

EMILY BUSSE

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PPI APPAREL GROUP, New York, NY - 2023 - Current

VP of Design and Merchandising

Women's, Men's, Boys, Girls Sleepwear, Loungewear, Underwear | \$30M+

Brands: USPA, BEBE, Nannette Lepore, Joe Boxer, Realtree, Tahari, Limited Too, Kathy Ireland, Gloria Vanderbilt, Sleep and Co.

- Lead **product development strategy** across a diverse portfolio, managing the entire process from concept to delivery. Oversee key areas such as style, color, quality, production schedules, and calendars to ensure **brand consistency** and **market alignment**.
- Drive **product innovation** by aligning seasonal assortments with emerging market trends and consumer preferences, while upholding **high quality, fit, and cost efficiency**.
- Directed the **NYC Design Office**, leading **cross-functional global teams** to align **seasonal goals**, track milestones, and ensure timely product execution and on-budget delivery.
- Strengthened **partnerships** with internal and external stakeholders, including **Buyers, Global Sourcing, Factories**, and cross-functional teams, ensuring the timely, cost-effective delivery of product assortments.
- Spearheaded **process optimization** by implementing a **centralized database**, streamlining internal approval workflows, and optimizing the fit process, reducing **lead times** and improving **product accuracy**.
- Identified **market gaps** and successfully launched a new **women's scrubs line**, filling **white space** in the customer assortment and expanding market opportunities.
- Drove **strategic product category expansion**, led **collaborative inventory planning**, and optimized the **supply chain**, improving inventory turnover and reducing underperforming product.

ALPINE CREATIONS, New York, NY - 2022 – 2023

SVP of Merchandising and Design – Walmart and Sam's Club Accounts

Women's Activewear and Athleisure, Men's Activewear, Knit Tops, Bottoms, and Outerwear | \$200M+

- Lead key account management for **Walmart** and **Sam's Club**, driving product development strategy and ensuring performance goals are met across multiple apparel categories.
- Oversee the **NYC Design Office**, managing seasonal calendars, milestone tracking, and global cross-functional teams to deliver quality products on time and within budget.
- Foster strong relationships with **key accounts, Buyers, Product Development, Global Sourcing, CTL**, and **Technical Design Teams**, ensuring smooth communication and collaboration.
- Manage the **end-to-end apparel development process**, balancing **trends, cost, timelines**, and **customer needs** to ensure market relevance and high-quality output.
- Lead global team collaboration, working with **overseas factories** and **fabric mills** to ensure product quality and cost efficiency, meeting tight timelines while maintaining high standards.
- Cultivate relationships with senior executives by **listening** to their needs, providing strategic input, and fostering collaboration to drive long-term growth.
- Spearheaded **global process implementation** to increase efficiency, including improving the internal color approval process, refining the women's fit scorecard, and enhancing **global communication** through virtual meetings and fit sessions.
- Developed a **new women's scrubs category**, addressing a market gap and expanding product offerings.

UNITED LEGWEAR APPAREL COMPANY, New York, NY - 2013 – 2022

VP of Merchandising and Design – Bodywear

\$7M → \$110M+ Business Growth

PROMOTIONS: Director, Bodywear (2017 – 2018) | Senior Director/Merchandising, Bodywear (2013 – 2016)

- Charged with revitalizing and expanding the **Bodywear** category across multiple segments, including **sports bras, underwear, sleepwear, athleisure, loungewear, and yoga lifestyle** for **Women's, Men's, Boys', Girls', Toddler, and Infant** categories. Brands include **Puma, Starter for Amazon, Avalanche, Pro Player, Happy Socks, Bread & Boxers, and Limited Too**.
- Successfully grew the **Bodywear** business from **\$7M to \$110M+**, driving **multi-channel growth** across key retailers including **TJX, Winners, Ross, Burlington, Costco US, Costco CA, Walmart, Amazon, Family Dollar, and Nordstrom**.
- Spearheaded the **relaunch of Puma Women's Bodywear**, introducing **seamless sports bras and fashion-forward underwear** styles, aligning IMU with **financial goals** and enhancing brand equity.
- Developed and launched **private label brands**, including **Parker and Fox** (kids' underwear) for **Ross, Burlington, and TJX**, expanding market reach and filling a key price point gap in the market.
- Played a key role in securing **private label programs** with major retailers like **Walmart, Amazon, Family Dollar, Ross, TJ Max, and Burlington**, including brands like **NOBO, VRST, DSG, Just Be, and Extremely Me**.
- Led the **Iconix Brand Group** presentation, securing the **Starter** license and successfully positioning it as a **private label** exclusively for **Amazon** across multiple categories, including **bags, sports bras, underwear, and accessories** for **Men's, Boys', Women's, and Girls'**.
- Built and maintained strong factory relationships in **Asia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, India, and Kenya**, traveling quarterly to oversee production and ensure quality.
- Recognized by **Costco CA** for achieving the **bestselling kids' underwear program**, and the **Best-Selling Bra in the US** at **Costco US** for the **sports bras** category.

