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**MEDIA
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September 2011

FULL-FIGURED FASHION

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IT'S ABOUT TIME!

Plus-size models Tara Lynn, Marquita Pring,
and Candice Huffine show readers that curvy is 'in'

PHOTO: (LEFT TO RIGHT) LEO LAM, MICHAEL SCHWARTZ, CLAUSSA STROUD

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CHALLENGES

There is a **new generation** of self-confident, full-figured women ready to purchase beautiful clothing in their size.

Celebrating curvy women

It was a clear and picture perfect day in New York City in 2008 and I was standing amongst the throngs of fashion followers who had scored an invitation to one of the Ready-to-Wear fashion shows at Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week. I was beyond excited as this was my first time attending a show under the tents.

As I made my way to my seat, I couldn't resist absorbing the frenetic energy under the tent. I eagerly watched the production team remove the protective covering from the runway, signaling the show was about to begin. For the next twenty-two minutes I was taken on a fantasy fashion journey of the most beautiful garments imaginable. However, when the twenty-two minutes were up and the designer had taken her bow, I realized that the fantasy was gone, reality had emerged, and I could never purchase any of these clothes because they weren't made in my size. This personal realization became the beginning of the conceptualization of Full Figured Fashion Week™.

The full-figured consumer

Although the vast majority of society is considered full-figured, we are continually underserved and the power of our wallets devalued. The full-figured consumer can no longer be the silent majority. There is a plethora of self-confident, full-figured women all over the world who want to purchase beautiful clothing in their size; including investment pieces and the latest fads. These women are ready to become loyal customers of brands that rally to meet their needs. Contrary to popular belief, there is a new generation of confident full-figured women and we do not want to wait until we lose weight to get the clothes we covet. For some of us, weight loss isn't even on our agenda. Instead, we subscribe to the blogs of self-proclaimed "fat-shionistas" looking for news of the latest looks and trends that are available to us. In other words, we love the skin that we are in right now and challenge retailers and designers



Gwendolyn L. DeVoe
Creator & Executive Producer,
Full Figured Fashion Week

"...We love the skin that we are in right now and challenge retailers and designers to step up to the plate to bring us more fashion choices that work for our various lifestyles."

to step up to the plate to bring us more fashion choices that work for our various lifestyles.

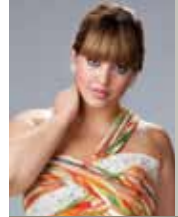
Tremendous support

The successful launch of Full Figured Fashion Week™ in New York City in 2009 and its subsequent events in 2010 and 2011, has confirmed what curvy women across America have always known—there is a demand for additional and more diverse fashion choices for curvy, fashion-conscious consumers who are unapologetic about their size and confidently love their curves. There has been tremendous support in this industry from retailers, independent designers, small businesses and event producers across the country. It is through this support that the full-figured fashion industry will continue to be a thriving platform that challenges, inspires, celebrates and redefines the curvy woman.

GWENDOLYN L. DEVOE
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MEDIA PLANET

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NEWS



DON'T MISS!

Hey guys! We're talking to you!

If you're reading this, good for you! When buying lingerie for the woman in your life, keep in mind this should be about making her feel beautiful and special. Lingerie should be flattering, not revealing. Women usually have four areas they may feel "less than excited about".

■ **Hip slimmers:** Look for chemises as they tend to be a little longer than babydolls. A good solution is finding one that has garters attached.

■ **Booty shakers:** Look for items that have keyhole back, open back, ties, ruffles and panels in back, as these help camouflage the booty. These styles were specially designed for those days when we don't want to bring attention to our rear-view.

■ **Tummy tuckers:** Look for items that have front horizontal panels or a contrast in color. Lingerie with these accents was designed to create an hourglass look and a cinched-waist shape.

■ **Cleavage makers:** Look for items that include padding, underwire and additional design features that create cleavage, a fuller looking bust and additional support.

Source: Jada Michaels, Owner, Jadamichaels.com

Question: Where do you shop when you are looking for great selection, easy returns, and a little respect?

Answer: The Web. Online stores offer a wide selection of styles and sizes, including no-hassle return policies.



Women redefine shopping

Online stores now offer a wide selection of styles and sizes not available in stores.

Almost all women love to shop. For many, roaming the stores, feeling fabrics, trying on clothes and browsing through displays of the latest styles is as much of a hobby as a way to replenish their wardrobes. However, when it comes down to the business of purchasing clothes, full-figured women face a number of challenges at the mall.

Many women who wear larger

sizes seem to prefer to shop online, especially when buying lingerie. In a culture that isn't totally joking when it quips that "you can't be too thin," women with curves can feel intimidated by skinny salespeople, tiny fitting rooms, and displays suggesting that anything above a size 8 is a special order.

What do you have in size 18?

