

QUESTION 9**RESOURCE ONE****ECO-FRIENDLY FASHION BRANDS WE CAN GET BEHIND**

By Hayley Phelan

Nowadays in fashion, the words 'eco-friendly', 'organic' and 'sustainable' get bandied around a lot. Sometimes it can be hard to tell the difference between a brand that's actually helping to make the planet a better place and one that's just riding the eco bandwagon with a less than well intentioned 'organic' label.

Companies are cashing in on consumers' growing environmental awareness by labelling their clothes 'green', without actually changing their production process too much.

'Green', 'eco', 'sustainable' and the rest are nice but meaningless, feel-good marketing terms. Part of the reason why it's so hard to put your finger on what a brand is actually doing to help the planet is because for many of the 'eco' terms, there's no one definition. Sustainable design could mean any number of things.

And one 'feel-good' marketing term does not necessarily encompass every aspect. For instance a company that uses organic cotton could be manipulating labour laws in less than savoury ways and likewise, items labelled fair trade are not necessarily environmentally friendly.

It's also important to remember that even the best environmentally-friendly products will have some negative impact on the planet. Trucks and planes are still used to transport 'eco' goods, and even garments labelled '100% organic' will use a polyester thread.

But just because there is some clever marketing going on, doesn't mean you can't feel good about eco-fashion. There are brands out there that are legitimately doing their part to help the planet by taking a holistic approach to sustainable design such as Tara St. James and Alabama Chanin.

[Adapted from: <<http://fashionista.com>>]

QUESTION 10**RESOURCE TWO****CHINESE FALL FOR 'FAST FASHION'**

by The Stitch Times

International clothing retailing giants are flocking to China to tap the huge potential of so-called 'fast fashion'. While overseas garment retailers are gearing up to China's 'fast fashion' market, local manufacturers are also poised to join the race.

The crucial factors contributing to the success of 'fast fashion' are novelty, trendiness, uniqueness and low price. The approach mainly targets young people. As Chinese consumers have only just learned about 'fast fashion', first movers like Zara, and H&M (Popular Fashion Brands) were able to capture a sizeable share of the market early on.

'Fast fashion' brands rely on several factors to establish their foothold. Firstly, they have a short product life cycle, from product development to marketing. They closely follow fashion trends (rather than setting new trends) and produce designs of the season (not ahead of time).

The second factor is 'speed' which is the core value of 'fast fashion'. The entire process from planning, to delivery normally takes between 120 and 160 days to reach the shelves.

An affordable price is what attracts young people to 'fast fashion'. These brands are selling products at low prices but with top rated store images.

[Adapted from: < <http://www.fibre2fashion.com>>]

QUESTION 13**RESOURCE THREE****IMPROVING LIVES BY GREENING LOW COST HOUSING**

South Africa's first 'Green Street' project involved taking thirty low-cost houses in Cato Manor (township) and giving them a green upgrade, called a retrofit.

The aims of the project were to demonstrate the range of socio-economic, health and environmental benefits which are possible through sustainable design and resource efficiency interventions in low income houses; and to show that people's quality of life can be improved, while keeping the country's development on a low carbon and more 'Earth-friendly' path.

The South African government has built millions of low cost homes but until fairly recently green considerations have not been a priority, so people living in these houses continue to spend significant amounts of their income on energy.

In the Cato Manor Green Street, each household received an energy efficient retrofit in the form of solar water heaters, insulated ceilings, efficient lighting, rainwater harvesting tanks and heat insulation cookers. Food gardens were established to produce healthy, home grown food.

Government is continuously looking for ways to promote a green economy that will have far reaching benefits for South Africans.

[Adapted from: <www.gbcsa.org.za>]

QUESTION 14**RESOURCE FOUR****NEW HOME BUILDING GONE BAD!! HELP?**

My husband and I are in the process of building a new home. We bought the land from a friend and then went to obtain a few building quotes. We chose a small homebuilder as he was by far the cheapest. We were assured that building wouldn't take longer than 6 months. We are sitting on month 7 and our completion date has been delayed four times, due to rain and lack of finances of the builder. The builder required a 50% deposit in order to start the work, a further 30% when the house reached roof height and the balance on completion. We have tried to contact the builder on numerous occasions and he doesn't always answer our calls. The house is at roof height and we have paid him 80% of the final price. He has not been on site in the last month. He promised us he would be back on site last week and to date we have not seen him, another one of his empty promises. Our furniture is in storage which is costing us money and we are renting a very small one bedroom flat while we build this three bedroom home. Please help as we have realised our builder is not registered with any professional body – who do we turn to?

QUESTION 15**RESOURCE FIVE**

Impahla Clothing is based in Cape Town. This is a privately owned manufacturing company of world-class sport, lifestyle apparel and fabric. The company has grown over the last eight years to 320 employees.

Impahla Clothing believes the answer lies in building relationships with their stakeholders and building their resources to serve the market and tackle future growth demands.

Impahla means 'clothing' in Xhosa and the company logo is the Flame lily, a wild flower. William Hughes (Managing Director) says the flame lily is a beautiful African flower that embodies the essence and spirit of the company.

The company's mission is to produce top-quality products on time and on budget. It strives to achieve the highest standards as a supplier of quality fabrics, garment manufacturing and branding services.

Impahla Apparel manufactures sport and lifestyle clothing under a sole source agreement for PUMA. Impahla has geared its operations to the highest international standards and proudly boasts being awarded PUMA's contractor compliance 'A status', one of the first factories in Africa to achieve this honour. Impahla has aligned its business philosophy with that of PUMA, resulting in Impahla becoming a PUMA Strategic Partner. This has great significance in that PUMA would always look to fill Impahla's lines before allocating work to other factories.

This company is making strides in eco manufacture by being the first carbon neutral garment manufacturer in South Africa, which is committed to a greener, cleaner and more sustainable working environment.

[Adapted from: <<http://www.impahla.co.za>>]