

Necessary Accessory

Exciting new trade event
Thurs 7th November '02
full details inside. . .

Business Planning Saves Jobs!

*Nobody plans to fail, so
don't get caught out
and fail to plan!*

Designers at Debenhams

Exclusive interview
with Jo Hooper,
Head of Design
at Debenhams



Issue 4 Oct/Nov 02



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news&views from the Chair



David Jones, Director for the London Fashion Forum reports:

It has been a conflicting period from a press and business "facts" perspective. We have heard that manufacturing industry suffered its worst slump for 23 years from the Office for National Statistics but yet more than half a million pounds is spent on plastic cards every minute. A staggering figure to comprehend. A total of £285 billion changed hands via credit or debit cards in the past year. One in twelve people owe at least £2,500 on their credit or debit cards and one in 24 owes over £5,000 according to Mintel. So how does all this affect our industry?

One manufacturer providing equipment to the retail trade reports that orders have slowed to a trickle (albeit mainly through the loss of one major customer) and retailers have not yet put to bed their Christmas purchasing plans and are generally nervous (information provided by GOL report). My own sources have provided very encouraging news for some designer collections hitting stores on time. Sales are above plan and repeat purchases are already in progress. This really does reflect the very best of British Design. Naturally not all collections are selling out but the early signs of the new season are very encouraging. In addition, British Fashion Week proved to be surprisingly boyant.. let's hope the same can be said for the New York, Milan and Paris fashion shows.

There are some designers choosing to show elsewhere rather than London as they seek an international status for their collections. I feel greatly encouraged by this move and feel personally delighted that British trained designers can hold their own in New York, Paris or Milan.

The UK have a steady supply of new talent to take their place in London reflecting healthy competition and the true evolution of fashion which after all is defined as "of the moment". I find this healthy and commendable.

With other major potential changes occurring in the ownership of our high street retailers the future looks both interesting and exciting.

This period has been exceptionally busy for the LFF and our newsletter has been highly acclaimed with our mailing list now exceeding the 5,000 mark. An incredible achievement. Finally, a welcome to our new company secretary John Baker and our secretariat Tracy Robinson. Glad to have you on board!

David Jones

Who are the Textiles and Clothing Strategy Group?

The Textiles and Clothing Strategy Group (TCSG) is a government funded industry forum which brings together business, unions, academia and government in an attempt to substantially improve the ability of the textile and clothing industry to compete in world markets.

The group was established in November 1998 with James McAdam as its chair. In June 2000, the TCSG published 'A National Strategy for the UK Textiles and Clothing Industry' which outlined a 55-point plan of action for the industry.

The follow up report, 'Making it Happen', which charts the progress made on these recommendations, was published in June 2002.

The structure of the group has developed to take in to account both the national and regional viewpoints of the industry. In addition to the main TCSG strategy group, there is a separate Regional

Network made up of Regional Development Agencies, Government Offices and independent regional trade networks.

A Working Group has also been set up as a forum to discuss and disseminate information on successful regional projects that have the potential for national application.

Although a lot has been achieved, the work of the TCSG continues. There are still areas outlined in the 'National Strategy', which need to be addressed, and every effort is being made to satisfy all 55 of the original recommendations.

News and information on the progress made by TCSG is published in its quarterly journal TCSG: Bulletin. If you would like to receive a copy of this or the 'Making it Happen' report, contact James Montguy at tcsdg@dial.pipex.com.

Business Technology Support Centre

The Business Technology Support Centre (BTSC), was established in 1999 by the London College of Fashion to help and support small to medium size enterprises in the clothing, footwear and textiles industry.

The Business Technology Support Centre, located at the Curtain Road site of London College of Fashion, is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund and is able to offer training, access to technology, and general business support, as well as helping designers produce their patterns and sample range.

It can provide all this at much subsidised rates for anyone in the London boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Bexley, Brent, Ealing, Greenwich, Hackney, Haringey, Havering, Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest.

The facilities include a Sample Production Unit, where samples can be produced to a high quality by an experienced sample machinist. Training is also available on a variety of sewing equipment, as well as being able to use all the equipment on site.

There is also a CAD/CAM Centre where patterns can be produced and graded, as well as training being offered.

Other services include:

- Advice and support for Production Development and Manufacture.
- Training and advice on e-commerce.
- Advice on Marketing and PR.
- Advice on business and financial planning.

BTSC offer

- One to one training.
- Seminars.
- Short courses.
- Demonstrations.
- Consultancy by recognised specialists.

One of their clients, Peter Howell of Aorta said "The Business Technology Support Centre certainly helped me establish my business. It would have been much more difficult without their support and advice".

For more information contact John Danes
tel: 020 7514 7526 email: j.danes@lcf.linst.ac.uk



During the LFF's research into the accessory market, many designers have requested greater exposure. As a result the LFF are pleased to announce a collaborative select event with The London College of Fashion (LCF) with the support of Annexe:

Necessary Accessory

Thurs 7th November 2002
2.00pm - 7.00pm
(set up time 10.00am until 1.30pm)

Rootstein Hopkins Space,
London College of Fashion

This much requested new event targets the very best of British Accessory Designers reviewing their ranges to both independent and main High Street retailers.

Each designer is allocated an exhibition area comprising of a table, two chairs and display equipment. Designers must specify the type of equipment required and should contact the LFF for an exhibitors pack that itemises all details.

The event is heavily subsidised by both the LFF and the LFC, the cost is only £50 per designer - to cover basic administration overheads. Food and refreshments will be provided.

The LFF has already secured the support of the British Shops and Stores Association (bssa), the trade organisation for 1,500 retail independents, along with major retailers such as Debenhams.

Over 7,000 invitations will be mailed out to the "right" target market including, all high street retailers, buying houses, import houses, wholesalers as well as a cross section of foreign retail buyers.

It will be a sociable, fun event aimed at giving exposure and profile to our talented accessory designers of today.

for more information please contact

Jenny Holloway or Tracy Robinson
at the LFF on 020 8462 1475 or
email info@londonfashionforum.com

A New Concept: Foundation Degree in Fashion & Clothing

Newham College of Further Education in East London has been validated by Middlesex University to run a three year part-time Foundation Degree course in Fashion and Clothing.

The aim of this new vocational degree programme is to train students to meet the growing demand for multi-skilled people who know their subject and can apply it confidently in the workplace.

The course will develop creative and practical skills including the historical and cultural contexts relevant to a

designer. And include business skills and professional practice.

The part-time nature of the course will allow students to continue working while studying and attract applicants who have been previously unable to pursue higher education.

For further information contact:
David Reeson on 020 8257 4318
email david.reeson@newham.ac.uk
Newham College of Further Education
East Ham Campus, High Street South,
London E6 6ER.

A life long dream for Zandra Rhodes

The Fashion and Textiles Museum (FTM) has been a burning desire for Zandra Rhodes for many years. Located in Bermondsey, this museum is the first of its kind to showcase the talent of local and international fashion and textile designers.

FTM will be centred around rotating exhibitions that represent the best of both vintage and modern fashion and textiles design and has been carefully selected to host the ASIAN DREAMS event on 21st November 2002 (see opposite). FTM are also offering students a Fellowship Award and are organising exciting educational programmes.

