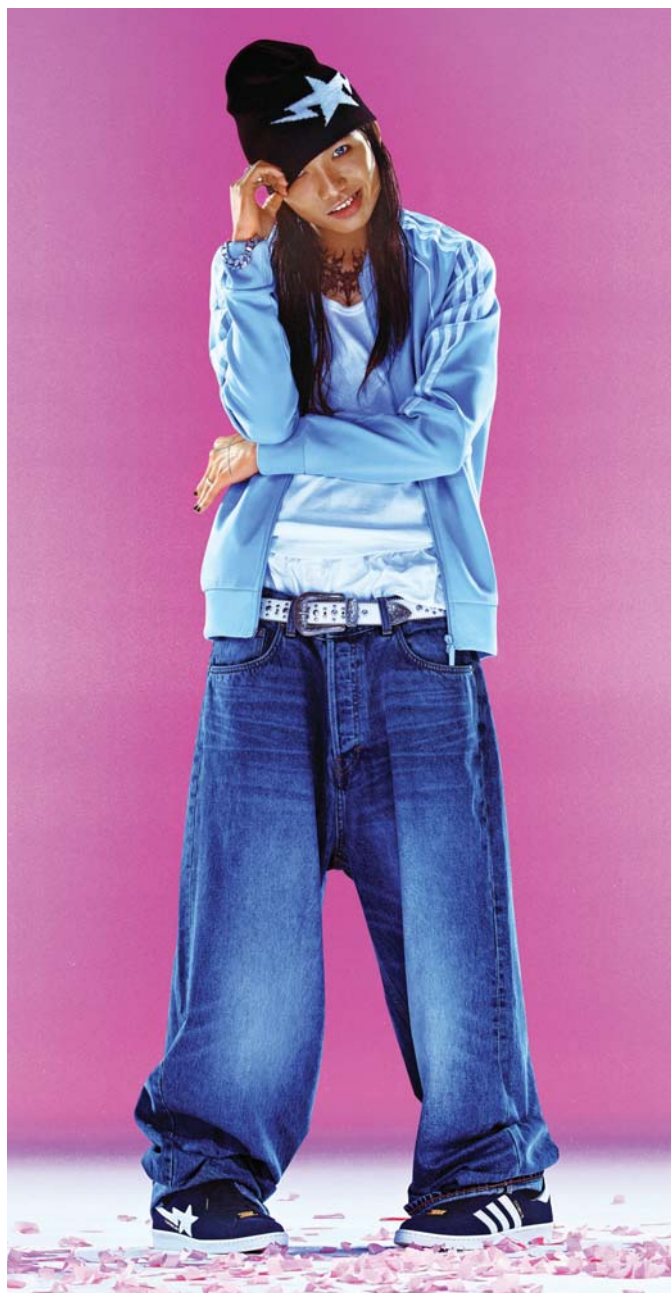


### About BAPE®

Situated in the heart of Tokyo, one of the leading fashion hubs of the world, Nowhere Co., LTD. strives to introduce Japanese fashion culture to the world. Since the brand's establishment in 1993, it has remained as a symbol of street fashion for more than 30 years. Thus far, it has produced iconic design items, original patterns and characters such as the "Ape Head", "BAPE® Camo", "BAPE STA™", "Shark Hoodie" and "Baby Milo®" etc. It has now expanded into men's, ladies' and kid's line and is carried throughout stores in Japan and also sold in US, UK, France, China, and various Asian countries.

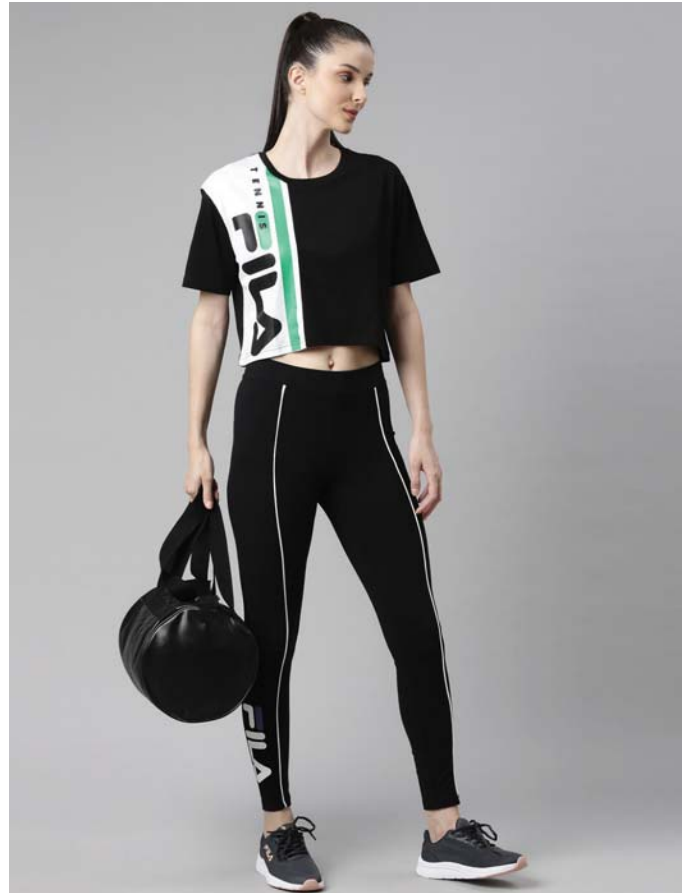
It has also created successful collaborations with established international brands and reputable artists. These collaborations are recognized as being genre less and flexible, not limited to fashion and apparel categories only.

Inspired by the rich sporting heritage of adidas - one of the world's leading sports brands and a global designer and developer of athletic footwear and apparel - adidas Originals is a lifestyle brand founded in 2001. With the adidas archive at its foundation, adidas Originals continues to evolve the brand's legacy through its commitment to product innovation and its ability to filter the creative and courage found on the courts and sporting arenas through the lens of contemporary youth culture. Marked by the iconic Trefoil logo that was first used in 1972 and championed by those that continue to shape and define creative culture, adidas Originals continues to lead the way as the pioneering sportswear brand for the street.



# FILA

Summer is here and it's the perfect time to dive in trendy athleisure sets, chunky sneakers and super cool accessories.





## PAKSHA BY TARINIKA LAUNCHES A REGAL MALACHITE



### Tamra Collection

Inspired by the beautifully patterned Malachite gemstone, the earliest ore of copper, Tamra is eccentric, contemporary, and distinctively classy. Paksha By Tarinika Introduces it's all-new and finest range "Malachite."

Bring in your inner goodness with Paksha's inspiring combination of Malachite gemstone with Handcrafted 925 hallmark silver and gold finish. This collection consists of Earrings, drops, bracelets & necklaces to match your everyday style and compliments with your outgoing plans too. This confident statement range will style you up from day to night.





## LUXURY ACCESSORY COLLECTION BY CORNELIANI

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Corneliani, a maverick in the market for luxury menswear, presents a unique range of accessories for fashion connoisseurs. The line includes striking accessories such as ties, belts, and pocket squares and is intended for today's unconventional, fashionable, and sharp men.

These wardrobe essentials are created for those who desire refinement and style and are an excellent collection for formal as well as casual settings. The several shade belts, travel bags, unique pocket squares, ties, and wallets from the assortment will make grooming for you a lot more interesting and fun. Elements of simplistic and subtle designs make the collection unique, classy, and distinctive.

A prominent international brand, Corneliani is distinguished by its commitment to heritage and quality, making it a must-have item for any man's wardrobe.





## SUNKISSED SUMMERS WITH MYARAA'S NEW COLLECTION

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Make the most of your summer holidays and spring break with Myaraa's latest collection.

Indulge in the luxurious elegance of Myaraa's Spring collection - a carefully curated selection of sustainably crafted headwear designed to elevate any outfit with effortless sophistication.





## RHEA KAPOOR X PIPA BELLA BRING A NOVEL COLLECTION THAT EXUDES POWER, RESILIENCE AND OLD SCHOOL GLAM



Nothing elevates everyday style like the right dash of accessories. Think about it. . . Your trusted hoop earrings, that one tiny shiny pendant or that one statement necklace can instantly turn an everyday look into an elegant one. Well, Pipa Bella by Nykaa Fashion is taking your everyday accessory game up a notch through its newest collaboration with the OG fashionista Rhea Kapoor. This fresh drop is packed with eye-catching pieces, each worthy of getting hooked to! So, get ready to ditch the layers this spring and let Pipa Bella add a dash of style to your breezy fits.



## EZOK : THE ALLURE OF LEATHER SLIPPERS

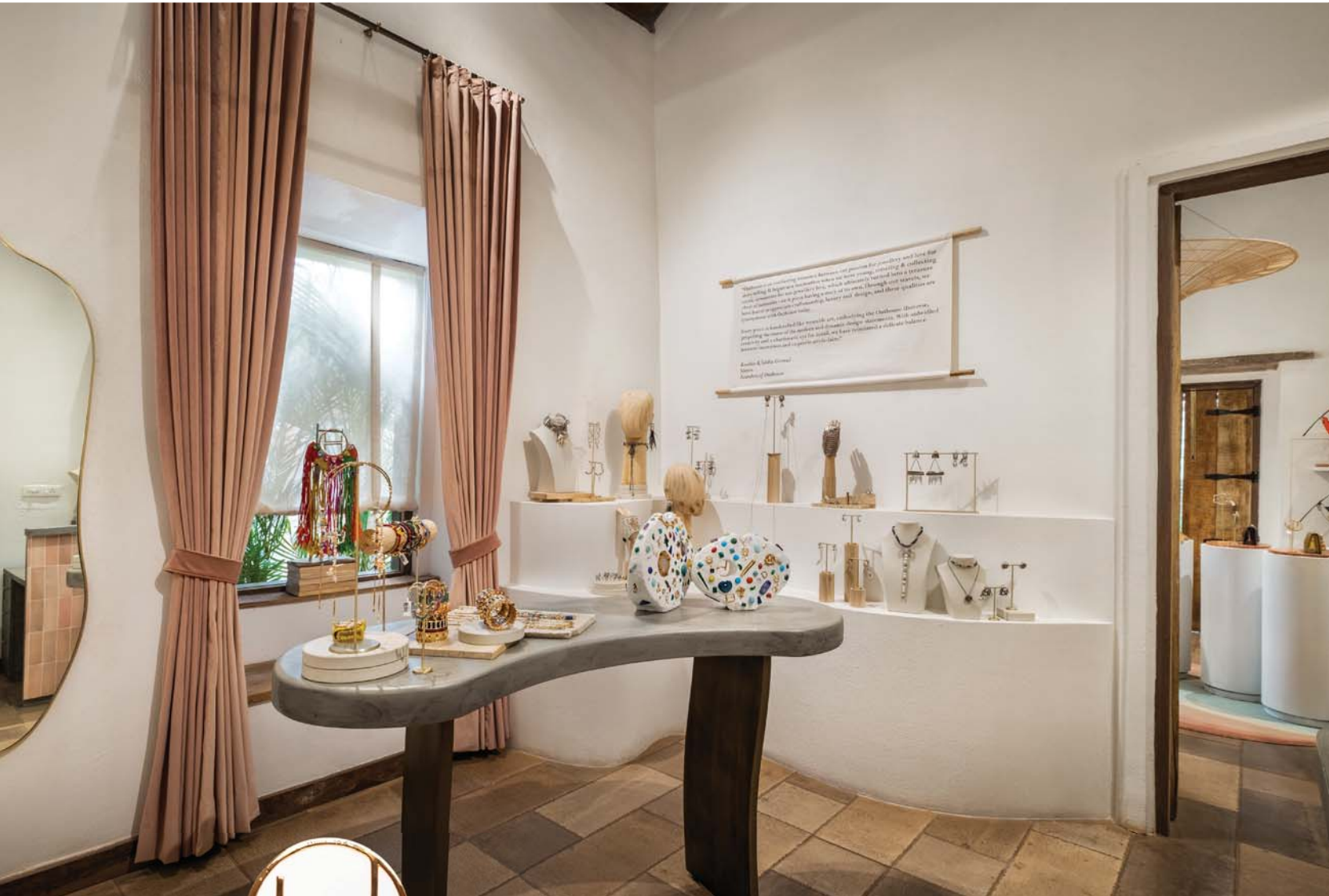


When it comes to footwear, few options offer the perfect blend of comfort, relaxation, and style quite like EZOK. The styles are effortless to wear and remove, making them convenient for everyday use, typically have a flexible sole and not limited to indoor use; they can also be worn for quick trips outside.

When it comes to footwear that combines sophistication, durability, and unmatched comfort, leather slippers stand out as a timeless choice. Crafted from high-quality leather, these slippers offer a touch of luxury while providing the utmost relaxation for your feet. Ezok Leather slippers exude a sense of sophistication and elegance that sets them apart from other types of footwear. The natural beauty of leather, with its smooth texture and subtle sheen, adds a touch of refinement to any ensemble. Whether you're relaxing at home or hosting guests, leather slippers effortlessly elevate your style and create an air of understated luxury. Available at all leading portals and [www.ezokshoes.com](http://www.ezokshoes.com)







## Outhouse Jewellery Gets A New Address

### The Much Loved Luxe Accessories Label Opens at Assagao, Goa

Founded by sisters Kaabia and Sasha Grewal in 2012, Outhouse is one of India's leading bridge jewellery houses

Contemporary, luxe jewellery label Outhouse by Kaabia and Sasha Grewal is expanding its retail network with their fifth store in the country! The new Outhouse Resort Boutique unveils this April in the holiday capital of the country : Goa. Set within a heritage Portuguese moradia or villa, the boutique at Assagao, Goa, portrays the vibrancy of the region through a soft melange of architectural styles with signature jewels. An eloquent design language blends with an extravagant holiday mood with the famed collection of jewels and bags create a lush style statement!

"Travel is a main source of inspiration for us and this essence is richly captured in this new location where we bring to life a season of resort wear chic. With the green gardens coming together with a dramatic experiential space, we are excited to present a complete Outhouse themed "reverie" to the global audience of Goa. The glam holiday spirit reigns through the year and we are down for it!", say the founders Kaabia & Sasha Grewal.





**About Outhouse For Goa: The Raffia Collection :**

With its new Resort Boutique in Goa, Outhouse unveils its eclectic raffia collection with a dynamic take on the power of colour. The drop displays the finesse of the House’s craftsmanship as the brand explores new-age materials with hand-knotting techniques and an irreplaceable couture spirit. Marking a trend of technicolour, the collection is envisioned with nostalgia from the nineties. Kaabia and Sasha Grewal, co-founders of the bridge-luxury brand, recollected memories from their sketchbooks when they visited their childhood home. Imperfect five-petal flowers were blooming in shades of tangerine, mustard and rani pink that instantly aroused a dopamine rush between the sisters. With jolts of this joy and progression, Outhouse translates the founders’ nostalgia to notable jewelled wonders.

The bespoke raffia collective is finished with a motley of gleaming metallic hardware and resin beads, and is perfect to accentuate your holiday style. The OH Poppi Monogram is sculpted in innovative ways to make surreal statements. Fashion a floral fantasy with the new bold bralette, geometric bags, chain belts, overlay dresses and artisanal earrings that made a high-wattage debut at Lakmé Fashion Week last summer.

Nishil Shah (Architectural Designer, Hasta Studio), describes the experiential space as a dramatic construction that marries Outhouse’s aesthetics with the city’s calm yet brimming attributes. The Portuguese charm is kept alive by retaining its beige stone flooring, high ceilings with terracotta tiles, teak wood doors and breezy windows. Complementing furnishings are handpicked in shades of coral and crimson. A bespoke addition to the boutique is a set of organic vases that reinterpret traditional ceramics with iconic metallic monograms and gemstones from various collections. Custom moulded with an intriguing sensibility by Geo Pottery, the vases deliver a dialogue of innovation. This dialogue is also captured in frames hooked to a wall that journals Outhouse’s craftsmanship process.







# Summer Style Unleashed

## Trend Guide for Your Perfect Holiday Look



From trendy caps and hats that add a touch of adventure to your 'vacay mode' to the coolest sunglasses that offer both style and sun protection, we've got you covered. Discover the timeless elegance of analog watches that will elevate your holiday ensemble, and embrace the vibrant spirit of the year's color Viva Magenta with our curated list of must-have footwear.



BY CHANDNI KUMAR MEHRA





# Viva Magenta Mania

## Embrace the Official Colour of 2023 in Style

From sneakers to flats and heels, there are endless possibilities to incorporate this eye-catching colour into your wardrobe. This trend-setting showcase will give your style an extra punch. Pack your bags, step into Magenta, and let your footwear ignite the spirit of summer!





# Travelling in Style

## Find your Perfect Fit!

Whether you're just starting or a seasoned traveller, finding the right luggage can make all the difference. From backpacks to suitcases and everything in between, this listicle features the top travel luggage products on the market exclusively available on Tata Cliq Luxury.





# The Art of Time

## Best analogue luxury watches for the discerning watch collector

In today's digital world, nothing quite compares to an analogue luxury watch's timeless beauty and elegance. This listicle highlights the top high-end luxury watches on the market, featuring exceptional craftsmanship, innovative designs, and unmatched precision, making them a must-have for any watch enthusiast.



# Shades of Perfection

## Discover the Best Sunglasses for Every Occasion

Whether you're hitting the beach, attending a music festival, or just running errands, a great pair of sunglasses can complete your look and protect your eyes from the sun. This article showcases the top sunglasses products on the market, offering something for every style, budget, and occasion.





# Hat-ventures Await

## Caps & Hats That Will Make You Travel-Ready

From snap-worthy sun hats that scream “vacay mode” to quirky caps that add a dash of whimsy, we’ve scoured the fashion globe to bring you the most extraordinary headgear for your summer escapades. Whether you’re lounging on a tropical beach or exploring bustling cities, these head-turning hats will have you feeling like the ultimate globetrotter.





# The Art of Influence

## Insights from a Successful Fashion & Lifestyle Influencer

Discover the secrets behind **Sejal Kumar's** meteoric rise to being one of the industry's most sought-after fashion and lifestyle influencers.

BY CHANDNI KUMAR MEHRA

**Can you share your fashion & lifestyle influencer journey with us and how you've set yourself apart in the industry? What makes your approach unique and appealing to brands?**

I've been creating content since 2014, covering fashion, lifestyle, music, and even acting in web series. My approach is to develop consistent, concept-heavy content that relates to my life personally. I focus on organic content for my viewers and building a good product. When I work with a brand,

the video is appreciated more because I cater to my audience first 95% of the time.

**What are your key strategies when collaborating with brands to ensure successful partnerships? How do you tailor your content to resonate with different target audiences?**

My strategy is to have enough organic content. I look at brand deals as a short ad break between most of my content rather than the entirety of it. I have one target audience that has evolved, and I try my best

to reach them as well as possible.

**What do you consider to be your most valuable strengths as an influencer? How do they benefit the brands you collaborate with across various sectors?**

My strength is storytelling across my interests - fashion, music videos, and lifestyle content. I love playing with writing and visuals to create something engaging. Integrating brands in my storytelling helps the audience relate to the product and me.



**How do you stay ahead of industry trends and continuously innovate your content to ensure it remains relevant and engaging for your audience and potential brand partners?**

I don't bother about staying ahead of industry trends, as every time I try to, I realize I'm caught up in the rat race and not enjoying what I'm doing. Instead, I have embraced that there will be ups and downs, and it's essential to keep growing my skills and evolving my content.