The reasons women who wear larger sizes prefer online shopping aren't only psychological. Because of limited floor space,

brick and mortar shops have to limit their selections to the most popular sizes, brands, and styles. This presents several problems. Styles being promoted by fashion buyers often miss the mark for larger women. Getting a style designed to flatter their curves—not just a larger version of a design made for smaller women—is paramount. Fit is extremely important for larger women as well, particularly when it comes to lingerie. When a full-figured woman wears a garment that is perfectly tailored for her size and fits just right, curves can become assets rather than problems to work around.

New at the cyber mall

Until recently, full-figured women had few good options, short of having clothes tailored just for them (which reminds one of the second half of that quip: "you can't be too rich"). But e-shopping has changed. Online Retailers have noticed the problems faced by

curvy shoppers and turned those problems into opportunities. Many of these retailers really do have a keen understanding of the shopping challenges larger women face. As a result online stores not only offer a wide selection of styles and sizes simply not available in stores, they increasingly have no-hassle return policies.

The ability to choose from an almost limitless selection of styles, try them on in the comfort and privacy of your home, and return them for any reason at all (that color just doesn't look good with my skin, the slip bunches when I sit down) has made online shopping a pleasure rather than a last resort.

Curvy women who were once ignored by retailers are now naming their terms: Redefining shopping for shoppers of all sizes—even those rare women who don't love to shop.

AVERY HURT

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TIPS

Shopping for clothes online

■ Know your size:

You will want to know exactly the size and fit of the clothes you are looking for. Have a friend take your measurements so you can determine and compare these



dimensions to the information given to you from the retailers website.

■ Find and read the return, refund, and shipping policies:

Search the site, e-mail or telephone call to clarify the return, refund and shipping terms.

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INSPIRATION

Question: What are the best basic habits to adopt in life?

Answer: Good nutrition, regular activity and loving yourself from the inside out.

TIP

2

ACCEPT
YOURSELF FOR
WHO YOU ARE

Love the skin you're in! Emme shares her keys to health and happiness

HOW I MADE IT

Why are we women so much harder on ourselves than men? A man will jovially accept his pot belly, but a woman will view hers as a mark of failure. A man will accept graying or thinning hair as a part of aging, while a woman will punish herself on every "bad hair day!" One of life's big lessons is learning to accept yourself for who you are, while also continuing to strive to be your best.

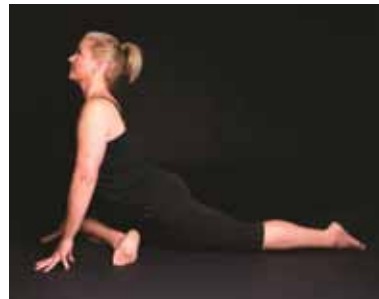
Most of us are balancing multiple roles in busy lifestyles, so it's not always easy to make time for ourselves. Nevertheless, it is paramount that we do. That means paying attention to what we eat and drink and making time for the activities we need, both physi-

cal and mental. It means getting enough sleep and making sure we keep up with important health checkups.

Eating a healthy diet

I confess that I was not always happy with who I was. But I have discovered that by changing just a few basic habits, my whole outlook and self-image have been transformed. The top good habit is eating a healthy diet and taking appropriate dietary supplements to give you both the fuel and nutrients your body needs.

Today we know that good nutrition not only supports growth and development when we are young, but also helps us maintain precious functions like vision and mental agility throughout adulthood. Proper nutrition also supports beau-



Emme
Plus-size supermodel

BEST TIP

To keep her skin healthy and looking youthful, Emme keeps on top of her beauty routine by consuming FloraGLO Lutein every day. A powerful antioxidant, lutein protects, restores and hydrates skin. FloraGLO is one of her partners in EmmeNation. See www.floraglolutein.com for more information.

Emme is a paid FloraGLO spokesperson and currently supplements her diet with FloraGLO Lutein.

tiful skin by improving elasticity and hydration. I have learned to start each day with breakfast and to include plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains in my diet. I've also learned to use dietary supplements to fill in the gaps in my diet, so I know am getting enough of the nutrients I need. This has made a big difference in how I look and feel, giving me energy and confidence to be at my best.

Feel the joy of vitality

The second habit I have cultivated is physical activity. No, I don't work out at the gym, but I do walk, swim and make a conscious effort to engage in outdoor activities. The key is to do something you enjoy, which may be different for everybody. My goal is not to achieve the

perfect body, but to feel the joy of vitality.

And here's my final habit: laughter! For some people, it's meditation or music or movies, but for me, it's doing things and being with people who make me laugh. I would encourage everyone in the world to find those special activities and people who lift your spirits and free your soul, and make it a point to include them regularly in your life.

Loving the skin you're in comes from nourishing yourself, body and soul. Demand that from yourself and I guarantee you will be on the path to good health, self-confidence and a happier outlook.

EMME

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INSPIRATION

Plus-sized models Marquita Pring, Candice Huffine and Tara Lynn talk about the controversial Vogue Italia cover and what it is like being a curvaceous woman in today's world.