The bold FTM building is the first of its kind in Europe to be designed by world renowned architect **Ricardo Legorreta**. Legorreta has incorporated Zandra Rhodes Textile Designs into the side doors to give a distinctive touch. The museum also features rooftop duplex flats with terrace views of the Tower Bridge. Ricardo Legorreta has been Mexico's most renowned architect for many years.

Zandra Rhodes wishes to recognise the best of British and International fashion and textile design, FTM intends to showcase the talents of important British Fashion Designers, Textile Designers, Accessory Designers and even boutiques. FTM also intends to exhibit international designers to show their influence in the world of fashion.

Following are some of the influential forces FTM wishes to acknowledge and showcase:

- Notable British Fashion Designers
 Mary Quant - Jean Muir - Bill Gibb - Ossie Clark
 David Sasson-Foale and Tuffin-Barbara Hulaniki-
 Katherine Hamnett-Bruce Oldfield - Vivienne Westwood
 Jasper Conran-Pam Hogg- Rifat Ozbek-Scott Crolla
 Helen Storey-John Galliano-Alexander McQueen
 and many many more.....



For further information on the Fashion and Textile Museum please write to 83 Bermondsey Street, London, SE1 3XF
 Tel: 020 7403 0222 Fax: 020 7403 0555 or
 E-mail: info@ftmlondon.org.

asian DREAMS

Thursday 21st November 2002
at Zandra Rhodes
Fashion and Textiles Museum
 83 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3XF
 (Closest Tube London Bridge)



The London Fashion Forum is holding a unique collaborative event with Newham College. Together they are hosting this exciting new cultural exhibition and catwalk show, which will be held at the Fashion and Textiles Museum.

This new style event includes exhibitors displaying Asian clothing, textiles and accessories to influential retail buyers, overseas buyers, import houses and wholesalers. In addition for selected exhibitors there will be a catwalk show. Entertainment, food and refreshments will also be available.

The event has been so well received that there will be a special presentation by Zandra Rhodes, with confirmed attendance from both Government support agencies and Government Ministers. Many designers and High Street retailers have also confirmed their attendance.

The event will open at 2.00pm and exhibitors need to set up promptly between 10.00am-1.00pm. Exhibitors will be required to supply their own display equipment.

If you are interested in either exhibiting or attending this event and require further information, please contact:

Jennifer Holloway or
Tracy Robinson at the LFF
Tel: 020 8462 1475 or email:
info@londonfashionforum.com



During London Fashion Week the national press has published picture after picture of the latest highs and lows from the best of the British Designers. But what is it like backstage with the glamorous models and latest creations?

In our EXCLUSIVE EXPOSÉ, the LFF's most intrepid investigative reporters went backstage at the Gharani Strok show to find out the truth behind the glamour. . .

Behind the scenes at London Fashion Week

Virtually the first thing that hits you when you go behind the stage is the excitement; you can almost feel the adrenaline in the air! The beautiful models are walking around scantily clad, with full make up on. Back stage there are a plethora of helpers, from dressers to makeup artists, to security - even the refreshments table is staffed by a very official looking and organised man. Nothing is left to chance and almost everyone appears to be talking into walkie talkies, seemingly surgically grafted on to their heads!



There are rows of heavily laden rails, prominently displaying separate theme boards for each model with their names clearly visible. Accessories are carefully arranged on a large table, strictly organised by model and theme. Lists are

everywhere and everyone is frantically checking them. Focal point is the 'master plan' - one large poster that gives the overview of the show with a number by each model.

Then pandemonia breaks out.....suddenly from all corners the "press" are there, making a bee line for the back of the tent. Against the backdrop of commotion Denise Van Outen and Sadie Frost, both dedicated fans of Nargess Gharni and Vanja Strok, make an entrance. Lights flash continuously in a paparazzi style 'firework' display, deafening squeals of excitement chorus all around us and then breaking through the cacophony a god-like voice from security commands "Everybody out!.....the show's about to start!"

In less than a blink of an eye we were all out. Moments later, sitting in a prime spot in the second row, we are watching an all inclusive, exotic trip of the globe with the sexy, hippie chick, collection in fine georgette's, silks and chiffon's.

Prints were the strong theme throughout, in a huge rainbow of vibrant colours. Silhouettes were mostly loose and body skimming, with elements of the kimono, kaftan and empire line dress.

The last outfit of the show saw Jodie Kidd glide effortlessly down the cat walk, looking stunning in an animal print dress that just floated on air. Then it was the finale... the crowd cheered Nargess and Vanja on an outstanding collection. The lights went up and Tracy Robinson and I sat there...dazed!!

This is what British Fashion Week is all about!



Top to bottom:
 Celebs at LFW
 Backstage preparations
 The Finale

We look behind the scenes at 'Designers at Debenhams' in this revealing interview with Jo Hooper, Debenhams Head of Design*

Designers at Debenhams

Mention "Designers" or needing something special to wear and most retail shoppers will automatically think of Debenhams. Debenhams has become THE high street specialists for "designer wear" and has carved out an important niche in the marketplace. From humble beginnings in 1996, when Debenhams decided to make a design statement at Debenhams, the market has grown at a staggering pace. The Designer turnover in Womenswear, Menswear, Home, Childrenswear and Accessories at Debenhams is now worth in excess of £100 m for this year.

Jo Hooper, Debenhams Head of Design, gave the London Fashion Forum a unique insight into this major achievement. . .

LFF Why did Debenhams originally decide to go down the designer route?
Jo "Customer expectations are high and rightly so. Excellent design, through colour, cut and fabric is a prerequisite in such a competitive market so the concept of "Designer" product at high street prices struck a chord at the time of its launch in 1996 with J by Jasper Conran.

"The concept of translating a £1000 dress into a very wearable version at £100, with the same designer essence preserved, appeals to everyone - John Rocha T-shirt at £25 - something for all budgets."

LFF So what makes a good designer in the eyes of Debenhams?
Jo "A clear handwriting is absolutely key so the customer can identify with the collection. Look at the clean silhouette of Jasper Conran, the gothic glamour of Maria Gracchvogel, the handcrafted colour explosion of Matthew Williamson.

"All these designers have a clear understanding of their own perspective and somehow they seem to have found the art of understanding what today's woman really wants to wear."

LFF What is your current policy regarding sourcing new designers at Debenhams?
Jo "Debenhams is always on the lookout for new talent but the criteria remains the same. Designers need to have a clear

handwriting, an understanding for the retail high street and also business acumen.
 "Designers can't just rely on their design expertise they also need to realise that they are dealing with a professional major high street name and Debenhams needs to be dealing with a professional Design House."

"A clear handwriting is absolutely key"

LFF Do your designers ever get into financial problems?
Jo "All companies in all industries will have peaks and lows in their cash flow. Designers are no exception. Yes it happens but Debenhams tries hard to support the designers each season giving them some stability.

"By giving Designers regular orders it helps the designers to have a sales plan and from here the Designers can plan their season. Planning in fashion is key to success... as planning in all business is."



LFF So how did you get into the heady world of fashion?
Jo "After graduating from Durham University (English Literature BA Hon) - not very relevant but a fun three years reading great books, I gained a trainee management position with Littlewoods Home Shopping. "I had a passion for clothing, demonstrated by my student overdraft, which they recognised and I was offered a trainee buyers position - a fantastic opportunity, and as so often a case, I was there at the right time at the right place."

