

German Shoe Retail Trade Profits from Constant New Fashion Impulses



Fashion has in the last 3 to 4 years discovered the feet and adorns them with always more unusual and decorative shoe elements. Brigitte Wischnewski, president of the Bundesverband des Deutschen Schuheinzelhandels/BDSE (www.bdse.org), Cologne, and owner (with her daughter as co-owner) of three shoe shops in the third and fourth generation in the high-, middle- and well-priced sector in the Westphalian Lübbecke near Minden, told Textination in a telephone-interview that the branch could profit from fashion even in the first semester 2010 with a prospective sales plus of 2.5% against the same time last year.

Inspired were the consumer requests for beautiful and fashionable shoes for the ladies by the



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TV series from Hollywood "Sex and the City", which also runs so far two successful movies. Stardesigner Jimmy Choo, living in London and having graduated from the Cordwainers College there, made a name for himself with the highheel-shoe models shown in this series. Also the Spanish designer Manolo Blahnik, who had studied art and literature, but never shoe design, moved the shoe with the fancy design into focus for the broad consumer class. Not to forget the Heidi Klum-TV-show with the bold shoe models of their top-models.



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And the Deutsche Schuhinstitut (DSI) in Offenbach contributed with their trend reports and their annual shoe fashion show in Frankfurt a lot for the fashionable shoe, too. Trendleader in the sector of shoe fashion is e.g. the brand Buffalo with their current advertising slogan "the coolest shoe trend of the summer stirs women's blood: ankle-boots in grey nubuck leather with about 1 inch patent leather – platform and patent leather highheel as well as lavishly applied deco-zips" (about 200 Euro).

On the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week in Berlin the Hamburg shoe chain Görtz presented at the StyleNite in the Friedrichstadtpalast „Görtz



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designed by Kaviar Gauche" – women's shoes and –boots with High Heels/eight models/styling Jessica Klimach. It is great that the consumer is again spending more money for shoes. If he finds a desirable model the price does not play a role anymore.



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Altogether the German shoe industry has caught up in the area of fashion and design considerably. This is especially a merit of the national training centers like Deutsche Schuhfachschule Pirmasens,

Gesamthochschule Kassel/Industrial-Design, FH für Gestaltung Pforzheim/Fachbereich Design and Staatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste/ Produktgestaltung Stuttgart. According to B. Wischnewski the fast sellers at sales of women's shoes are currently Ballerinas as well as roman- and bootleg sandals in black.

With men's shoes especially all fabric- and leather sneakers as well as slip-ons sell well. Big sellers with kid's shoes are Converse - linen models. It is also good that children of owners of mid



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shops are again willing to accept responsibility to take over the shops of their parents. A profound basis are here the degree qualifications of the LDT Nagold, trade academy for textile & shoes. Business with the buyers' associations ANWR (Ariston-Nord-West-Ring), Garant Schuh + Mode AG, Rexor, Sabu and GEB ran well in the first half of the year.



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However, there are certain concerns about the increasing number of mono-stores of German shoe producers like e.g. Lloyd as well as the strong expansion in selling area due to new shopping centers. The consumer can only spend his Euro once. Also the online-shoe trade is

growing, driven by new offerers like Mirapodo from Otto-Group and Zalando with their TV-ads. Target groups are here mainly the young consumers with their internet appetite. However, it is not that easy to find the right size

online. Due to this the return share with online-buys is 25 to 40%. B. Wischnewski explained that it is difficult to give a 10-year-prognosis about how the online business will effect the existence of the middle-class shoe trade shops.

To be able to further keep up with the difficult competition now the important things are especially friendly sales personnel, service for the customers around the clock with imaginative special offers and to have always the current fashionable brand shoes and the opening hours adapted to the big competitors.

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