

BILL JOHNSON

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Operations Executive with a demonstrated record of exceeding profitability goals, turning around underperforming units and driving increased revenues and market share

High-energy leader experienced in leading multi-unit regions with up to 400 locations. Excel in brand positioning, revenue growth, financial management and driving operational excellence. Champion a strong focus on customer satisfaction and loyalty. Well-developed employee relations, motivation, management development and training qualifications demonstrated by higher than average retention rates.

Core Competencies include:

- Multi-Unit P&L Analysis / Expense Control
- E-Commerce, Catalog, Wholesale & Retail Sales
- Site Selection / Real Estate
- Recruiting / Hiring / Training / Retention
- Turnarounds / Change Management
- Expansion / New Market Development
- Concept Branding / Marketing
- Global Purchasing / Contract Negotiations

SAMPLE CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

- ✓ Led Division from 4 years of losses to profits with +686% EBITDA growth in 2007
- ✓ Right-sized stores closing 120 underperformers and opening 50 high-margin outlets to dramatically exceed store growth targets and industry averages
- ✓ Doubled market share and grew profits 250% through brand repositioning – named “Brand of the Year”

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

BLUE FOOTWEAR

Leading consumer-driven footwear company and the # 2 wholesale supplier of women’s fashion shoes to U.S. department stores under brand names like Naturalizer, Via Spiga, Franco Sarto and LifeStride.

Successively promoted to positions of increased responsibility based on consistently exceeding goals and expectations.

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, NATURALIZER RETAIL ✧ JUN 2002 – PRESENT

Promoted to assume P&L management for Naturalizer brand throughout North America. Challenged to turnaround declining sales, profit margins, consumer traffic and market share. Oversee strategic planning, operations, real estate, merchandising and marketing for over 300 retail locations throughout the U.S. and Canada. Member of Executive team to support expansion of retail concept globally.

Notable Accomplishments:

- Led Division from years of operating losses to positive earnings, delivering significant improvements every year, culminating with +686% growth in operating earnings in 2007.
- Revamped management personnel to build a team capable of delivering sustained organic growth in a zero sum market. Noted for producing comp store growth 2-4% in each of last 4 years year in contrast to competitive set which is down 3-5% annually.
- Repositioned store portfolio to both right-size the chain and grow the highly profitable outlet segment to maximize earnings. Led comprehensive real estate strategy to change mix of channels, resulting in exiting 120 mall-based stores and opening 50 outlet stores.
- Integrated redundant Canadian infrastructure, consolidated all non-store support functions (Buying, Allocating, Planning, Marketing, IT, Real Estate), producing +\$6M in annual savings and a return to profitability for the segment after 3 years of losses.

- Led update of product line to fill holes in wholesale line. Sourced product providers through new manufacturers and designers that now account for 30% of sales.
- Developed new store design and changed shopping environment to attract a greater audience. Reduced turnover in stores 50% by fostering a store-friendly culture. Launched Star Sightings communication program that shared best practices and success stories in customer service. Introduced recognition awards for Top Store Managers.
- Built an accelerated career program for gifted college students to add talent, diversity and future leadership.

VICE PRESIDENT MARKETING, NATURALIZER BRAND ✧ JUL 1997 – JUN 2002

Promoted to oversee all marketing strategy and execution for Naturalizer brand. Managed \$16M annual budget across trade and consumer advertising, market/consumer research, sales events/promotions, packaging, relationship marketing, store design and more. Oversaw team of 20.

Notable Accomplishments:

- Credited for role in growing sales 85% in 5 years from \$230M to \$350M, averaging 15-20% growth each year.
- Doubled market share, increased brand awareness and improved profits by 250% or \$10M by directing brand repositioning through an integrated product, store and consumer communications 3-year plan. Named “Brand of the Year” in 2001 by the industry’s leading publication.
- Launched a Direct to Consumer Catalog and e-commerce platform to add incremental sales and profits, resulting in +\$12M in sales and \$2.6M in profits.
- Recognized for contribution to successful addition of the Naturalizer brand within the Federated Department store group that generated an incremental \$35M in sales annually.

DIRECTOR OF RETAIL MARKETING ✧ SEP 1994 – JUL 1997

Promoted to lead the marketing function in support of +300 specialty women’s footwear stores throughout the United States. Managed \$6M budget and team of 9 comprised of Art Directors, Copywriters, Production Manager, Database Manager as well as an external media agency. Oversaw all marketing and visual projects including events, promotional design, advertising, store graphics and signage, Customer Relationship Management, local/grassroots marketing tools and more.

Notable Accomplishments:

- Noted for role in growing sales to ~\$150M annually.
- Credited for transitioning marketing strategy from a mass media communications program to a consumer database marketing platform that reduced marketing expense +\$2M while driving same store productivity to record sales per square foot. Created data warehouse and introduced data mining to support highly targeted direct mail programs.
- Introduced Voice-Of-Customer Consumer Panel to test products, promotions, store design and service changes.

DIVISIONAL MERCHANDISE MANAGER ✧ FEB 1992 – SEP 1994

Led the footwear buying and merchandising teams for 47 better grade department stores on the West coast, generating \$64M in annual revenues. Charged with creating consumer-right and trend-right assortments to drive high sales and margins. Supervised team of 10 Buyers, Planners and Allocation Specialists.

Notable Accomplishments:

- Increased margins by +2%, delivering an incremental \$1.2M in Gross Profit.
- Increased Inventory turn by 30% with corresponding improvement in markdown expense.
- Added premium priced brands to brand matrix driving a 10% increase in average retail prices.

EDUCATION

MBA, Finance

University of Tennessee ✧ Knoxville, TN

BA, Accounting

University of South Carolina ✧ Columbia, SC