LFF What is it about fashion that you enjoy so much?
Jo "I love the constant change with one season closing and another opening. Fashion essentially means "of the moment", so the challenge is non stop to find that perfect outfit, the new "must-buy" of the season, this seasons new colour for black... it is just so exciting and challenging.
 "From a business perspective the challenge and the satisfaction comes from success in sales and problem solving.

"Retail is one long problem-solving exercise either in product, price, production, logistics etc. In addition we are a public company and it is important to keep our shareholders happy. We always have one eye on practical realities of business...the bottom line is profit."

LFF What other projects are you working on?
Jo "Fashion is now moving faster than ever - our customers are better informed and they can see the current and forward fashion trends almost as quickly the couture designers are walking down the catwalks of Milan, New York and Paris.

"In particular the high street shopper is influenced by what the celebs are wearing so Debenhams challenge is to respond more quickly to these trends. This means looking at new markets, faster routes in established markets, trailing small quantities, liaising closely with fashion press so we can ensure that Debenhams are giving what the customers wants and when they want it.

"One of these initiatives is by working with Jenny Holloway and Devrim Zarif of LFF and Cutting Edge. Debenhams are networking directly with smaller CMT units to gain speed of response to small docket runs.

"We have already reviewed a cross section of units and selected a couple to test the concept of Dealing Direct.

This means that for smaller unique runs we can go to a CMT unit, pay them directly, ensure that we have design confidentiality and turnaround small collections within two to three weeks.

"If the trials are successful then we can roll the sales out to an all store distribution. It's at its concept stage at the moment but it appears to be a winner!"

LFF In this issue of the Newsletter we are targeting the Accessory Market. Do you have any pointers for accessory designers reading this interview?

Jo "The same key points are important for an accessory designer as for any fashion designer - a distinctive look, a clear handwriting, whether through print, use of colour, shape, materials etc.

"Accessories represent a key profitable area within the womenswear area, not only for Debenhams but for the rest of the high street. You only have to look at the ground floor of Top Shop at Oxford Circus currently to see the sales being driven by this area. The belt you wear, the bag you carry is an essential part of the look.

"That's why pricing is so important - the successful retailer is one who entices you to spend just a little bit more. You need that belt to create the finished look with your jeans and...it's only going to cost you £20... and... while you're there those beaded sandals are perfect for another £25!..."

LFF So any advice to the designers out there wanting to have space at Debenhams?
Jo "As I said previously we are always on the lookout for new talent and it is Debenhams raison d'être. I know it is hard for any designer to make that first contact but I also know how incredibly busy our designers and buyers are.

"If there are designers out there that really believe they have identified a genuine gap in the market with their collection, a clear distinctive handwriting, financially stable with a solid business plan, then yes, Debenhams would like to hear from them.

"But remember we have many many priorities including our exacting quality standards and time is at a premium. We can not just drop everything to review ranges. It takes time but this is one case when persistence can pay off.

"Also remember that whilst fashion is of the moment and we have rolling ranges, ranges that go on between seasons with open to buy budgets, there are peaks in sales for example millinery. Sales in millinery peak in Easter onwards until July as it is the wedding season, Ascot etc.

"We are constantly reviewing ranges and collections and it is more important for us to focus on the "influence" of fashion. Today people are after distinctive accessories to create their own individual look and there are this seasons "must have's" such as the fringed bag, the cowboy boots, the Indian silver jewellery etc"

LFF The LFF are holding their "Necessary Accessory" event on 7th November 2002 at the London College of Fashion jointly with Kari Allen of the Rootein Hopkins space. It is a unique experience to see over 25 talented designers under one roof...
Jo [Laughing] "Okok....we will be there!"

The LFF would like to express their sincere gratitude to Jo Hooper for giving up her precious time to conduct this interview and giving us an exclusive behind the scenes look at Debenhams.

*Since holding this interview Jo Hooper has been approached by various companies to work directly for them. Indeed, Jo has now agreed to work on a number of projects including the Community Managers position for the FashionCapital portal. The LFF would sincerely like to wish Jo Hooper all the very best for the future.

DTI & BFC Commission Designer Fashion Study

The UK fashion design sector is often referred to as the flagship of the UK clothing and textile industry. A recent report by the industry-led Textile & Clothing Strategy Group said, inter alia, that:

"The UK is known worldwide for the quality of its design but UK design graduates are often not attracted to working in UK clothing manufacture... for their part, many UK manufacturers are wary of UK design graduates because of what they perceive as a lack of necessary technological or commercial understanding"

Both the DTI and the British Fashion Council (BFC) accept the TCSG's argument that the proper use of design can be a key determinant of the wider UK industry's success. In line with the TCSG proposals, therefore, the DTI and BFC will work to promote the use of UK designers by manufacturers and the development of sustainable designer fashion businesses.

However, it is important that this collaboration is directed at the right targets and is proportionate to the economic and other significance of the UK design sector.

The DTI and the BFC therefore propose to commission an independent study of the designer fashion sector, its overall impact on the textile and clothing industry, the support available to meet its development needs, and what, if any, further help and support would be both practical and proportionate.

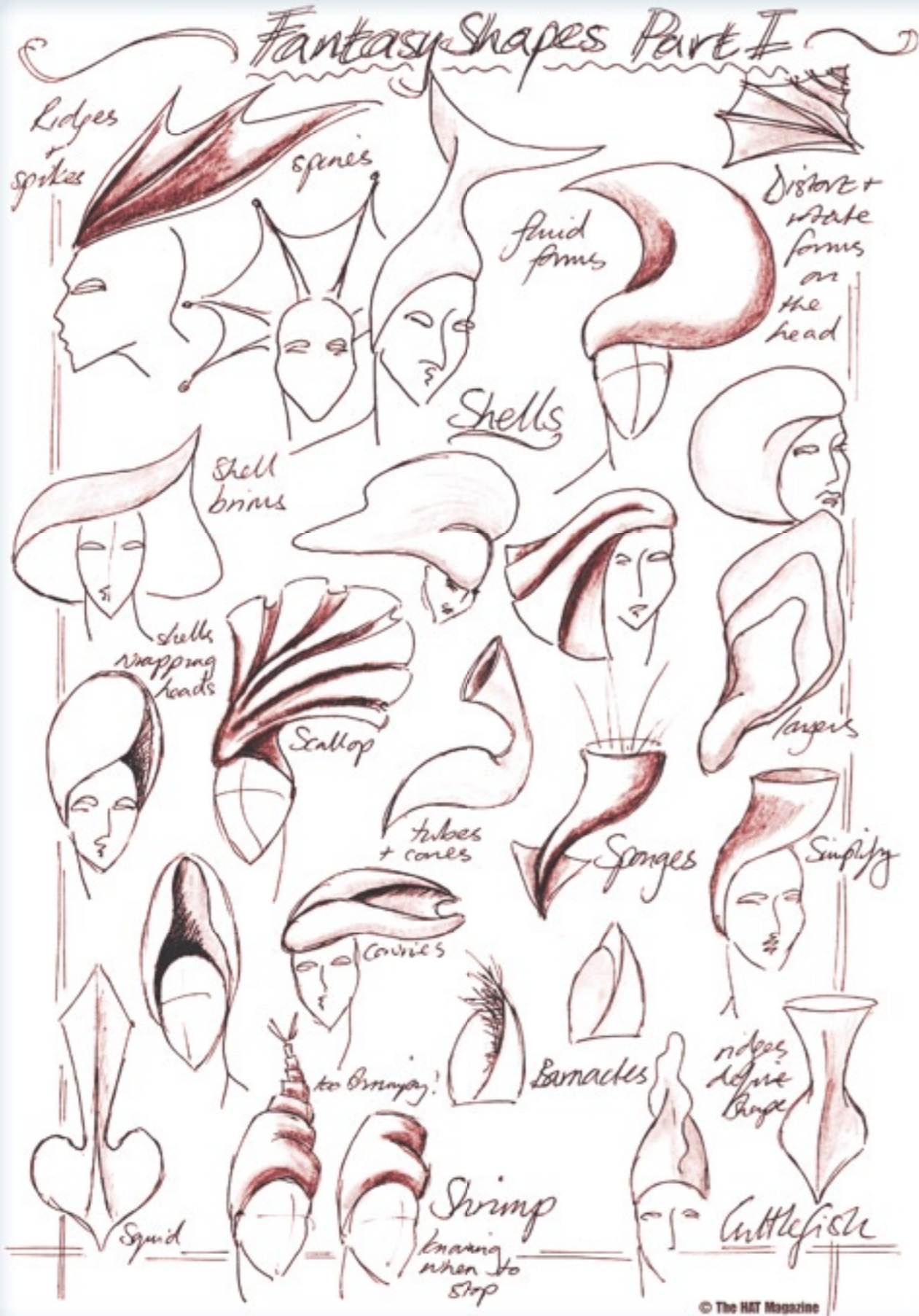
The studies aims and objectives are to carry out the following:

