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Feb. 06, 2004

Hunt for hip leads to alleyways of Japan

TOKYO -- Loic Bizel leads visitors through alleys packed with wild-haired youngsters, makes his way into tiny boutiques tucked beneath stairwells and points out fatigue-inspired jackets, handpainted sneakers and plaid miniskirts. Part tour guide and part business consultant, the 32-year-old Frenchman is a "cool" hunter, with a mission to uncover the ever-changing street fads of Japan and translate them into a language the rest of the world can understand. "The people in the streets are very creative," Bizel said, pointing to a young man wearing baggy shorts on top of long pants, a look that's all the rage in Tokyo. "The search to be unique, to be different, creates style." Bizel's expertise is in demand because Japan has shifted from being a powerhouse of manufacturing to an exporter of culture, including "manga" animation, gourmet sushi and now fashion tastes. Global businesses eager to get a glimpse of what's in store for the future are sending their executives here just to hang out with the cool hunter and absorb what's hip. (AP) [FULL STORY](#)

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Hunt for hip

Part tour guide and part business consultant, Frenchman Loic Bizel is a "cool" hunter, with a mission to uncover the ever-changing street fads of Japan and translate them into a language the rest of the world can understand.

Madison & Vine panel

Brand integration into television programming may still be in the early stages and involve a lot of trial and error, but it's definitely here to stay and on the upswing. That was the general consensus of a panel of entertainment and marketing executives Wednesday at the Beverly Hills Hotel.



MAN OF MANY FACES: Actor Benoit Poelvoorde poses in front of a display poster for "Podium" featuring his visage at the film's premiere Monday, held at the Paramount Opera in France. (WireImage.com photo)

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