



# UL RESPONSIBLE SOURCING

## *"An Interview with Rachel Lincoln, prAna Living's Design Innovation Manager"*



UL Consumer and Retail Services (CRS) Responsible Sourcing team would like to thank speakers and guests joining us for UL's 12th Responsible Sourcing summit in Los Angeles on March 1-2, 2017. Speakers from the Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety, Ropes & Gray LLP, Business for Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI), ICTI CARE, Richline Group, prAna, Textile Exchange, Landesa, BJ's Wholesale Group, Columbia Sportswear, MillerCoors, HP, Eileen Fisher, and the International Labor Affairs Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor gave insights in panels discussing "The Unintended Costs of Regional Responsible Sourcing Issues", "Success Stories – Positive Impacts from Responsible Sourcing Initiatives", "Product Traceability – Approaches That Can Be Applied from Agriculture to Jewelry", "Supply Chain Risk Segmentation – Where to Focus Your Energy" and "How Repair, Reuse, and Recycle Programs Can Enrich Responsible Sourcing Efforts".

If you were unable to join us for this event, UL shares a series of "An Interview With..." conversations with some of our guest speakers. This is our second blog from the event.

### **"An Interview with Rachel Lincoln, prAna Living's Design Innovation Manager"**

UL Responsible Sourcing's Jude Mackay spoke with prAna Living's Rachel Lincoln to discuss the challenge of post-consumer waste in the responsible apparel sector. Rachel is Design Innovation Manager at prAna Living. She has been an instrumental contributor to the company's four year consecutive double digit growth and is driven by innovative material technologies, closed loop processes and promotion of a work, life balance through the use of essential oils. She hails from California and is currently raising two little girls to be strong, independent women.

**Jude Mackay:** Rachel, we were introduced to one another when planning our "Repair, Re-Use, Recycle: Exploring Innovative Ways To Address End-Of-Life Concerns..." segment for UL's annual Responsible Sourcing Summit. We heard the U.S. Department of Labor's International Labor Affairs Bureau speak about the impacts of waste in the international landfill community, and HP speak about their 25-year program in recycling. Why is this topic so important to you at prAna?

**Rachel Lincoln:** "25% of all landfill products are textiles and 90% of garments end up in landfills. The EPA estimates that Americans discard 14 million tons of textiles waste a year, 68lbs of textiles waste per year per person. At prAna, we are mindful and conscious of the part we play in those statistics and how we can take ownership for the product we produce and promote a circular economy. We're yogis, climbers and world travelers: we see design as a way of life, and a platform for positive change. We design with social and environmental responsibility in mind, always. We started our waste journey by working on our footprint with polybags, and have prevented 10 million plus tons of plastic from ending in landfills since 2011, so now 79% of prAna styles are shipped without a polybag. We hold ourselves accountable for our overall impact, and place a huge importance in avoiding waste. Our next focus is exploring end-of-life options for our garments, emphasizing the construction of a circular apparel model." Using our business as a platform for change.



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**Jude Mackay:** Rachel, we spoke with HP's Annukka Dickens from HP, whose partnerships in Haiti meant that they are able to create innovative inclusive supply chain solutions. With prAna, am I right in seeing that also Partnerships and Innovation are also significant themes of your program?

**Rachel Lincoln:** Partnerships and Innovation are the key themes and focus of our program here at prAna. We don't have a dedicated innovation team, but we do have a small but nimble, volunteer based working group that is driven by passion for change. We develop strong relationships with external partners as an opportunity to implement their innovations within our product line. Whether we partner externally or internally we are always driven by using prAna as the business platform for positive change.

**Jude Mackay:** Cutting down in packaging is a great initiative, and a natural step for a smaller brand to take. How does a small brand like prAna start out with innovative end-of-life solutions, when perhaps you lack the scale that a large brand like HP has?

**Rachel Lincoln:** It starts with people. At prAna, we are inspired by each other's motivation to make a difference socially & environmentally in our communities and overseas and that inherent intention fuels innovation around our industry. Moving forward, we are looking to build off of that foundation by creating strategies that focus on areas where we have the most purchasing power and can impact and create massive smalls.

**Jude Mackay:** What are you hoping to achieve long-term?

**Rachel Lincoln:** "Asides from diverting from the landfill, we currently have little data on our apparel that needs repair. We will receive our first data download from our partners at The Renewal Workshop in April 2017. By analyzing what's gone wrong with apparel performance, we can use this data to innovate at the design stage to build better product and expand product lifespan. From the materials side, We know it's easy to take strides in natural product recycling, but we are hoping to also work on synthetics and synthetic blended products, which are the core fibers of our performance ranges."

**Jude Mackay:** It's a great philosophy and a labor-intensive process, how do you keep track of your achievements?

**Rachel Lincoln:** The Renewal Workshop handles our data on our Reduction of Material to Landfill goals. But this is part of a bigger picture. prAna is working on an "Impact Score" sustainable business model, a weighted scoring system that gives scores in "savings" and "positive" impacts: the environmental impact of the original product, versus a score for reduction of material to landfill, money invested in circular economy, and number of Living Wage jobs in the circular economy. The impact of working together with our partners has already helped us achieve reductions on energy, carbon, water and toxins. We understand the importance of partnerships and the expertise these lend to our program.



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**Jude Mackay:** Looking forward to seeing how your Renewal Workshop partnership influences your Impact Score. Do you have any message for those who wish to embark on an impact-mitigation journey?

**Rachel Lincoln:** Yes! Identify your passions. What do you care about most and how can you seek to make that better. Take surfing for example, if you are a surfer, your bread and butter is the water then you are going to want to ensure that it is free of debris and clean so you can focus your impact on prevention of trash in the oceans and organizations like the Healthy Seas that collect old fishing nets from the ocean and repurposed them into recycled nylon that makes swimwear. There are a lot of amazing initiatives to be a part of in the world but at prAna, we believe in using one's drive and passion for what impacts them most will lead to the most creative and thoughtful innovations for positive change.

#### **About Rachel:**

Rachel Lincoln is a Design Innovation Manager at prAna Living. She has been an instrumental contributor to the company's four year consecutive double digit growth and is driven by innovative material technologies, closed loop processes and promotion of a work, life balance through the use of essential oils. She hails from California and is currently raising two little girls, Vida (6) and Olivia (3) to be strong, independent women.

**To read UL's 2017 Responsible Sourcing Summit speaker interview with Annukka Dickens, HP, please [click here](#).**

#### **About UL Responsible Sourcing:**

UL is a leading global provider of responsible sourcing auditing and advisory services, which include supply chain monitoring, research, program development, and training. UL's Responsible Sourcing team has the global footprint to provide services in several countries.

For more information on all the ways you can rely on UL to help you manage sourcing risk, contact [RSinfo@ul.com](mailto:RSinfo@ul.com)