



From left, Venus Williams and Devon Damelio, sales manager for Active Collective, at the booth for EleVen by Venus Williams | Photo courtesy of Emerald Expositions

Swim Collective and Active Collective Attract Business-Focused Buyers

By Dorothy Crouch | Thursday, August 8, 2019

During the summer trade-show circuit, this year's **Active Collective** and **Swim Collective** sibling events drew buyers interested in fortifying business. Held at the **Anaheim Convention Center** in Anaheim, Calif., July 31–Aug. 1, the **Emerald Expositions**–produced show is growing.

On the floor at this edition of the show, Migdal HaEmek, Israel–headquartered **Nilit** occupied a space with its **Sensil** products, offering a textile–manufacturer presence at the event. The company's goal was to engage with emerging brands explained Kirsten K. Harris, the company's vice president of marketing for North America.

"You get to be around very energetic brands that are in that innovative period of their infancy, and it's exciting to see the different concepts that designers are coming out with," she said.

In addition to Sensil's presence, Emerald Expositions will continue to expand its textile partnerships during its New York installment with **Lenzing** present at that event, which begins Aug. 22.

During Swim Collective, **Coreena's Bridal** owners Coreena and Nick Ferrata were looking for styles to sell once they open a new shop in College Station, Texas. While the store will also feature active styles, the couple was attracted to the colorful swimwear offerings at **Beach Bunny Swimwear** and the versatility of **Kya Swim's** reversible suits.

"It's important for us to be here to feel the fabrics and see the construction to really know what we want," Coreena said. "A lot of pastels have been popular from what I've seen. We wanted to fill that area. We're in a college town."

For Orange County, Calif.'s **Lulo Swimwear**, sisters and co-founders Johana and Jessica Marin were exhibiting their women's and children's swimwear, which is made in their hometown of Pereira, Colombia. Wholesaling between \$25 and \$50, the pieces are handcrafted by local women, with 10 percent of each sale donated to the town's children who live on the street.

The women saw buyers from Hawaii and California. With a booth that featured a beach-party-perfect trailer, they offered full-coverage, rash guard–style suits in addition to flirty styles, including off-the-shoulder cuts, bandeau and reversible designs in floral prints and bright solids.

"Trending now are off-the-shoulder styles and a lot from the 1980s. Mustard is really in right now," said Johana. "A lot of our customers are based in California and have been asking for more coverage."

Traveling to the swim show from Kailua Kona, Hawaii, **Mermaids Swimwear** owner Carol Mardian visits local trade shows held in her state but was attending Swim Collective to see her bigger accounts. Based in a resort area, Mardian's store carries beach accessories and an array of swimwear from 2T to a woman's size 24 with prices ranging from \$60 to \$200.

"I am still seeing a bit of rib out there and vibrant colors such as marigold—not so much moss green and burgundy. I am seeing brighter palettes," she said. "I am always looking for Hawaiian prints."

From Chicago, Donna West and Carrie Londe were visiting to buy for their two women's boutiques named **Londo Mondo**. The pair enjoyed working within a single venue that was easy to navigate as they searched for high-waisted swimwear, French cuts and unconstructed bandeaux.

"The other thing I needed to concentrate on was accommodating my customers who have cup sizes D, DD and DDD," said West. "This past season I did a trial of the **Sunsets** line, so I am going to be bringing that in and testing more styles."

On the Active Collective side, buyers were searching for style and sustainable options. With more consumers exhibiting a stronger commitment to environmental awareness, buyers wanted to know more about brands that are bringing to market sustainable options.

"I own two studios, and that is the lifestyle that we're all living and promoting," said **Ohana Yoga + Barre's** chief brand officer, Kelly Misuraca, who was visiting from Denver.

Walking the floor, Misuraca found eco-friendly options at **Girlfriend Collective**, which uses fabric created from recycled water bottles and fishing nets. She was searching for specific items that fit within her \$28-to-\$40 wholesale budget.

"As far as women's trends go, longer crop bra tops that can double as a bra and tank are super popular," said Misuraca. "For us, I want more solid, subtle colors as opposed to all the bright and vibrant prints. More in the earth tones—coppers, mustard yellows and sage greens to mix with the neons makes those brighter colors more palatable."

Fitness veteran and "Crunchless Abs" founder Linda La Rue was showing her ethically manufactured Los Angeles–made **American Fitness Couture** brand. La Rue showcased her leggings, sports bras and novelty tops, which wholesale from \$25 to \$40 and promote a sustainable mission through a reliance on bamboo-based fabric.

"They're asking about price points, and then they want to touch the fabric," she said. "I start talking to them about the product and pocket leggings—everyone wants pockets. Then, I start to talk about how bamboo grows 3 feet per day."

For Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., activewear brand **Mega Fashion Club**, this show was an opportunity to showcase its recently launched apparel, which wholesales between \$30 and \$180 and offers a new approach to this category with its Mega Wrap jacket.

"People seem to like this as something new, different and bold," said Chief Executive Officer Megers L. Frierson, Sr. "We had people stop from China, New York and North Carolina. Buyers are asking for gray and gold and a full body jacket. That has been popular."

As an assistant buyer for **Saks Off 5th**, Alison Rose traveled to the show from New York to see brands that will not exhibit during the East Coast Active Collective. She saw trends in tie-dye patterns and mesh bras while searching for pieces at a 50-percent discount off wholesale to fit within her buy now, wear now business.

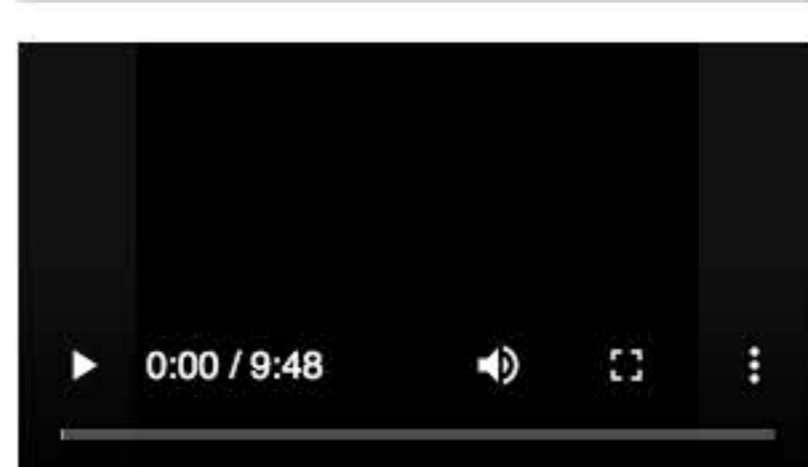
"We met with **EleVen**, which was amazing because we are testing out tennis and they have a tennis line that is curated by Venus Williams," she said. "We like this show because it's concise. You have the bandwidth to see everybody and not be overwhelmed."

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