

FASHION / TEXTILES

Traceable Supply Chain Is Key for Italian Textile Companies

Sustainability remained a pivotal talking point at trade show Milano Unica, which closed on Thursday.

By [Alessandra Turra](#) on July 13, 2018



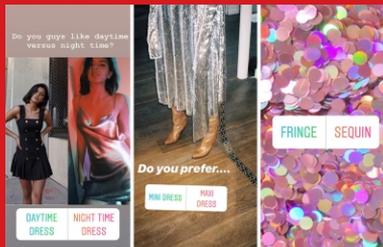
 Reda 1865 Fall/Winter 2019 fabrics
Courtesy Photo

MILAN — Raising the bar on [sustainability](#) should be the main goal of the Italian textile business is what emerged from the press conference opening the 27th edition of [Milano Unica](#), which closed here on Thursday. In line with the same edition last year, about 6,000 fashion companies attended the fair, which registered an increase of international buyers, especially from Holland, the U.S., Japan, China, France and Germany.

“Sustainability has been treated as a marketing tool, but it’s time to put the focus on what the Italian companies have done so far and it’s time to put the accent on the sustainable approach of

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the whole supply chain,” said Andrea Crespi, president of the Italian fashion chamber’s [sustainability](#) committee.

The Italian textile compartment’s leadership in terms of sustainability is a fact, according to Sistema Moda Italia president [Marino Vago](#), who revealed that “an executive from a French major luxury brand admitted that our textile companies have a five-year competitive advantage on our competitors.”

The main issue is to guarantee the traceability of the raw materials, according to [Milano Unica](#) president [Ercole Botto Poala](#). “Technology and the digitalization can be instrumental in the development of this process,” he said, adding that despite the new national government not sending any representatives to [Milano Unica](#), he hopes it will continue to support the Italian fashion and textile compartment as the previous one did.

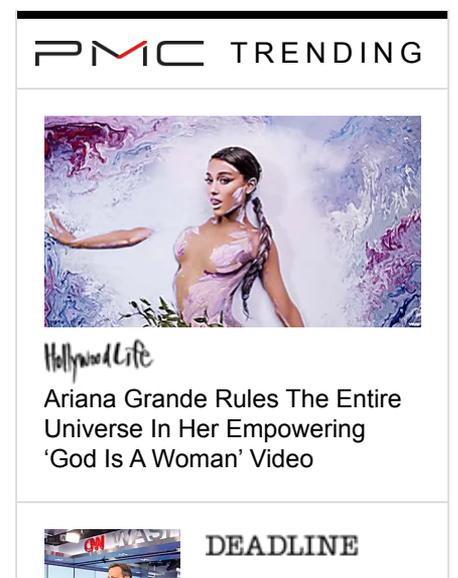
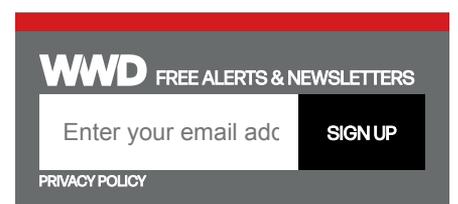
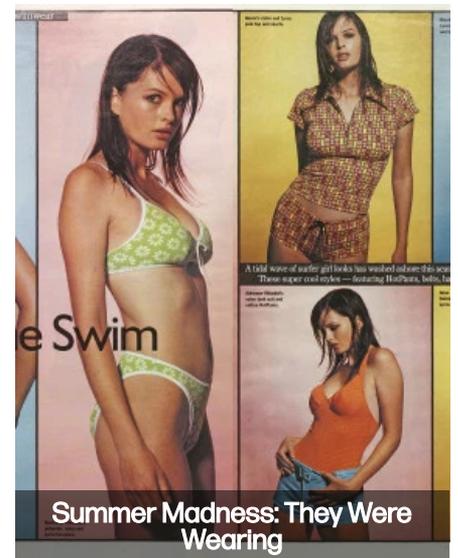
Especially because public investments are crucial to support the evolution of the system in terms of products and to raise awareness among the final customers.