**Can you share examples of how you've leveraged emerging technologies or trends to enhance your influence? How has this benefited your brand collaborations?**

Using tools to empower my content has helped me position myself bigger than ever today. The gift of the internet and social networking has opened up many opportunities.

**Which skills have contributed most to your success as an influencer? How do these skills translate into positive outcomes for your partner brands?**

Keeping my content and storytelling first has contributed the most to my success as an influencer. I customize the brands' integration into my storytelling, helping the audience relate to the product and me.

**What are the top three insights or lessons you've learned throughout your journey that have contributed to becoming a sought-after influencer across multiple categories?**

Three valuable insights have played a vital role in my success as an influencer. Firstly, consistency is key, and I focus on delivering high-quality content regularly, which has helped me build a loyal following over time. Secondly, I prioritize creating organic content that resonates with my audience. I engage my followers and foster a strong connection with them by staying true to myself and maintaining authenticity. Lastly, I approach every brand campaign with dedication and give my best effort. This commitment has allowed me to build a solid portfolio of successful collaborations, leading to brands seeking partnerships across various categories.

**As the influencer marketing landscape evolves, how do you plan to adapt and maintain your value proposition for future brand collaborations in the fashion & lifestyle industry?**

I plan to continue being authentic to what comes naturally, always be in touch with my followers, and keep experimenting with my fashion.

**SEJAL KUMAR**

@sejalkumar1195  
845k



**If your target audience was a stylish accessory, what would it be?**

My audience would be like a handbag; they are essential and have a mix of everything.

**What's a fun, catchy phrase that encapsulates your content style?**

Fashion has to reflect who you are.

**If your content were a fashion accessory, what would it be and why?**

My content would be a pair of cool sunglasses because I always try to shift perspectives and turn the tables.

**What was the "Cinderella moment" that transformed your follower count?**

It was a consistent process; nothing happened overnight. I just enjoyed doing what I did and kept doing more, eventually building a community that supported my work.

**Share a recent shoe, accessory campaign, or brand partnership you're head over heels for.**

I am currently in love with the 2023 summer collection by Charles and Keith.

**What's your magic formula for mixing sponsored content with organic posts?**

I look at brand deals as a short ad break between most of my content rather than the entirety. I focus on reaching my audience, whether it's through my story or a brand's story.

**Tell us about a fashion "faux-pas" you've experienced in your career and the lesson you learned from it.**

Wearing outfits that don't fit well taught me to prioritize finding clothes that fit comfortably and flatter my body.

**What's your only advice for brands looking to step into the world of influencer collaborations?**

My advice to aspiring digital creators is to focus on consistency and content. Once those two things come together, everything else will fall into place.

**What's your secret sauce for aspiring Instagram influencers aiming to make a statement on social media?**

Be yourself and work on being your most authentic self.











# Rising stars of the Digital Landscape

BY CHANDNI KUMAR MEHRA





## RISHIKA KHERA

### If your target audience were a stylish accessory, what would it be?

A sleek, versatile sling bag with a smartphone holder and ample space to carry other essentials, which is ergonomic, practical, and stylish.

### What's a fun, catchy phrase that encapsulates your content style?

Chic, sharp, and always on-trend: "Fashion With Flair."

### If your content were a fashion accessory, what would it be and why?

A pair of statement earrings - eye-catching and expressive.

### What was the "Cinderella moment" that transformed your follower count?

When Instagram introduced the collaborative post feature, it changed the game for me. Being featured on other people's pages drew attention to my content and expanded my reach to a broader Instagram audience.

### How many hours per week do you walk in the shoes of an influencer, juggling all the related tasks?

A 24/7 hustle, no rest for the fashionably fierce.

### Share a recent shoe, accessory campaign, or brand partnership you're head over heels for.

I recently partnered with a pre-loved luxury brand called "Tangerine Luxury." It was an absolute dream collaboration. It opened my eyes to the massive demand in the pre-loved luxury market. This collaboration became a significant highlight for me.

### What's your magic formula for mixing sponsored content with organic posts?

Seamlessly integrate brand messaging with authentic, symbolic storytelling. By blending sponsored and organic content, the viewer remains engaged, and there is greater relatability and reliability, fostering loyalty among followers.

### Tell us about a fashion "faux-pas" you've experienced in your career and the lesson you learned from it.

Wearing a High Street Fashion ensemble for a Boho-themed night was a faux pas. The lesson learned was always to double-check the dress code for events.

### What's your only advice for brands looking to step into the world of influencer collaborations?

Align values and aesthetics, prioritize long-term partnerships over one-off deals, and remember that follower counts are essential but should not overshadow other important aspects.

### What's your secret sauce for aspiring Instagram influencers aiming to make a statement on social media?

Consistency, authenticity, and creating a unique and personal brand identity. These ingredients will help aspiring influencers stand out and make a meaningful impact on social media.



## RATNIKA VYAS

### If your target audience were a stylish accessory, what would it be?

Jewellery! It's in my name, Ratnika, given to me by my grandmother. It means the finest jewel. I adore timeless pieces and trendy creations from new brands made with love.

### What's a fun, catchy phrase that encapsulates your content style?

Be your kind of beautiful!

### If your content were a fashion accessory, what would it be and why?

I recommend a versatile bag encompassing all kinds of luxury and lifestyle content.

### What was the "Cinderella moment" that transformed your follower count?

Starring as the lead actress in my Netflix series, "Bonafide Bride."

### How many hours per week do you walk in the shoes of an influencer, juggling all the related tasks?

All the time. Instagram and offline shooting are windows, but it's important to shine as an example of walking the talk. Discipline, sincerity, and earnestness one should embrace at all times!

### Share a recent shoe, accessory campaign, or brand partnership you're head over heels for.

I absolutely love Feeta Official, a California-based shoe brand that creates luxurious statement handmade shoes. I have a pair with gold embellishments on a Rani pink shoe made from saree-like fabric. It can be worn with anything, literally!

### What's your magic formula for mixing sponsored content with organic posts?

I make the brand managers laugh by finding relatable humour in situations. Sales happen naturally, but the goal is to make the brand feel remembered with your ideas.

### Tell us about a fashion "faux-pas" you've experienced in your career and the lesson you learned from it.

Once, I wore a highly established label's saree with embellished mirror work, and it cut my wrist, causing me to bleed while hosting an event. I wish I had chosen my or my mom's saree for comfort instead of prioritizing fashion.  
Lesson learned: prioritize comfort and safety.

### What's your only advice for brands looking to step into the world of influencer collaborations?

Be collaborative and think beyond your growth. Joining forces is helpful and selfless. It's about fostering organic partnerships that are more appreciated.

### What's your secret sauce for aspiring Instagram influencers aiming to make a statement on social media?

Be yourself and stop caring about others' opinions. Your tribe will find you if you're comfortable with who you are and honest about it. It's not easy at first, with likes and engagement impacting us, but consistency and patience are key. Being wholesome and completely honest is the sexiest accessory appreciated by all.

@ratnikavyas

42.9k





## VRINDA KHER

### If your target audience were a stylish accessory, what type would it be?

I would say my target audience would be big studs – bold, eye-catching, and making a statement wherever they go!

### Can you share a catchy phrase that encapsulates your content style?

“Whoever said fashion can’t be fun, clearly hasn’t seen my page!” I believe in bringing joy and excitement to fashion.

### If your content were a fashion accessory, what would it be and why?

If my content were a fashion accessory, it would be cuffs/bracelets. Just like my content, cuffs or bracelets add the perfect touch of style while maintaining elegance and simplicity.

### What was the “Cinderella moment” that transformed your follower count?

I had a Cinderella moment when I shared my Indian looks from a wedding I attended. People resonated with it, and my follower count skyrocketed!

### How many hours do you invest weekly in your influencer career and related tasks?

I dedicate around 6 hours a day, approximately 42 hours a week, to my influencer career. But honestly, I’m always learning, observing trends, and discovering new brands. Being an influencer is a lifestyle that I embrace fully.

### Can you share an accessory campaign or brand partnership for which you’re head over heels?

I’m head over heels for Kate Spade’s Spring Summer Collection. It celebrates women of all age groups and perfectly aligns with my style and values.

### What’s your secret formula for mixing sponsored content with organic posts?

There’s no magic formula, but I ensure that my sponsored posts maintain my aesthetics and vibrant presentation just like my organic posts. I follow a ratio of 5:1, prioritizing non-sponsored posts and making sure my audience enjoys the content I create.

### Can you share a memorable fashion “faux-pas” you’ve experienced in your career and the lesson you learned from it?

One memorable fashion faux-pas I’ve seen is wearing stained and un-ironed clothes. Fortunately, my mother taught me well, and I’ve never made that mistake. It taught me the importance of presenting yourself well and paying attention to details.

### What’s your top advice for brands looking to partner with influencers?

Research and get to know the influencer well before collaborating. This not only helps the brand make the right choice but also allows the influencer to deliver their best work.

### What’s your secret sauce for aspiring Instagram influencers looking to make an impact on social media?

Well, it’s a secret sauce, but I’ll share it with you! Be yourself and present things in a way that reflects your unique perspective. Don’t get caught up in copying others. Run the race on your own track, and eventually, you’ll surpass the competition.



## SHENA ARORA

### **If your target audience were a stylish accessory, what type would it be?**

My target audience would be a trendy watch: versatile, dependable, and effortlessly stylish.

### **Can you share a catchy phrase that encapsulates your content style?**

"Unapologetically authentic and always on-trend" sums up my content style perfectly.

### **If your content were a fashion accessory, what would it be and why?**

My content would be a pair of statement earrings: bold, eye-catching, and versatile enough to elevate any outfit.

### **What was the "Cinderella moment" that transformed your follower count?**

Consistent effort to create high-quality, engaging content and connect with my audience authentically over time transformed my follower count.

### **How many hours do you invest weekly in your influencer career and related tasks?**

Fortunately, I have a team to help me with the behind-the-scenes work, but I'm still involved in influencer-related tasks for around 15-20 hours per week.

### **Can you share an accessory campaign or brand partnership for which you're head over heels?**

I recently collaborated with Kate Spade for their Mother's Day campaign, which was an incredible experience. The chic and playful designs perfectly matched my style. I had the freedom to create content that resonated with my audience while showcasing the beauty and functionality of the products.

### **What's your secret formula for mixing sponsored content with organic posts?**

I only collaborate with brands that align with my values and aesthetics, ensuring that sponsored content is still valuable and exciting to my audience. I also balance sponsored posts with organic content to maintain authenticity.

### **Can you share a memorable fashion "faux-pas" you've experienced in your career and the lesson you learned from it?**

I wore a dress to an event that looked great on the hanger but didn't flatter my body type. I learnt to always try on clothes before buying them and to prioritize comfort and fit over trends.

### **What's your top advice for brands looking to partner with influencers?**

Focus on building genuine relationships with influencers and finding those whose values and audience align with your brand rather than solely focusing on follower count. Allow influencers creative freedom to showcase your product authentically and engagingly.

### **What's your secret sauce for aspiring Instagram influencers looking to impact social media?**

Authenticity, consistency, and a willingness to take risks and experiment with new content formats and ideas. Prioritize building genuine connections with your audience and fellow influencers in your niche.

@snehaarora197  
500k



# Continuous Transformation

## ALBERTO TORRESI



Director Ishaan Sachdeva is working to bring a youthful energy and new approach to stay fresh – and in 2023 that means giving customers plenty of choice.



**A**lberto Torresi is an Indian footwear brand that specializes in crafting stylish and high-quality shoes for men. The brand is known for its wide range of footwear options, including formal shoes, casual shoes, boots, and sandals. Alberto Torresi focuses on creating shoes that combine comfort, durability, and contemporary designs to cater to the modern man's fashion needs. The brand emphasizes using premium materials and skilled craftsmanship in the production of its footwear. With a reputation for offering fashionable and functional shoes, Alberto Torresi has gained popularity among customers looking for reliable and stylish footwear options.

Ishaan Sachdeva shared his views with Amit Chopra, S&A...

**How has the brand evolved since its inception?**

Since the inception of Alberto Torresi, there have been significant transformations in the Indian economy. These changes include the introduction of demonetization, the implementation of GST, multiple alterations in the excise regime, and the rise of e-commerce. Furthermore, the impact of COVID-19 has also affected the e-commerce sector. As a result, we have undergone numerous adjustments. Initially, we operated solely as an offline brand, starting with 70 stores and eventually expanding to 800 multi-branded outlets. However, due to the macroeconomic changes and the country's evolving preferences, we had to scale back and focus more on e-commerce. The field of e-commerce itself has experienced various changes since its inception, including shifts in business practices and the adoption of the current marketplace model. Presently, our primary sales approach revolves around the marketplace model. Additionally, we have made significant improvements to our product styling and range. Previously, we only offered formal leather products, but we have expanded to include alternative materials and a wider variety of styles. While our ladies' range is currently limited, we have plans to expand it in the coming year.

**Tell us about the most significant milestones the brand has achieved in the past year?**

When we consider our milestones, it is important to acknowledge that surviving amidst numerous changes is a significant accomplishment. However, beyond that, we take pride in being one of the top players in the industry. One of our noteworthy milestones is the establishment of a robust web store that generates a substantial portion of our revenue. This achievement is significant

“**WHEN WE CONSIDER OUR MILESTONES, IT IS IMPORTANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT SURVIVING AMIDST NUMEROUS CHANGES IS A SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENT.**”

because Alberto has managed to cultivate a loyal customer base who regularly make purchases from our online platform. Additionally, we have successfully retained a substantial customer segment who prefer to buy from our physical branch stores. This accomplishment is a testament to our brand's success.

**How has the pandemic affected your business?**

The onset of the pandemic compelled us, like many others, to undergo significant changes. One notable transformation was our approach

to sourcing materials. Previously, we heavily relied on imports from China. However, the pandemic prompted us to explore local sourcing options and leverage local capabilities. Additionally, there was a substantial enhancement in our technological capabilities. This improvement encompassed various aspects, including better product creation, streamlined ordering processes, efficient processing methods, and enhanced styling. The increased penetration of e-commerce allowed for greater exposure and improved information mining, thereby revolutionizing how products were launched.

In the past, product launches were relatively static, occurring only two to four times a year. However, with the evolution of e-commerce, launches now take place on a weekly basis. This injection of novelty has significantly influenced our perception and evaluation of products. Our strong online presence, particularly through our own website, has played a crucial role in this regard. It enables us to launch a product, assess its performance, and make informed decisions regarding inventory management. Consequently, we can determine whether substantial inventory investments are necessary.

**How do you stay competitive?**

Ultimately, our goal is to manufacture products that resonate with our customers in terms of material, fit, and design. We tailor our manufacturing process to meet the expectations and preferences of our customer base. With our exposure to global trends and standards, we have the advantage of being at the forefront of international looks. We can seamlessly adapt these global styles to suit the Indian market, allowing us to remain competitive in this highly competitive industry.



“

**WE UTILIZE A WHATSAPP BOT, A CHAT BOT, EMAIL, PHONE, AND VIRTUALLY EVERY POSSIBLE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION WITH OUR CUSTOMERS.”**

Furthermore, we are dedicated to experimentation. Leveraging the capabilities of our website, we engage in frequent small-scale product launches to gauge their success. These test launches enable us to infuse freshness into our range. Even within our core category, we continuously explore various styles to determine the direction our designs should take. This constant experimentation ensures that we stay innovative and in tune with the evolving preferences of our customers.

### On Recent product launches

Recently, we have made significant strides in introducing a more casual and contemporary approach to our footwear. We conducted a small launch of these new designs, which has received a positive response. In the past, our products leaned towards a classical and conservative style, but now we are embracing a more youthful and vibrant aesthetic. This shift allows us to test and explore new directions as we continue to evolve.

Sustainability is a key principle we uphold in our manufacturing processes and our choice of factories to collaborate with. We prioritize working with factories that adhere to proper testing standards, not only in terms of chemical compositions but also in overall production practices. Additionally, we have expanded our range to include non-leather alternatives, further contributing to our commitment to sustainability.

### Company's vision for the future

The next phase in our company's journey involves reestablishing our offline channel. Initially, we deliberately controlled our offline presence due to various factors and limitations. However, our goal is to relaunch the offline stores by the middle of 2024, aiming for at least five new locations. While the growth in the e-commerce sector has been intriguing and presented its challenges, we have successfully addressed the disruptions in sourcing and have set



up a solid foundation for e-commerce growth. Currently, our focus remains on leveraging the potential of e-commerce. Nevertheless, we are committed to expanding our reach and customer touchpoints by reintroducing offline stores soon.

### On international expansion

We have made attempts at international expansions in the past, but unfortunately, they did not yield the desired results. However, we are actively seeking new and promising partnerships that specialize in international e-commerce. It has been intriguing to witness the emergence of new policies that facilitate international e-commerce, and we are considering this as a potential avenue for growth. While I cannot confirm if it will happen this year or in 2024, expanding internationally is a goal we have set for ourselves. We aim to make significant progress in this direction by the end of 2024.

### What role does technology play in the design and production of your footwear?

We begin by ensuring accurate data collection, followed by data processing, responding to the information, and implementing necessary adjustments. Additionally, we utilize advanced technology for researching compatibility and references, which we incorporate into the product's essence. Moreover, our website continuously receives new features, and we have plans to launch an app soon. Excitingly, we are currently progressing towards developing AI-driven design concepts, which will eventually shape our final product.

### How does the brand engage with customers and gather feedback to improve products and overall brand experience?

We have established various channels for feedback management. We utilize a WhatsApp bot, a chat bot, email, phone, and virtually every possible means of communication with our customers. We also actively engage on social media platforms. Our aim is to be readily available and responsive to our customers, catering to their preferred method of communication. Furthermore, we are committed to enhancing this process by investing in AI technologies, which will lead to a smoother and more refined experience. This will allow us to effectively gather feedback from our end customers and better understand their perception of our products and services.







MICHAEL ANGELO  
SHOE-MAKERS



## SUMMER COLLECTION 2023

Unleash your inner fashionista with our trend-setting summer collection. From vibrant sandals to chic loafers, each pair is meticulously crafted to ensure you step out in confidence wherever your summer adventures take you.





# Responsible Retailer

## TRENDS FOOTWEAR

Kumar Nitesh, CEO of Reliance Retail Limited Footwear Business turns around the footwear business which embodies brands Trends Footwear, Reliance Footprint, Payless, Lee Cooper and Catwalk in its portfolio and he is primarily focused on delivering outstanding customer service.

**N**itesh explains, "Our partners operate in various sectors, including retail, manufacturing, supply chain, wholesaling, and consumption. However, we always remain in the background, supporting the brands, rather than being at the forefront."

While the central focus of the company involves procuring and negotiating products for various brands, Nitesh mentions that they are also expanding their operations to include private label management and data management divisions.