- An investigation, producing quantified outputs, of the impact of the designer fashion industry on the wider UK textiles and clothing industry
- An analysis of the business support needs of the designer fashion industry using both existing, published sources and new material obtained from interviews and surveys as appropriate;
- A mapping study of the major elements and sources of relevant generic and specific business support for UK fashion designers, from the public and private sectors, UK and European sources;
- A mapping study of current gaps in provision.

The study will result in the preparation of a report to be presented to the DTI and the BFC. This will act as the basis for further collaborative work aimed at ensuring the future success of the UK fashion design sector.

For further information please contact the BFC on 020 7636 7788.

Keeping Ahead of Fashion: Hatters & Millinery Trends with The Hat Magazine



The Hat magazine is edited and published by Carole and Neil Denford who are the original co-founders of the Hat Shop, in London's Covent Garden, which managed to gain international acclaim for over 15 years.

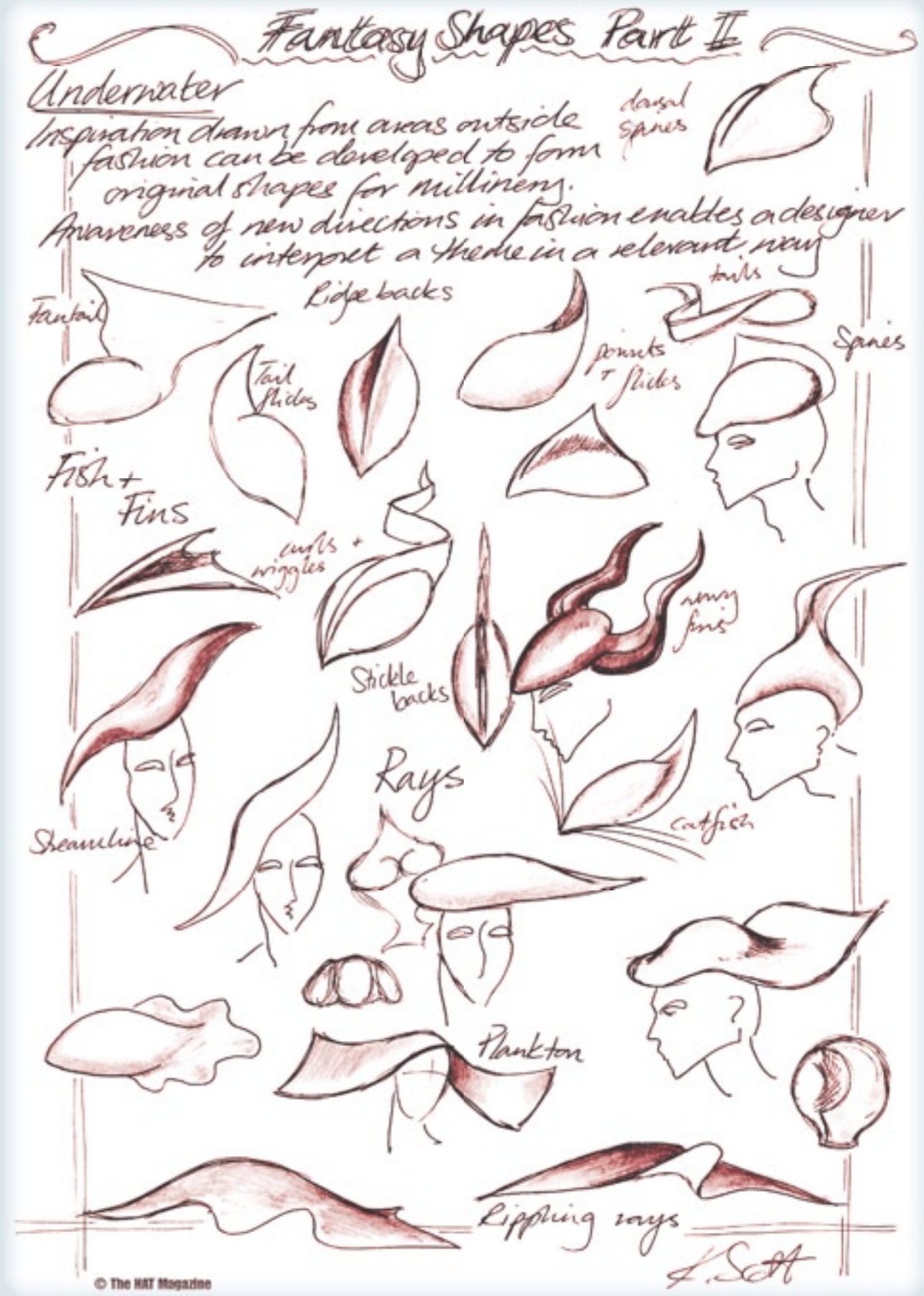
Carole was trained and lectured at the Cordwainers FE College, a bespoke and respected establishment that regrettably no longer exists. The College specialised in true craftsmanship for saddlery, shoes and leatherwork but excluded clothing design and manufacture.

During Carole's time at Cordwainers she was disappointed to discover that there was a host of accessory and shoe publications but nothing that related solely to millinery. A family friend was already publishing a specialist car magazine and suggested that they should develop their own publication and offered initial help and advice.....and so The Hat magazine was born.

Within four years The Hat has established a regular readership in excess of 4,000 and has become the voice of the Hatters and Millinery Industry. It is widely acclaimed by designers, students and retailers. Filled with information such as forthcoming trends in design, handy workroom techniques and forthcoming events The Hat continues to grow from strength to strength.