Curvy: It's a way of life

In June, Vogue Italia grabbed attention on both sides of the pond with its cover-story spread featuring four gorgeous models. Nothing new for Vogue, you say? Yes, but these ladies were what the fashion world calls “plus-size.” We asked three of the models, Marquita Pring, Candice Huffine and Tara Lynn about the landmark cover and what it is like being a curvaceous woman in today's world.

The June Vogue Italia cover made quite a splash. Can we expect to see more magazine covers like this one?

■ **Marquita:** You most definitely can. It's only a matter of time before more publications begin to support a curvier, healthier, body image.

■ **Candice:** I can say with confidence that curvy women will no longer be an afterthought in the fashion world—not only as models, but as consumers as well.

■ **Tara:** Fortunately for those who value diversity in the way we depict beauty,

Vogue Italia seems to be anticipatory. I think many people have been waiting for this, and I hope we'll see more.

As a double-digit size in the fashion world, where size 4 is closer to average, do you have to deal with discrimination and stigma?

■ **Marquita:** I have yet to experience discrimination regarding my size. The industry has been taking major strides toward representing and accepting more diversity—let's embrace that!

■ **Candice:** I never experience discrimination and stigma in my work as a model. The only time I have ever run into a not-so-pleasant scenario is while shopping and realizing that the store doesn't stock my size.

■ **Tara:** The atmosphere in the industry is overwhelmingly positive regarding the inclusion of my size. Rare individuals go into a shoot with the attitude that I am not a real model, or that we are not doing a real fashion shoot, but they soon come around.



Candice Huffine, Marquita Pring, and Tara Lynn

How do you manage to maintain a positive body image in today's society where so many people think one can't be thin enough?

■ **Marquita:** I remain positive about myself and my body by trying not to compare myself to anyone. We see these perfect bodies and faces glamorized all around us and it's often difficult not to compare or be envious, but everybody is different.

■ **Candice:** In everyday life I pay my curves no mind. If you free yourself of self-image stress you'll find you have a lot more time for the fun things in life.

■ **Tara:** I respect myself. I do my best to make decisions I can take pride in, like keeping active and eating a lot of whole, raw foods. And I let my body be what it is.

What message do you have for other women who are struggling to keep a healthy

body image in a culture that seems to privilege ultra-thin women?

■ **Marquita:** My advice is to stop comparing yourself! When you are confident, your beauty shines and being healthy is the first step to confidence.

■ **Candice:** My message would be to focus on making yourself happy. If you are constantly on a diet and won't meet your friends for dinner because you don't want to overdo it in the calorie department, guess what? You are missing out on a great night of conversation and laughs.

■ **Tara:** Our culture will continue to privilege any specific group only if we let it. By fearing discrimination, we fuel it. If instead we celebrate and respect ourselves, we begin to free ourselves of stigma.

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INSPIRATION



TIP
3
ASK RETAILERS TO CARRY SIZES 14+

The full-figured market is not a small one

One of the greatest observations in the full-figured fashion industry is the lack of stylish apparel choices for plus-size women. This is quite baffling, considering in America alone, roughly 62 percent of women wear a size 14 or larger and approximately 65 million women are considered “Plus-Size.”

Here’s another small fact: the dollar volume for this market is estimated at \$47 billion, and yet, when was the last time you walked into a mainstream retail store anywhere and saw the latest and greatest fashion trends hanging in depth in a size 18+?

Today’s plus-size shopper is fashion-focused, trendy, and chic—and has the money to back it up. She wants the same fashion choices available to her as every other woman of any other size. And why shouldn’t she? More and more we are seeing full-figured Hollywood star-

”



Dalia MacPhee,
Designer,
daliamacphee.com

“When you walk into the women’s section of most major retail chains, the main section where all the latest sections hang contains a size range of 0-12.”

lets grace the red carpet with stunning designs. The question is, why is this not transferring fast enough into mainstream fashion?

When you walk into the women’s section of most major retail chains, the main section where all the latest sections

hang contains a size range of 0-12. If you are one of the 65 million women who cannot wear those sizes, most times you have to go to a different section, which more often than not offers a small grouping of frumpy, non-fashionable pieces. Now, maybe the buyers don’t have enough selection from mainstream designers in this size-range, so they must create a different section for “plus”. Or maybe the designers have made their own incorrect assumptions about the plus-size market. Or maybe plus-size women aren’t supporting mainstream stores enough because they are unhappy with the selection, therefore affecting the buyers, which in turn affect the designers, and so on and so forth. Who knows? What we do know is this is now the fastest-growing segment in the apparel industry. It’s about time for the fashion world to “size up.”

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NEWS



QUESTION & ANSWER



Jill Hutchinson
Publisher, Sonsi

Technology plays a vital role in full-figured fashion, from the ways clothes are made to the way women are purchasing pieces today. How have you seen the industry evolve over the past few years?

→ When it comes to serving the plus size woman, recent technology has allowed the industry to make significant strides. Product advances use revolutionary fabric blends to flatten her tummy, slenderize her silhouette and hug her curves in all the right places. This means she no longer has to compromise on comfort or style, for great fitting jeans and pants.