### On Imperatives for the Retail Industry

Nitesh states "Although the core principles remain the same, customers' demands have escalated significantly, and as retailers we must actively respond to this situation. At Trends footwear we are seizing the chance to attract new customers by applying insights gained from the previous year and allocating

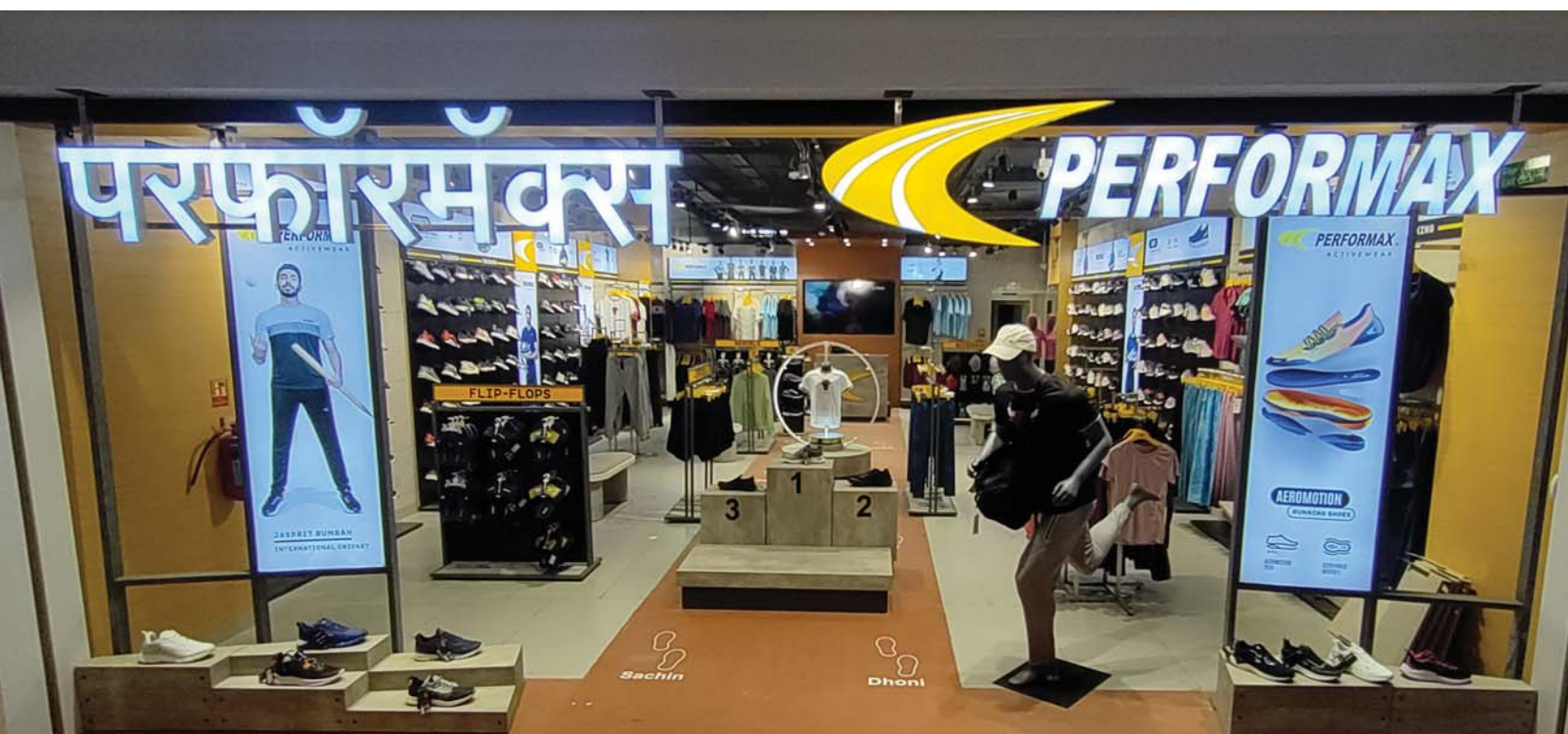
resources to develop effective approaches for serving customers excellently, regardless of their shopping preferences."

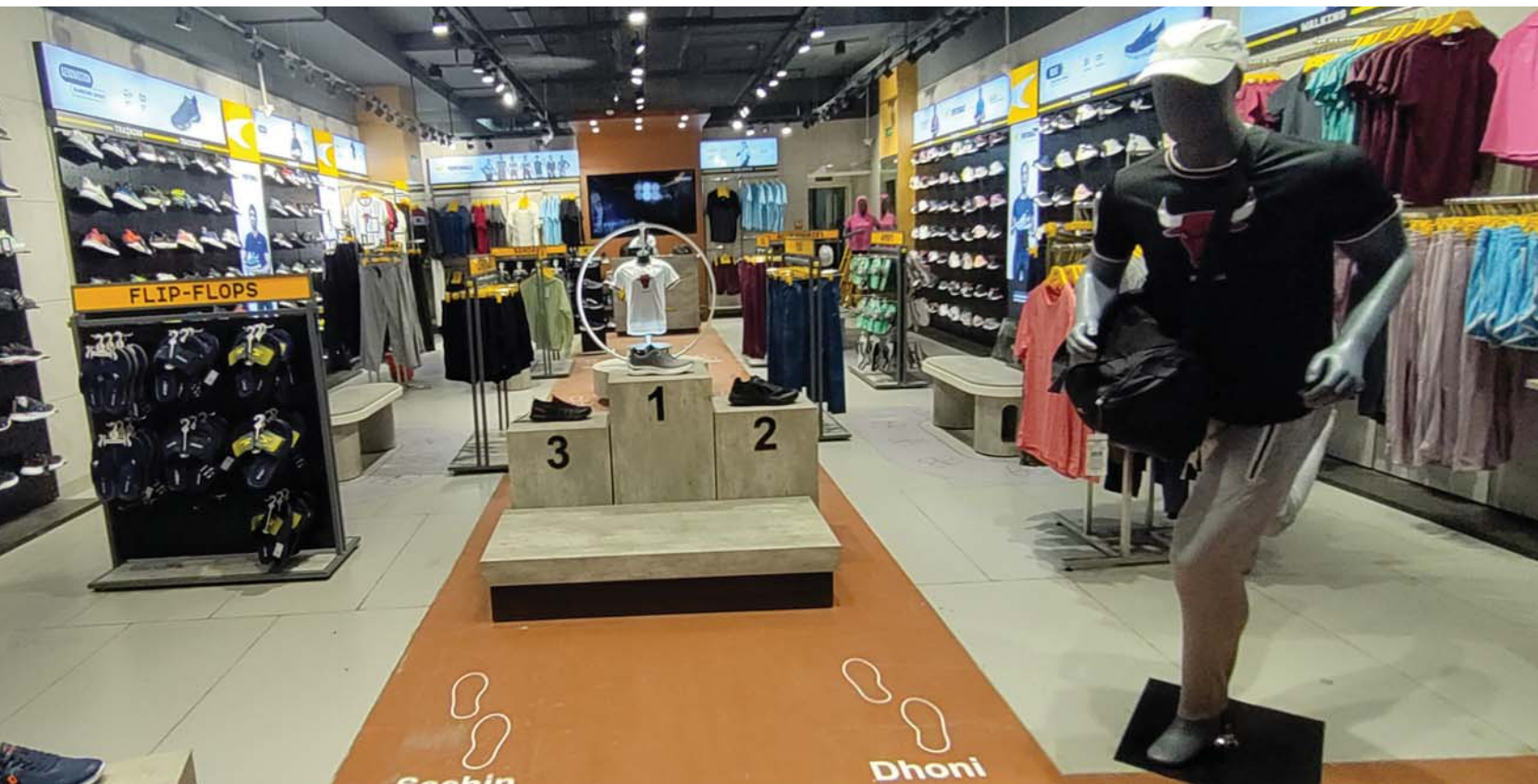
"With the onset of COVID-19 in March 2020, retail establishments nationwide were compelled to close their doors, consequently compelling consumers to alter their purchasing habits. This unprecedented event swiftly propelled the course of retail evolution, resulting in a greater magnitude of transformation within a year than what the industry had experienced in several decades. Presently, consumers are expressing their preferences for sustainability and a broader sense of purpose through their purchasing decisions. I suppose one-third of the participants discontinue their usage of a brand due to its social actions, and I am sure many would permanently lose trust in a brand if it prioritized profits over people. Concurrently, consumers are also willing to pay a higher price for products that align with their personal values." He added.

### On Growth

Corporate social responsibility encompasses a broad spectrum of business activities and has reached a significant stage of maturity. Companies have truly started to act upon their commitment to the communities they serve, the environment, and their employees. They actively monitor and evaluate their performance and accomplishments in these domains. This function has now become integral to the core operations of every business.

"In our case, certain objectives that were originally projected to be achieved in five years have now become attainable within a three-year timeframe. It is essential for us to swiftly comprehend how to effectively meet the needs of these consumers and expedite our timelines accordingly. Both enhancing customer experiences and efficient order fulfillment serve as crucial purposes for brick-and-mortar stores. As we proceed with the evolution of our omnichannel strategy, we will persistently adapt and redefine the





role of physical stores to align with our overarching objectives.

### Innovation as critical

With a solid five-year tenure at TRENDS FOOTWEAR, as well as holding various positions on the executive board in his previous stint, Nitesh possesses extensive experience in high-level roles. This background has positioned him well to effectively tackle the challenges that have emerged in recent years.

Not surprisingly, Nitesh identifies the availability and pricing of goods as two significant challenges for the business. The organization faced a situation where some individuals believed it was crucial to introduce something entirely innovative post pandemic. Despite these obstacles, Nitesh reveals that the company successfully created new brand lines and opened 550+ store openings in new cities across India amidst the crisis. Furthermore, they effectively orchestrated acquired strong regional retail chains and brands.

### Sticking to the strategy

The entire group places significant emphasis on sustainability management as a key strategic objective. TRENDS FOOTWEAR faces the challenge of overseeing the development of these goals and collecting the substantial amount of data required to inform and evaluate them. "One of the primary challenges is to establish a system where suppliers can input all their product data, such as the quantity of plastic used in a product, enabling us to analyze it," Nitesh explains. According to Nitesh, the management

of these challenges shares a common strategic approach. He emphasizes the importance of developing a solid foundational strategy and a clear strategic position for the company. Furthermore, he emphasizes the need to stay focused and committed to that strategy, drawing on lessons learned from his experience with several exceptional mentors.

### Sustaining longevity is crucial

According to Nitesh, maintaining strong relationships with suppliers is crucial due to the complexity of logistics resulting from products sourced from multiple manufacturers and sources. Engaging suppliers in long-term contracts is one way they foster and sustain these relationships.

"Within these long-term contracts, we negotiate prices based on raw materials, but the partnerships are usually very stable," Nitesh explains. "These agreements have facilitated the availability of products during critical situations. We have been informed by suppliers that they do not support other wholesalers and retailers due to their practice of frequently switching partners within short time frames. Consequently, we refrain from adopting such a strategy."

The next phase for TRENDS FOOTWEAR extends beyond existing locations. Nitesh reveals that they are in discussions with potential partners across India who are interested in their expertise in private label management, based on their successful track records.

Nitesh attributes his success to the guidance of several exceptional mentors and highlights the importance of

developing a strong fundamental strategy and strategic position for a company, emphasizing the need for focus and commitment to that strategy.

### Leading with purpose

According to Nitesh, the secret sauce that has been responsible for the chains immense success is in fact, the people working behind the scenes.

"It's all about the people," Kumar tells S&A Magazine. "You must focus especially on your internal people. Value them. Treat them well. Bring them in for the ride. Have them at the table and listen to their voices."

### About Trends Footwear

Trends Footwear is an exclusive fashion footwear destination store with a collection to suit one and all. Trends Footwear houses latest, trendy and fashionable footwear for men, women and children. Trends Footwear houses domestic brands, International brands, and a host of Reliance Retail-owned private labels for women, men, and children. Currently, it operates across 700 plus point of sale in 355 cities across the country.

### About Performax

Performax retails from EBOs, 1000+ Trends & Trends Footwear stores, Centro, Fashion Factory, Shoppers Stop, Lifestyle and Ajo.com

**Shoes:** Training, Running, Lifestyle, Walking.

**Apparel:** T-shirts, Shorts, Track pants, jackets, leggings, compression wear, Polos, Sports bra etc.





**PERFORMAX**®

ACTIVEWEAR

FOOTWEAR

APPAREL

ACCESSORIES

SWEAT IT.  
GET IT.

THE NEXT GEN  
IN ATHLETIC UPGRADES  
IS HERE



FOLLOW US



SHOP NOW



AVAILABLE AT



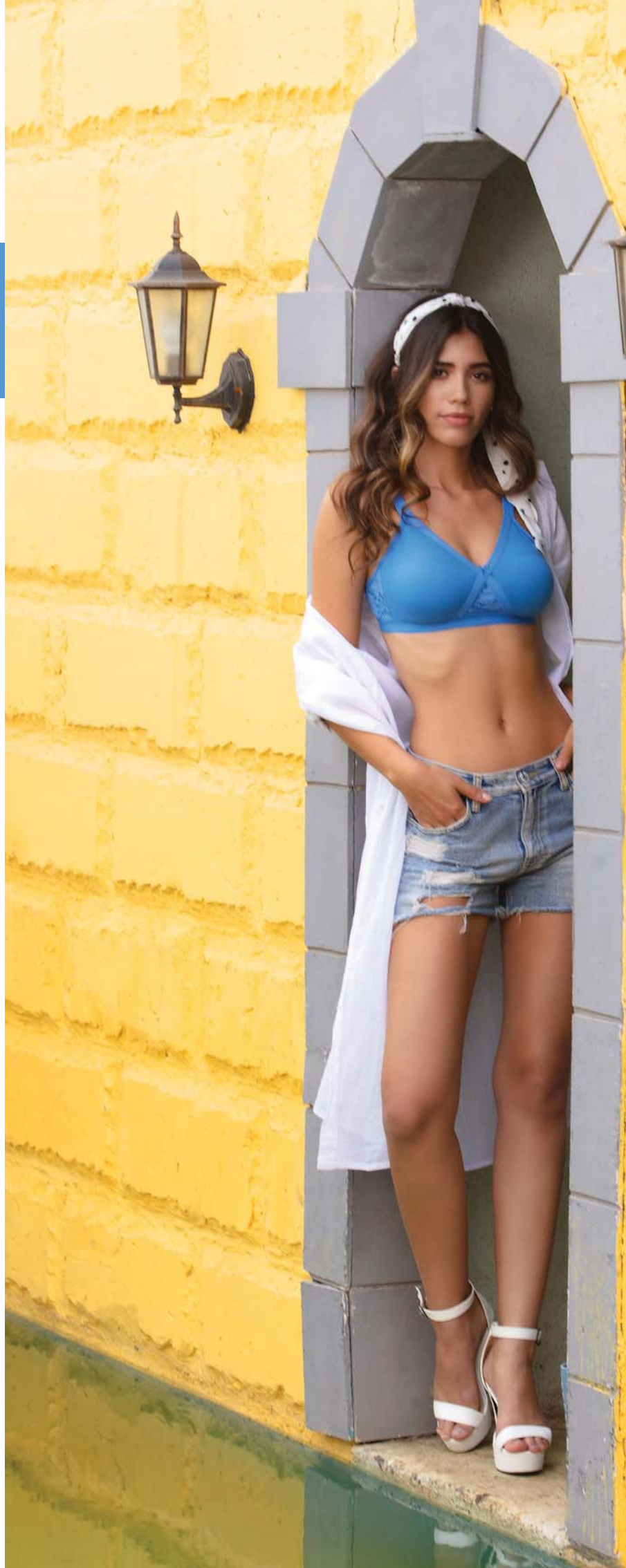
PERFORMAX STORES, AJIO.COM, TRENDS & TRENDS FOOTWEAR

# “Intimate Innovators”

## “Candyskin’s Founders Elevate the Accessories Game”

Dive into this exclusive interview where founders of Candyskin, Richa and Riya Kalra share their insights on the evolution of the intimate wear accessories market, the role of e-commerce and social media, and the impact of industry innovations. Learn how they engage their target audience, approach collaborations, and envision the future of intimate accessories in India.

BY CHANDNI KUMAR MEHRA







Richa Kalra



Riya Kalra



**As entrepreneurs in the intimate wear industry, how have you observed the evolution of the accessories market in recent years?**

When we began selling accessories, only some brands were offering them. Over time, as sales increased, we expanded our accessory line. Trust plays a crucial role when people purchase accessories since they come into contact with the skin. Our brand already has a reputation for selling high-quality products, aiding our accessory sales.

**In your opinion, what are the key factors driving the accessories market growth within the intimate wear segment in India?**

Brands like ours are incredibly mindful of the quality of our accessories, ensuring they are comfortable and gentle on the skin. We thoroughly test each addition to guarantee high-grade silicone materials and hypoallergenic adhesives suitable for sensitive skin types. Our accessories are reusable, easy to store, and simple to clean, contributing to their popularity.

**Can you share your thoughts on the role of e-commerce and social media in shaping the intimate wear accessories market, both in India and globally?**

Social media and e-commerce play a significant role in educating customers about wearing, using, storing, and cleaning intimate wear accessories. Social media is a valuable tool for customers seeking relevant information to make informed choices.

**How important is it for brands in the intimate wear segment to have a strong accessories portfolio, and how do you believe it impacts their overall brand image and customer experience?**

A robust accessories portfolio is crucial for brands in the intimate wear segment, as these products typically have lower average selling prices, making them an accessible entry point for new customers. Additionally, these accessories often incorporate elements already used in lingerie manufacturing, such as hook and eye closures or transparent straps, ensuring a cohesive product line.

**Much of your target audience is active on digital and social media. What is your strategy to engage the target consumers through these channels? How has the response been so far?**

Since around 33% of social media users are young, our digital platform targets this influential audience. We create relatable and informative content that resonates with our customers and educates them on using our products, wearing them, pairing them, cleaning, and storing them. The response has been positive so far, as our audience finds value in our content.


**Can you discuss any innovations or trends you have observed in the intimate wear accessories market that are particularly interesting or potentially impact the industry significantly?**

We recently introduced boob tapes to our accessory line, which are versatile and suitable for all sizes. They provide a new solution for women with larger chests who previously struggled to find the proper support. Another exciting innovation is fashion tape, a versatile product used in various ways, such as replacing safety pins for shirts. These tapes are easy to use, travel-friendly, and help prevent clothing mishaps.







A woman with long brown hair, wearing a bright red bikini and white sneakers, is posing in front of a yellow wall. Above her is a window with green shutters and a flower box filled with colorful flowers. She is smiling and looking towards the camera.

**As founders of Candyskin, how do you approach collaborations or partnerships with other brands or businesses in the accessories industry to enhance your product offerings or market reach?**

We continually seek cross-marketing opportunities with brands that have a similar target audience. Our strategy involves running cross-promotional campaigns using shared promo codes. In addition to accessory brands, we explore collaborations with various categories targeting a similar audience, broadening our market reach and product offerings.

**How do you envision the future of the intimate wear accessories market in India, and what opportunities do you see for new and existing brands in this space?**

The intimate wear accessories market in India is primarily volume-based and driven by online sales. We always stay up-to-date with global trends and products, conducting trials before producing large volumes. As we educate customers and they become more informed, we believe they will be more likely to embrace lingerie accessories, recognizing their overall usefulness.





## Asia's Foremost Manufacturer of PU Systems

Rymbal, a leading polyurethane system manufacturer in India, is renowned for its innovative “Made in India” solutions. In the footwear market, traditional PU soles were typically deemed non-recyclable, leading to their disposal in landfills after use. However, Rymbal’s ground breaking recycling technology for PU soles revolutionizes the industry with a highly sustainable and eco-friendly solution. This innovation empowers organizations to significantly reduce their carbon footprints in footwear production, fostering a greener and more environmentally-conscious approach.







