

## Rising Fashion Designers Focus on U.S. Cotton in Thailand



The COTTON USA Fashion Design Challenge in Thailand in 2008 proved itself as an increasingly powerful PR tool for U.S. cotton, generating \$1.8 million in earned advertising value (EAV) while heightening consumer awareness of the fashionable side of cotton and COTTON USA. This third annual design competition for fashion students advocated young designers to support the Thai textile and garment industries and U.S. cotton.

Judges selected Sirius Tantiyapong (nicknamed “Yod-Yoko”), a student at Silpakorn University, as the winner of the COTTON USA Design Challenge for his collection “Dimension of Picasso.” The winning designer traveled to New York Fashion Week, and the trip was broadcast on Thai television.

Yod-Yoko competed with 300 up-and-coming Thai designers over the course of the competition. Judges whittled the group down to five finalists, who had six weeks to complete their collections for the final round during which they defended their work to an honorary panel of 10 fashion industry leaders at a COTTON USA fashion show.

Following his COTTON USA win, Yod-Yoko won the award for “Best Design for Shirting Fabrics” at Supima’s second

annual design competition in January 2009. Yod-Yoko created two eveningwear looks with 10 yards of Supima fabric. He worked directly with Thai Textile Industry, as well as a COTTON USA and Supima licensee, to develop 200 count/two ply Supima fabrics especially for the show. Yod-Yoko’s inspiration was “Rhythm of Fingerprint Line” in which he used his own fingerprint in an art form to provide unique fabric lines and textures.

Thanks to his U.S. cotton design competition wins, Yod-Yoko appeared on the front pages of Thai daily newspapers, on a magazine cover with a 14-page fashion spread, and on live television.

The COTTON USA Design Challenge was awarded “Campaign Publicity” finalist for the Thailand’s Adman Award in 2006 and accumulated over \$1.7 million in earned advertising value (EAV) for competitions in 2006 and 2007.

The 2008 competition brought in \$1.8 million in EAV, and press coverage of Yod-Yoko’s win in Supima’s design competition increased COTTON USA’s EAV to \$2.7 million. CCI earned an advertising value return of \$100 on every dollar invested of U.S. Department of Agriculture Market Access Program (MAP) funding.

### COTTON USA TAKES THE CATWALK

Up-and-coming designers showed off their U.S. cotton fashions at the COTTON USA Design Challenge in Thailand.