Technology has also been vital in the evolution of the online marketplace, putting the world of plus-size fashion and accessories at our fingertips. Thanks to the latest technology, later this month Sonsi and her sister brands Lane Bryant, Fashion Bug and Cathelines will launch a technology breakthrough that caters to specific body types and will solve the issue of fit for millions of curvy women.

Advice for girls with “big girls”

It can be a great problem to have, but the fact is the more “well-endowed” a woman is, the more difficult it can be for her to find the perfect bra. The necessary combination of good fit, comfort, and adequate support is definitely not a no-brainer.

The good news is that getting a bra that does the job no longer means sacrificing style for function. Thanks to technological innovations and more attention to aesthetics, today’s larger size bras are both stylish and far more serviceable than they were in years past.

Nevertheless, getting the perfect bra still takes a bit of savvy. Here are a few inside tips to help you find just the right one for you:

- Generous cup linings can add a lot of support as well as comfort. Extra support is not limited to the cups, however. Look for extra fabric around the wing area as well.
- Seek out bras that use newer technologies to achieve a good balance of support and comfort. Don’t let those gorgeous designs fool you; if you ask a knowledgeable salesperson to help you, you’ll find some twenty-first-century engineering underneath those lovely styles.
- And speaking of a knowledgeable sales staff, do take advantage of their expertise. Because your body changes over time—due to small amounts of weight loss or gain, or shifting of tissue due to exercise—it’s best to get fitted by a pro.
- If you can’t get professional fitting, the next best thing is to find a brand that works well for you and stick with it. While styles change, a given brand’s approach to structure doesn’t change so often.
- No matter what your size or shape there is a bra out there to give you the support you need while making the most of your lovely curves. Don’t be shy about getting just what you need.

EVERY HURT

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DID YOU KNOW?

- **1863:** This year, the U.S. government granted the first patent for a ‘corset substitute’ (since then the government has registered over 1,200 patents of breast supporters).
- **1907:** The year when the word “brassiere” was first reported in an American copy of Vogue.
- **1913:** Mary Phelps Jacob, dissatisfied with the idea of having to wear a heavy corset, improvises a garment from two silk handkerchiefs, cord and some ribbon. She soon applies for a patent.
- **1928:** Ida Rosenthal, a Russian immigrant, is responsible for the creation of cup sizes, and develops bras for every stage of life (puberty to maturity).

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NEWS



DON'T MISS!

A few cool fashion blogs to follow and read online!



Roxy Roknian and Caroline Shadoo
Bloggers, Broadist

PHOTO:(LEFT) HAL BERGMAN, (RIGHT) SARAH GAINER

Broadist.com

■ **What is Broadist?**

Broadist is a personal style blog written and moderated by Roxy Roknian and Caroline Shadoo. Broadist aims to promote radical self acceptance by addressing broader bodies and minds—starting with their own. These ladies are uber witty and make fashion fun. Don't forget to check out their feature 'Babes We Liked on the Internet.'



Golda Poretsky
Blogger, Body Love Wellness
PHOTO: DLO BROWN

bodylovelwellness.com/blog

■ **What is Body Love Wellness?**

Body Love Wellness is a blog designed for plus-sized women who are fed up with dieting and want support to stop obsessing about food and weight.

! **More fashion blogs on the web:**

styleisstyle.com

curveappeal.tumblr.com

curvygirlchic.com

anomalousallure.blogspot.com

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TIP

4

MAKE YOUR
BODY YOUR
BEST FRIEND

JESS WEINER
Author, media consultant
and Dove's Global Amba-
sador for Self-Esteem

PHOTO: DANA PATRICK PHOTOGRAPHY

What I learned from the bathing beauties of LA

Let's get one thing straight. I now live in Los Angeles, California; the land of fake boobs and Botox clinics.

To say that we don't have a myopic view of beauty out here is to say that puppies aren't cute. We not only adhere to the world's unrealistic beauty standards, we created them! With all the emphasis on fantasy in my city, it's hard to remember what real beauty looks like. Lucky for me, I take aqua aerobics at my local gym.

It's not your typical LA gym—because, believe me, within a stone's throw you can find a zillion workout places with spandex gymbots who spend hours on an

elliptical as though their lives depended on it. I go to the gym in a predominantly orthodox, Russian immigrant neighborhood and I wouldn't have it any other way.

Variety of shapes of sizes

I don't need to look much further than my 9 AM aqua-fit class to see real beauty in a variety of shapes and sizes. No thongs here, ladies. No ultra tan, super-svelte wannabe models. Nope, I swim with Greta (age 80), Molly (age 49), and Lillian (age 78). When I first joined the class, I must admit, I felt like I was sitting in on one of my grandma's board game get-togethers. I thought I wouldn't be challenged physically and that I'd

have nothing to relate to with my classmates.

Yet as we got going with our frog leaps and underwater chest presses, I soon realized aqua aerobics isn't for wimps—it's a great workout without the intense pressure of a machine or free weight. I was impressed when Greta out ran me in our freestyle lane race we do to warm up. Soon I realized that I had a lot to learn from these ladies - not just about swimming but about being in touch with your body.

