

Brazilian Clothing Maker for Girls Gets an Overseas Try Out

Contributed by Geovana Pagel
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A hit among girls and adolescents from Brazil, clothing and accessories by brand Turma da Mel, based in the southeastern Brazilian state of Minas Gerais, are going to be sold by a multi-brand store in Australia. The company's finance director, Pedro Paulo Cavalher, explains that negotiations are at an advanced stage, and the contract should be signed by late 2008.

This will not be brand's first incursion into foreign territory. "Two years ago, we began exporting to Portugal, but rising domestic demand led us to focus our attention mostly on national consumers," says Cavalher.

Last year, the brand opened two stores in Ipanema, Rio de Janeiro, where it sells wholesale and retail. Expansion plans include three other stores owned by the brand, in the region ranging from Barra da Tijuca to the south of Rio, as well as new stores in the cities of Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais state; Vitória, Espírito Santo and Recife, Pernambuco.

The increase in number of orders and customers demanded investment of 6 million reais (US\$ 3.7 million) in a factory of Grupo Veste Sonhos, to which the brand belongs, in the city of Muriaé, plus another 400,000 reais (US\$ 249.3 million) for expanding production capacity from 110,000 to 140,000 items per month.

According to the director, the investment resulted in the construction of the company's new industrial headquarters, with an area of nearly 4,000 square meters (43.056 square feet), and the purchase of various equipments and machinery featuring the most advanced technologies available in the world for the clothing segment.

Founded in 1994, the group consolidated itself as a leading reference in the fashion hub of the "Zona da Mata" region, in southeast Minas Gerais. Active in five different segments and offering a mix of more than 500 items, the Veste Sonhos group currently owns three companies and three exclusive stores, the main brand being Turma da Mel, which was established in 2002, and eventually absorbed other brands.

Presently, the group is present in every state of Brazil, supplies more than 1,500 municipalities, and has a portfolio of over 4,000 multi-brand customers. The brand Turma da Mel has seven franchises, in the states of Minas Gerais (Southeast), Rio de Janeiro (Southeast) and Bahia (Northeast), and is preparing the launch of its first licensed products soon.

Service

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