

SARA K DENNIS

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SENIOR RETAIL EXECUTIVE / SVP DESIGN/PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Experience includes Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein, Vera Wang, Liz Claiborne, Lands' End & Marquee Brands

Versatile executive who combines strong merchandising, design and product development knowledge with proven brand management savvy. Entrepreneurial leader who has consistently driven revenue and profit gains. Known for ability to bring structure, discipline and efficiency to the design, merchandising, creative and product development process, especially in the most challenging environments.

Areas of expertise include:

- Category and Division Turnaround
- Brand Strategy and Brand Development
- Process Improvement/Reorganization
- Licensing and Strategic Alliances
- New Product and Line Launch
- P&L/Multimillion Dollar Budget Management
- Team Leadership and Staff Development
- Revenue and Profit Enhancement

EDUCATION

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY - AB ART HISTORY

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

MARQUEE BRANDS - (A PEA IN THE POD & MOTHERHOOD), NJ. 2019 – 2022

Senior Vice President, Design

DESTINATION MATERNITY (A PEA IN THE POD & MOTHERHOOD), NJ 2018 – 2019

Senior Vice President, Design

Recruited by CEO to create strategic initiatives to "right-size" the design organization, create a performance-based culture and to streamline processes allowing for innovation and growth.

Lines: Motherhood Maternity, Jessica Simpson Maternity, A Pea in the Pod.

- Empowered Design team to create a free flow of ideas and innovation energizing a stagnant team
- Rebalanced product assortments focusing on **Best Selling Top 30** Products. Launched new products throughout FY2019 including: 3 in 1 parka; NUDES intimates program and "Shimla" fashion capsule
- Partnered with Sourcing to narrow vendor base and platform raw materials
- Improved adoption ratio and reduced over-development
- Created culture of accountability and cross-functional collaboration
- Streamlined the organization – eliminating headcount and redundancy allowing for a smooth transition to Marquee Brands

THE KNOWLES COMPANY (Luxury Properties), ME **Associate Broker** 2014 – PRESENT

LANDS' END, Dodgeville, WI 2012 – 2014

Senior Vice President, Design

Recruited by company's Brand President and CEO to unify Design team, bring a cohesive vision to product lines and streamline operations. In charge of design for all product categories, including home and school/corporate uniform products. Partnered with SVP of Merchandising to stabilize the business by reinstating/updating historical best sellers, thus recapturing loyal customers. Reinvigorated the Design team and forged partnerships with Global Sourcing and Creative teams to ensure a clearer brand vision.

Lines: Men's, Women's, Kids' Apparel, Swimwear, Sleepwear, Outerwear, Accessories and Footwear.

- Reversed declining Women's business; sustained solid sales in Home and Men's lines; and strengthened foothold in Japan.
- Increased Women's business by 5%, Accessories and Footwear by 13%, and Kids by 12% in 2013 through innovations.

- Achieved outstanding gains—growing Outwear by 7%, Women's Swimwear by 8%, and Whole House Sweaters 25%.
- Grew Women's and Kids businesses by developing spirited product assortments while resurrecting long-standing products.
- Attracted new customers by pushing innovation and fashion into landmark products, such as the Supima Cardigan.

BELSTAFF, NEW YORK NY

2011 – 2012

CONSULTANT – Design Operations / Product Development / Talent Building

Tapped by CEO and Creative Director to aid in re-launch of British luxury brand, recently acquired by Harry Slatkin CEO, LABELUX and Tommy Hilfiger. Tasked initially with hiring and “on boarding” talent to build New York-based design team. Requested to create and launch high-end, Men's and Women's fashion apparel collection in just 6 months. Served as liaison between Italian product developers, manufacturers and NYC design team. Collection launched during London Fashion Week February 2012.

Lines: Apparel, Outerwear, Footwear and Accessories

NY BRAND STUDIO, NEW YORK NY -

2010 – 2011

CONSULTANT -VP/GMM, MIX—exclusive brand created for COLES (Australia)

Recruited to build new business and launch new Joe Mimran power brand to be distributed in COLES. Built high-performance team of 24 from the ground up and established the entire business infrastructure. Provided creative direction to designers and merchandised the lines.

