

Global concerns still occupy top of mind in both retailers and manufacturers. In November 2007, Creators Mitzi Rivas and Amie Garcia of **Livie & Luca** shoes travel to Southern China to meet with their factory executives, tour the facilities, learn about eco-friendly and socially conscious practices and build a relationship with the workers. “We took this trip to become educated,” Mitzi says. “Consumers want to know how their products are made, that they are safe and that working conditions are fair.” What they encounter are sincere and hardworking individuals committed to producing a high-quality product.

The trek to China highlights the MAGIC kids exhibitor’s goal of being a socially responsible business that also offers a high-quality product. Mitzi and Amie use scrap leather in the production of their shoes, recycling high-quality leather that would otherwise be discarded. Spending time at the factory allows them to see the entire process of producing their handmade shoes. The two spend Thanksgiving away from their families but both feel it is their responsibility as owners of the company to know their product is produced with socially aware practices. Workers are given competitive salaries that are over minimum wage and are offered steady work throughout the year, which is not always the norm for



focal point

factory workers. At their factory, workers live nearby or on-site, many of whom walk or bike to work.

Reduce, reuse, and recycle, that’s the Livie & Luca mantra since 2005. Their paper products are printed on post-consumer paper using soy ink. Online customers are sent reusable cloth bags in place of disposable shoe boxes. The company donates 10 percent of their proceeds to several charities and is launching a shoe recycling program this year. Now that’s what I call minimizing your carbon footprint.

Creative and appropriate packaging of clothing essentials has stepped up to inspire a buying spree. For instance, the **Baby Candy** shop opens for the first time at KIDShow. “The feedback and excitement from buyers about the quality and packaging is fabulous!” says Creator Olivia Omega Logan, who debuts two added collections of tagless

one-pieces and t-shirts that are wrapped like candy: **Sugar Free**, 20 styles in 100 percent organic cotton and **Sweet Talk**, 100 percent cotton clothes sporting sweet, mouthwatering sayings. Olivia tells me that her line recently makes its television debut, too – on the Ellen DeGeneres Show! As the segment plays in the background, Olivia tells me, “Before the show I was a stay-at-home mom with a good idea. Ellen mentioned my website and it was crazy after that. I got the business up and running in three weeks.” Wow - can’t beat mass media exposure!



Baby Candy