When I am in the pool, I feel free. There are no mirrors to look at and this somehow gets me more in touch with what my body is actually doing, versus what it

looks like doing it. I love the fact that I am 3 miles away from Beverly Hills and you wouldn't know it by the hearty one pieces, non-chemical peeled skin, and REAL women surrounding me. I love that somewhere women are fretting about eating too many carbs and these women are worried about not getting water in their bathing caps.

I love that this is how I am choosing to start my day. I can focus on my health and happiness and not be overly concerned with being "perfect."

JESS WEINER

editorial@mediaplanet.com



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**Question 1:**

How have you seen the industry change over the last few years? Where do you see the industry headed?

There is an absolute, undeniable curvy revolution happening at this very moment. This is such an exciting time for our industry—the mounting occurrences of plus-size coverage in our media, magazines, blogs, runway shows, and TV is amazing! Over the next ten years, expect a huge expansion in aesthetic offerings and price-points. With half of all women considered plus-size, the expansion has only just begun.

The industry has responded to the consumer demand for more contour bras to provide enhanced smoothing under knits like t-shirts. There has also been growth in technology that allows fabric to do the functional work that previously was achieved by stitching. Some brands include an internal cup lining that is both soft and powerful for a great shape.

Today's curvy woman is aware of the trends and she is confident in wearing items that flatter her figure and make her feel fabulous! This October, Ashley Stewart celebrates 20 years of fashion. The days when the industry thought curvy women wanted to cover up in shapeless clothes are gone. It is the impact these curvy and confident women are having on Ashley Stewart that is going to continue reshaping this industry

Question 2:

Which so-called “plus size fashion rules”, if any, does your company abide by?

There are no definitive right or wrong styling rules when dressing a plus-size body. We have found throughout years of servicing the plus-customer that she likes what every woman like—style, comfort and versatile pieces. We recognize our social responsibility to ensure that women receive positive body images in media portrayal and are dedicated to making sure that our advertisements and campaigns use size 14+ models.

There are very few rules for the plus-sized consumer now that the industry has stepped up and addressed both her fashion and functional needs. She can get the great shape and support she wants from new bras without sacrificing aesthetics. A great example is an underwire and a minimizer with stitch-free wings which smooth her sides and back for a flawless look.

We don't believe in “plus size,” nor do we believe in rules! It's all about providing fashion that flatters every full-figured woman's curves. We make sure to introduce new fashion items frequently into our stores, allowing our customers to stay on top of the hottest trends. For our shopper it's all about putting together “looks” that work for her life, enabling her to express her own individual style.

Question 3:

If you could tell a frustrated plus-size shopper one thing, what would it be?

Get ready for change, your voices are being heard—and Kmart will make sure that you Love Your Style! With 50 percent of the US females being plus-size and less than 1/3 of retailers offering plus apparel, frustrations are understandable. We join you in this curvy revolution and are committed to creating a brand that fulfills your desire for updated apparel and shows the world the beauty of plus-size women.

I would recommend that they let an expert fitter help with finding both the right size and the right bras for her needs. With so many options available, she does need to have a wardrobe full of bras. A fitter will also help ensure that she is wearing the correct size, which is important in getting the support and comfort that she deserves. Olga sponsors many events and also provides fashion tips on their website!

It's going to get better—and you have a voice in making that happen. In the meantime, though, there are some great sources of fashion inspiration out there including online curvy fashion publications, trend savvy bloggers and other style leaders. Dare to experiment and don't be afraid to flaunt those gorgeous curves!



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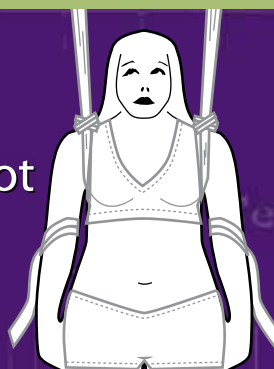
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Jay Dunn
CMO, BareNecessities.com



Debbie Martin
Senior VP of Design and
Design Development,
Lane Bryant



Dawn Robertson
CEO, Avenue



Question 1:
How have you seen the industry change over the last few years? Where do you see the industry headed?

The average American woman is now a size 14, and the media landscape and fashion designers are finally beginning to warm to this trend. For example, plus-size women have so many more bra options now than ever before. A number of styles now provide terrific comfort and support in extended sizes, and are as attractive and sexy as anything available in so-called average sizes.

With more than 53 percent of American women wearing size 14 or above, full-figured fashion labels are no longer taboo with consumers and media. Lane Bryant unveiled two campaigns that encourage curvy women to flaunt their assets—our racy commercial for Cacique's red bra, which led to more than 4.3 million YouTube hits, and the new "Technology Just Got Sexy" ads heralding the launch of our revolutionary "Tighter Tummy Technology" (T3) pants.

