

'We've found opportunities on the supply side to run our operations more efficiently and effectively, which we will pass on to our customers'

Bernd Hake, UK managing director of Hugo Boss, says the brand will mitigate any price rises on product p26



Free stand: Connected Generation

EXHIBITIONS

Pure Spirit confirms NextGen winners

Pure Spirit, the young fashion show, this week unveiled the 12 up-and-coming brands to win support to exhibit in the inaugural Pure NextGen Designers area in February.

Young fashion brand Connected Generation, menswear brand Village Green and vintage-inspired womenswear brand Upper 5th were awarded free stands at the show by a judging panel who included *Drapers* editor Jessica Brown and UK Fashion & Textile Association chief executive Eric Musgrave.

Nine additional brands will win subsidised stands at Pure Spirit, which takes place at new venue Earls Court, London, from February 13-15.

The shortlist comprises handbag label Brown & Berry, premium women's brand Cashmere in Love, nightwear brand Too Many PJs, 8 LA Jewellery, costume jewellery brand Trisori, jewellery brand Sägen, Sian Jacobs knitwear, fair-trade brand Maxjenny and contemporary womenswear label Silk & Sawdust.

FOOTWEAR

End of anti-dumping gets mixed reaction

BY SUZANNE BEARNE

Last week's decision by the EU to ditch anti-dumping duties on leather footwear sourced from China and Vietnam will allow retailers to safeguard margins but is unlikely to lead to a drop in the retail price of footwear to consumers, industry leaders warned.

The duties, which amount to 16.5% on Chinese leather imports and 10% on Vietnamese leather footwear imports, were introduced in 2006 in an attempt to prevent the market from being swamped with cheap Far Eastern imports. Last week it was announced that the anti-dumping duties would not be renewed on March 31.

The British Retail Consortium (BRC), which backed *Drapers*' 2009 Dump The Duties campaign to put pressure on the EU to ditch the levies, said the change would reduce the retail price of footwear and drive consumer spending. Its head of EU affairs Sean O'Sullivan said:

No impact? Hush Puppies

"It will be significant enough to increase consumer confidence."

But retailers and manufacturers said it would only be enough to mitigate the rising costs of production, raw materials and freight.

Daniel Rubin, executive chairman of footwear retailer The Dune Group, said:

"We buy a fair amount from China, so we will be able to reduce our costs. However, prices are going up so much. I was in China last week and I was hearing about wage inflation of about 20%, so it might just help keep prices at current levels."

David Rist, managing director of the Hush Puppies brand, said: "There will

"The majority of spring stock will already be out so I doubt we will see significant change this season"

Richard Kottler, chief executive, British Footwear Association

be no impact at all in the immediate future. The duties come off after March, so that's a long way after [spring 11] deliveries and, for autumn, we've already developed our shoes and have samples and a number of orders in from other countries [not affected by the duties]."

British Footwear Association (BFA) chief executive Richard Kottler said: "Bearing in mind this does not take effect until the end of March, the majority of spring stock will already be out so I doubt we will see significant change this season. [The impact on retail prices] next season depends on the cost of goods from Vietnam and China."

Dennis McNeill, director of supplier Aegis Shoes, added: "We were looking to move from China to India because of the levy, but we will keep it [production] the same now."



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