

Turnaround time

A range of new innovative textile products helped contribute to the optimistic mood at Outdoor Retailer Winter Market 2010. **Kathlyn Swantko** reports from Salt Lake City

Two quarters of positive economic growth recorded during the third and fourth quarters of 2009 brought with it a noticeable uptick in optimism among several exhibitors at Outdoor Retailer Winter Market 2010 (ORWM'10), which ran in Salt Lake City, from January 20-24.

Others remained more cautious, feeling that until the unemployment rate declines from its current rate of 10%, the economic outlook remains dim. This cautious attitude was evident in the fewer number of exhibitors and lighter traffic at this season's show, compared to past Winter Markets.

However, one experienced, anonymous attendee, who has seen the textile industry through a number of economic fluctuations over the years, said that the leather business has proven to be a positive barometer for an economic turnaround. He said: "When leather comes back, the rest of the industry seems to follow, and I see the leather business improving."

Confirming this situation, Mike Dodd of Pittards said that while last year's leather business was very tough, he is now beginning to see the sales come back.

There were a number of new

developments in leather and other textile highlights at this season's ORWM:

Pittards used ORWM '10 to introduce its new Keratan abrasion-resistant leather to the US market. Keratan leather has significantly improved abrasion resistance, and is being targeted towards the motor cycling and snowboarding markets. The leather's embossed diamond pattern is bonded into the leather's fibre structure, allowing for flexibility, breathability, and water resistance. The etched pattern is specifically designed to work with the performance treatment.

Mike Dodd of Pittards explained: "With Keratan, we have doubled the abrasion resistance, and have received a very positive reaction to the new development. It gives our customers the opportunity to continue to use leather where abrasion resistance is necessary, but not always achievable. Everybody understands the need for improved abrasion resistance in leather."

● www.pittardsleather.com

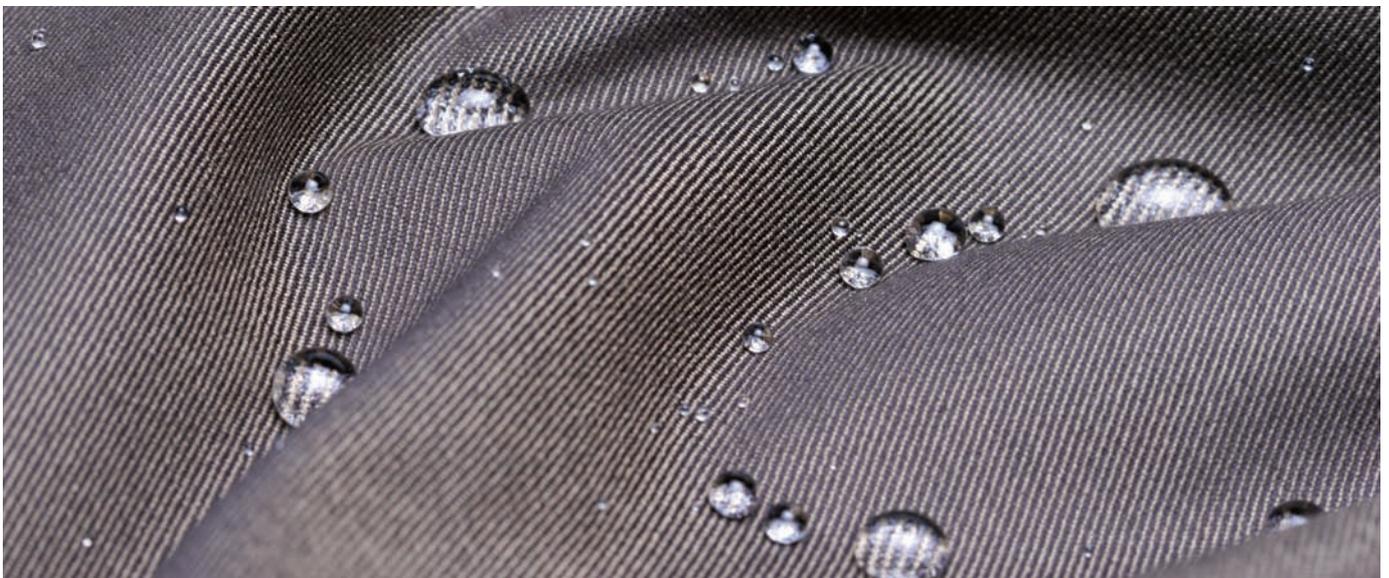
In a new outdoor collection, which was debuted at ORWM '10, **Schoeller** unveiled two new eco-fabric developments. Its

new DWR (durable water repellent) fluoro-free finish, which is free of fluoropolymers and also meets the bluesign standard, is a dirt- and water-repellent finish that is impregnated into the fabric after the dyeing process to ensure long-lasting protection. Shannon Walton, marketing director for Schoeller, stated: "Unlike other DWRs, the fluoro-free finish can be renewed by heat treatment, and is fully washable."