**R**ymbal, brand name operating under Horizon Performance Polyurethane (HPP), offers environmentally-friendly PU solutions that are renowned for their lightweight, comfort, and exceptional durability. Our objective is to deliver innovative, sustainable, high-quality products while minimizing our environmental impact. Through our state-of-the-art research and infrastructure, we remain at the forefront of technological advancements in the PU industry, enabling us to develop more efficient, productive, and cost-effective solutions. As a dedicated team, we consistently invest in research and infrastructure to ensure our products align with the latest trends and technologies. Our team of expert scientists is committed to developing tailor-made solutions to meet the specific needs of our customers.

### Holistic solution provider

As a leading manufacturer of PU systems in India, Rymbal specializes in providing complete support to the footwear industry. Rymbal's locally produced PU systems cater to a wide range of footwear and components, ensuring high quality and reliability. The products rigorous testing against SATRA standards and qualifications guarantee the performance of the products. With a



long-term vision of global export, the company strives to promote eco-friendliness by offering sustainable PU solutions to the world.

### Every step of our process prioritizes eco-friendliness

Rymbal launched a sustainable PU system made from chemical recycling of footwear post consumption. This technology will help to reduce dumping of footwear waste in landfill and will reduce overall carbon footprint of the footwear made from enabling the industry and users to walk on a path towards a sustainable future. Rymbal envisions itself as a provider of eco-friendly and sustainable PU system solutions and its commitment to sustainability is reflected in its offerings, which comprises of systems that are free from restricted substances and bio-based.

### PU Systems for Insoles, Outsoles, Midsoles and Unit soles

Rymbal offers a wide range of polyether and polyester-based Polyurethane systems that cater to the manufacturing of footwear components such as unit soles, insoles, outsoles, single and dual-density shoes for various footwear applications such as fashion shoes, industrial safety shoes and more.

### Improved Hydrolytic Resistant Polyester Based PU Systems

Rymbal offers exceptional Polyester-based PU systems that provides 2 times more hydrolytic stability than regular polyester systems. The hydrolytically stable technology is designed specifically for the "Hot and Humid" climatic conditions of the Indian subcontinent to give extended durability and performance.





## NEERAJ GARG

Co-founder and Director

Is a 1st generation entrepreneur, who along with Ankit Goel and Radhey R Sharma founded Rymbal which is an innovation-led organization highly focused on Research & Development. He has more than two decades of experience working with polyurethanes, including almost a decade with a leading global manufacturer of MDI. He has pioneered many innovative and unique solutions for the Indian footwear market that led to the exponential growth of the polyurethane industry. The founders at Rymbal take pride in finding solutions to problems not well addressed by others in the market.

### Neeraj shares his views with S&A...

#### How does Rymbal contribute to the footwear industry & what sets it apart?

Rymbal is an independent Polyurethane system house and contributes to the footwear industry by designing, developing, and delivering sustainable Polyurethane systems for the manufacturing of Insole, Outsole, Midsole, and Unit sole for fashion footwear, industrial safety shoes, and many other footwear applications. We at Rymbal believe that sustainability is the need of the hour in the footwear industry, as India is the second largest consumer and manufacturer of footwear in the world, and generally post consumption these footwears go to landfill, polluting the environment. Rymbal has set itself apart from its peers by prioritizing sustainability at the core of its organizational vision. By innovating and delivering in-line sustainable materials and manufacturing processes, Rymbal has helped to reduce the environmental impact of the footwear industry in its capacity. Our company's efforts in this area have been recognized by customers and industry experts, making Rymbal a leading system provider in sustainable footwear production.

#### How does Rymbal see the current & future usage of Polyurethane versus other materials for footwear soles?

We recognize that consumers are increasingly concerned about the environmental impact of their purchases and are looking for "Green & Clean" products in all areas of their lives. Therefore, we at Rymbal are committed to developing sustainable PU systems that are eco-friendly and free from toxic chemicals while maintaining product's high quality, comfort, and performance standards. I believe that Polyurethane is an excellent material for footwear soles, outperforming other materials in terms of durability, flexibility, and cushioning properties. PU also allows for a wide range of design possibilities, making it a versatile material for footwear manufacturers. With the latest technology of Rymbal, Polyurethane footwear can now be chemically recycled and new footwear soles can be manufactured with this recyclate, giving products which will have lower carbon footprint. With this development, we have a firm belief that PU will grow into a more popular choice for footwear soles in the future.

**How important is sustainability to the footwear industry in India? Can it draw any parallel from Global trends?**  
Sustainability has become an

increasingly important issue for the footwear industry in India, just as it has in the global market. The Indian footwear industry is producing over 2.8 billion pairs of footwear each year, and unfortunately, most of them post-consumption ends up in landfills. This irresponsible way of disposing of footwear and polluting the environment is a significant problem that the industry needs to address. Rymbal recognizes the importance of responsible manufacturing and consumption in creating a better world and wants to drive positive change in the complete value chain.

As the world is moving towards restricting harmful chemicals from the system, via regulations such as REACH, the need for sustainable alternatives has become more important than ever. This global trend towards sustainability is also reflected in the Indian market. Consumers are becoming increasingly concerned about the environmental impact of their purchases and are looking for eco-friendly products. As a result, the demand for sustainable footwear products is rising in India.

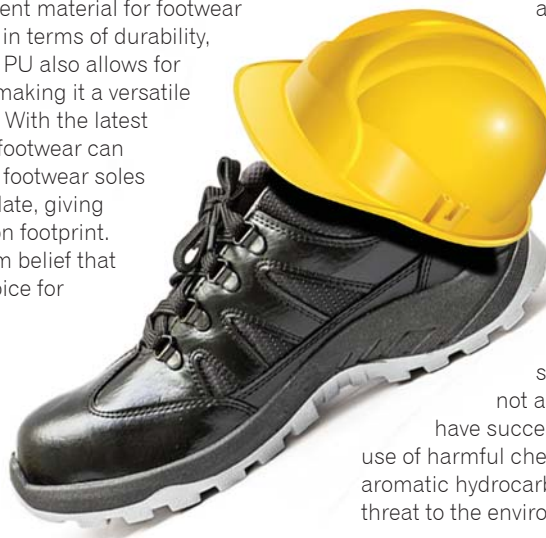
Rymbal is committed to collaborating with customers to facilitate the circular economy in the footwear industry. Rymbal is open to collaborating with brands, manufacturers, or start-ups to create a healthy and sustainable ecosystem for the industry, where the footwears can be recycled into new pairs or made from bio-based sources. By prioritizing sustainability, Rymbal is driving positive change in the footwear industry in India and globally.

#### What are the action items that Rymbal is doing to deliver and promote sustainability for the footwear industry?

Rymbal believes that sustainability is not just a choice but a responsibility towards the environment, and as a responsible Polyurethane system manufacturer, Rymbal is taking various initiatives to reduce the environmental impact of the footwear industry and create a healthier and sustainable ecosystem.

#### Our current offerings serve three big domains of sustainability:

- Rymbal is committed to eliminate restricted chemicals or limit their use to permissible band during manufacturing of PU systems. Getting rid of lot of these chemicals is not an easy task but with our investment in R&D, we have successfully worked on to reducing/eliminating the use of harmful chemicals such as phenols, phthalates, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and other chemicals that pose a threat to the environment and human health.





- We are also working towards reducing the industry's dependency on non-renewable petroleum resources by using bio-based monomers in manufacturing Polyurethane systems. This will not only reduce the carbon footprint of the final product but also help in creating an eco-friendly environment.
- We at Rymbal have developed a recycled Polyurethane system, by chemically recycling footwear soles which would else be dumped in a landfill. We piloted this project with an Industrial safety shoe, which has a sole made from 10% recycled PU. This shoe was showcased at PU Tech 2023 exhibition and was a major centre of attraction. This initiative not only promotes the lower carbon footprint in new footwear made from it but also helps reduce waste generation/dumping.

In conclusion, Rymbal's commitment to sustainability in the footwear industry is evident from its initiatives and collaborations with customers to create a healthy ecosystem. We are dedicated to developing innovative and sustainable products that cater to the needs of the footwear industry while reducing the environmental impact.

### **How can Rymbal's product innovation help Indian brands increase the global acceptance of their footwear products?**

Rymbal's product innovation can help Indian brands increase the global acceptance of their footwear products in several ways. Firstly, there is already a growing demand for sustainable footwears, and Rymbal offers innovative and sustainable solutions to meet this need. By using Rymbal's sustainable material for shoe soles, the Indian footwear brands can differentiate their products and can position themselves as environmentally responsible and compliant with sustainability regulations.

Secondly, Rymbal is open to collaborating with Brands, Manufacturers or new entrants to the market and adding value to their products. By partnering with Rymbal, Indian footwear brands can leverage our expertise in sustainable materials and technology to develop eco-friendly and chemically safe footwear.

I believe that as Rymbal is having full-fledged R&D centre in India, we can help reduce domestic customers' new product development time by weeks/ months as compared to other global companies that may take double or triple the time to deliver projects. By being closer to its customers and understanding their needs, Rymbal can deliver solutions faster and more efficiently, giving domestic players a significant competitive advantage, and making Rymbal a reliable partner for footwear manufacturers.

### **Tell us something about the Rymbal's capabilities in development of advanced & sustainable PU systems...**

Rymbal is a leading provider of polyurethane systems to the footwear industry, offering a wide range of innovative solutions to meet the diverse needs of customers. We offer a range of polyether and polyester-based Polyurethane systems that cater to the

manufacturing of footwear components such as unit soles, insoles, midsoles, outsoles, single and dual-density shoes, for various footwear applications such as fashion shoes, industrial safety shoes, and more.

We have a state-of-the-art manufacturing plant and a world-class R&D Centre in Delhi NCR. Rymbal has strong research capabilities with ongoing developments starting from the monomer level to the prepolymer and polymer levels. We collaborate with our customers on new product development and create more efficient polyurethane systems based on specific customer requirements. The R&D Centre is equipped with the latest technologies and equipment, which includes modern chemical synthesis lab, characterization technologies such as DSC, ICP-OES, GCMS, TGA, etc., enabling Rymbal to stay at the forefront of innovation in the footwear industry. Our research capabilities enable us to develop new and innovative polyurethane systems that can meet the everchanging needs of the footwear industry.

Our end-to-end solutions starting from PU system development to product testing and validation, makes us a reliable partner to footwear manufacturers, who are seeking to enhance their efficiency, streamline their operations, and stay ahead of the competition.

### **What are some of the growth plans of Rymbal for the next 5 years?**

Rymbal's growth plans for the next five years are centred around new innovations, sustainability, and expanding its reach beyond geographic boundaries. Rymbal has been growing with double digit growth and will continue to do with our vision on developing new technologies and solutions that will set us apart from competitors. The biggest growth for us holds in future and we are excited about the upcoming business differentiators that will help us to expand our share in India and beyond Indian geographical boundaries. By doing so, Rymbal can continue to grow and expand its business, while also increasing its impact on the global footwear industry.

### **Would Rymbal like to share anything with S&A readers?**

Rymbal believes that the future of the footwear industry is in sustainable and environmentally responsible practices. As the world moves towards a more conscious and eco-friendly way of living, it is imperative for all industries, including the footwear industry, to follow suit. Rymbal is committed to being a solution provider and innovator in this space, providing sustainable materials for footwear production and recycling post consumption footwear waste.

And as the second-largest producer and consumer of footwear in the world, India has a critical role to play in driving climate action. We at Rymbal recognize this and are fully aligned with the vision of a more sustainable and eco-friendly future. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "Be the change you want to see:", we at Rymbal believes that by walking the way in sustainable footwear production, we can inspire others in the industry to follow suit and make a positive impact on the environment.



# *Walk the Talk with KEDDO*

*The  
Shoes  
That  
Will  
Make  
You  
Stand  
Out*



*KEDDO has launched the new Spring-Summer 2023 collection. The inspiration for the new season's models comes from the spirit of adventure and exciting impressions of distant travels, which remain forever in memory.*





**K**EDDO has unveiled a new Spring-Summer 2023 collection of fashionable youth footwear and accessories. The styles of the new season are inspired by the spirit of adventure and breathtaking impressions from distant travels that stay in the memory forever.



The main trends of the footwear collection are women's white sneakers on a massive platform, along with variants in bright colors and animal prints; color block summer sneakers; sandals and clogs with woven tops, as well as styles with different textile finishes - from simple transparent mesh to velour and chic shoes with terry texture.







In addition to shoes for women, men and teenagers, the collection includes basic and trendy bags and backpacks, as well as stylish sunglasses for women and men, which would be a spectacular finishing touch to any look.





The collection is available for purchase on KEDDO's official website [KEDDO.com](https://www.keddo.com), in the brand's stores and at its partners from March 2023.











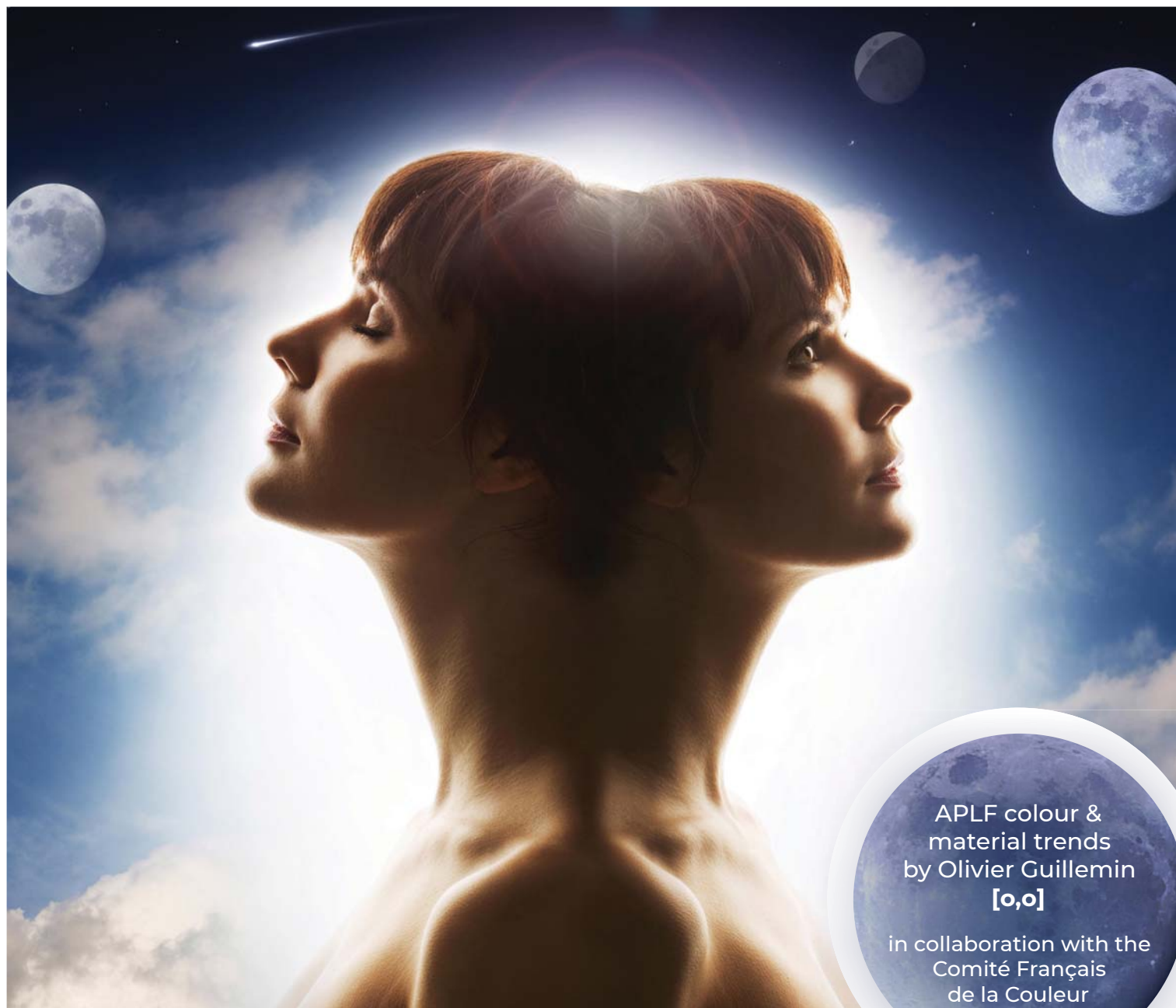
## About KEDDO

The KEDDO brand was established in 2007. Its popularity began with the creation of unique slip-on sneakers, which became an online bestseller and coveted footwear for young people around the world. In 2011, at a well-known design studio in the Netherlands, KEDDO developed the unique rubber boots with hidden wedges, which became another global hit of the brand. By 2017, KEDDO footwear stores appeared in Germany, France, Spain, Eastern Europe, the CIS and Southeast Asia. Today KEDDO shoes and accessories are sold in more than 80 countries around the world. The brand is in the TOP-100 on T-mall, in the TOP-3 on KAOLA, holds a leading position on the Little Red Book site, and is represented by major online retailers in North and Latin America and the Middle East.

Official site: <http://www.keddo.com>

# DUALITY

Fall-Winter 2023/24



APLF colour &  
material trends  
by Olivier Guillemin  
[o.o]

in collaboration with the  
Comité Français  
de la Couleur

A season full of contrasts and opposites that harmonise in style and materials. The paradoxes of our era are expressed in fashion and in our lifestyles. A creative and optimistic response to the issues that concern our daily lives and our planet.

**APLF**  
LEATHER

**MATERIALS+**

**FASHION  
ACCESS**

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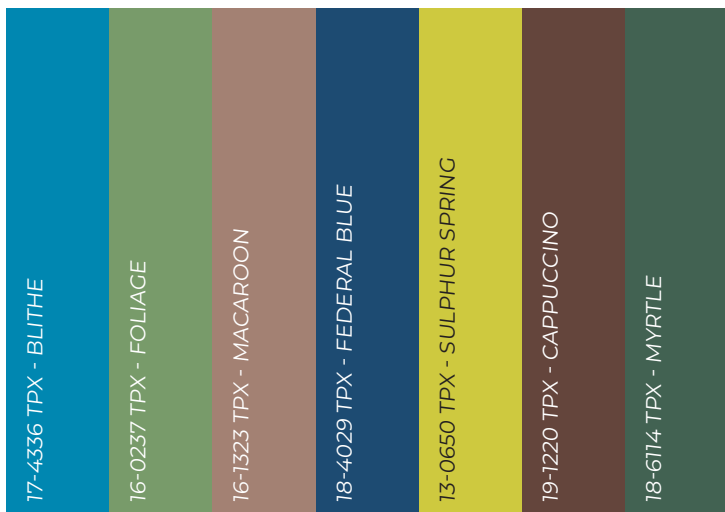
Photos : BublikHaus, Xackery Irving, Joy\_Studio, Lia Koltyrina, Maciej Olszewski, Rido, Eugenia Porechenskaya, ShotPrime Studio, tativophotos, Alexei Vladimir @ Shutterstock



# RESPONSIBLE DUALITY

Natural & boosted

New casual  
Eco-responsible  
No gender  
Bio-performance  
Functionality  
Glamping  
Biomimicry



## COLOURS

Contrast variations of blues, greens and browns. Colours inspired by an intense, reworked nature.

