

WWD

INTIMATES

FLIGHT DIAN

This season's lingerie can be like buried treasure, with charming little bras and briefs peeking out from under



feature

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Several new designers hope they're in the right place at the right time. By Karyn Monget

Following a swath of label launches in 2009, the intimates field has continued to sprout with designers, brands and licensees, as retailers crave innovative merchandise to beef up inventories — particularly after a year of slimming down.

Most of this year's fledgling designers project wholesale volume for the first full year of between \$250,000 and \$500,000, and hope to gain entry at major department and specialty stores as they begin garnering orders at specialty boutiques and e-commerce sites.

WWD asked the latest crop of emerging designers what their motivation was in creating lines at a time when most companies are cutting costs and scaling back labels and assortments. Here is what several had to say.

KELLY DOOLEY, WHOSE BODYROCK SPORT CONTEMPORARY sports bras retail from \$44 to \$94 in sizes XS to XL, says she started her own line when she couldn't find a sports bra that was fun with a fashion twist — “a sports bra I could love.”

“I felt it was the time to act,” Dooley says. “If I didn't run with this idea, someone else would have, which is something I would have regretted forever. My mom always told me that great achievement involves great risk, and I truly believe that as long as I have the perseverance to make this company thrive, the state of the economy is somewhat irrelevant. Starting BodyRock during a recession gave me the opportunity to establish fruitful relationships with local companies in the Garment District. My goal in starting BodyRock was to keep production domestic and to be able to ensure quality during a time where most companies are cutting corners. That adds value to my company.”

**Anna Maria La
Bianca's sheer**



he says. "I can't forecast what the economy will do in the months or even a year, but I know recessions don't last forever. It's important to seize the moment. That's why I decided to launch my collection now and be ready when things start heating up. I want to be more accessible, and the current environment allows me to fine-tune your operation." Bras are available in sizes 32A to 38D, and bodysuits come in S to L. Retail prices are \$80 to \$120.

"I think I decided to launch in the recession; I just followed my gut and it brought me here," explains Jenna Leigh, whose firm specializes in lingerie and intimates. "I don't regret it. Just the opposite. It was the perfect time to start a lingerie business because lingerie has

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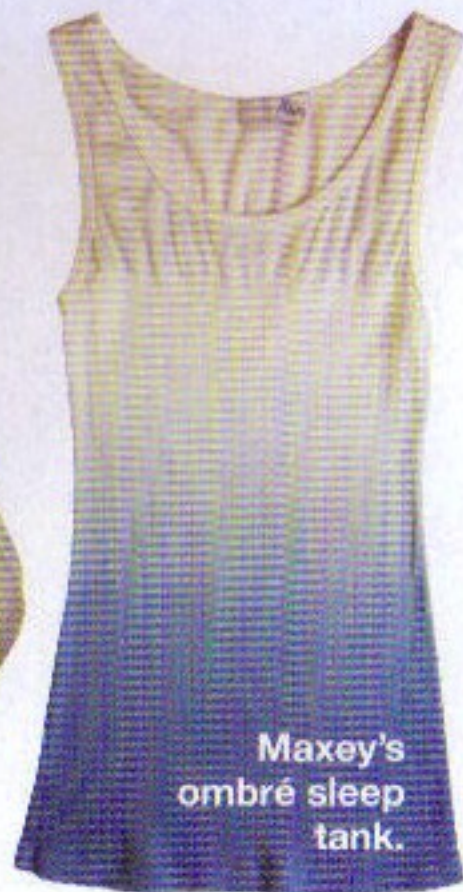
BodyRock's contemporary sports bra.



Brulee's silk and mesh bodysuit.



Maxey's ombre sleep tank.



PHOTOS BY ROBERT MITRA