The Hat is published quarterly and if you subscribe now it is at the reduced rate of £45 per year (UK only rate). In this issue of the LFF magazine we have republished forthcoming trends with kind permission from The Hat and our front cover photo is also courtesy of the Hat. The LFF wish Carole and Neil continuing success.

Please contact The Hat Magazine at 170 Brick Lane, London, E1 6RU. Tel: 020 7247 1120 Fax: 020 7375 2199. www.thehatmagazine.com



Annexe is the UK's largest dedicated designer accessories trade exhibition showcasing the best in bags, belts, hats, jewellery, scarves, shoes and more.

Annexe - Trade Shows

The LFF visited the Annexe show at the Metropolitan Hotel which was held between 14th-17th September and the attendance was significantly up on the last event. The LFF were pleased to feel a 'buzz' in the air with overseas customers writing orders on the spot. An excellent event, well organised at an excellent venue

The show was founded in February 2001 by four accessory designers, Ines Hermida, Christina Frankopan, Lily Gardner and Junko Araya Tsang. They decided to show together during London Fashion Week and exhibited their individual collections together in one room at The Metropolitan Hotel. The hotel also regularly features the work of other designers during London Fashion Week. This September, Anya Hindmarch, Cacharel and Joanna Ho are just a few of the designers showing their collections there.

Over four seasons that Annexe has run, the founders have put a tremendous effort into pre marketing the event and have been amply rewarded by visits from the world's key accessories buyers and press from the UK, Japan and the US. In response to demand from buyers and designers, the show has gradually expanded every season. As accessory designers themselves, the founders uniquely understand the needs of their exhibitors, and have developed extensive



Zara Collis has expanded her collection to include fun swimwear. The new collection was very well received at Annexe.



networks of information and support for designers throughout the year.

Annexe is known for its innovative and high quality designers. Buyers come from international boutiques and department stores, looking for something fresh and exciting. The big name buyers include Harvey Nichols, Fenwicks, Libertys, Selfridges, Browns, Matches, Cruise, Isetan, Seibu, Adam et Rope, HP France, Le Bon Marche, Bergdorf Goodman and Neiman Marcus.

September sees Annexe showing for its fourth season.

Exhibitors represent the full range of accessory sectors and includes both new, up-and-coming designers, and established forces in the international fashion accessories market. Fifteen designers are participating in the September 2002 show.

Three new labels are debuting their collection at Annexe this September, including Beatrix Ong. Beatrix has a solid pedigree in shoe design having produced and designed for Jimmy Choo Couture and Lulu Guinness. This season she has designed shoes in collaboration with designer Maria Chen-Pascual and they were featured in Maria's catwalk show.

Another new exhibitor is Uschi Lechner. After two years designing for Ginka, Uschi founded Office Lendorff, producing printed textile based accessories in the form of hats, bags, scarves and sarongs. Striking and innovative imagery, full of humour and subtle surprises characterise her new collection, which is her third season.

The team that run Annexe all had strong business careers before they became designers, including PR, marketing and finance. The exhibition office is run by Tiffany Arntson (ex TheRedHand.com) and is currently recruiting staff for next year's official launch. The team is committed to establish this accessories show as a permanent feature during London Fashion Week, providing a reliable platform for these talented accessory designers.

Next February the show will grow to include up to 40 exhibitors, and will move to a more permanent home. All enquiries should be directed to: Tiffany Arntson, Project Co-ordinator, Office: 01778 561 769 Mobile: 07866 775 162 Email: tiffanyarntson@onetel.net.uk



Case History 1: Fashion Victim

Yuko Iida launched Fashion Victim in 2000. She designs ladies contemporary handbags, known for their quirky imagery and printed textile finishes. Her experience working in theatre costume design and studying textiles at Central St Martins forms the basis of her approach to handbag design.

A variety of summery coloured leathers, straw textured fabrics, and wildly imaginative shapes bring excitement and adventure to her inventive new collection. Fashion Victim's key stockists include Urban Outfitters (UK), Le Bon Marche (France) and Adam et Rope (Japan).

She heard about Annexe through UK Fashion Exports. Having shown at larger trade shows, such as Top Drawer at Earls Court, she was looking for something smaller and less overwhelming whilst still attracting top buyers from around the world.

She joined Annexe in February 2002 and was subsequently introduced to all the main department stores (Selfridges, Liberty etc.) and well known boutiques as well

as many international buyers, especially Japanese, and as Japan is the main market for Fashion Victim handbags, that was a major draw.

"The main benefit about Annexe is the fact that it is an intimate show with a good bunch of like minded designers. The contacts I have made through Annexe are fantastic, especially the press.

"The Metropolitan Hotel is an excellent venue in the heart of London, with the best facilities and friendliest staff you'll find anywhere in London. I passionately believe in Fashion Victim, although I highly value feedback from buyers and the other designers opinions, hence it is good to show my work in such a creative environment.

"This has helped Fashion Victim move forward and achieve the long-term ambitions of the company.

"I aim to continue to show with Annexe and hopefully Fashion Victim will grow with Annexe as I feel both will become bigger and better in the future."



"Annexe has given me a solid and progressive base to show my collection each season."

Case History 2: Caroline Burns

Working with quality hides, Caroline creates designs ranging from classical to experimental. Her collections are essentially soft leather accessories including scarves, wraps, belts and chic evening wear vintage style jackets and gilets, inspired by fur cuts. Caroline's key stockists include Harrods, Isetan and Neiman Marcus.

In 1997 Caroline returned from Milan where she was doing a design MBA at SDA Bocconi Milan. She started working for a leather interior company right at the beginning of the market explosion in interiors. Through her experience within the interiors business, she identified a gap in the market for luxury fashion accessories, indulging in fine leathers, shearlings and hides. She subsequently established her own named business in 2000.

Initially she showed at Premiere Class, Paris and Coterie, New York but felt the shows were too big, not select enough and lacked the atmospheric creative excitement that fashion usually generates.

She joined Annexe in September 2001, attracted by the intensive pre-show marketing, the impressive buyers attendance list and the fact that it specifically deals with accessories. Most of her fellow exhibitors were at a similar stage of business development, though they all had enough previous business experience and understood what they

were undertaking by setting up their own fashion businesses. The resulting in-house network is unique in its general support, collective and shared experience and freedom of information.

"Annexe is such a well organised and personal show that I can actually interact with my buyers on a stress free basis. The feedback that I receive is so helpful for me to know how the buyers actually work and what they are looking for. As a result, my latest collection has been developed with further insight to the buyers' strategies. My Spring/Summer 2003 collection has one theme with three sub stories, providing a neat, complimentary collection that crosses various different markets. I have also developed a new approach to my display, making it more user-friendly, successfully communicating the tone and style of the collection, and thus more efficiently reflective of its quality.

"Annexe has given me a solid and progressive base to show my collection each season. It has a secure following therefore I can plan my market growth accordingly. Continuous participation with a show gives buyers an understanding of your marketing positioning and style, and gives them a confidence in your brand. I also show at Tranoi, Paris, to enhance my brand profile and confirm my status on the international circuit."



