

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Selfridges shines light on sustainable clothing practices

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Selfridges' window display for Material World

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British department store chain Selfridges is putting the focus on sustainable clothing with a series of consumer-facing education initiatives and a special collection.

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Selfridges partnered together on a capsule collection with yarn manufacture Tengri, which launched in London Jan. 9. Selfridges' Material World campaign is being showcased through a window display in its Oxford location, along with a series of consumer engagements to educate on sustainability.

"We are a shop selling 'stuff,' so let's take a closer look at the very materiality that makes it," Linda Hewson, creative director at **Selfridges**. "Material World will examine sustainable textile development, with a focus on social, local and global production stories.

"The project will explore current problems and their impact as well as presenting solutions and ideas, with honesty and humor, in a retail environment," she said. "Through Material World we want to invite consumers and the industry to refashion the way we think about our clothes and how we talk about sustainability."

Sustainable style

The new collection will be a part of Selfridge's "Bright" Series. The department chain has created an online hub for the collection and information regarding sustainable apparel.

Material World's tagline, "What on Earth are you wearing," is a play on words, hoping to make consumers aware of where their clothing comes from. Users can grab downloadable images with quotes regarding these practices as well as read up on the various issues within each apparel sector.

For instance, a section on cotton details what the problem is with cotton productions, walks through a solution and directs users to shop a brand that supports the solution.

Tengri is a sustainable knitwear manufacturer that opened last year and operates through an online Web site. A new window display at Oxford Selfridges tells the sustainable brand's story through visuals, educating passersby.

The new collection is available in Selfridges' menswear and inspired by the juxtaposition between nature and urbanization. Knitwear pieces are available exclusively at Selfridges such as a varsity jacket, special edition marl beanies and scarves.

Tengri founder Nancy Johnston will be featured in a series of initiatives to advertise the partnership and campaign.

Department store innovations

Selfridges also recently doubled the space dedicated to selling accessories citing the category's appeal as motivation.

With the ideology that "the power of a truly great accessory can never be underestimated," Selfridges renovated its accessories department at its Oxford Street flagship in London. The accessories category is viewed as an access point to many luxury goods brands due to the entry-level price tag for many pieces such as wallets and cosmetics bags, with handbags commanding a higher ticket ([see more](#)).

The department store also announced strong results for the 2015-16 financial year, ending Jan. 31, 2016, recording a gross sales increase of 1.4 billion, or \$1.2 billion at current exchange.

An increase of 5 percent, year-on-year, Selfridges saw positive growth across all channels, symbolizing the success of its omnichannel efforts over the course of 2015-16, and beyond. Selfridges' growth comes two years into a capital expenditure, which has included a 300 million or, \$365 million at current exchange, overhaul of its London flagship and omnichannel capabilities ([see more](#)).

"As an innovator in noble yarns and the first brand to manufacture yak fibers here in the United Kingdom as a sustainable alternative to cashmere, we are honored to be invited to take part in this high-profile creative initiative and as an ambassador for luxury fibers," said **Tengri's** Ms. Johnston.

"We are slowly seeing positive shifts in consumer attitudes to sustainability, but it's essential for influential retailers to drive the change for good to protect our planet and our future," she said. "We're proud to sit with so many talented brands selected for Material World, and to be spearheading a sustainable fashion revolution."

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