## HYBRID, NATURAL, FUNCTIONAL MATERIALS

Leather with natural grains / Double-faced leather / Split leather / Naturally tanned leather / Flocked leather / Coated suede / Smooth patent / Pull-up leather / "Bubble" sheepskin / Double-faced shearling / Fake, plant-based leather: Piñatex, palm leaves, grapes, fungus / Fishskin with natural finishes / Ripstop in recycled polyester / Corduroy / Patchwork denim / Quilted wool / Waxed cotton / Natural rubber

## MOTIFS & ACCESSORIES

Abstract vegetation / Reworked tartan prints / Tech accessories and buckles, outdoor inspiration / Cords and webbing, climbing / hiking inspiration / Buttons in recycled resin / Waterproof zippers.

## SHOES

High-heeled leather and knit loafers / Braided clogs with wood soles and high heels / Flat, thigh-high gladiator-style Mary-Janes / Knee-high trainers / Thick-soled puffy sneakers / Ankle boots with thick wood soles / Logger boots with cleated, soccer-style soles / Wellies rain boots / Fringed moon boots / Pointed, high-heeled pumps with straps

## BAGS

Saddle-stitched hobo bags / Stiff leather bucket bags with an embossed motifs / Handbags with double handles / Multi-pocketed, colour-block handbags / Studded baguette bags / XXL leather pouches with puffy quilting / Cork luggage line / Leather backpacks with hiking-inspired accessories / Saddle bags in satiny, recycled nylon / Reversible shearling tote bags

## ACCESSORIES

"Connected" cork clutches / Belts with dog clasps for attaching multiple pouches / Sunglasses with rainbow-tinted lenses / Coloured rope straps and jewelry trims, giant metal closures / Caps and hats in denim and leather / Quilted leather gloves

# DISCREET DUALITY

Smart & cool

Timeless simplicity  
Eco-technical  
Relaxed urban chic  
Protection & comfort  
Warm sobriety



## COLOURS

A blank page for imagining this new season. A range in a Scandinavian mood revolving around white and bleached tones contrasted with sober darks.

## IMPECCABLE MATERIALS WITH BEAUTIFUL HANDS

Leather with classic grains / Calf suede / Saffiano-grained calfskin / Woven leather / Box calf / Foam-backed leather / Grained patent / Caviar-grained calfskin / Leather embossed all over with logos / Shiny lizard skin / Rabbit leather / Metallic coatings with frosted effect / Mink fur / Mat, quilted nylon / Cashmere / 3D mesh / Flannel and tweed / Waterproof technical fabrics.

## MOTIFS & ACCESSORIES

Discreet, classic motifs, herringbones, tweeds / Marble-effect prints / Mat metal accessories / Transparent buckles / Metal hardware covered in leather & fabrics.

## SHOES

Mules with clean-lined uppers and suedine microfiber soles / Pointed oxfords with contrast top-stitchings / Wide sneakers with chunky soles / Stretch, high-top sneakers / Ankle boots with elasticized sides, notched soles and high rubber heels / High mesh boots with ultra-flat heels / Leather and felt riding boots / Thigh-high boots in stretch suede with thick soles / Rubber and fur snow boots / Minimal winter sandals / Trekking boots with integrated knit socks

## BAGS

Origami handbags / Hand-held mini flap bags / Minimal, large baguette bags / Oval shoulder bags / Miniature, ultra-chic duffel bags / Quilted, woven, flapped bags / Small leather-covered, hand-held briefcases / Pleated evening clutches in supple leather / Small backpacks with flaps / Giant tote bags in chunky knit

## ACCESSORIES

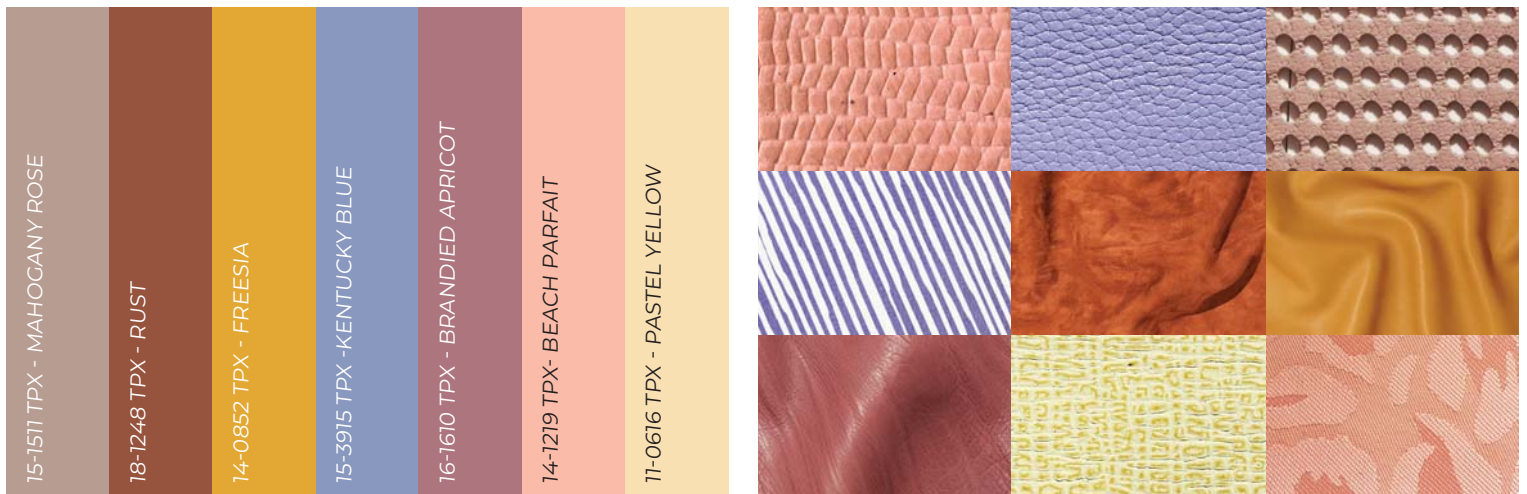
Ultra-minimal clutches in braided leather / City skiing-style sunglasses / Caps and bobs in felt or leather / Knit and leather fingerless gloves / Alpaca beanies with fur pompoms / Mineral-style chains for telephone or eyeglass straps



# SOOTHING DUALITY

Soft & sporty

Retro-future  
Spiritual  
Yoga mood  
Well-being  
Contemporary  
romanticism  
Active & soothing



## COLOURS

Soft harmonies in subtle, radiant half-tones that evoke a certain nostalgia. Colours that offer a change of pace to update a sport mood.

## MATERIALS THAT ASSOCIATE COMFORT WITH PERFORMANCE

Washed lambskin / Super-soft nubuck / Grained leather / Perforated leather / Leather with rubber finish / Stretch nubuck / Leather with geometric grains / Pleated leather / Satiny, pearlized, iridescent leather / Eco-responsible, recycled leather / Ostrich leather / Fox fur / Mesh nettings with cane-work inspiration / Coated, pleated fabrics / Bulky handknits / Organic, quilted nylon / Double-sided terry cloth

## MOTIFS & ACCESSORIES

Waves and other organic motifs / Tone-on-tone mandala motifs / Bio resin accessories with a terrazzo look / Satiny metallics / Chains in organic resins / Soft, mat straps, webbings and braids

## SHOES

Mules with platform soles / High-rise loafers with thick rubber soles / Sporty Mary-Janes with Cuban heels / Ballerinas / Satin sneakers with elastic laces / Mesh sneakers with thick, supple soles / Chelsea & Australian boots / Pointed ankle boots with curved thin heels / Pleated high-rise boots

## BAGS

Suede and leather bucket bags / Handbags with knotted handles / Large vintage-style handbags / Fur pouches with kiss-locks / Triangular-shaped belt bags / Leather backpacks with giant, satiny webbing / Minaudière bags with tone-on-tone chains / Shopping totes in tie-dyed leather / Luxury leather bolster bag with integrated compartments for shoes, yoga mat... / Giant-braided leather travel bags

## ACCESSORIES

Luxury stationery in leather / Shoulder straps in coloured beads / Belts with giant buckles / Shearling mittens / Fantasy-shaped sunglasses with coloured glass

# REBELLIOUS DUALITY

Tech & glam

Sophisticate punk  
Trash & Chic  
Exuberant  
Festive  
Sensory appeal  
Audacious  
Fantasy



## COLOURS

Exuberant garden colours, a precious, electrifying range with artificial perfumes. A sophistication to experience the everyday alongside exceptional moments.

## SENSUAL, SPECTACULAR MATERIALS

Shiny, ultra-smooth leather / Quilted calfskin / Leather with shot, metallic coatings / Net and lace nubuck / Lacquered leather / Leather embossed with motifs and logos / Wrinkled patent leather / Ripped, cracked leather / Leather patchwork / Latex and vinyl / Water-based PU / Crocodile and python skins / Shiny water snake / Fake astrakhan fur / Printed wool / Multicoloured jacquard weaves / Quilted satin / Shot nylon / Silk velvet / Rhinestoned netting and mesh

## MOTIFS & ACCESSORIES

Pixelized, exotic floral print / Flashy, all-over logo motifs / High-gloss metal findings and buckles / Painted, contrast edges / Rhinestoned patches, studs and tassels / Eco-responsible sequins

## SHOES

Studded or "pierced" oxfords / Platform Mary-Janes with ultra-high heels / Painted sneakers / Sneakers with extra-wide, high soles / Rhinestoned ankle boots with ultra-thin, high heels / Ankle boots with extra-wide uppers and stiletto heels / Futurist, thigh-high biker boots / Second skin, lace-up thigh-high boots with motifs / High-heeled sandals with feathered straps going up the legs / Metallic, strapped pumps with block heels

## BAGS

Supple hobos in metallic leather / Baguette bags in box calf / Fringed handbags / Shoulder bag with giant chains / Hand-held "box" bags with multiple studs in different sizes / Tiny, rhinestone-covered minaudières / Precious mini backpacks worn crossbody / XL shopping totes in mesh and lacings / Quilted nylon backpacks with integrated hood / Shiny color-changing hardcase trolleys

## ACCESSORIES

Glam clutches with integrated phone chargers / Rhinestone covered gloves / Jewelled sunglasses / Corset belts / Decorative harnesses for bust, legs, arms / Statement jewelry



APLF colour  
& material trends  
by Olivier Guillemain  
[o.o]

in collaboration with the  
Comité Français  
de la Couleur



# Duality

for Spring-Summer 2024

The seasons continue on without resembling each other,  
but duality still remains the key theme for summer 2024.

A duality in contrasts that expresses  
all the paradoxes of our era ...

in colours, materials ... and style!

**APLF**  
LEATHER

**MATERIALS+**

**FASHION  
ACCESS**

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# Comforting duality

Simple / Cool / Carnal / Sensual  
Voluptuous / Comfortable / Sporty  
Innovative



**A natural, carnal range with soothing, luminous harmonies...**

**Eco-responsible, techno-sensual materials.**

**Materials & textures** Washed lambskin / Metal-free tanned leather / Saffiano and geometric grains / Leather with flocked motifs / Nubuck "corduroy" / Leather with shape memory / Stretch nubuck / Iridescent lambskin / Pleated leather / Smooth, puffy patent leather / Geometric leather mesh / Lizard skin / Sport netting / Summer quilting / Jersey / Recycled ripstop nylon / Spinnaker nylon / Recycled cashmere / Heat-sensitive, heat-changing materials.

**Motifs & Accessories** Reworked classic prints / Blurry floral motifs / Nubuck and leather-covered buckles / Siliconed cord stoppers and snaps / Stretch ribbed edges / Organic cotton ribbons / Waterproof zippers / Technical webbings.





# Genuine duality

Rough & Authentic / Textured / Nomadic Luxury Savoir-faire / Eco-consciousness

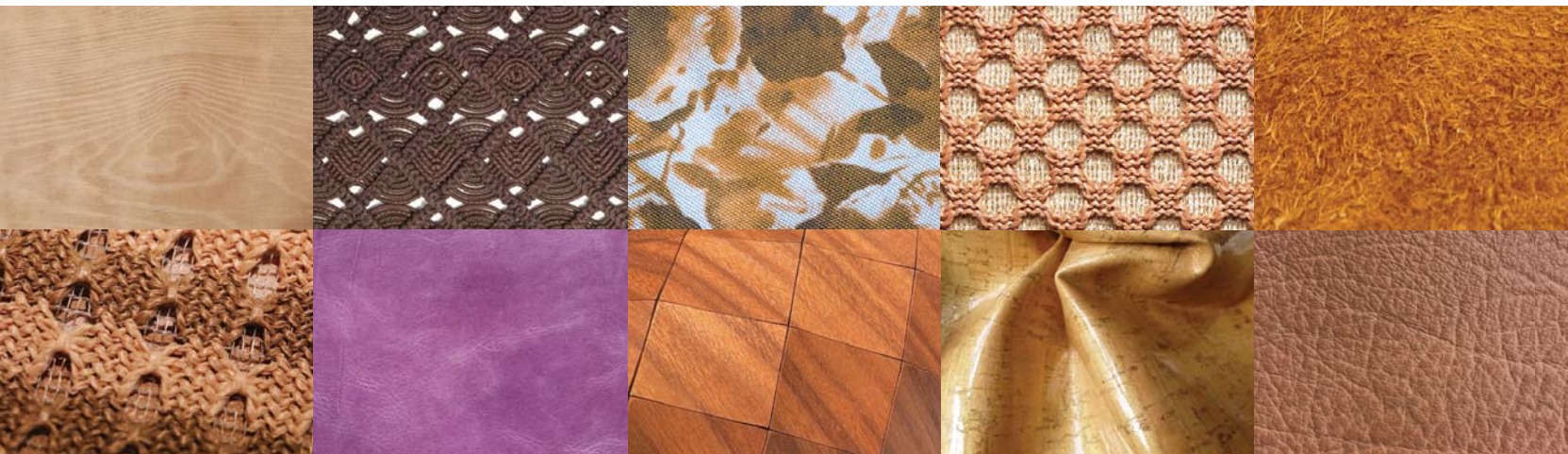


**A range of earthy colours from elsewhere. A desire to mix warm colours in a gypsy, vintage, globetrotter mood.**

**Precious or rustic materials but always authentic and high-quality.**

**Materials & textures** Natural-grained leather / Vegetable-tanned leather / Thick, matte, cow leather / Plant-based materials made to look like leather: cactus, grape, mushroom / Water-based PU / Embossed honeycomb leather / Leather macramé / Rough suede / Fish skin / Patchwork denim / Recycled, beeswaxed cotton / Wood and cellulose fabrics / Natural jute / Linen canvas / Cork / Wicker straw / Seaweed straw / Bamboo / Multi-material weavings and braidings.

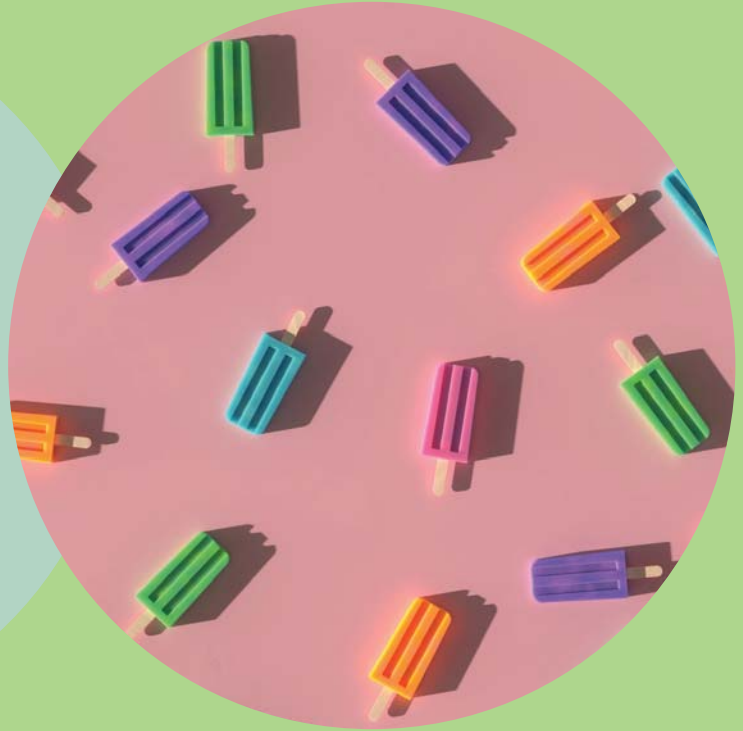
**Motifs & Accessories** Kaleidoscope motifs / Bohemian prints / Ethnic braids / Nature-inspired prints / Wood and





# Joyful duality

Emotional / Floral / Spring-like / Seductive  
Charming / Artificial / Pop / Fresh



75-0220 TPX - PARADISE GREEN

72-0740 TPX - LIMELIGHT

74-3612 TPX - ORCHID BLOOM

75-1621 TPX - CANDLELIGHT PEACH

77-5130 TPX - COLUMBIA

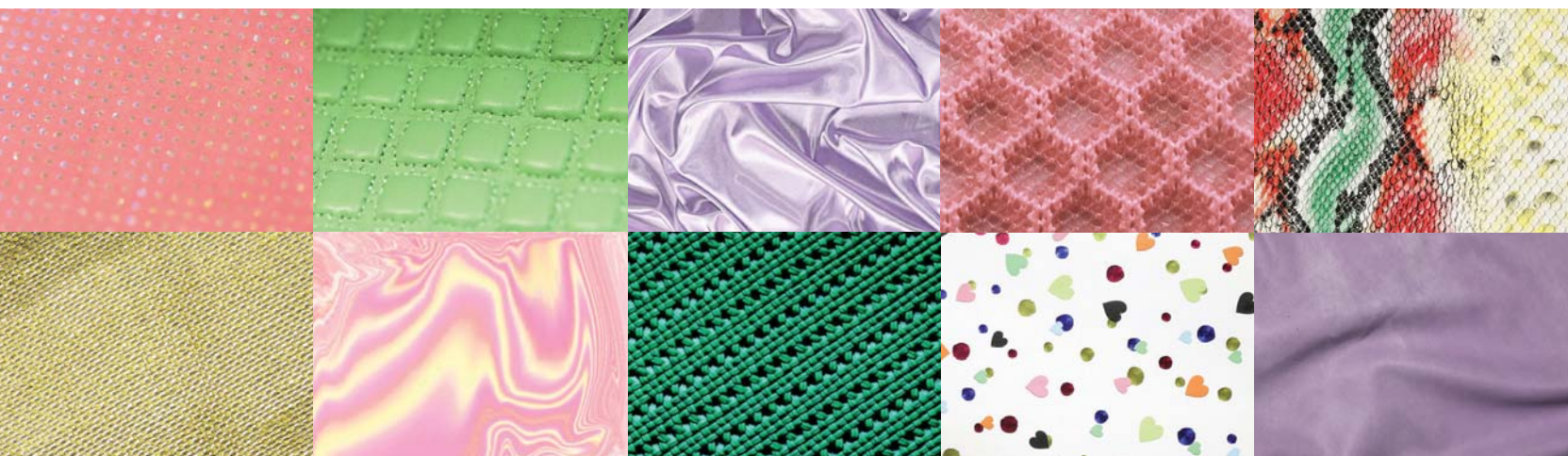
77-5919 TPX - PURPLE IMPRESSION

**A bouquet of lively emotions. Intoxicating floral tones... always fresh and surprising.**

**Seductive materials that play up the paradox of an artificial nature.**

**Materials & textures** Super-smooth, shiny leather / Leather with embossed monograms / Glittery nubuck / Leather with a rubbery hand / Glazed leather / Heat-formed nappa / Ostrich skin / / Multicoloured python and watersnake / Recycled, braided plastic lanier / Terrycloth / Puffy neoprene / Printed, coated canvas / Double-face mesh / Pleated vinyl / Quilted satin / Colourful, synthetic macramé / Coloured rattan / Summer knit.