Nobody Plans to Fail, but Many Fail to Plan... The importance of Business Planning



In issue 3 of this newsletter the LFF produced a unique article entitled "So you want to be a... Fashion Designer?" Following publication of this article many designers have written into the LFF newsdesk and asked more detailed questions regarding business planning. In particular, *What is Business planning and How do you do it?*

It is pertinent to note that Jo Hooper's inside look of Debenhams (see page 5) also highlighted the need and importance of planning to minimise the risk of failure and ensure that any designer is not part of the transient fashion theme of "here to day but gone tomorrow". Planning for success starts here!

If you want to become successful you can not, emotionally or financially, afford to rush into ideas and actions without a clear plan of where you are and where do you want to be? The more time you spend on preparation the less likely you are to have to contend with all types of problems in the future.

There are a host of Business Support Organisations (BSO's) there to help you along the way but fundamentally you are in the driving seat. You know your strengths and weaknesses and you also know the threats to your business and the opportunities out there that can represent the big time. So how can you start this process to help eliminate mistakes?

GET ORGANISED! Find the ideal place for you to think, analyse and strategise. Some people prefer absolute quiet and calm, others the outdoors... whatever your ideal place is, find it and use it. You will have ideas buzzing around at a million miles per hour... harness them and start to put your business plan together in a logical manner. Only then you can be sure that your business proposal is viable.

What do I put in my business plan?

- What previous experience have you had?
- Where are you and/or your business now?
- Where are you going?
- How will you get there?
- What will it cost to get there?
- What and how much do you need to get there?
- What are your expected returns?

Covering the above questions demonstrates your ability to plan for success.

If you are approaching banks, BSO's or Enterprise Agencies for funding and loans a business plan shows that you know what you are doing.

When the plan is finished keep using it as your guideline, update and review what you have written and amend accordingly.

How do I write my business plan?

There is no magic formula here, no set rules and the level of detail in your plan does depend on the nature of your business. However, we have drawn up a checklist for you to use as a guide:-

1) Summary of Business

Name, Location, Product/Service offered, market and competition, your technical and management strengths, business goals, mission statement, financial needs and how money will be used and then the earnings projection

2) Market Analysis

Total market for product or service (this can be at an international, national and regional level), Industry trends, target market, customer demand (use accredited data if possible from newspapers, verdict reports, retail trends etc) and competition

3) Products and Services

Full description required at the different levels of markets, how your product and service compares with the competition in terms of quality and price.

4) Market Strategy

Overall strategy including product, price, promotion and place in particular you need to confirm your pricing policy to your different end users and market segments and how will you sell, distribute and provide back up sales service.

5) Management Plan

What is the type of your business e.g. partnership, sole trader or limited company (see issue 3 of LFF newsletter), number of employees, CV's of your key personnel, do you need an organisational chart so everyone knows who should report to who? How will you control your finances and what is your operating plan... how is your company going to work on a day by day basis?

6) Financial Data

You may need to show your personal bank statements from the previous three months especially if you are seeking a loan or funding. You will need to show detailed cash flow projections for the short, medium and long term. Concentrate on the short term over a year period. This involves showing a profit and loss statement, balance sheet, capital expenditure on office, machinery etc and then each section needs to be explained.

Some designers have asked how to prepare a break-even analysis and we have provided 5 ways for you to review your business and it's needs:-

i) Work out your gross profit (do not include VAT)

Projected sales	£75,000
Less Direct Costs	
Purchases (materials)	£32,500
Labour costs	£20,000
	£52,500
Gross profit	£22,500 (a)

ii) Work out your gross profit margin

Gross profit (a)	£22,500 x 100 = Gross profit margin 30% (b)
Sales	£75,000

iii) Calculate your overheads

Indirect costs	
Business salaries (incl. your earnings/drawings)	£6,000
Rent	£2,000
Rates	£ 500
Light/heat	£ 500
Power	£ 400
Telephone	£ 100
Insurance	£ 500
Maintenance	£2,000
Advertising	£1,500
Bank interest/HP	£1,500
Other expenses	£1,500
Total overheads	£16,500 (c)

Remember indirect costs are costs that have to be paid even if you do not make any sales. Another term to describe these outgoings are Fixed Costs.

iv) Calculate the actual turnover you require to break even.

Overheads (c)	£16,500 x 100 = Break even sales £55,000 (d)
Gross profit margin (b)	

This figure relates to the monetary value of sales. Check the number of units that have been sold to achieve the monetary value. Ask yourself these questions - Is this level of unit sales viable? Can you achieve these sales?

v) Calculate the monthly target to break even

Break-even sales (d)	£55,000 = Monthly break-even sales £9,167 (e)
	6 (i.e. six months)

This means that profits occur once the break-even point has been reached. As overhead costs have been allowed for the break-even calculation profits occur at a rate of 30% (i.e. the gross margin % - figure b) on projected sales over and above the break-even figure

Projected sales	£75,000
Less break-even sales	£55,000 (d)
	£20,000
x Gross profit margin	30% (b)
= Profit for six months	£ 6,000 (f)

It is important to remember that these figures can still be affected by the actual sales figures achieved, if there is an increase or decrease in gross profit margin or an increase or decrease in overheads, but it gives you an indication of what you need to achieve and a guideline to work by.

There are no quick fixes in business organisation and planning.

Can there be anything more rewarding than creating your own collection, your own unit or your own retail shop from an idea that you had?

With determination, planning and hard work the world can be your oyster, but remember, Rome was not built in a day and every empire needs strong foundations.

The key to success really is in the planning. Planning for success starts here!

Cash flow is King...

Without cash flowing through the business there is no business! Hence cash flow control is vital to the day to day survival of your company. Even if you have a full order book and every sale you make is highly profitably it doesn't mean anything unless your customers (debtors) pay on time. Delays in payment can jeopardise your business.

Producing a cash flow analysis or statement will help you prevent this situation occurring. It shows when money is coming in and when money has to go out. There are intricate forms that can be filled in and literally some entrepreneurs use bits of paper to do rough calculations and reconciliation's to ensure that the banks and sponsors are happy.

Some designers like to produce a 12 monthly forecast in line with selling seasons but others like to review no more than the next six months. Whatever period you choose one piece of strong advice is that each week you should reconcile receipts and outgoing with your account at the bank. At any one time you need to know your account balance and any potential problems that are looming.

Profile

Continuing our ongoing series of profiles of LFF Steering Group members, this issue we feature....



Michael Goodmaker

Michael Goodmaker has been involved in the Clothing and Textiles industry literally, all of his life. He has been involved at every step

of the design and manufacturing process from concept to the preparation of the finished garment ready for despatch. During this time Michael has worked for a host of commercial enterprises expanding his breadth and depth of knowledge to make him an important member of the LFF committee.

Michael's great grandfather, grandfather and father were master tailors and Michael soon followed in his ancestors footsteps. With a keen enterprising spirit Michael identified an opportunity to make money at the age of 13 by producing Ki pper Ties to his school colleagues from his father's remnants. At 13 Michael had his first taste of retail experience (with some modelling on the side) in a menswear shop and was soon poached to work for a shop in Carnaby Street.

Continuing with his studies, Michael was successfully selected to join the John Lewis management programme on leaving College. However, just two months into this two year training programme, Michael's skills were spotted by a manufacturer who, at that time, was the UK's largest garment manufacturer. Michael joined as an assistant and progressed to become the assistant general manager responsible for overseeing the 20,000-40,000 unit production each week. Other responsibilities included the management of the Design and Cutting Room, Machinists, Quality Control and Fabric and Trimmings.

