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Lectra Holds its First Education Congress

Lectra hosted its "Privilege" partners from some of the world's most reputed fashion schools & universities in the U.S., China, France, Italy, and Switzerland in the heart of its strategic facilities

Paris, July 17, 2008 – Lectra, the world's leading provider of integrated technology solutions for the fashion industry, held its first Education Congress at the end of June dedicated to its "Privilege" partners. Deans, directors, and teachers from the world's most reputed international Fashion Schools and universities came to Bordeaux, France, for two days of very intensive seminars.

The Lectra Education Congress: a highly stimulating environment

The Education Congress had, as main objectives, to network all participants to allow them and Lectra specialists to share their experience and expertise and to build a think tank geared toward the specific needs of fashion schools and universities. This think tank focused on different ways of providing students with a solid background, preparing them for their professional futures.

"This congress was a great opportunity to demonstrate the importance we place on education," said Véronique Zoccoletto, Chief Human Capital Officer and Education Program Director at Lectra. *"But more than that, Lectra has provided a one-of-a-kind, close-knit environment for enriching exchanges among professors, deans, and directors from our partners, as well as with professionals from well-known fashion companies."*

Design and development of fashion accessories: An increasing demand for new talents

Lectra's solutions and education experts prepared a complete and dedicated program to address the concerns of fashion schools and universities which need to prepare their students for a professional environment undergoing full-scale evolution.

An entire session was dedicated to accessories that are becoming more and more important in well-known fashion brand strategy and as such must be integrated into fashion school curricula. Today, most of the schools want to offer their students the opportunity to develop particular skills in footwear, handbag and other accessories creation and development.

To better understand trends in the accessories market, Nicolas Dumontier, Project Manager for leather goods at Louis Vuitton, presented the main stakes faced by the industry.

Lectra experts explained, through live demonstrations and concrete customers' examples, how Lectra's 2D and 3D dedicated solutions could help overcome these challenges in this specific market and in the entire fashion sector in general.

Mastery of technology solutions, a "must" for tomorrow's professionals

"All our students need to know Lectra's solutions so they can be prepared for their future careers. Mastering CAD/CAM technology is a "must" for our students if they want to find good jobs in the fashion industry," precise Jun Li, Professor at Donghua University in Shanghai (China).

During one of the presentations, the Human Resources Development Manager at a leading fashion group encouraged education professionals to orient their students not only towards design but to pattern-making as well. Candidates with a mastery of pattern-making and grading as well as of the field-related technologies are in short supply, and thus very difficult to find, not only in Europe but also in the rest of the world, she said.

To address key concerns of the fashion schools and universities in terms of teaching methods and of students' involvement in concrete projects, the Lectra Education Congress also hosted two value-added testimonials: a new e-learning teaching method and the "mini-company" ESIV project. These presentations were very exciting for all schools, showing their willingness to share their experience with their counterparts.

E-learning: a promising new teaching method

Luciana Scrutchen & James Mendolia, who have experience of the e-learning teaching method, explained the way e-learning is used at Parson's The New School for Design (United States) and showed why it should be considered a major teaching tool in the coming years in academics as well as in professional training courses.

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ESIV mini-company project: a real-world business experience for the students

Catherine Prévôt, Executive Director, Ecole Supérieure des Industries du Vêtement — ESIV (France), presented the ESIV's "mini company" project and demonstrated that it was possible to teach through practical educational methods. She explained how the school offers students the chance to create a "mini company," covering all key "real-life" experiences and functions, such as the creation of a 300-piece collection. Many of the collection development steps used Lectra solutions: Kaledo for creation, Modaris for pattern-making, Diamino for marker-making, and Gallery for collaborative product development management.

Looking forward to meeting again next year

The Lectra Education Congress offered its participants in-depth discussions with famous Lectra customers, market leaders and Lectra specialists, and the opportunity to share precious experience and initiatives.

It also demonstrated that Lectra was able to build a value-added network between fashion schools and universities and the industry, and established the value of the new Lectra Education Program in supporting future fashion professionals.

"Having new technologies is how we can stay ahead of the game. This congress was a good opportunity to evaluate that. It was also a great opportunity to unite the schools in the industry. It's always good to interact with other schools to see what they're doing and what you're doing. You can really learn a lot from each other," says Mario Federici, FIT, Chairperson & Professor, Production Management Department.

"This event was really rewarding as it allowed us to exchange skills, teaching content, and projects, all of which is very important for us," explained Catherine Prévôt, Executive Director ESIV.

Lectra Education Program

Launched in September 2007 as a major component of the new Lectra education program, the "Privilege" program comprises a personalized approach focused on the development of common projects, such as conferences, internships, support for students, shared information and data related to best industrial practices, etc., and is based on a strong long-term, mutual commitment.

For years, Lectra has supported education by offering the use of its technologies and expertise. As an industry leader, Lectra is responsible for contributing to the development and preparation of students for life-long careers. To date, over 660 schools and universities worldwide have integrated Lectra solutions into their curricula.

About Lectra

Lectra is the world's leading provider of integrated technology solutions for the fashion industry (apparel, accessories, and footwear). Lectra offers a wide range of software, automated cutting systems, and high value-added services covering the entire value chain, from design through manufacturing to retailing. Lectra Fashion PLM (Product Lifecycle Management), specifically designed for fashion companies, integrates process optimization and collections life cycle management. In close association with the fashion industry, Lectra develops solutions based on several decades of shared experience.

Lectra serves 20,000 customers in more than 100 countries with 1,550 employees and \$297 million in 2007 revenues. The company is listed on Euronext Paris.

For more information, please visit www.lectra.com