“I think that fast fashion has been unintentionally fundamental in the development of an ecological and social collective conscience,” said Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana president [Carlo Capasa](#), who said that 30 percent of the production of fast-fashion giants is not even delivered in store, yet it goes straight to the dump.

“Wasting less” should be the mantra of our times, according to Botto Paola. “The quantity of raw materials at our disposal is limited, but at the same time the number of final customers in the world is doubling, which means that we need to become more careful when we consume,” he said.

But, to consume less, customers should be able to deal with products that are durable and resistant. And this is definitely one of the targets pursued by the Italian textile companies showcasing their collections at Milano Unica.

“I think that the market is tracing two different paths. On one side there are those companies which make huge volumes and have cheaper prices, on the other side there are smaller firms betting on creativity and offering luxury, special products. We want to be among these last ones,” said [Nino Cerruti](#), who last week announced that London-based fund Njord Partners acquired 80 percent of the Lanificio Fratelli Cerruti. The Cerruti family will retain a 20 percent stake in the firm, which will maintain its production in the Biella area. “I think the times were mature for a deal like this because nowadays for



companies to survive and grow in this difficult market they need investments to become more international and to be able to diversify their offering to be competitive on the markets of the future,” Cerrutti explained. “I think we are living in a moment which is very similar to the Sixties. At that time, men’s wear, which was previously exclusively sartorial, started including casual fashion and now this is becoming huge. Companies need to get ready to face this second revolution by developing the right products for the right customers.”

Cerrutti’s vision focused on a celebration of flexibility and versatility that emerged in the company’s fall 2019 textile collection, which featured a range of fabrics designed to be crafted for different kind of garments, spanning suits to blazers to outerwear pieces. In keeping with one of the trends scouted at the trade show, Lanificio Cerruti played with colors and graphic patterns, including madras plaids and checks, for its offering of blazer [textiles](#).

“Micro motifs and solid tones have been extremely popular for so many years, but people are getting tired of them,” said a spokesperson from the Reda 1865 textile design team. “Men currently want more fashionable yet always wearable pieces, which means we tried to develop a collection featuring colors that are vivid but not too aggressive and motifs, such as Prince of Wales, checks and madras plaids, which are captivating yet not too flamboyant.”

While Reda 1865 continues to expand its Atto line of performance naturally stretch and water-repellent products designed for smart suits, Biella-based textile firm Luigi Botto, which is under the umbrella of parent company Brandamour, presented its first range of machine-washable wool suiting fabrics.

Brandamour also showcased for the first time at Milano its relaunched Fila brand, offering high-end women’s [textiles](#) crafted from luxurious vicuna and cashmere fibers.

With the women’s offering at the trade show becoming more and more relevant, cotton textile specialist [Albini](#) set up a booth dedicated to its sophisticated feminine offering, which spanned from more traditional striped shirting fabrics to high-end fil coupe designs, offered in a fresh color palette, spanning from light pink and lilac to different shades of blue.

In the men’s section, Albini put the focus on striped motifs and performance fabrics, including shirting products that are waterproof, sun protective and antiodor.



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“These types of performance fabrics are particularly requested in the U.K. and the U.S.,” said Albini president Stefano Albini, who also said the company is expanding its offering of heavier cotton fabrics to be used for different garments.

Prints were at the core of [Ratti](#)’s R Collection and R Uomo lines. “Being a global company, our goal is always to offer a wide collection to meet the needs of different clients,” said Ratti shirting division’s head designer Roberto Leva, who mentioned chevrons, chains, lettering and florals among the main motifs in the company’s collection.

Asked about the trends of the U.S. market, Ratti’s head of North American market Paul Guggi said in the men’s segment, the boundaries between formal and casual shirts are completely blurring, while, in the women’s business, he noticed an increased demand of fluid and soft fabrics. “We are seeing a growing request for viscose fabrics, which have the same aspect of silk but are more affordable,” he said.

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