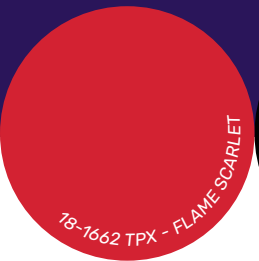
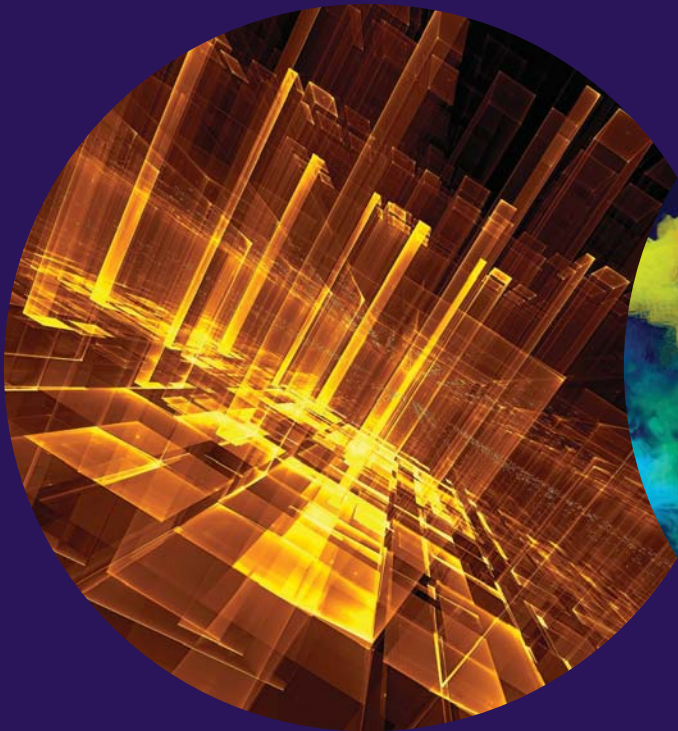
**Motifs & Accessories** Graphic and geometric motifs / Pop prints / Colourful cords / Oversized pipings / XXL chains in organic, colourful resin / Barbie Girl rhinestones / Fake fur braids / Tone-on-tone painted metallics.





# Extravagant duality

Glamour / Baroque / Strange  
Extreme / Festive / Mystical  
Futuristic

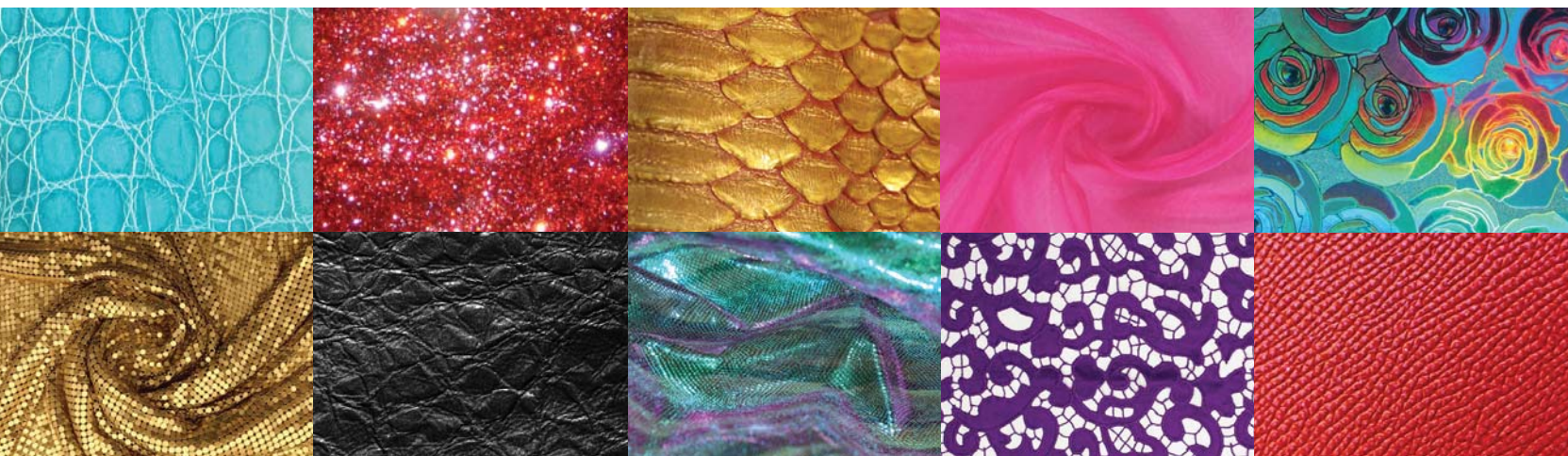


**The surprise of a festive, contrasted range that exalts baroque & the future!**

**The unexpected association of innovative materials with spectacular finishes.**

**Materials & textures** Second-skin stretch leathers / Box calf / Leather with caviar and shagreen grains / Net and lace suede / Holographic leather / Flocked leather / Cracked patent leather / Crocodile skins or embossings / Carbon fabric / Rhinestones, glitters and sequins / Dévoré velvet / Nylon moiré / Meshes with motifs / Denim with bleached monograms / Feathers / Fabrics and leathers with integrated stardust LEDs / Quilted motifs / Lacquered raffia / Organic pleating.

**Motifs & Accessories** Connected components / Strange, mystical motifs / Supernatural prints / Retro-reflective transfer prints / Baroque metal hardware with motifs / Glittery cords and laniers / Heat-sensitive bias / LED accessories.







## The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) unveils new footwear standards

India is making her mark in the global economy. Towards this, there has also been a focused initiative towards ensuring India's recognition on the global stage as a quality conscious country. In keeping with this policy, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) along with the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) introduced quality control orders (QCOs) requiring BIS certification for over 370 than across various sectors. One of the sectors brought under the scanner of BIS certification is the footwear sector. As per the Union Ministry of Commerce, footwear manufacturers have time till July 1, 2023 to get BIS certification.

*BIS Footwear has developed a comprehensive policy that guides its operations and ensures that it delivers high-quality products to its customers. This policy is designed to ensure that the brand remains competitive and relevant in the dynamic and highly competitive footwear industry. In this article, we will discuss the various aspects of BIS Footwear policy, including its approach to sustainability, ethical sourcing, and customer satisfaction.*





Currently, there are over 450 products that fall under the scope of mandatory Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS) certification, like CE marking in Europe. These consumer products include helmets, electric iron, cement, switches, domestic pressure cookers, tubes, LPG stoves and cylinders, packaged drinking water, electric immersion water heater, and footwear. The government has made it mandatory for these products to comply with Indian standards for several reasons – protection of plant, animal, and human health, safety, protection of the environment, public interest, national security, and preventing unfair trade practices. Thus, it is compulsory that the manufacturers and importers of Footwear obtain Bureau of Indian Standards (“BIS”) Certification. The post focuses on the issues surrounding the certification of Footwear and regulatory matters.

### Footwear (Quality Control) Order, 2020

This QC Order makes it mandatory for footwear targeted to children of 14 years or younger to conform to 7 Indian Standards for Safety of Footwear (prescribing requirements for physical, chemical, and electrical safety of footwear) and bear the ISI Mark under a license from BIS. This QC order has come into force from January 1, 2021. Accordingly, no person is permitted to manufacture, import, sell or distribute, store, hire, lease, or exhibit for sale footwear that do not conform to the Indian Standard and do not bear the “ISI” Mark under a license from BIS. DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, primarily issued this order to avoid low-quality footwear from being sold in India as they were being indiscriminately imported into India, leading to several consumer complaints about their quality.

The BIS grants license to footwear-manufacturing units based on an assessment of their manufacturing and testing capability to the norms stated. Most of the footwear manufacturing by the world’s leading brands, was undertaken in countries like China, Vietnam, and Indonesia ( and now India too).The coverage of footwear under BIS, will make it mandatory for manufacturing units across the world to obtain quality related certification in order to affix the ISI mark on footwear manufactured for sale in India.

This, in turn, requires a process to be carried out which commences from preparing and filing of the application with the

BIS authorities, to a factory visit by a BIS scientist to manufacturing locations for ultimate issuance of the license and finally affixing the ISI mark.

The Centre’s move to make BIS certification mandatory is aimed at weeding out import of cheap and sub-standard footwear from countries like China and promote domestic manufacturing of these items, but industry insiders believe given the nature of the sector, the move may cause more damage as the testing’s would attract added cost. Notably, this entire process is typically considered to be time consuming, laborious and dreaded by manufacturers. It is even more laborious for manufacturers located outside India, from the perspective of organizing, coordinating, & undertaking foreign travel arrangements. To be fair, with the need to ensure expedited licensing on account of the large number of products being covered under BIS, the authorities are accommodative and efficient throughout the process. From review of the initial application to undertaking factory visits, authorities have accepted clarifications on doubts raised and issued licenses swiftly.

Usually, BIS is expeditious in granting the license if the application is appropriate, the clarification provided are logical and the cooperation extended during the visit is uncompromised. BIS authorities have ensured that they invest commensurate efforts in responding timely from their end as well.

As compared to other industries that have been brought under the BIS fold, the footwear sector has several nuances and inherent challenges to obtain certification. Footwear makers and distributors are already struggling to stay afloat after GST on footwear was hiked from 5% to 12% suddenly followed by the more disastrous Covid-19 lockdown. Worse fear is the fact that there are not many BIS laboratories in India. Pre-testing must happen in a laboratory following which the manufacturer will get a BIS certification.

### Support, Guidance & Resources Required from BIS

As industries continue to evolve and face new challenges, the BIS department plays a crucial role in providing the necessary support, guidance, and resources to ensure the smooth functioning and growth of businesses. The BIS department sets standards and guidelines for various industries, ensuring quality, safety, and reliability in products and services. These standards help businesses improve their processes, enhance their competitiveness,



and gain consumer trust. Additionally, the BIS department conducts research and development, provides technical expertise, and offers training programs to educate and empower industries. By collaborating with businesses, the BIS department can help them overcome obstacles, adapt to changing market trends, and stay compliant with regulatory requirements. The support, guidance, and resources provided by the BIS department would be vital for industries to thrive, innovate, and contribute to the overall economic growth of the country.

**N Mohan**, CEO – Kothari International Corporation Limited says, "We have requested BIS to closely work with the Industry and to take their views as at the end we are all willing to support as Quality enhancement is to the benefit of the Industry. However, We have to be mindful before we introduce these standards. The categorization of the products needs to be done in conjunction with the Industries stakeholders, even if it may require another year, so be it. The best route is to start the Journey with some Physical standards 4 or 5 and review the same after 1 year or so. Review the testing facilities as India consumes 2.6 Billion pairs and it will go up to 5 Billion pairs over the next 5 years considering the current growth rate, so we need to be careful and make it easy to implement. Labs requirements need to be assessed based on lead time for each test specified in the QCO. Also, India has the Opportunity to become



the most preferred Sport wear Destination given the current flight of investments flowing into the Country. These Supply Chain integrators are governed by the Brand's direction. If we let the Brands feel that as a Country, we are acting as a Protectionist then we will stand to lose interest in these Investments. India's time is now and we shouldn't lose this opportunity. Brands and Industry associations world over have been very worried on these new Mandates."

### PROCEDURE FOR GRANT OF BIS LICENCE

Those desirous of obtaining the BIS licenses need to apply to BIS along with requisite Application Fee. Separate application is required to be submitted for each product / Indian Standard.

- The foreign manufacturer needs to set-up a liaison / branch office located in India with the permission of Reserve Bank of India and shall meet all liabilities with respect to BIS Act, Rules, and Regulations for purpose of the BIS license.
- The requirement to set up an office in India shall not apply if the foreign manufacturer nominates a legally appointed Agent, located in India, who declares his consent to be responsible for compliance to the provisions of the BIS Act, 2016; Rules and Regulations, and terms & conditions of the BIS license, executed by or on behalf of the foreign manufacturer in connection with the grant of such license.
- The application is scrutinized, and if found complete in all respects, it is recorded.
- After recording of application, preliminary audit is carried out at the applicant's manufacturing premises by BIS Auditor.

The cost of preliminary audit is borne by the applicant, which also includes the cost to BIS of the man-days spent by BIS officer, expenditure towards travel, stay and per diem, as applicable for BIS officer as per the norms of the BIS.

During the preliminary audit, competence of the applicant is checked in respect of:

- availability of requisite in-house manufacturing and testing facilities as per the Indian Standard(s);
- competence of permanently employed testing personnel; and
- conformity of the product sample(s) to the relevant requirements of the Indian Standard, when checked in the factory during the Preliminary Inspection.

Sample(s) are also drawn for independent testing, which the applicant is required to deposit with the laboratory identified by BIS. The discretion to choose the laboratory rests solely with BIS. The cost of testing of the sample(s) is to be borne by the applicant.

- The BIS license is granted to an applicant, if:
- results of preliminary inspection are satisfactory;

- sample(s) drawn during preliminary inspection are found conforming to the Indian Standard(s);
- applicant agrees to comply with the Scheme of Testing and Inspection (STI);
- applicant agrees to pay the annual minimum marking fee and the license fee to BIS; and
- applicant signs Agreement with BIS for compliance of terms and conditions of the license as given in Reg. 5 of the BIS (Certification) Regulations, 1988. 38
- Immediately after grant of the BIS license, the licensee is required to pay annual minimum marking fee and annual license fee to BIS.
- Subsequently, the licensee is required to pay the marking fee, quarterly, based on the production covered under the Standard Mark during the quarter, as per the accepted marking fee rates.
- The BIS license, so granted, is valid for one year.
- The applicant is required to sign an Agreement with BIS for due compliance of the terms and conditions of the license, as given in the BIS (Certification) Regulations, 1988.
- The Agreement between BIS and the licensee / manufacturer includes provision for fee, nomination, rights and responsibilities of licensee, determination / termination, indemnity, performance bank guarantee, non-renewal, cancellation of licensees.
- Sample(s) is/are drawn by BIS from market during operation of the license. The cost of market samples, thus drawn, is borne by BIS. The cost of testing of the sample(s) is borne by BIS.

However, in case of products for which the cost of testing is high, the testing charges are to bear by the licensee. The decision in this regard shall rest solely with BIS.

- The license may be renewed for further period of one or two years (up to 5 years) subject to its satisfactory operation.
- The licensee is required to apply to BIS along with the renewal application fee, annual license fee (for one or two years as applicable) and Annual Minimum Marking Fee or the marking fees calculated on unit rate basis, whichever is higher at least one month before the validity of the license. The production statement, based on which the marking fee is calculated, is also required to be certified by a Chartered Accountant.





### On collaborating with the BIS and other industry stakeholders

*N. Mohan commented, "I have been an active participant in this industry for nearly four decades and personally, I, urge the Industry to bring about Quality awareness as improvement will only benefit the Consumer and make build an Image Globally.*

*Having said that the standards need to be easily implementable, and we should work with BIS and all the Industry stake holders and devise an acceptable standard that will not only enhance the quality standard and will not create a License Raj."*

It is imperative that Customs authorities tighten the procedures for import of footwear to ensure compliance with the quality norms of the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). Indian footwear retailers view themselves to be sitting on inventories they acquired before certification by Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) became mandatory, they fear that it would force many to shut shop temporarily. Footwear retailers also fear losing their stockpile to surprise raids.

### How did the BIS come about?

When India was on the brink of Independence, its industrial infrastructure was just growing. This called for a set of national standards to keep a check on the quality of work. And so, the Indian Standards Institution (ISI) was established on January 6, 1947. The ISI only concentrated on product certification and did not focus on the need to meet a particular set of quality/safety standards, which is why the BIS came into existence with a broadened scope. The Bureau consists of 25 members.

### Is a BIS license mandatory?

Getting a BIS certification is usually voluntary. However, the government of India has mandated "compliance to Indian standards" for a few products keeping in mind public interest as well as animal and environment welfare. Under the BIS Act 2016, the government can bring under compulsory certification regime "any goods or article of any scheduled industry, process, system or service which it considers necessary in the public interest or for the protection of human, animal or plant health, safety of the environment, or prevention of unfair trade practices, or national security."



**AT PRESENT, THERE IS A LACK OF CLARITY REGARDING THE APPLICATION OF QCO (QUALITY CONTROL ORDER) ON INVENTORY THAT WAS MANUFACTURED OR ACQUIRED BEFORE JUNE 30, 2023, WHICH IS THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF QCO. THIS UNCERTAINTY IS CAUSING CONCERN FOR PAN-INDIA RETAILERS AND BRANDS WHO HAVE INVESTED SIGNIFICANT CAPITAL AND INCURRED SUBSTANTIAL TAXES, DUTIES, AND LEVIES WHILE PROCURING SUCH INVENTORY. DESPITE THE INDUSTRY PREPARING FOR QCO COMPLIANCE IN NEW MANUFACTURING, THERE IS NO DEFINITIVE INFORMATION REGARDING ITS APPLICABILITY TO PRE-QCO INVENTORY. WHILE, THE FOOTWEAR SEGMENT OF AGRA INVOLVES ARTISANS FROM THE LOWEST RUNG OF THE ECONOMY. I DON'T THINK THIS IS THE BEST OPTION TO BE COMPETING WITH CHINA. WE ARE EXPECTING AGRA TO BE GI TAGGED AND A SIMPLE PROCESS OF PUTTING LOGOS ON THIS FOOTWEAR SHOULD SUFFICE. THE INITIAL TESTING COSTS ITSELF WILL COME UP TO RS 2 LAKH PER UNIT OF FOOTWEAR MAKERS. THIS IS EXCLUDING YEARLY RE-ASSESSMENTS, REPEAT TESTING OF FOOTWEAR ETC. THE EXERCISE COULD ADVERSELY IMPACT MANY MANUFACTURERS TOO.**

**KULDEEP SINGH, PRESIDENT FAFM**



As of January 1, 2021, the government has made footwear a part of this list seeking a compulsory confirmation of safety norms that have been specified by the Bureau.

### Who needs to apply?

Any organization that has a legal entity in India or abroad and is engaged in manufacturing or assembling can apply for a BIS certificate. In order to apply for the certificate, one can either login to BIS and fill out the application form there, or download the form, attach documents, and submit it with the stipulated fee.

### How does BIS grant a license?

The Bureau conducts visits to the manufacturing premises of the organization seeking a certificate to assess its manufacturing infrastructure, quality control, and testing capabilities. In order to confirm that a given product adheres to the relevant standards, BIS conducts third-party laboratory testing/testing on the manufacturing premises, or both.