The plus size market has seen growth in the last few years but is still decidedly under-penetrated. Many stores are starting to carry plus-size mass market and designer's fashions; however value-conscious customers are not willing to trade style for a great price. Finding affordable and stylish clothes is a top fashion priority. The customer is vocal about what she wants, and where she wants to shop.

Question 2:
Which so-called "plus size fashion rules", if any, does your company abide by?

When we decide to carry a particular bra, we always make sure to stock the entire size-range in which that bra is offered. Whether a customer is looking for an everyday bra, sports bra, strapless bra or something sexy, we want to make sure we can satisfy any wardrobe need—in any size. Comfort is not a size. Sexy is not a size.

Fashion is about confidence and looking good, so there really shouldn't be any "rules". Our philosophy is that fashion is not a size. It's our obligation to design merchandise reflecting current fashion trends, make clothes that are flattering and comfortable, and empower consumers with outfits that make them feel sexy. We encourage our customers to be unique and creative and above all else, choose outfits that make them feel confident.

We are constantly challenging ourselves to provide a positive shopping experience with affordable fashion, trend-right product for real-size women with a youthful attitude. In developing our new product launches, we strive to take a collaborative approach, such as a partnership between our customer test focus groups, design, technical teams and merchandising teams, to examine the market for the right fit and design.

Question 3:
If you could tell a frustrated plus-size shopper one thing, what would it be?

For intimate apparel, take the time to learn your true size—it will be worth the time and the investment. There is absolutely no need any more to sacrifice style, comfort or sex appeal. Then come to bare necessities.com, and we can introduce you to an amazing assortment of bras in your size, from the best manufacturers in the world.

A top frustration for curvy female shoppers is that stores tend to run out of sizes quickly. Lane Bryant offers sizes they need in the latest styles. We dress customers from head to toe—offering everything from intimates to career clothing to jewelry. We also sell shoes for those looking for extended sizes and widths, which can be tough to find at other retail stores.

I would love to tell our customers to come in and see our newly-designed stores, where she can express her individual style and find affordable, modern fashions that fit her body and her lifestyle.

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NEWS



TIPS



Carolyn Wang,
Senior
Merchandising
Director,
Ming Wang

Dressing for your body type

When dressing for your body type, remember: it's not about what you can't wear, it's all about what you can. Follow these quick tips to flatter your figure regardless of your size.

■ **Take on trends:** Don't hesitate to embrace the latest style, just alter to compliment your shape. Rather than wearing an animal print dress, wear a slimming black tank with an animal print jacket.

■ **Perfect proportions:** Wear pieces that compliment your height. Drop your hands to your side, wherever your wrist hits is the most flattering length for a jacket.

■ **Bank on black:** Black staples are vital and can transform your figure. For pear shape, choose a black trouser pant that hugs the right amount of curves, and pair with a black tank to create an interrupted line from top to bottom.

■ **Flaunt what's flattering:** Accentuate your favorite feature. If you have nice legs, wear fitted bottoms. If you have beautiful eyes, play with color near your face.

CARYOLYN WANG

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Question: How can we shine a brighter light onto full-figured fashion?

Answer: Incorporate plus-size designs into the mainstream fashion industry.

Time for fashion to "figure" it out

Time for the fashion world to "figure" it out—the path to prosperity has major curves.

But retail aside, what are a few things that must happen to catapult this segment of the industry into the limelight, where they can exist on an even-playing field? The plus-sized industry needs its own in-print, glossy magazine. It's a complete myth that the market isn't there! Don't you think 63 million women in America deserve their own magazine, too?

Something else that is truly missing is a dedicated or inclusive runway event that occurs during Fashion Week in New York City. Brands and event companies have made great strides toward the fashion week goal: One Stop Plus featured their best catalogue brands, off-site at Lincoln Center during Fashion Week, as did Devoe Signature Events in NYC and Los Angeles for Full-Figured Fashion Week the past three years, with sponsors of moderately-priced clothing showing everyday and dressier looks. But nothing with high-end, designer names has graced the runway under

