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Los Angeles-based designer Maggie Barry was one of 11 international designers featured in Digital Couture, an event organized by print technology company Epson on the eve of New York Fashion Week. For more from the event, see page 10.

Bungalow Clothing Gets Funding by Mixing E-commerce With Old-School Retail

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

The executives of online shopping site **Bungalow Clothing** believe there is a new way of building an e-commerce business, and it means taking a page from one of the oldest playbooks in retail.

The classic retail strategy is the trunk show. It also has been called the **Avon Lady** party or the **Tupperware** party. According to Rob Wright, the Los Angeles-based co-founder and chief executive officer of Bungalow, these gatherings are the best way to find the customers that contemporary retailers love—the ones who have the means and the interest in spending a lot of money on clothes.

Bungalow's unique business model will also answer a question as old as e-commerce, Wright said. How do you inject a lively boutique experience into something circum-

scribed by a computer screen?

Bungalow's different angle on e-commerce recently caught the attention of some high-level tech people including Tony Hsieh, founder of **Zappos.com**. Hsieh's **Vegas Tech Fund** participated in a round of funding that raised around \$1.5 million.

After Vegas Tech invested in Bungalow—which sells high-end contemporary brands such as **Iro**, **Paige**, **Haute Hippie**, **Halston**, **Ella Moss** and **Rails Clothing** from its Las Vegas headquarters—Bungalow's sales force increased from about five people to about 20. Wright forecasted the sales team will eventually grow to 100 nationally and internationally.

The company will eventually look for another growth round of venture funding.

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INDUSTRY FOCUS: FINANCE

Factoring in the Age of Start-up Apparel Companies and E-commerce

By Deborah Belgum Senior Editor

The retail realm as we know it is being turned upside down by a growing proliferation of e-commerce sites that are acting as the new Main Street store.

Supplying these new websites are a proliferation of start-up apparel and footwear brands that just might skip selling to a traditional store or, then again, hedge their bets and sell online and offline.

Everyone is trying to figure it all out. Will online sites re-

place retail? Will bricks-and-mortar stores end up just being showrooms?

All this makes for a brave new world for the factoring community, which is financing these endeavors.

California Apparel News recently spoke with some finance-industry executives to find out how their companies approach financing new businesses and how selling to e-tailers differs from selling to a bricks-and-mortar retailer.

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RETAILER PROFILE

Designer Looks: What's Next for Elyse Walker

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

Retailers do business in a world where every sale counts, but since Elyse Walker started her self-named boutique more than 15 years ago, she tried to take a different sales angle.

A visit to the **Elyse Walker** shop, a five-minute drive from the beach in Los Angeles' exclusive Pacific Palisades neighborhood, feels like a high-end fashion get-together where women talk about style and catch up under the hip paintings of the street artist Retna.

At the store, Walker plays the gracious host, a friend ... and someone who would very much like to dress all of her clients, whether they live a few blocks away in a multi-million-dollar home overlooking the Pacific Ocean or in a loft in Manhattan's trendy West Village. But there is no

➔ **Elyse Walker** page 34

TRADE SHOW REPORT

Milano Unica Celebrates 10 Years, Turns Its Eye to New York for July Show

By Alison A. Nieder Executive Editor

MILAN, Italy—**Milano Unica**, the European textile trade show formed when several well-established Italian trade shows—including **IdeaBiella**, **Moda In** and **Shirt Avenue**—joined forces 10 years ago, is preparing to launch its first New York show in July.

The trade show took its showcase of Italian fabrics and trim to Shanghai in 2013, when it began exhibiting at the giant **Intertextile Shanghai** trade show. It has yet to be determined whether the Milano Unica show in New York will be an independent show or in partnership with an existing trade show.

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