Michael held this position for over 20 years until the late 1980's when he became employed by a national retailer to be the manager to monitor in-house production and quality control. Along the way Michael also produced freelance designs for Ted Baker, Whistles and Jeff Banks until 1991 when he became a Clothing Adviser for the East London Small Business Centre.

Over the past ten years Michael has worked on a cross section of clothing projects for all segments of the clothing and textiles and industry. Currently Michael is working with Newham College of Further Education. He specialises in one-to-one support for local residents seeking self-employment, business start-up and help with general employment matters.

Michael remains deeply committed to improving the profile and effectiveness of the clothing and textiles industry. If you wish to speak to him personally please contact him on the following numbers.

Contact Details:-
Home tel/fax: 020 8954 1273
Mobile: 0777 565 6015
Email: gold@goodmaker.freeserve.co.uk

The LFF Surgery: Your Questions Answered

We've had a busy mailbox since the last issue came out offering to answer any questions you have relating to the industry. So without further ado here's the first batch and remember, **we're here to help YOU**, so keep 'em coming.....

Q "Animal Alien in E2 have offered to put my work on display. Any advice?"
Sami Malik Designer.

A You need to establish clear and written terms of business such as; Are these garments are on Sale or Return? What are the payment terms? e.g. payment within seven days of sale. Exclusivity and copy-right forms should be signed to ensure there is no passing off of your designs. On delivery of the garments to the outlet you must have a well prepared delivery note that needs to be signed by the manager of the outlet. Ask the manager to check the quality of the garments before signing to ensure that are "fit for purpose intended" and they are of "merchantable quality". Remember damage can occur by potential customers trying on the garments and you do not want a dispute later with the outlet. A subsequent meeting has been arranged for one to one mentoring service with Malik.

Q "I am a quality ladieswear unit specialising in small docketts with high work content and attention to detail. My current customers include Jean Muir, Frank Usher and I work with small designer docketts. I have been established for over 60 years and I currently have excess capacity.."
Cos Pratsides.

A Our readership now stands at over 5,000 and retailers account for over 15% of that total. We are happy to distribute your name and contact details....who knows? Good luck.
EPSL (E. Pratsides and Sons)
EPSL House, 5 Constable Crescent (Off Marlfield), Tottenham N15 4QZ
Tel 020 8808 2455.
We are also dealing with Debenhams on a Dealing Direct project and will pass on your information. (A visit has been made to the unit by LFF)

Q "We will be at the TBC Trade Show....the thing is I am a bit confused about how you do an invoice. Is there anything I should put on it to cover us?"
Rachael Trattles designer from I-Saw.

A This question has been frequently asked. We have provided a 'template' invoice as an insert with this issue to keep for your future reference. Remember that we have not covered all the terms for contract law and the Sale of Goods and Services Act but at least it's a start.

Q "This is possibly a long shot. Do you know who makes silks for jockey skull caps/riding hats?"
Gunnery and Saddlery retail outlet (Kent).

A After extensive research....MadHatters, Theodoros Hernz, Florentia Clothing Village, Vale Road, London N4 1TD.
Contact Bino Kyriacou 020 8802 7198.

Finally for this issue, a question raised by a number of people...

Q "Where can I exhibit my collection so I can attract a quality clientele and I can afford it?"

A The British Designers Day at Pall Mall was the start, now it has developed into the Profile event to be held in February (date yet to be confirmed). We are holding an exhibition and catwalk show with a competition element. At the end of the competition the winner will be announced on the night and will be given space at a major retail outlet.
The on line FashionCapital portal project will also be launched at this event and we have already attracted sponsors from BSSA, two major retailers, Business Link for London, CoNEL and London Fashion On-Line. After the competition there will be music and food with refreshments available. More details will be published in our next issue.

We positively welcome your views, be they on the newsletter, the LFF's other activities or more general issues affecting the fashion & clothing industry.

Tell us what you think,

For example:-

What are we getting right and more importantly where do you think we can make improvements?

What topics would you like us to cover in future issues?

The 'Surgery' is proving to be popular, so send in any questions you have regarding you and your industry and we will do our best to answer them - remember, we are here to help you!

If you have something to say, be it about the LFF or more general issues. Please write to Jenny Holloway at:

Fashion Forum House,
28 Station Approach, Hayes,
Bromley, Kent BR2 9EH

or email: jennyh@londonfashionforum.com



What's it all about!?

What is the London Fashion Forum (LFF)?

The LFF is a non profit-making limited company. It comprises of:

- David Jones.....Director
- John BakerCompany Secretary
- Jenny Holloway...Project Manager
- Tracy RobinsonSecretariat

In addition there is a committee of ten industry experts that meet each month to discuss policy and direction for the good of the Clothing and Textiles Industry. To ensure there is a "global" view of the industry there is also a team of observers from:-

- Government Office for London (GOL)
- London Development Agency (LDA)
- Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)
- Textiles and Clothing Strategy Group (TCSG)
- UK Fashion Exports (UKFE)

This combined committee of expertise and experience gives the LFF a unique advantage of being an excellent source of knowledge for the London based Clothing and Textiles Industry.

How did the LFF start?

In September 2001 GOL commissioned a survey entitled "London Textile and Clothing Sector Study" by VK Associates. Some of the conclusions drawn were as follows:-

- "More could be done to improve communications within the sector and make the industry aware of the help that is available"
- "Expertise available around London... is not 'joined up' in providing the support and help many SMEs would find useful."

One of the major recommendations from the survey was:-

- "We would strongly recommend setting up a London-based strategy forum... such a forum should be run and managed by successful people from the industry itself..." (RI)

The first meeting by the LFF was held on September 25th 2001 with David Jones as chair. By October LFF had began working on structure, format and forward strategies and in May 2002 the LDA granted the LFF a three year funding programme.

The Aims and Objectives of the LFF are simple:-

The strategy group offers support and guidance, and acts as a voice for the industry. It aims to ensure the existence of a co-ordinated and integrated support for the industry, plugging gaps where they exist.

David Jones, Director, stated "It has been established to actively address changes, close the circle between designers and manufacturers, and to engage all parties across London who have a vested interest in the growth of clothing and textiles. The optimism in substantial parts of the sector along with the many real strengths London has to offer (for example, design houses, technology skills, tourism, and cultural diversity) can be positive assets for revitalising the sector and helping sub-sectors that are in decline."

The LFF provides a one stop shop for anyone within London who has a question that needs to be answered about the Clothing and Textiles Industry. For anyone who needs help... the LFF are there offering FREE and impartial advice. The LFF also go one step further by providing real projects with real networking opportunities to generate new business contacts.

What is the business strategy for the LFF - how do you make things happen?

