

TRANSWORLD **business**

THE LEADER IN BOARDSPORTS NEWS AND INFORMATION

Not Your Typical Cliché

Over the past ten years, Cliché has managed to make a name for itself in the U.S. market, firing off an entire trend around "the whole European thing."

Text and photos by Seb Carayol

Many small companies get their start in someone's garage. It's a testament to humble beginnings, and an ever-watchful eye on overspending. In Cliché's case, though, the garage was the upgrade.

The new office—a proper, two-level, 5,400-square-foot former car-repair garage houses a warehouse, offices, and of course a near perfect mini-ramp. "I heard those are expensive now," says Jérémie Daclin, who founded Cliché in 1997, as he points to an antique 50s gas pump still standing in what is now dubbed "the chilling room." There's nothing flashy about the company headquarters, set in a calm Lyon, France suburb. The only way to distinguish Cliché's "siège social" from the street is its yellow portal adorned with Cliché's "Euro" logo. In a matter of ten years, Daclin's

(continued on page 32)



Cliche's Andrew Brophy, popping out of an international bluntslide to fakie.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



CUSTODY BATTLE

The story behind La Jolla Group's licensing agreement with Rusty. (Page 04)



A BRAVE NEW WORLD

i.e. Distribution plans to return World Industries to the core. (Page 04)



COMING TO AMERICA

Bataleon Snowboards sets up shop at a new U.S. headquarters. (Page 14)

twsbiz.com
TRANSWORLD BUSINESS online

PacSun's New CEO Goes On Record

An exclusive *TransWorld Business* interview with Sally Frame Kasaks.

By Joshua Hunter

Last October, after merchandising missteps and an ill-timed fall-inventory transition created rough waters for Pacific Sunwear, then CEO Seth Johnson abandoned ship. Analysts were quick to conjecture that the 1,200-store, mall-based retail chain faced serious challenges. With no captain at the helm, PacSun board member and former Abercrombie & Fitch CEO Sally Frame Kasaks was named interim chief executive of the company. As the board searched for someone to fill Johnson's position in the wake of decreasing same-store sales, Kasaks manned the bridge and immediately began to batten down the corporate hatches. After eight months spent navigating turbulent seas, Kasaks became the company's permanent captain.

TransWorld Business caught up with Kasaks to hear how she plans to steer the store off into the sunset. Although she acknowledges that challenges are dead ahead, she's optimistic about the new opportunity.

TransWorld Business: When you were brought in as the interim CEO after Seth Johnson resigned, what were your first priorities?

Kasaks: Well, there were a couple things. When I did step in as interim CEO, we—the team here, the board and I—needed to take action on some immediate issues, which we did. We took business action, including write off of inventory, and then shutting down 74

(continued on page 24)



PacSun's CEO Sally Frame Kasaks.

Women's 2008 Apparel and Swimwear Preview

A sneak peek at the latest offerings from the industry's leading women's apparel and swimwear brands. (Page 40)



Beyond Boards

Surftech launches full line of surf accessories.

When Randy French started experimenting with epoxy surfboard construction in 1989, there was no way he could've known what his Santa Cruz, California-based company, Surftech, was to become. Now nearly two decades after its inception, Surftech is bringing a full range of surf accessories to market.

But why would a surfboard brand expand into accessories? French says there's room for improvement in the marketplace for many of the accessories surfers use on a daily basis. "Our mission as a company is to innovate and engineer superior products and technology that currently don't exist on the market," French explains. "Surftech isn't interested

in just creating 'me too' products. We only take on products that we feel confident could use improvements."

Surftech will be introducing leashes, traction pads, and board bags during this September's trade-show season in hopes of showing retailers new, innovative products. "It's about innovation and function," says French. "Meeting the needs of surfers is the heart of creating products that perform better."



A series of traction pads with built-in inserts to attach straps are part of Surftech's new accessory line.

Marketing Director Sander Nauenberg says the improvements made in the products are the direct result of feedback from athletes and board builders. "With leashes we focused on improving the attachment between the leash and board as well as developing a better leg cuff," he explains. "On our thin, versatile day bags we offer a range of bags featuring super light, durable, and solar-resistant materials, unique closure systems, and

specialized ventilation. Our heartier travel bags include features such as patented crush zones, side pouches, and impact-resistant substrates."

Nauenberg says that Surftech's traction pad offering will include an "Armor" line, which features a built-in substrate layer designed to protect the tail deck and rail from failing. Surftech says this feature will increase the lifespan of boards ridden by powerful surfers. Additionally, the company has designed a series of pads with built-in inserts to attach straps.

According to Nauenberg, customer demand is already in place for the new line of products, and Surftech plans on leveraging

its existing retail relationships to gain distribution. "One of the biggest reasons we decided to jump into accessories was the numerous retailers who were asking us to," says Nauenberg. "We have proven ourselves numerous times as a company they trust to provide great products and support them on the floor. These pre-existing relationships are essential aspects to making our accessory launch a success."

—Joshua Hunter