

# The clothing, footwear and textile trade's one-stop shop

 By Lauren Hartzenberg

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The [ATF Trade Exhibition](#) and co-located China Premium Tex expo, which both kick off today in Cape Town, provides local and international players in the apparel, footwear and textile trade with a space to connect, source and form lasting business relationships.



The main objective of the free event, according to organisers Leaders in Trade Exhibitions (LTE), is to offer foreign manufacturers as well as local importers and service providers in these industries with an opportunity to make contact with Southern African buyers from chain stores, independent retailers, mini chains, boutiques, wholesalers, agents as well as factory/production managers and other important industry decision makers. The China Premium Tex expo alone will feature more than 100 manufacturers from China who will be displaying a vast array of products exclusively to southern African buyers.

This year, the event organisers also welcome Trend Forward owner Dave Nemeth, Nicola Cooper from Nicola Cooper & Associates and Choppies Superstores independent retail consultant Brett Kaplan, who will each be presenting a talk focused on wising attendees up to the trends shaping their industries and preparing them for the future.

In the business of organising trade shows for over 25 years, this is LTE's last year organising the ATF expo. The company [announced in September](#) that it's handing over the reins of both the ATF and Source Africa events to the South African subsidiary of global trade fair company Messe Frankfurt, a move which is expected to help grow the shows on an international scale.

Here, LTE member Deidre Harte shares what she's enjoyed most about organising the trade fair over the years and weighs in on the importance of events like the ATF Trade Expo for the greater apparel, textile and retail sector.

## **Who should attend the ATF Trade Exhibition?**

The ATF Trade Exhibition is aimed at buyers from chain stores, independent retailers, mini-chains, production and factory managers from clothing, footwear and textile manufacturers as well as importers, distributors, wholesalers looking for new agency and distribution opportunities.



### ▣ ***What are the highlights of the year's event?***

This year there will be very informative business presentations taking place on each show day aimed specifically at the changing Apparel and Retail Landscape and the Future of Retail in South Africa. We also have a first-time exhibitor from Belarus and Estonia participating with beautiful linen products. The China Premium Tex will host over 100 manufacturers who will be displaying quality products from China.

### ▣ ***How has the exhibition grown since inception?***

Over the years we have managed to secure exhibitors from many countries with an extensive range of products on display. Now that Messe Frankfurt will be taking over the shows from 2018, we believe they will take it to the next level and grow the events to truly international standards.



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### ▣ ***Why do you believe events of this nature are important for the apparel, textile and retail sector?***

The event offers a one-stop shop for sourcing executives to come view a vast array of products under one roof. These buyers are very busy and as they have limited time, it makes it easier to see what is available on the international market in one outing.

### ▣ ***Considering that Messe Frankfurt will be organising the event from 2018, what has been your highlight handling the ATF and Source Africa events as an LTE member?***

We have always been passionate about exhibitions. By focusing on organising shows for the clothing, textile and footwear industries here in South Africa, we have created a niche for ourselves and to see actual business materialise between buyers and manufacturers gives you great satisfaction. We have also made some exceptional friends with loyal local and international supporters in these industries.

*The ATF Trade Exhibition and co-located China Premium Tex is running from 21 to 23 November 2017 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre. For more information, visit the [dedicated event website](#).*

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