

Manty Sales Are Up! Is the End of the Recession Near?

By Amy Odell; August 24, 2009

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Good morning indeed.

Photo: Courtesy of Calvin Klein

Sales of men's underwear are up 4.7 percent for the first half of the year, which is pretty amazing for two reasons. First, because lately the only sales that seem to be increasing are those of crocodile Birkin bags. Second, because if Alan Greenspan's manty theory is correct, then the end of the recession could be in sight! Greenspan postulates that when times are really bad, fresh underpants are the first thing men cut back on, since hardly anyone sees them. Then when times improve, men start buying underwear again, and sales soar as pent-up demand is met.

Sales of men's underpants don't dip very often. While manty sales increased the first half of the year, menswear sales are down 5.2 percent.

Experts weigh in for *WWD*:

"Underwear does follow a consistent pattern," said Marshal Cohen, chief analyst for NPD, who is a firm believer in the category's predictive powers. "As a pure commodity, its sales figures can reflect general sentiments about consumer confidence. To me, these strong figures mean we are nearing the end of the recession, and that it is not going to be as long or as deep as some feared."

As Freshpair.com's president explains, "You need underwear. It's not something you can go without for long. Once you start buying again, it will be one of the first things guys will need." First comes underwear, then a job. Maybe dating will improve, too! Unless Greenspan's theory is pure crap, which some are saying it is since he didn't see the recession coming in the first place.

[Briefonomics: Forecasts From the Underwear Department](#) [WWD]