

Pitti Patter

New and notable brands to check out at the Florence trade show.

MASSIF

Massif is finally ready for its debut.

After more than a year in development, the brand will have its unveiling at Pitti Uomo. The high-tech fashion collection uses the same advanced proprietary technology that the company utilizes for the tactical and rescue gear it provides to elite U.S. combat units, including the CIA, SWAT teams and back-country firefighters. All garments have moisture management and antimicrobial properties as well as stretch and 3-D ergonomic shaping. Seams are naturally shaped to legs, underarms are fully gusseted to provide for range of motion, and there are secure interior and exterior pockets and stealth sleeve pockets. But while the fabrics and details may be technical, the styling is contemporary.

Scott Branscum, president, whose background includes Eddie Bauer, Perry Ellis and Cutter & Buck, has been immersed in creating the brand since its inception in November 2010. And although the first collection won't hit stores until this fall, retailers have already expressed interest in the label.

"They're completely intoxicated by the story of the brand," Branscum said. "They know there's something interesting here and that helps us pass through the brand gauntlet."

Massif was founded in 1999 by two entrepreneurs whose adventures included rock climbing and rescue missions. The company was acquired by Tactical Holdings and its private equity partner, Golden Gate Capital, in 2009.

The apparel collection will feature 34 styles, each in four to five fabrics. Categories include everything from outerwear, a hallmark of the line, to sweaters, knit and woven shirts and pants. Outerwear will retail from \$650 to \$950; pants for \$200 to \$450; woven shirts for \$200 to \$300, and knit shirts from \$150 to \$250. Hangtags will tell the line's unique story and retail design veteran

Kenneth Walker is creating a shop concept for the brand.

Branscum said industry people and target consumers have been field-testing every piece to ensure that they fit well, are comfortable and perform up to the company's standards.

Massif is targeting high-end department and specialty stores to carry the collection. "The mother brand is global and the caliber of retailer who understands this proposition is also global," he said.

In addition to Pitti, Massif will show its line during New York Market Week as well as at the Project show in Las Vegas in February.

— J.E.P.



A Massif coat.