### Post license surveillance

To ensure that a manufacturer is adhering to its safety and quality standards even after securing the license, BIS conducts "surprise factory surveillance inspections". According to BIS, no person shall manufacture, import, distribute, sell, hire, lease, store or exhibit for sale any footwear without the ISI mark. Sellers, including retailers, are responsible for ensuring that only footwear carrying the Standard Mark are purchased from footwear manufacturers holding valid BIS license, and sold.

### To Sum-Up

The footwear industry in India has a lot of untapped potentials. It is projected that the sector is likely to grow at a 11-12% rate. Further, the Indian government is creating clusters or special zones with tax and other incentives to ease and attract investment in this sector.

It is possible that some manufacturers within the rubber and polymeric materials industry may experience backlash in response to the BIS Act. This could stem from several reasons, including resistance to change, concerns over increased costs associated with compliance, and potential disruptions to existing supply chains. Manufacturers may find it challenging to meet the new quality standards established by the BIS Act, which may require significant investments in new equipment, processes, and testing procedures. This could lead to increased costs, which may be passed onto consumers or reduce profit margins for manufacturers.

Additionally, some manufacturers may resist the new regulations due to concerns over disruptions to their existing supply chains. The BIS Act may require manufacturers to source materials from approved suppliers or require the use of specific materials and processes, which may not align with existing supplier relationships or production processes.

Finally, some manufacturers may view the BIS Act as unnecessary regulation, which could stifle innovation and limit their ability to compete in the global marketplace. These manufacturers may argue that existing market forces, such as competition and consumer demand, are sufficient to ensure quality and safety standards for rubber and polymeric products.

Overall, while the BIS Act Made from all-Rubber and all Polymeric Material and its Components is aimed at improving product quality and safety, some manufacturers within the industry may resist these new regulations due to concerns over increased costs, disruptions to existing supply chains, and the perceived need for additional regulation in an already competitive marketplace.

### Sustainability

BIS Footwear recognizes the importance of sustainability in its operations and has implemented several measures to reduce its environmental impact. The company is committed to minimizing its carbon footprint and has implemented measures to reduce its energy consumption and waste generation. It has also adopted sustainable production practices, such as using eco-friendly materials and reducing the use of chemicals in its production processes.

BIS Footwear is also committed to reducing its reliance on fossil fuels and has implemented measures to increase its use of renewable energy sources. The company has installed solar panels in its production facilities to generate renewable energy, reducing its reliance on grid electricity. This has not only helped to reduce the company's carbon footprint but has also led to significant cost savings.

### Ethical Sourcing

BIS Footwear is committed to ethical sourcing practices and ensures that its suppliers meet high ethical standards. The company has a strict supplier code of conduct that all its suppliers must adhere to. This code of conduct outlines the company's expectations regarding ethical behaviour, including labour practices, human rights, and environmental sustainability. BIS Footwear conducts regular audits of its suppliers to ensure compliance with its code of conduct. The company also works closely with its suppliers to help them improve their ethical practices, providing training and support where necessary.

### Customer Satisfaction

BIS Footwear places a strong emphasis on customer satisfaction and has implemented measures to ensure that its customers receive high-quality products and excellent service. The company has a comprehensive quality control system in place that ensures that all its products meet the highest standards of quality. BIS Footwear also has a customer service team that is available to address any customer queries or concerns. The company has a hassle-free return policy that allows customers to return any products that they are not satisfied with, ensuring that customers are always satisfied with their purchases.



## AMBIGUIOS SITUATION

The current lack of clarity regarding the impact of the QCO norm on MSMEs needs to be addressed. As per the notification, it is mandatory for producing units with a turnover of more than 50 crore to obtain certification under BIS rules and systems, while micro and small enterprises have been exempted. However, Medium sized enterprises and Retailers such as Reliance footprints, Metro Shoes, Bata's, VKC's and the likes out-source a considerable amount of volume from smaller enterprises.

This raises the question that when units with a turnover of more than 50 crore procure goods from units with a turnover of less than 50 crore, and imprint with their branding, are these products and packaging exempt from the mandatory BIS system?

As per certain estimations, approximately 40% of the Indian footwear market is produced by units with a turnover of less than 50 crore, while medium and larger manufacturing units with a turnover of more than 50 crore cater to around 30% of the Indian footwear market. Surely, many Brands and retailers procure their requirements from multiple exempted units and remain out of the ambit of QCO implications. As a result, the very purpose of implementing QCO is defeated, and producers with a turnover of more than 50 crore are left to suffer. Compliance issues for 2/3 of the market will remain free and without any responsibility.

The only possible solution is to prevent traders cum manufacturing units, whether in disguise or not, from being eligible for exemptions when they procure from manufacturing units with a turnover of less than 50 crore. This would upgrade at least 60% of Indian products, and to some extent, serve the objective of QCO until the exemption limit is reduced from 50 crore to 5 crore turnover limit.

## Conclusion

BIS Footwear policy is designed to ensure that the company remains competitive and relevant in the highly dynamic footwear industry. The policy is based on sustainability, ethical sourcing, customer satisfaction, innovation, and social responsibility. These principles guide the company's operations, ensuring that



it delivers high-quality products that are stylish, durable, and comfortable to wear. BIS Footwear is committed to continuous improvement, constantly exploring new materials, designs, and production techniques to ensure that its products remain at the forefront of fashion and technology. With its strong commitment to sustainability, ethical sourcing, and social responsibility, BIS Footwear is a brand that consumers can trust and rely on.





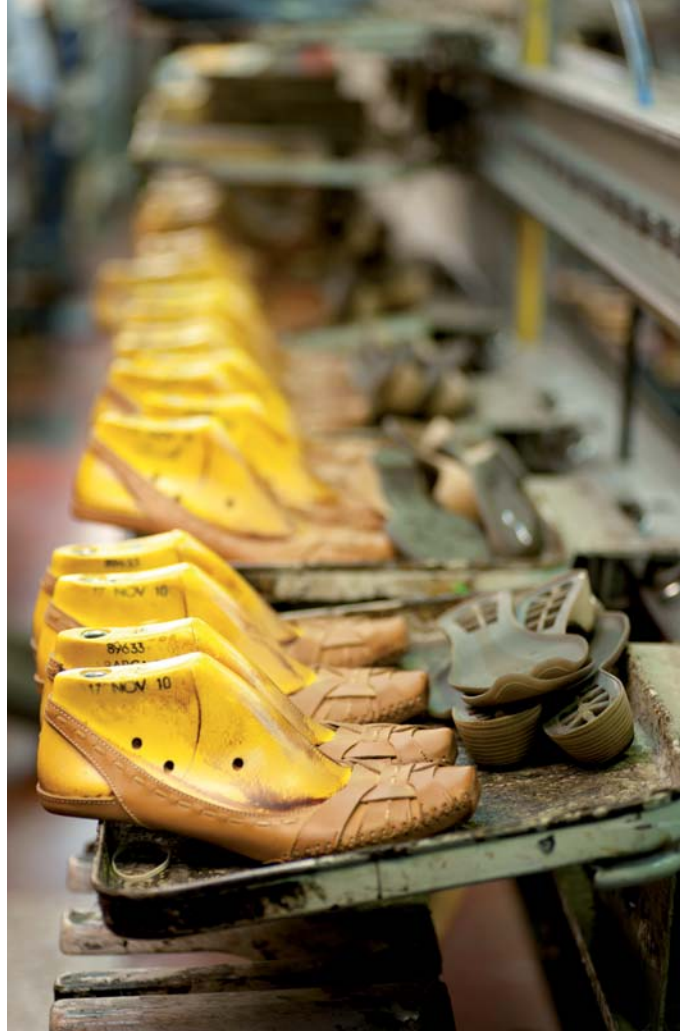
## Industry VIEW



**N Mohan, CEO,**  
Kothari International  
Corporation Limited

### Challenges or Opportunities for manufacturers ?

"Fashion Footwear is a continuously evolving category and there can be no mandate restricting the creativity. Standards should not be material or design agnostic. This is the reason nowhere in the world there is mandate for the Fashion footwear. However, mandate do exist on safety Footwear, and it is important too. The Current standard of clubbing various categories together will create a huge disruption and we will again see license raj. While there will huge challenges to implement if the Standards are not logical and, on the hindsight, it will evoke quality awareness among manufacturers. To be honest the Customer is king they decide which product to buy, we must concentrate only on few basic performance standards initially." N Mohan, CEO – Kothari International Corporation Limited



### Impact on business operations

"The standards in the current form will create a big confusion in terms of product classification and we will leave a lot of things vague and will impact the Business. Labelling again on the Product being a Fashion product can interfere with the aesthetics, we need find a way for this also. Both Domestic Brands International brands will have a huge impact due to this ambiguity. Especially International Brands will have bigger issues as the large production lines cannot make just for India alone as the Indian quantities are small. India is being looked at Global Brands as a Reliable Production base and large Brands are shifting to India, and we must give market access to these brands as our consumption is also increasing and should not be perceived as a protectionist. International brands bring in Innovation and Technological developments which will inspire Domestic brands to compete, and the end customer will be benefitted by this healthy competition."



**Akash Sehgal,**  
Senior Vice President,  
Footwear / Travel &  
Accessories, Landmark  
Group Corporation Limited

### What steps have you taken to ensure that your footwear products meet the BIS standards and guidelines, including testing, certification, and quality assurance processes?

"We are absolutely in line with Govt's initiative to produce, distribute and sell quality footwear in India. We are still waiting from BIS about testing requirements for all kinds of footwear and all certified labs locally and Internationally."

### How is the BIS footwear policy affecting your supply chain, including sourcing of raw materials, production processes, and distribution of footwear products?

"The major concern is that there is high import dependency of fashion footwear for material (mainly PU/Synthetic), trims, embellishments, and soles. It will negatively impact in terms of availability till India Manufacturers can produce goods locally that is at par with Imports."

### Do you believe that BIS footwear policy will influence consumer perceptions and demand for certified footwear products, particularly in terms of safety, quality, and trust in the Brand ?

"Brands were always committed to deliver quality product and utmost satisfaction in terms of comfort, quality and durability of products and continue to follow the same. I am not sure whether BIS will have any additional advantage as SATRA standards are mostly followed for all Local and International brands. Founded in 1919 as The British Boot, Shoe, and Allied Trades Research Association, the company has developed into international research and testing organisation now known as SATRA and whose brand is recognised and respected throughout the supply chains of numerous products industries."





**Vikas Bagga, Brand Strategist and Mentor**

**What steps are common steps generally being taken or likely to be taken by Industry at large to ensure footwear products meet the BIS standards?**

**Vikas Bagga:** Foremost, a far deeper sense of realization that BIS norms have been laid by the concerned body with notified date of implementation need to sink in, albeit more clarity and need for simplification is felt amidst ongoing demand for extension on the date of implementation that is being heard loud and clear.

**Critically:** Seeking and securing the requisite license with (maximum) online and lesser offline interface, assured timely grant of such license cum certification of the products / processes and speedy renewals – again online, shall serve as cornerstone for BIS implementation. No visible momentum in this direction is underway at the moment.

**Testing facilities** – wherever available or else to be developed inhouse, ideally in conjunction with other similar units in any given cluster as a practical proposition is being evaluated, though here again pitch and pace is not so robust.

All in all, co-opting exercise between players in any given cluster to absorb the norms fully, implement them whilst jointly seeking more clarities, simplification and collective “ask” for higher resources – perhaps even additional time lines for fulfilling certain complex processes as well mastering them will work; however for that to happen a more collaborative and cohesive approach is desirable within the stakeholders folding into their respective Industry bodies.

**How is the BIS footwear policy influencing the product development and innovation strategies across The Footwear Industry particularly in terms of safety, quality, sustainability, and consumer protection?**

**Vikas Bagga:** The QCO’s, as is being perceived is yet not covering the entire gambit of various categories and sub categories of footwear. This seemingly is just the beginning and later left out categories may well fall in the overall ambit of existing or newer QCO’s. Facets such as quality, safety, sustainability and is some ways consumer protection do get impacted with pricing, overheads, inflation, ease of procurement or sourcing etc. The very popular VFM (Value for Money) parlance too comes into play almost now on auto mode.

Ultimately availability or now as it seems creating added resources and superior resource management within the frontiers of the country will define the contours of product development and innovation of the Footwear Industry. That would definitely require additional support and favourable policies for formation of a far more, well equipped eco- system in our Country – that though is a journey in itself and Industry possibly now in a definitive transition phase. A special mention on sustainability though – a concept that is catching up globally like never before. Sustainability has to be real concept and not symbolic notwithstanding the BIS norms on the anvil. Therefore, the larger goals centric around circular economy backed by good Government and Industry intent would lead that drive in terms of both its horizon and velocity.

**How is the BIS footwear policy affecting supply chain at large including sourcing of raw materials, production processes, and distribution of footwear products? Current trends and observations thereof?**

**Vikas Bagga:** The impact on supply chain is going to be varied in short and medium term for units currently under the ambit of BIS norms. The long-term impact of course will depend on the form and shape the prescribed compliance framework witnesses upon

actual roll-out on 1st July 2023 – the currently notified date of QCO’s getting effective. The experiential learning / feedback is likely to lead to series of amendments, simplification and much needed added clarity – a long standing demand of the Footwear Industry in unison.

**Upon taking a ring side view, some of the key observations are:**

- a) Derivatives of the QCO’s being interpreted differently by various Industry Bodies, Business owners and other stakeholders at large....
- b) Continuing demand of the Industry to extend the official date of implementation of the QCO’s and intense efforts thereof. Government’s response as on date not receptive to any further extension.
- c) Importers expecting at least a short-term impasse or disruption have accelerated the import of raw material and finished ready to use footwear in the past 3 months whilst being prepared to hold stocks for an extended period so that supplies don’t go dry during festive season in later part of the year.
- d) Bigger brands and brand/eminent retail chain shave issued advisories to vendors / OEM units for securing BIS certification / BIS certified stocks only in categories that have been explicitly covered under the notified QCO’s.
- e) Units falling in threshold limits as prescribed by BIS body are now amidst hectic consultation with the Industry Bodies and alongside with spate of Agencies that have sprung up for facilitating the BIS certification for the units.
- f) Correspondingly, infrastructure deficit being acutely felt by the Industry at large. Augmenting existing lab / testing facilities or setting up fresh such facilities being evaluated; Cost factors / viabilities under scanner and much of that could be visible in coming weeks.
- g) Production units (non-exporters) are spreading the production cycle in a manner wherein running momentum does not get severely hampered pre or post implementation of the QCO’s as stability in terms of raw material / component sourcing and demand gaps itself may get impacted in immediate short term.
- h) A clearer picture is yet to emerge on the status of the stocks that would rest with large aggregators, distributors and retailers on the eve of new QCO’s getting implemented. While the BIS certification is required to be secured by manufacturing units (as per scale and financials prescribed by DPIIT), the other stakeholders of the supply chain and customer fulfilment can’t remain oblivious of the impact – at least in short term, hence the rising angst as the deadline draws closer.
- i) Likewise, rising anxiety amongst smaller production units who are currently not in the purview of BIS certification on the likelihood of their customers (especially brands) insisting upon BIS certified products in course of time.
- j) Eventually, the Governmental Agencies are likely to further capture and consolidate their respective data repositories over a period of time. That could translate into a guided higher share of organized sector emerging in coming years.

**Do you believe that BIS footwear policy will influence consumer perceptions and demand for certified footwear products, particularly in terms of safety, quality, and trust in the brand?**

**Vikas Bagga:** It’s a long-drawn exercise that will eventually rope in all stakeholders extending up to end customers in more than one way. The end customers are as it is discerning and mindful with comfort, fashion and product differentiation being the nodal factors / attributes behind most purchase decisions in the given times. Brand led manufacturing activity though for the longest time has evolved keeping customer’s insistence on high end buying cum usage experience given the acute competition across all segments and widespread availability of endless options. The added layer of BIS certification – once populated by the authorities may augment the selling pitch of retailers and buying inclination of end customers. While this churn is on, Brands and possibly semi organized players too would step up the sourcing initiatives from production units that fully comply with BIS norms.



**Ashish Bansal,**  
Country Head  
BFL BRANDFOLIO PVT LTD

**Steps taken to meet the BIS standards and guidelines:**

**Ashish Bansal:** The Factory from which we source Products are Compliance Factories and they already Follow International plus India Related Quality Norms. We have got the International Factory Audited by the BIS Department. We are just waiting for the Final BIS Certificate from Department.

**Would the BIS footwear policy influence your product development and innovation strategies?**

**Ashish Bansal:** The BIS footwear policy has a profound impact on our product development and innovation strategies, focusing on safety, quality, sustainability, and consumer protection. It has compelled us to prioritize these aspects throughout our processes. We have implemented stringent quality control measures, including rigorous testing and certification processes, to ensure compliance with BIS standards. Our product development now emphasizes the use of sustainable materials and eco-friendly manufacturing techniques. We have also enhanced consumer protection measures by providing clear labelling, accurate product information, and responsive customer support.

**Would the BIS footwear policy affect your supply chain?**

**Ashish Bansal:** The BIS policy requires us to source raw materials that meet the prescribed quality and safety standards. This affects our sourcing practices as we need to identify suppliers who can provide compliant materials. We collaborate with trusted suppliers and conduct thorough assessments to ensure the materials used in our footwear align with the BIS requirements.

We have modified our production processes to align with these requirements. This involves implementing quality control measures, adopting standardized manufacturing techniques, and ensuring worker safety protocols. To comply, we will ensure that our products meet these specifications before distribution. This includes incorporating the appropriate labeling, including BIS certification marks, and ensuring packaging aligns with the prescribed guidelines. Compliance with distribution-related aspects of the BIS policy is essential for market access and to meet regulatory obligations.

**Do you believe that BIS footwear policy will influence consumer perceptions and demand for certified footwear products?**

**Ashish Bansal:** Yes, the BIS footwear policy is expected to have a significant influence on consumer perceptions and demand for certified footwear products, especially in terms of safety, quality, and trust in the brand. As consumers become more aware of the BIS footwear policy and its certification requirements, they are likely to prioritize certified footwear over non-certified alternatives. The presence of the BIS certification mark can instil confidence in consumers, building trust in the brand and reinforcing their perception of the product's safety and quality.







## Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags Around the World

Voices from Spain One of the Most Important International Markets for the Production and Sale of Footwear and Leather Goods

The expanding growth of the Spanish footwear and leather goods market bodes well for export-oriented local manufacturing businesses that year after year, attract the interest of international buyers at Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags. The focus is increasingly on sustainability and medium/high quality. The main difficulties encountered include a labour shortage and concern for the German market, which seems to be in retreat.



**T**he aim of Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags has never been to simply sell exhibition space, but rather to build, edition after edition (number 99 will be held at Riva del Garda from 17th to 20th June 2023) a **business platform capable of growing the footwear and leather goods industry** and providing the market with key opportunities to expand its boundaries.

To do so, however, it's important to know the market. Based on this premise comes **Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags Around the World**, a series of initiatives bringing the Riva event into close contact with the industry's institutions, manufacturers and distributors all throughout the world with numerous targeted events, company visits and personal meetings. **Spain** was the initiative's most recent focus.