The other new eco-development introduced was Schoeller's Naturetec soft-shell and brushed wool fabric, a machine washable wool that is bluesign certified and mulesing-free, using wool from South America.

● www.schoeller-textiles.com

Advanced Flexible Materials, Inc. (AFM) introduced its Silver Lining fabric to the outdoor market. AFM, the makers of Heatsheets reflective blankets, are now taking its insulation technology a step further, offering it for applications in apparel, gear, and footwear products. The Silver Lining technology combines a reflective insulation with a soft, non-woven fabric to create a strong, durable and comfortable insulating lining.



Schoeller's new DWR (durable water repellent) fabric with fluoro-free finish.

Products made from Silver Lining are waterproof and windproof, or breathable and wind-resistant.

Based on the reflective insulation material developed by NASA for the US space programme, Silver Lining components are now being incorporated as linings, layers and primary fabrics for a growing number of new and innovative products – from parka linings to emergency sleeping bags and footwear. Made of aluminised polymer film, the radiant barrier both bars and lets in heat to maintain a consistent temperature.

Silver Lining fabrics are available as Water Proof TF (non-breathable) and Breathable Aire-TF (breathable). The fabric can be used as a non-conductive IR-reflective insulation layer. It retains reflective insulation properties even when wet, is easy to sew, and is completely machine washable.

Lisa Jones, sales director for AMF, explained: "Our goal is to get this ultra warm, super light weight and amazingly cost-effective material into the hands of the people where it can save lives and make a difference in the quality of the lives we live."

● www.afmnc.com

3M used ORWM '10 to introduce its new stitchless bonding films, designed for the outerwear, activewear, and intimate apparel markets. The thermoplastic polyurethane films offer a variety of performance advantages for bonding both polyester and nylon fabrics, including excellent stretch and recovery properties, soft hand, wash durability, and high bond strength.

According to Clint Morrill, marketing supervisor for 3M Industrial Adhesives and Tapes Division, the 6000 Series of bonding films can be used when stretch properties are a priority, and the 7010 Series of films can be used when durability is the important factor.

● www.3m.com

Thermore S.p.a. presented its Thermore T37 Dynamic, a smart insulation that is a self-adjusting thermal product. According to Joe Digirolamo, US sales manager for Thermore, the 'smart' insulation concept means that the thermal resistance (clo value, tog rating, etc.) actually changes based on the weather conditions.

Digirolamo explained: "The keys to the technology are the 'thermal gates' or chemical microspaces that make up the unique structure of the T37 Dynamic. During colder conditions, these gates are closed and maximum thermal efficiency is achieved. As the temperature becomes warmer, the microspaces start to open

and allow excess heat to escape. The ongoing adjustment helps to keep the user in the comfort zone over a range of weather conditions when compared to traditional insulation."

● www.thermore.com

Nuwa Textiles, the Taiwan-based producer of woven nylon and polyester, used ORWM '10 to promote its new NuHyde Ultra Abrasion Resistant Finish, specially formulated for heavy duty performance designs requiring high abrasion resistance and strength, and ideal for luggage, backpacks, and wear areas of garments.

Larry Harrison, director of new product development for Nuwa, explained: "NuHyde is a newly developed process that increases abrasion resistance by over 450% compared to conventional PU coatings. When fabric yarns are fused with NuHyde, its high viscosity content creates a barrier on the surface without compromising the tear and tensile strength of the fabric."

The coating has been tested by the independent

testing lab SGS using a 1,000 g Taber Wheel and resulted in an increase from 1,200 cycles for a two-times polyurethane coating to 5,600 cycles for NuHyde. The number of cycles, or complete rotations, gives an indication of how well the fabric will wear in real life.

● www.nuwatex.com

● www.outdoorretailer.com



Noticeable etched pattern on the surface of Pittards' Keratan abrasion-resistant leather.



Designers reviewing fabric swatches in Outdoor Retailer's Sourcing & Design Center.