

World buyers come to Hong Kong for TDC Fashion Trade Fairs

Two important garment trade fairs - Hong Kong Fashion Week for Fall/ Winter 2006 and World Boutique, Hong Kong 2006 - open today (January 17) at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. Organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (TDC), both fairs will run until this Friday (January 20).

The number of exhibitors at the two fairs has grown by 20%, with 1,330 exhibitors from 25 countries/ regions registered for Fashion Week, making it the largest garment trade fair in Asia and No. 2 in the world. World Boutique, Hong Kong, now in its fourth year, has attracted 232 exhibitors showcasing over 400 brands.

TDC has invited buyers from all over the world to visit the two fairs. There are 54 missions, a total of 1,800 people, visiting Hong Kong Fashion Week and 49 missions, a total of nearly 1,700 people, attending World Boutique. They include buyers from Mitsukoshi Department Store (Japan), Morgan (France), Boutique Marie Claire (Canada), Lotto Sport Italia Spa (a sportswear brand from Italy), and Li Ning (a sportswear brand from the Chinese mainland), as well as representatives of leading shopping malls and department stores.

The success of the fairs reflects the steady growth of Hong Kong's clothing exports. Chairman of the TDC Garment Advisory Committee, Mr Andrew Leung, said at the opening ceremony, "Total exports of clothing and accessories increased by 9% in the first 11 months of 2005 to around US\$25 billion. This demonstrates that Hong Kong is an important production centre for clothing and clothing accessories, as well as a centre for creative design."

Hong Kong's exports to three major markets - the U.S., the U.K. and Germany - have achieved considerable growth of 11%, 13% and 21% respectively.

"The two events also highlight our ability to offer global one-stop service, all the way from design and production to marketing and distribution," said Mr Leung. "Hong Kong manufacturers are gaining a reputation for excellent design because of their work for ODM (Original Design Manufacturing) and OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturing) customers as well as their own brands."

The joint opening ceremony of the two fairs was officiated by Hong Kong's Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Rafael Hui, TDC Executive Director, Mr Fred Lam, and Mr Andrew Leung. World Boutique, Hong Kong will again open a window for fashion buyers looking for premium items, designer collections and various lifestyle products and fashion accessories. Products on display range from apparel, handbags and shoes to watches and fashion jewellery.

At Hong Kong Fashion Week, the fair will showcase a great variety of products including menswear, ladies' wear, children's wear, Bridal & Evening Wear, and Body & Intimate Wear. They will be featured in different zones, making it easier for buyers to find product categories. TDC has also organised a total of 19 fashion runway shows and 9 seminars focusing on industry news and trend information. A special highlight will be **The Hong Kong Young Fashion Designers' Contest 2006**. This contest will showcase the creations of 16 budding designers, who will compete for 8 awards in 4 categories, namely, Casual & Jeans-wear, Contemporary Day-wear, Avant-garde Collections and Party-wear. At the finale of the contest tonight, TDC will present the "Style Icon Hong Kong Memento" to 10 celebrities: Edison Chan, Shirley Cheung, Hu Bing, Louis Koo, Eric Kot, Chiling Lin, Rosemary Vandenbrouke, Donna Xie, Vanessa Yeung and Shawn Yu in appreciation of their contributions to Hong Kong's fashion industry.

Oracle Added Value has been commissioned to conduct an on-site survey among exhibitors and buyers on their views about the growth of different markets and product trends. The results will be announced on the last day of the two fairs.