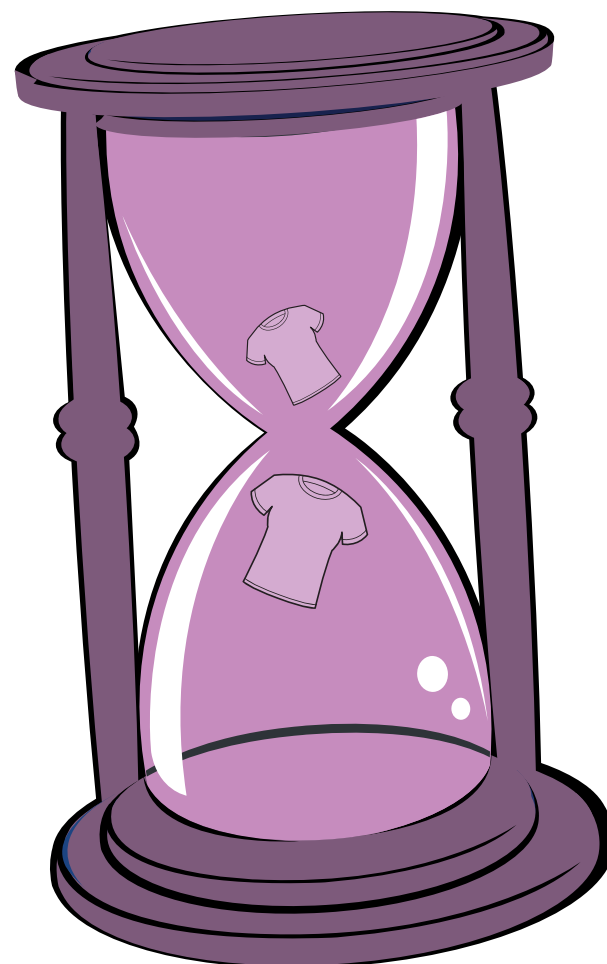
the umbrella during prime time Mercedes Benz Fashion Week. We either need to have our own catwalk couture show of high-end designers, during Fashion Week in New York, or be on the same catwalk as the straight-size models whose designers have size 2 through 24 in their divisions. In short, there is no major runway show featuring high-end, mainstream clothing for the full-figured woman.

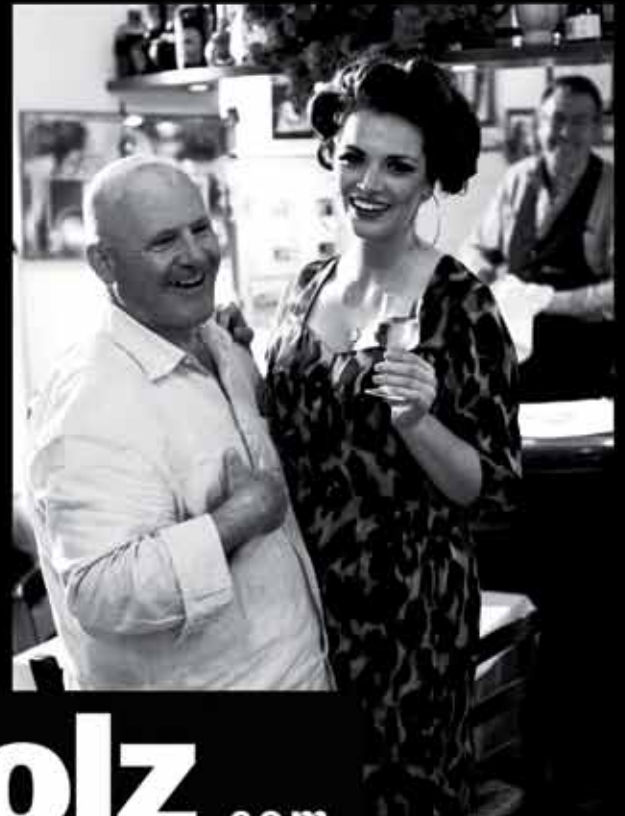
But, it's just a matter of time. As more of these plus models show off their broad international appeal, scoring gorgeous Italian and Australian Vogue covers, top designers are taking notice. The day when a full-figured woman becomes a fashion icon in her own right is around the corner.

If I was the mainstream fashion industry I wouldn't want to repeat the hard lesson learned by the publishing industry. Failure to anticipate, innovate and recognize the demands of the consumer means coming late to the game and you'll be playing catch-up in the face of a plus-size explosion.

CATHERINE SCHULLER

editorial@mediaplanet.com





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INSIGHT



DON'T MISS!



Nikeya N. Young,
Plus-Size Fashion Blogger

PHOTO: VICTORIA SPRUNG; MUA: KRISTYN J

Midwest plus-size fashion innovators

When you think of popular fashion markets in the United States, New York or Los Angeles likely come to mind. However, there is a full-figured style revolution brewing between the coasts. In addition to mainstream plus-size retailers, there is a plethora of innovative full-figured designers and boutiques in the Midwest. Chicago Runway director Ryan M. Beshel feels that many underestimate the talent that is coming out of this region, giving models and designers that hail from here the opportunity to stand out in a crowd. The Midwest curvy woman wants to feel comfortable and look fabulous with an effortless ease. Shavonne Dorsey, a participant in the Fashion Incubator program in Chicago, has high hopes for affecting change in the full-figured fashion industry. "I would love to influence the industry by not having women focus so much on their size, but instead focus on dressing themselves to look beautiful". With its own share of plus fashion weeks and expos, there will be plenty of opportunities for people to come and see all of the excitement that the Midwestern Full-Figured Fashion scene has to offer.

NIKEYA N. YOUNG

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Question: What is one area that needs attention in the full-figured fashion world?

Answer: More pieces for the curvy, professional woman.

TIP

4

DRESS FOR
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The forgotten woman: Renew past trends

An icon of plus size fashion in the 1980's and 90's was a lovely store called "The Forgotten Woman." The chain boasted nearly 30 stores nationwide in its heyday. After quick expansion and limited resources, the Forgotten Woman was forced to close its doors in 1999. This store was a beacon in the plus size fashion world. Catering to professional plus size women, they were one of the first elegant boutique chains to offer stylish clothing for work

and leisure.