SELF ESTEEM CLOTHING, California / New York, NY - 2010 – 2012

Designer and Merchandiser – Juniors

\$50M Juniors Business with Walmart, Kmart, and JCP

- Created and executed the **merchandise vision** and **product strategies** for a **\$50M Junior's business**, working with major retailers like **Walmart, Kmart, and JCPenney**.
- Led the entire **product design process**, from market research and concept board creation to design execution and production, ensuring alignment with customer needs and retailer expectations.
- Developed trend and **print presentations** for key meetings with **retailers**, helping to guide the seasonal direction and build buy-in for new collections.
- Managed relationships with **outside fabric and print vendors**, expanding offerings and increasing the **internal product matrix** to diversify the company's designs.
- Curated and maintained the **fabric library**, providing **sales teams** with critical information for production and **product development**.
- Developed and launched a new **sleepwear line**, managing all stages from **concept to production**, resulting in **new business** and increased revenue.
- Collaborated cross-functionally with **design, merchandising, marketing, sales planning, production, sourcing, quality control, and packaging** teams to ensure product alignment and on-time delivery.

WAL-MART, New York, NY - 2008 – 2010

Designer – Juniors, New York Trend Office

Ocean Pacific & No Boundaries Private Label Brands

- Designed and developed **junior apparel** for two major private label brands, **Ocean Pacific** and **No Boundaries**, with full responsibility for the **design** and **product development** process.
- Produced **Wal-Mart's highest-volume key account programs**, significantly increasing **customer approval** and driving **sales growth**.
- Upgraded the **fashion image** of the **Ocean Pacific** brand, aligning it more closely with its **niche market**, driving stronger brand recognition and appeal.
- Built and nurtured relationships with numerous **domestic** and **overseas vendors**, overseeing the end-to-end **product development** and **manufacturing processes** to ensure high-quality standards and timely production.
- Managed the **CAD Team** in the seasonal **development of prints** and **graphics**, contributing to product differentiation and category success.
- Developed and managed a **domestic and overseas vendor matrix**, including **China**, streamlining the supply chain and improving vendor relationships.
- Directed the **summer "OP Hot Spot" program**, creating innovative prints and graphics for **cross-functional categories** like **swimwear** and **sunglasses**, enhancing brand visibility and customer engagement.

KNOTHE APPAREL GROUP, New York, NY - 2005 – 2008

Head Designer – IZOD/Wal-Mart Account

Men's & Boys' Underwear, Sleepwear, Loungewear

- Led the design and development of the **Izod/Wal-Mart** line, including **underwear**, **sleepwear**, and **loungewear** for **men's** and **boys'** categories.
- **Launched the Faded Glory Boys** underwear line for Wal-Mart, which quickly became a **major profit center**, growing the business to **\$2M**.
- Designed the successful **"George Boxer" line** and several loungewear items, contributing significantly to **Wal-Mart's** sales in the category.
- Introduced a **sustainable boxer product** for the **Claiborne** line, aligning with industry trends and supporting Wal-Mart's commitment to sustainability.
- Led cost-reduction efforts by **outsourcing Encad printing services**, significantly lowering **sample development costs** while maintaining high quality.

Education

Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah, GA

B.A. in Textiles

Skills

- **Design Software:** Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop
- **Product Lifecycle Management:** EXENTA (PLM), CGS
- **Office & Communication Tools:** Microsoft Office, Outlook
- **Collaboration & Virtual Communication:** Teams, Zoom, Skype