The LFF engage in a host of "grass roots" initiatives that have one simple objective... to make more PROFITABLE business for clients both directly and indirectly. The LFF have over 12 live initiatives that are in work and some of the main projects are highlighted below:-

- 1) November 7th 2002 **Necessary Accessories Event** at London College of Fashion - a true networking event where accessory designers network with buyers, retailers, overseas agencies etc. Event held in conjunction with the London College of Fashion.
- 2) November 21st 2002 **Asian Dreams at Zandra Rhodes Fashion and Textiles Museum (FTM)** - a cross section of designers, retailers and wholesalers will exhibit their products at this exhibition and catwalk event. This event is being held in collaboration with Newham College of Further Education.
- 3) February 2003 - **Profile Event** a new concept for the Fashion Industry enabling an exhibition and catwalk for "fledgling" designers to take place. Discussions are being held to include a competition element from main high street retailers. The FashionCapital portal project will also formally launch at this prestigious event. This event is being staged in association with Business Link for London, CoNEL, London Fashion On-line, BSSA and High Street Retailers.
- 4) **The Stock Exchange** - an innovative concept whereby CMT units and manufacturers exchange stock with local retailers. This project is ongoing.
- 5) **Delivery Day** - working with FE and HE institutions the LFF visit London based colleges, with a cross section of committee members, to give both overall advice to final year fashion undergraduates and a unique one to one mentoring service.
- 6) **Upskilling** - in conjunction with both Skillfast UK and Cutting Edge the LFF are working to move CMT units further along the supply chain networking units directly with retailers who want speed of response and fast-trak production. Two retailers are currently engaged in this initiative.
- 7) **FashionCapital Portal Project.** A major e-trading tool for the industry. The portal provides an electronic one stop shop for the fashion and clothing industry networking and integrating all segments of the industry together. In conjunction with Business Link and CoNEL with substantial funding from the LDA.

Other major initiatives in work include collaboration with Cutting Edge on the successful Manufacturers Showcase Event, Resource Centre at the Florentia Clothing Village, Regional Meet the Source Event, East Side Story with EMEP and working with UK Fashion Exports on the "Open All Hours Event" (name to be confirmed).

In addition the LFF produce a bi-monthly newsletter that has received excellent feed back and support from the industry. Circulation has seen rapid growth and now stands at over 5,000 subscribers. The LFF are also developing their own website which is due to launch later in the year.

For further information on the LFF, the events highlighted above or to receive a copy of the free newsletter please contact:-

Jenny Holloway or Tracy Robinson
London Fashion Forum, London Fashion Forum House,
28 Station Approach, Hayes, Bromley, Kent BR2 9EH
Tel 020 8462 1475 Fax 020 8462 2440
or info@londonfashionforum.com

EventsDiary

Overseas Events

SEPTEMBER

30 Colomode
Over one hundred of Europe's strongest up and coming designers will be in Lille, together with more than 400 buyers and many celebrity visitors.
Tel: 020 7704 9747 or
email: doreen1367@aol.com

OCTOBER

10-13 Atmosphere D'hiver
Paris Jardin des Tuileries, Paris
Tel: 00 33 1 44 94 70 00
Womenswear

10-13 Paris Jardin des Tuileries,
Paris Tel: 00 33 1 49 09 64 22.
Womenswear

DECEMBER

3-5 Expofil Parc des Expositions,
Paris Nord, Villepinte Paris.
Tel 020 7221 3344

UK Events

OCTOBER

10 Barclays 2nd National Retail Conference
Royal Society of Arts, London.
Free event 020 7441 4028

NOVEMBER

7 Necessary Accessory
London College of Fashion
2.00 - 7.00pm for further details
see page 6 or call 020 8462 1475

13-14 Drapers Record Fashion Summit 2002
Cafe Royal, Regent Street, London
for further information visit:
www.drapersrecord.com/summit

21 Asian Dreams
Zandra Rhodes Fashion and
Textile Museum, 83 Bermondsey
Street, London SE1 3XF from
2.00pm for further details see
page 7 or call 020 8462 1475

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FashionCapital Update

Following in-depth meetings held between the LFF, Business Link for London, CoNEL and London Fashion On Line, it became apparent that duplication existed in one area between the FashionCapital portal and London Fashion Online.

Both services offered the benefit of allowing perspective on-line clients to display their collections on virtual "shop fronts". The shop front is a standard layout that allows designers, suppliers, and manufacturers etc to exhibit their garments on line. The client pays a nominal amount for this service.

After liaising with all parties concerned it has been agreed by the London Development Agency, which is funding both projects, that the two projects must amalgamate. To ensure the smooth transition of this merger the official launch date for FashionCapital has been put back until February 2003.

The soft launch of the FashionCapital was achieved on time in July and has been very well received with a large number of leads and enquiries being generated.

For further information regarding FashionCapital please visit www.FashionCapital.co.uk

LONDON fashionforum Issue 5: Out late November

UsefulContacts

This issue: Retail Accessory Outlets

Key to symbols: ✉ = Post, ☎ = Tel, 📠 = Fax, ✉ = Email, 🌐 = Website

007 Licence To Sell Belts
366 Katherine Road,
London E7 8NW
☎ 020 8548 9090

A to Z Bohemian Glass (UK) Ltd
(Wholesale only)
1 Bedford Mews, East Finchley,
London N2 9DF
☎ 020 8883 1452

Accessories World
71 Berwick Street,
London W1F 8TB
☎ 020 7734 1698

The Bead Shop
21a Tower St,
Leicester Square, London WC2
☎ 020 7240 0931

Bees Jewellery and Fashion Wholesalers
296-298 Green St.,
Forest Gate, London E7 8LF
☎ 020 8470 0600

Blair Accessories Group Wholesalers and Manufacturers
55 Eastcastle St.,
London W1W 8EG
☎ 020 7323 7500

John Collier Buttons Ltd
Unit 4a Ironbridge Close,
Great Central Way,
London NW10 0UF
☎ 020 8451 6562

Continental Textiles Accessories
5th Floor, 58-59 Margaret Street,
London W1W 8SN
☎ 020 7323 2111

Neisha Crosland Accessory Retailer
137 Fulham Road,
London SW3 6SD
☎ 020 7589 4866

Deida Hats
49 Slaidburn Street,
London SW10 0JW
☎ 020 7351 2727

Fabulous Hats
746 High Road, North Finchley,
London N12 9QG
☎ 020 8343 8110

Felicity Hat Hire
113b Northcote Road,
London SW11 6PW
☎ 020 7738 0838

Paul Harvey Accessory Wholesaler
77 Oxford Street,
London W1S 2XZ
☎ 020 7434 0266

Hats Plus
101b Kings Cross Road,
London WC1X 9PL
☎ 020 7278 6419

J R M Beads Ltd
329 Chiswick High Road,
London W4 4HS
☎ 020 8995 1802

The Jewellery Display Co Ltd
Unit 6 Lea Park Trading Estate,
Warley Close,
London E10 7LF
☎ 020 8556 0008

Laura Ann Pearce Jewellery Design & Manufacturer
Studio 205,
31 Clarkenwell Close,
London EC1 0AT
☎ 020 7253 9092

Stuart Morgan Silver Jewellery
1 Sunny Gardens Parade,
London NW4 1JA
☎ 020 8202 6800

Koh Samui Ladies Designer Wear & Accessories
5 Monmouth Street,
Leicester Square,
London WC2
☎ 020 7240 4280

Rachel Skinner Millinery
13 Princess Road,
London NW1 8JR
☎ 020 7209 0066

Van Peterson Jewellery
27 Conduit Street,
London W1S 2XZ
☎ 020 7495 7797

Western Belts
418 Katherine Road
London E7 8NP
☎ 020 8552 4740