

presented by LYCRA®



The Balance Collection by Marika features Lycra® for movement and support

Textiles Made for Feeling Good and Looking Good

TRENDS FOR A NEW GENERATION OF FITNESS

Nothing short of a cultural shift is occurring. As consumers make an increased effort to nurture their mind, body and spirit, their external focus is giving way to achieving a greater sense of inner focus and well-being. This link between feeling good and looking good carries over into all aspects of daily life. For consumers this includes not only what they eat and where they shop, but also how they exercise and the clothes they wear to the gym.

Participating in yoga, as well as other types of

mind/body fitness, and opting for activewear that features comfort and performance is an ideal fit for today's growing trend toward wellness.

In fact, according to Invista (formerly DuPont Textiles & Interiors) research, consumers now cite the maintenance of physical and spiritual health and well-being as one of the top five life priorities. Conducted in the United States and Europe in the spring of 2003, the Invista research shows a universal interest in the concept of deriving well-being benefits through clothing. "Invista stands poised to help

leverage these trends and consumer desires into textiles," says Cathy Knowles, Invista Activewear Manager. "And the research shows consumers are ready to accept these benefits in textiles."

While research reveals that consumers respond positively to a range of wellness properties, like aromatherapy and skin toning, comfort remains key. Clothing that fits, functions and feels good 24/7 is a high priority, especially among busy consumers stretched for time juggling career, family and personal demands.

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FINDING A BALANCE IN FITNESS AND FASHION

The New Balance Active Lifestyle collection was developed for the customer balancing the need for physical, mental and emotional well-being. The line consists of tops and bottoms that have a yoga influence but are appropriate for all-around fitness. The women-specific garments range from bra tops and shorts to hoodies and long pants.

"In the past, most product was designed for hard bodies, who engaged in spinning classes and hard-core workouts," says Jim Howard, Global Apparel Manager for New Balance. "There was a lack of product in the market for people who wanted to feel fit but also look good."

Invista defines this individual as the Balance consumer. Based on in-depth Invista consumer research, there are four distinct "Sports Attitudes" with each consumer type demanding a different level of performance from their activewear. The Balance customer prefers apparel that delivers easy comfort, a personalized fit and soft, natural feeling apparel on their body. In activewear they seek a balance between comfort, performance and fashion.

For New Balance, the Active Lifestyle line achieves these characteristics with soft, flowing fabrics and a comfortable, flattering fit.

"Lycra® has been instrumental in the development of the Active Lifestyle collection," says Howard. "Lycra® allows fabrics to have the hand, the feel, and the general drape we were looking for in this line."

The company also uses Tactel®, in pieces such as the Soothing Seamless Tank and Soothing Seamless Capris. "These pieces exemplify what this line is about," explains Howard. "The garments are soft, flattering and comfortable. They can be worn anywhere at anytime but they offer performance features, too." He says the garments work for yoga but also for athletes that

incorporate yoga as one part of an overall cross-training routine.

"We see the wellness trend as an integral part of today's lifestyle," Howard concludes. "It is one more brick in the wall of fitness."

YOGA AND BEYOND

Marika is a leader in active apparel. The company offers several categories of clothing including the Balance Collection of yoga-inspired styles and the Shiva Shakti line of high-end yoga-specific apparel.

Cotton has traditionally been the fabric of choice for yoga wear, but according to Norm Zvail, Marika President, as yoga increasingly attracts a younger and more diverse participant, and as the category evolves and broadens, there is greater demand for technical fibers and fabrics. "Today's customers want performance features, like moisture management and a comfortable, yet functional, fit," says Zvail.

Lycra® is an important element in Marika garments whether the look is body hugging or relaxed. "To me there are four basic values to Lycra®," explains Zvail. "It allows for ease of movement while providing support for different body types and different types of exercise. Lycra® energizes the body and it feels substantial. Merchandise with Lycra® has a perceived value for my customers."

These features combine to create Marika garments that meet current consumer demands. "Every one is looking for balance in their life and we see our collection as reflecting that trend," states Zvail. "Today's consumer desire for wellness goes beyond yoga, to include nutrition, Pilates, and other types of alternative fitness."

Today's textiles and activewear can go beyond, too, with Invista performance fibers.



Soothing Seamless line from New Balance in Tactel®/Lycra®



Zen Jacket from New Balance featuring Lycra®