### WHY SPAIN?

Spain has long been regarded as one of the most important international production poles. Suffice it to quote a few figures (source FICE) to clarify the concept: in 2022, **Spanish footwear exports reached EUR 3,056 million and 159 million pairs** (+22% in value and +6% in volume compared to 2021. And +14.2% in value and +2% in volume compared to 2019).

The European Union is the main buyer of Spanish footwear, accounting for 77% of total exports in volume and 71% in value. **France, Italy, Germany, Portugal and Poland** top the list of destinations. Exports to the EU reached EUR 2,168 million and 122 million pairs, an increase of 28% in value and 8% in pairs compared to last year, while the average price increased by 19%.

The **United States**, on the other hand, is the top non-EU destination, with 28.7% growth, exceeding the pre-pandemic figures

by 5 percentage points. The **UK**, post-Brexit, emerges as the second largest market with a 17% increase, albeit 28% lower than in 2019. **Turkey** shows the most striking growth: +45%, which becomes +95% if one considers the pre-pandemic figures. The opposite is true in the case of **China**, which remains the fourth most important market outside the EU, but whose import figures from Spain show a marked decline: -38%.

This is also a crucial market for **Italy**, which enjoys considerable inbound and outbound trade with Spain. Exports from Italy to Spain are now worth EUR 32 million, while inbound trade is worth EUR 30.5 million (according to data processed by ICE based on ISTAT data).

This makes Spain a major player in the fashion accessories market with a strong propensity for exports, and similarly for **leather goods** – as demonstrated by the figures – a segment characterised by medium/high-quality collections and competitive prices, with **45% of production directed to foreign countries**.

These figures clearly demonstrate Spain's considerable role within the Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags offering, and how important it was for the event's organisers to meet with Imanol Martínez, Marketing Director of **FICE** (the business organisation representing 90% of Spanish footwear production, distribution and exports); Fernando Gutiérrez, Secretary General of **ASEFMA** (the Spanish association of manufacturers of leather goods, travel goods and related items); Pablo Conde, Consumer Goods and Cultural Industries Director, and Veruska de Prado Poloni, Fashion Department, both from **ICEX Spain Trade and Investment** (the institution that promotes the internationalisation of Spanish companies). Not to mention the **ANCC** (the Association of Spanish Retailers) whose president María Labrador has confirmed the attendance of a delegation at the next edition of the fair at Riva del Garda in June.





The Spanish institutions highlighted a few key points in an expanding economic landscape, including the fact that Spain's market and procurement are undergoing significant change. It is a **positive historical period, particularly for medium-high-end and luxury products**. **Albania, Serbia, Croatia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Cambodia** are experiencing remarkable growth, making shoes at even lower prices than their Chinese counterpart. The **lack of specialised workers** in the footwear and leather goods market is emerging as a serious and increasingly pressing problem for European production, one that has been foreshadowed for years.



## THE VOICE OF PRODUCERS

During its recent trip to Spain, Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags met a number of those who fill its trade fair pavilions with magnificent shoe and bag collections every year, finding the perfect mix of quality, carefully selected materials and details, attention to price, and innovative and sustainable contents.

Sustainability, in fact, is precisely the focus of **Pablosky** (a manufacturer from the Toledo area), which with its third generation of entrepreneurs at the helm, 300 employees and a turnover of EUR 40 million, makes sustainable and certified children's shoes. **Recykers** too speaks of sustainability, promoting vegan shoes made from certified materials derived from recycling activities: "Recykers was founded with a clear objective right from the start: to develop, through innovation, sustainable materials and production techniques to create better-performing and more efficient products. We are committed to recycling and reusing existing materials and to promoting the use of biodegradable ones," states the company.

After more than 30 years in the business, the export-oriented company, **Bertuchi – Nex51**, has similarly embraced the demands of the market, choosing to offer a product line with sustainable contents, such as soles made from naturally sourced recycled materials.

Sandals, slippers and moccasins for men, women and children destined for large retail chains (Auchan, Intersport, Leclerc), on the other hand, are the core business of **Pro-Contact** from Alicante. A company that exports 90% of its production and has been exhibiting at Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags for 35 years: "Buyers are tired of fast fashion and cheap products. They are now looking for truly sustainable offerings and reject those promoting operations that smack of greenwashing." The company highlighted one particular concern: a significant drop in sales in the German market, causing many shops to close.

A finding that was underscored during the next leg of the trip. Founded in 2003, the company quickly became an important market player thanks to its substantial and clever investment in communication. We are speaking of **XTI**: more than 20 outlets in Spain and 70 franchises worldwide. Its brands XTI, XTI Kids, Carmela (leather line) and Refresh are produced in China (by factories with exclusive agreements), Turkey and Bangladesh, for an annual total of 7 million pairs, 60% of which are exported. A brand that has always been a key participant at the Riva event: "Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags is crucial for testing new collections. The timing is perfect and allows us to directly engage with many international buyers."

Also based in Alicante is **Pinoso's**, a brand that has managed to innovate in an unexpected product category: comfort shoes. Its men's leather models have conquered the US, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, Europe, Korea and Canada (thanks also to contacts forged at Riva del Garda). Why do we speak of innovation when it comes to Pinoso's? Because they produce shoes for diabetics that are certified in the US, which must have no inner seams, provide a snug and adaptable fit thanks to a special fastening system, and have a removable, anti-bacterial memory foam insole that perfectly adapts to the foot.

Then there are those who visit Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags to meet a specific target group of buyers, such as **Neox/Marila**, which is aiming for distribution in the southern hemisphere. Or **Sab Calzados**, which offers its production firepower (3 million pairs per year) to those in search of private labels. **Lola Canales/Pasoli**, which specialises in quality sandals, has been exhibiting at the fair for the past 14 years, while it's been 35 years for **Bio Step**, which produces roughly a million pairs per year (EUR 40 million turnover) of sandals and slippers for men and women, in demand across the globe in Russia, the US, Sweden, Germany, France and Belgium.

A lengthy list of industrial businesses that could fill several more pages. A peek at a much broader picture where it is clear that Spain, like other European manufacturing countries, has a varied offering of fashion accessories, in terms of both models and price ranges. An offer guaranteed to benefit all those who will be sourcing at Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags.



# The Leather Story Timeless appeal meets sustainability

In an exclusive interview with The Leather Story's Founder **Aditi Kapur Chawla**, where she shares her insights on the leather accessory market and what drove her to establish a brand in this niche.

BY **CHANDNI KUMAR MEHRA**

**As the visionary behind The Leather Story, can you share your insights on the leather accessory market and what drove you to establish a brand in this niche?**

The Indian leather accessories industry is still an untapped and disorganized sector. As an international market professional, I noticed a stark difference in the availability and offering of leather accessories in markets like the UK, USA, Australia, and Germany compared to India. Despite having access to raw materials, state-of-the-art tanneries, and skilled artisans, India's retail market needed more options for our consumption. This gap led me to establish The Leather Story.

**Tell us how The Leather Story's exquisite designs and attention to detail cater to the evolving demands of the leather accessory market.**

We create solutions and listen to our customers to make their busy lives more organized and accessible. We challenge ourselves to develop innovative designs, and after a rigorous development process, we send prototypes to selected customers for user trials that ensure that our products are stylish, functional, and loved by our customers.



**Leather accessories have a timeless appeal. How does The Leather Story balance classic styles with staying on-trend in this ever-changing industry?**

We keep in mind the timeless appeal of leather accessories and do not compete with fast fashion brands. We study trends and adapt to our ethos, supporting sustainability in mind. Our customers have a similar mindset and choose our carefully designed styles of responsibly sourced leathers.

**What role does sustainability play in the leather accessory market? How does The Leather Story address environmental concerns without compromising style and quality?**

The leather industry has been sustainable from its inception as it upcycles the bi-products of the meat industry. Leather can go through a lot of wear and tear, making it a genuine classic material with a long life. At The Leather Story, we focus on responsible sourcing, manufacturing and offering only the best possible to our customers. We use vegetable-tanned leathers and unique colours that set us apart.

**What are the key trends shaping the future of the leather accessory market, and how is The Leather Story poised to stay ahead of the curve?**

The fashion retail industry is moving towards a sustainable, circular economy, and The Leather Story is committed to responsible sourcing, manufacturing, and offering only the best to our customers.



**What advice would you give aspiring entrepreneurs looking to make their mark in the leather accessory market?**

Passion for leather as a material is vital to success in the leather industry. Entrepreneurs should focus on creating responsibly and take pride in their creations, which can pass down through generations.

**What sets The Leather Story apart from competitors in the leather accessory industry, and how do you plan to maintain this edge?**

At The Leather Story, we focus on our customers and create stylish and functional products. We believe in healthy competition, which pushes us to bring out the best outcomes.

**Can you give us a sneak peek into some exciting upcoming leather accessories your audience can look forward to?**

We are working on more options in our best-selling categories of sunglass cases and watch organizers. Our customers have given us a long bucket list, and we are slowly working through it.



# Evolving and Energizing: Shoetech'23 Exceeds Expectation

**SHOETECH'23 solidifies its leadership in the components sector trade fair landscape with another successful edition**

**S**hoetech'23, an important exhibition in the industry, held from 5th to 6th April at Agra, saw an increase in visitor numbers and received constructive feedback indicating a developing market with a clear economic outlook.

The Show was marked by its dynamic and focused approach to trends, style and products, with 70 plus exhibitors drawing a satisfied crowd of professionals and buyers. The event saw an increase in visitor numbers, with a total of 2000 plus attendees by the end of the fair on April 6th, reaffirming Shoetech's role as a global reference point for the leather industry and its ability to interpret market trends. While the number of PAN India visitors remained stable, there was a 5% increase in local Agra visitors, reflecting the growing demand for Made in India and manufacturing excellence.

The eighth edition of AGRA was organized by Indian Footwear Component Manufacturers Association (IFCOMA) at Madhu Resort, Agra. IFCOMA President Sanjay Gupta presided over the show and the organizers of the event took the opportunity to honour and recognize industry leaders who have made significant contributions to their respective fields. The felicitation ceremony was a highlight of the show, as these leaders were applauded for their outstanding achievements and exemplary leadership.



*Mr. Sanjay Gupta, President- IFCOMA felicitating Mr. Puran Dawar, President – AFMEC*



*Representatives from Industry addressing the press conference at SHOETECH'23*





*Mr. Ajay Kumar Lal, Scientist – F/Senior Director & Head, Chemical Department, BIS addressing at the inaugural session*



*Mr. Manoj Bhaiya, President, C & E Ltd & Chairman, Suolificio Linea Italia India felicitating Mr. Arun Kumar Sinha, IAS, Managing Director, FDDI*



*FAFM members interacting with BIS team*



*Mr. Puran Dawar, President – AFMEC felicitating Mr. Amit Chopra, MD Shoes & Accessories*

The inaugural session was attended by Shri Sanjay Leekha, Chairman – CLE, Shri Puran Dawar, President – AFMEC, Shri V. Noushad, President CIFI, Shri Gopal Gupta, Chairman, Gupta Overseas, Shri Rajeev Wasan - A. T. Exports, Shri Motilal Sethi, Regional Chairman, North CLE, Shri Arun Kumar Sinha, IAS, Managing Director, FDDI, Shri Opinder Singh Chhatwal, President, ASMA, Shri Kuldeep Singh, President-FAFM, Shri Sanjay Gupta, President- IFCOMA, Shri S.K. Verma, Executive Director - IFCOMA, Managing Committee of IFCOMA, other industry dignitaries, eminent speakers and media persons.

Puran Dawar, President AFMEC said, "While IFCOMA is doing a laudable job of providing trade linkage to the domestic Industry at the same it is pertinent to note that India is bound to become a Global Factory in the near future as China has taken a back seat in many ways.

He appreciated the move taken by Govt of India to introduce the QCO standards for Footwear and allied products. He said that Quality is the Key to success of emerging New India and QCO's will certainly pave the way forward to achieve the mark that will ascertain Indian footprint on Global map.



*Mr. Kuldeep Singh, President-FAFM interacting with BIS team*





Mr. Sanjay Leekha, Chairman – CLE addressing the inaugural session



Mr. V. Noushad, President CIF addressing the inaugural session



Mr. Motilal Sethi, Regional Chairman, CLE-North addressing the inaugural session



Mr. Motilal Sethi, Mr. Sanjay Gupta, Mr. Puran Dawar, Mr. Arun Kumar Sinha IAS, Mr. Sanjay Leekha



Mr. Sushil Magan, Mr. Anil Magan, Mr. Rajeev Wasan - A. T. Exports and Mr. Gopal Gupta, Chairman, Gupta Overseas at the BIS session



Exhibitors Booth at Shoetech '23



He emphasised that the Production Linked Scheme likely to introduced soon, will bring key focus on component development and upgradation in India. This will create a benchmark for the Indian Industry which is raring to go.

Additionally, the organizers arranged an informative and engaging session on the latest BIS footwear policy changes in the industry. This session was well-received by the attendees, as it provided valuable insights and updates on the new policy framework. AK Lal & Aditya Das, from BIS department and experts in the field shared their knowledge and expertise, shedding light on the implications and opportunities arising from the policy changes. The session was moderated by Shri Vikas Bagga – Business Consultant and Shri Amit Chopra MD Shoes & Accessories and conducted with great professionalism, featuring interactive discussions. Attendees had the opportunity to ask questions, clarify doubts, and engage in meaningful discussions with the experts. The session was informative, engaging, and highly relevant to the current business landscape, providing the audience with valuable knowledge and insights to navigate the changing policy landscape.

Delivering the 'Keynote Address', Shri Arun Kumar Sinha, IAS, Managing Director, FDDI said, "The components & accessories industry in India is the backbone of the Indian Footwear Industry which has transformed significantly since last few years.





Mr. Vikas Bagga, Business Consultant moderating the BIS session



Mr. Anil Magan & Mr. Sushil Magan felicitating Mr. Gopal Gupta, Chairman, Gupta Overseas



Mr. Amit Chopra, Mr. Ajay Kumar Lal, Mr. Aditya Das & Mr. Vikas Bagga



Exhibitor's booths

Almost 95% of the Indian Footwear components & accessories manufacturers fall under the MSME category with huge employment opportunities”.

The organizers were lauded for their efforts in curating such a well-structured session that provided a comprehensive understanding of the new policy changes and their potential impact on the industry. The seminar on BIS quality norms for footwear was a great success, and it provided valuable insights into the importance of quality in the footwear industry. The attendees gained a better understanding of the various quality standards that must be followed and the importance of quality control in the manufacturing process. It is essential for the footwear industry to prioritize quality to meet consumer expectations and remain competitive in the market. Overall, the felicitation of industry leaders and the well-organized session on the new policy were notable highlights of the show, adding immense value to the event and leaving attendees inspired and informed.

#### INDUSTRY RESPONSE

With no room for error, Shoetech'23 once again demonstrated its indispensability as an important trade fair where both supply and demand converge, shaping the medium-term economic future of the industry. Exhibitors at Shoetech'23 affirmed that “it is in Agra that we meet the most competent audience, to whom we dedicate our utmost attention.” As the fair concluded, there was a sense of economic recovery on the horizon, building on the positive feedback received from the footwear and leather goods sectors. While some orders were placed, the market is experiencing increasing structural fragmentation, posing a challenge to maintain quality amidst diversity.

‘Shoetech’ Agra which is specifically aimed at enabling the manufacturers, suppliers, distributors, and designers, etc. to put



Mr. Yogesh Khulbey, ID Footwear interacting with BIS team

forth their raw materials, accessories, components as well as their inventive technologies for the benefit of the industry at large has established its unique position in the footwear and allied industry and is known as the ‘premier event’ for national and international organizations seeking business opportunities in India’s huge domestic market.

More than 70 exhibitors participated in the Shoetech Agra and displayed various Footwear components, accessories & machinery which included specialized products such as Soles (TPR/TPU/PU etc.) of the latest design , PU, Semi-PU, PVC, Machinery, Adhesive, Varnishes, Release Agents, Water based adhesives, Plastic shoe lasts, Insoles, toe-puff & Counters, Shank Boards, Technical textiles, Linings & Interlinings, Laminated fabric, EVA & PU foam, Moulded Socks, Comfort foam Insole, Heel grip, Non-woven fabrics, Velcro tapes, Shoe finishing Chemicals, Buckles, Metal fittings, Industrial Sewing Threads, Finishes & Chemicals, Packaging Boxes, Synthetic leather, fur, labels, Moulded counters, Shoe Machinery, Spares for Machinery, Knitted fabrics, Fusible Interlinings and much more.



# VERSAKNIT BIODEGRADABLE FABRICS A Boon for the Planet!



BY MANUJ SETH

**E**nvironmental sustainability is becoming increasingly important as we strive to minimize our impact on the planet. One way to achieve sustainability in the fashion industry is through the use of biodegradable fabrics. Biodegradable fabrics are made from natural materials that can decompose in the environment, reducing the amount of waste that ends up in landfills. They can also be recycled or reused, further minimizing their environmental impact. Moreover, the production of biodegradable fabrics involves less water and energy consumption compared to conventional synthetic fabrics. By choosing biodegradable fabrics, we can contribute to a more sustainable future, where fashion and the environment can coexist harmoniously.

Besides the increasing awareness of recycling, reuse and recovery of materials, there is an increasing need to limit the exploitation of resources and the production of waste. Biodegradability is the ability of a material or product to completely degrade into basic inorganic molecules, without any external intervention, in the presence of natural agents such as microorganisms, sun and oxygen, in a reasonable amount of time.

Natural materials like cotton, wool, hemp, or leather are biodegradable and can disintegrate by natural processes. These materials are sourced from plants and animals, and their natural structure allows them to decompose over time. Cotton, for instance, can decompose in as little as one week under ideal conditions. Wool, hemp, and leather take longer to break down, but eventually return to the earth without leaving harmful residues behind. Biodegradable materials such as these are preferred over synthetic alternatives that take hundreds of years to decompose and leave behind harmful microplastics. By using natural materials in the production of textiles and clothing, we can promote sustainability and reduce our environmental impact.

## VERSAKNIT

In recent years, the fashion industry has been working on innovating products using biodegradable materials, further reducing its environmental impact. Innovations have resulted in biodegradable fabrics made from materials such as bamboo, banana, pineapple, and seaweed. These materials not only have a lower environmental impact, but they are also highly versatile, offering a range of textures and properties. For example, pineapple leaves are used to create a leather-like material, which is an excellent sustainable alternative to animal leather. Biodegradable materials are also being used to create packaging for fashion products, reducing waste and providing an eco-friendly option for customers. As technology advances, we can expect to see further innovation in the use of biodegradable materials, providing us with sustainable options that will benefit the environment for years to come.

## VersaKnit UPPERS Biodegradable Natural Fibers

- Bamboo • Cotton • Wool • Lyocell • Hemp • Linen • Viscose
- can be made available with and without spandex.

Whenever feasible, it is recommended to select VersaKnit biodegradable fabrics and uppers. These are more expensive, which means you'll likely buy less – but that's a good thing, too. We need to break free from the fast fashion mentality that encourages rapid turnaround times on trends and a quasi-disposable attitude toward shoes and clothes.

**Versatile's outlook is to reimagine the way fashion is designed, made, worn and reused.**

But this type of systemic change can not happen in a bubble. An open innovation culture is crucial, and this makes a strong case that pre-competitive collaboration between brands and producers is a key step in the transition to a better vendee vendor relationship.





Wear  
**Happiness**



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