Lines: Men's, Women's and Kids' Apparel, Intimates, Swim, Denim, Accessories and Footwear.

VERA WANG GROUP, New York, NY

2006 – 2010

Senior Vice President, Simply Vera Vera Wang

Hired to build and lead new licensed business in partnership with Kohl's. Managed team of 4 internal employees and worked with large Kohl's team. Accountable for merchandising, design, product development, marketing, advertising and PR. Maintained brand standards and ensured contract compliance. Reported directly to Vera Wang with full P&L accountability.

Lines: Women's Apparel, Shoes, Handbags, Belts, Small leather goods, Gloves, Cold Weather Accessories, Hosiery, Socks, Slippers, Flip Flops, Sunglasses, Hair Accessories, Intimates, Sleepwear, Jewellery, Sheets, Towels, and Bath Accessories.

- Grew brand from start-up to over \$250 million in annual sales from 1,000 Kohl's stores.
- Led creation of brand standards, collateral, logo, packaging, hangtags, 'look book', main labels and store fixtures and devised and executed launch campaign including print and TV ads, new website and media events.
- Collaborated with Kohl's Product teams daily

LIZ CLAIBORNE, New York, NY

2003 – 2006

VP Product Development Liz Claiborne Apparel

Recruited to help reposition well-established brand that had lost focus. Led global design for \$650 million business managing a team of 75. Challenges included lack of clear creative direction, too many distinct brands, outdated systems and a “silo” approach to business management.

Lines: Core, Differentiated, Essentials, Golf and Active.

- Worked closely with new Creative Director to develop a strong unified voice, refocusing all lines on traditional brand values.
- Played key role in organizational restructuring that reduced corporate staffing by 15% while supporting company's goals.
- Created comprehensive strategy to rebuild market share, including defining opportunities and product/pricing strategies.

CALVIN KLEIN, INC., New York, NY

1996 – 2003

SVP Jeans, Underwear & Swim, 2002–2003

VP Product Development Underwear & Swim/ Jeans, Underwear & Swim, 1998–2002

Director Product Development, Underwear & Swim, 1998

Director Product Development, Men's Underwear / Design Director, Men's Underwear, 1996–1998

Originally hired as Design Director and moved quickly through increasingly responsible positions, including managing the Jeans business through 2 periods of major transition. As SVP, oversaw merchandising, design and product development team of 50 with accountability for \$650 million global product line.

Lines: Men's, Women's, Juniors and Kids' Jeans; Men's and Women's Underwear, Sleepwear and Swimwear

SARA K DENNIS – PAGE 3

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- Grew Underwear business by launching innovative products/programs that now comprise ~40% of product line revenues.
- Brought focus to Jeans business during difficulties with US licensee and grew royalties as a result.
- Led overhaul of Jeans organization, revamping merchandising and product development and hiring new Design Directors.
- After sale of company, worked with C-suite to integrate 2 design teams, cutting Calvin Klein's US overhead by ~10%.

DELTA TEXTILES LTD., New York, NY

1995 – 1996

Director of Marketing - San Francisco

Recruited to identify and develop business opportunities for leading Israeli intimates manufacturer. Challenged to penetrate new accounts and to develop a relationship with the Gap. Overcame previous problems with senior Gap executives and built strong working relationship, allowing Delta to develop a multi-million revenue stream with the Gap and Banana Republic.

POLO RALPH LAUREN LLC, New York, NY

1990 – 1995

Product Manager – Men's Hats, Underwear, Robes, Swimwear, and Polo Bear

Built headwear division from \$100K to \$12 million in 18 months and managed design and product development of Polo's Underwear business from start-up to \$50 million over a 3-year period.

SKILLS

PRODUCT

- multiple brand launches and product strategies
- knowledge of global markets
- trend forecasting
- expert management of product life cycle – concept to consumer

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

- P/L navigation and management
- facilitator of pipeline operations
- strategic thinker planning/prioritization
- excellent conflict resolution skills

COMMUNICATION

- Languages: French (fluent); Italian & German (working knowledge)
- collaborator and relationship builder
- advocate and real time producer of feedback to team members/management
- accomplished public speaker

AGILITY

- ability to adapt to change quickly and efficiently
- performance enhanced by immersion in fast paced environment
- ability to work on teams populated by members with different learning styles