In the past 10 years, this woman has been forgotten once again. The plus-size fashion world is mimicking the straight size fashion world and concentrating on the young. These "fashionistas" are proud and screaming to the world that they can be just as body conscious and outrageous as their size 2 friends. More power to them. Unfortunately, the woman over 35, working professionally and with the dollars to spend is not in the mix. She wants to be fashionable and professional. This is not too much to ask.

Trends come and go

Having spent nearly 20 years in the plus size clothing industry, I have watched many trends come and go. The first plus-size revolution began in the early 1990's. Big name designers like Dana Buchman, Ellen Tracy and Donna Karan were in the lead as plus size fashion became big news. In 2000, Plus-Size Supermodel, Emme,



Danielle Malconian
CEO, Vikki VI / Plus By Design



"Having spent nearly 20 years in the plus size clothing industry, I have watched many trends come and go."

launched a beautiful soft dressing career line. Although we always found ourselves in the back corner of the store, our customers were very happy to have a decent selection of fashion to choose from and helpful sales people to assist them. Over the last ten years, these beautiful plus size designer collections have become a thing of the past. They have since been replaced with loads of tops and bottoms. Professional, fashionable plus size clothing has become very hard to find.

The recent recognition and resurgence of media and focus on plus-size women is very exciting. My goal is to include the professional woman in this revolution. She needs to be able to be able to purchase classy, fashionable and well-made styles to make her feel beautiful and confident. It's not about size. It's not about age. It's about image.

DANIELLE MALCONIAN

editorial@mediaplanet.com

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INSIGHT



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Catherine Schuller
Image and Style Director, Divabetic

Faux Pas or Fantasy?

The reason Photoshop is so prevalent in the media is all because of marketing. Making things look better makes the user think that they will actually be better people by simply wearing or using the product. The media is subliminally saying that the world should and will be perfect if you buy our product, wear our clothes, use our makeup, etc. No advertiser wants to present an item to be sold only to have it upstaged by a dimple of cellulite, a fleshy fold or a pimple or blemish. That detracts from the 'perfect' world the so carefully crafted in boardrooms prior to the product being sold on the page. We are humans, not ideals. How about putting some sort of consumer warning or notice at the bottom like they do on cigarette ads ... something that reminds us that the images have been modified from the original version?

CATHERINE SCHULLER
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Question: What can you do to create a sleek line without following crazy diet fads?

Answer: Invest in a great piece of shapewear.

Intimate apparel: Not your grandma's girdle anymore

There have been great strides in intimate apparel in recent years. Grandma's girdle has evolved into a revolution of sleek, comfortable shapewear with solutions to many fashion and figure dilemmas.

Knitted, seamless styles are more comfortable and breathable than cut-and-sew styles, especially ones with higher spandex content (25 percent is good). You'll find seamless shapewear cannot be detected under all your fashion choices, especially light-colored or fine gauge fabrics. There are styles to accent outfits or body types and styles for every season; best-kept secrets for looking younger and more toned!

The bodysuit is a good staple foundation garment. When shopping for a bodysuit, make sure it stretches in all directions for comfort like a second skin. High-waist shapers are popular if you want to wear your own bra or if a full bodysuit

seems confining or too pricey. When selecting a high-waist shaper, be sure it comes all the way up, tucking underneath your bra to prevent rolling.

A newer trend, the open-front style, allows you to wear the bra of your choice; minimizer, push-up, demi-cup or any other bra for the look you prefer. Open-front styles eliminate unflattering mashing of the bustline, which happens with many slimming camisoles. Some open-front styles have another great feature—a full back to eliminate lumps above or below bra strap.

Bodysuits, high-waist shapers and open-front styles provide a firmer looking midriff and eliminate "back fat." Combined with a great-fitting bra, you'll appear thinner and more youthful.

A deal-breaker with shapewear can be difficulty in using the bathroom, so look for styles without Velcro or snaps which can cause challenges and pain. A gusset with well-



Connie Elder
Creator, Lipo in a Box shapewear, Go2 Bras and Underology skin care



"There are styles to accent outfits or body types and styles for every season; best-kept secrets for looking younger and more toned!"



enforced seams and a large opening is best.

Capri or mid-thigh shapers carry your smooth appearance down the leg. To avoid unsightly bulging at the end, choose shapewear with a smooth transition at the mid thigh or stick with the Capri length.

Lingerie shopping can be intimidating. Boutiques specializing in intimate apparel have qualified consultants to assist with fitting. Online and TV shopping (channels like QVC or HSN from the privacy of home) are a great choice, providing product information and non-biased customer reviews. These outlets often have customer service available to share product specifications. A shapewear wardrobe ensures dressing with comfort, control and confidence every day. Clothes will drape better on your body. It's like enjoying a nip and tuck without the scars!

CONNIE ELDER
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