

Dear Readers,

In this issue we bring you fascinating articles that explore emerging models and tools for brick-and-mortar, digital and omnichannel retail. Customer experience, both online and offline, is becoming increasingly important to run a successful business; we propose reports on how to enhance this experience through digital applications, in-store features and virtual reality. Another report examines alternatives to the traditional 'forward buy' model that reduce the retailer's risk, but also give more power to brands. As always, our Look- and Storebooks contain special highlights for you to optimize your portfolio and get inspired by some of the world's most interesting stores.

I am writing these lines from Ibiza, a popular August holiday destination for many industry leaders. Something I have noted as particularly interesting during my time here is that the Balearics are naturally a key area for the Inditex group. One can spot Zara and Mango retail outlets on every corner, including their Accessory, Home, Men's and Women's stores.

However, despite this dominance, there are a multitude of smaller, creative and profitable shops that have found their own assortment, which they have used to great effect in terms of generating business.

The typical 'Ibiza Hippie' look, for example, is prominent across various sectors: the same customer who just bought a coat for a ridiculous 59 EUR at Zara doesn't think twice about spending hundreds of euros on innovative Ibiza fashion in the aforementioned smaller boutiques.

The consumer still pays for creativity and fashion is still profitable. However, one must have the right portfolio in order to differentiate their store from the Zaras of this world.

Speaking of creativity and innovation, at the end of this month, the third edition of WeAr Select Digital is coming out. Since its launch, WeAr Select Digital has evolved to become one of the most interesting platforms for young designers and creative brands. The entire editorial team of the WeAr Group scouts the world for the most successful new key pieces on behalf of premium retailers, and provides information on these pieces to stores free of charge.

We monitor a multitude of showrooms and tradeshows worldwide. This means buyers don't have to travel as much as we do, nor do they even have to study complete collections. Instead, they are able to see selected key pieces from top collections. We are working hard to edit the creative outputs of these brands down to their most relevant pieces and to make it as easy as possible for the buyer to find new labels. As this is pure talent support, there is no commercial interest in the shape of an edited selection.

Quality journalism is also the result.

This innovative concept is only made possible through the sponsorship of some established industry brands, for which we express our most sincere thanks.

If you would like to gain free access to this platform as a retailer, or you are a label and think you fit our requirements, I would be delighted to hear from you at kv@wear-magazine.com.

Enjoy this issue and, as always, here's to your business's success!

Yours,
Klaus Vogel
Editor and Publisher