

WENDY MUNT

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Professional profile

Entrepreneurial, creative and highly commercial retail and licensing professional, with an exemplary record of delivering successful ranges and strategies for leading brands and licenses in the UK, US and Europe. Success has been achieved through the generation of profitable business streams and revenue growth using outstanding skills in brand and licensing development, contract negotiations and licensing partnerships.

Excellent skills also in strategic and operational buying, project management and global supplier/client relationships. Senior manager at various UK retail giants and licensing consultant to major global companies such as the BBC; recognised as a valued, professional business partner who impacts at Board level. Collaborative communicator and exceptional strategist who is continually focussed on building relationships with licensees, licensors and other stakeholders, as well as leading and inspiring teams that will drive future success.

Skills Summary

- Strategy Development & Implementation
- New Product Development / Category Creation
- Brand Transformation & Category Optimisation
- Creative Problem Resolution
- Sales/Profit Planning & Range Forecasting
- Team Leadership & Contract Negotiation Training
- Licensed Merchandise & Marketing Strategies
- Senior Stakeholder Influencing
- Media Trained

Entrepreneurship & Creative Strategy

Leads Brand Licensing & Marketing strategies to drive commercial activity & maximise opportunities. Manages expansion & risk to enable organisational development, revenue growth & business change.

Business Development

Passionately creates differentiating licensed ranges; ensuring product propositions offer superb consumer choice with high quality, high margin, aspirational products reflecting latest market trends & compelling incentives to buy such as Limited Editions & 'must have' Exclusives. Licensed clients include Fluid World & the BBC.

Project Management & Leadership

Effectively led, motivated, developed teams at the BBC & 5 Senior Buyers, 3 Senior Merchandisers & their teams at Home Retail Group & other retailers. Strong ability to support, develop and inspire to meet business & personal objectives, setting challenging KPI's & empowering to provide ongoing support & ensure success.

Communication & Engagement

Strong communicator at all levels including with CEOs of major UK/US companies such as Mattel, Hasbro. Global reputation of having a firm but fair, professional working practice; gaining respect & recognition through forging sustainable, trusting relationships based on mutual benefit. Cuts through complexities, providing clear direction. Supporter of a 'will to win' culture, delivering corporate objectives in a positive, determined 'can do' environment. Strategic, influencing negotiator with factories & suppliers, remaining solution/results focused in challenging situations.

Quality Improvement & Transformation

Spearheads business change with licensing companies, entrepreneurs & retailers to drive commercial activity of unique, quality products, identifying inefficiencies & delivering excellent customer experience.

Selected Career Highlights

Brand Licensing

Managed creative development of 100's toys from conception to launch using extensive retailing & global sourcing experience. Spearheaded rebranding of toys revitalising appeal to consumers & delivered multi-£M global sales. Developed new branded ranges; the 2 most successful of which delivered £8M+ UK sales & sold overseas.

Business Transformation

Consistently grew sales of Toys to £160M+, profit to £75M & market share to 40% of Home Retail Group's second highest earning category to become the UK's largest retailer in all except one sector whilst under my leadership.

In my consultancy, assessed the commercial viability of 100's of toy concepts before inventors, licensees & larger company clients invested in development; plus created strategic solutions, jointly delivering multi-£M's in sales & profit.

Business Development & Commercial Visibility Grown each clients' business using excellent analytical skills, financial planning & stock management. Enhanced company profiles, brand/range portfolio & brand awareness in the market.

Entrepreneurship

Awarded Northamptonshire's 'Entrepreneur of the Year 2012' by The Entrepreneurs Circle & received a 'Special Recognition Award' by The Retailers Association for work assisting entrepreneurs.

Professional Experience & Further Achievements

Be Inspired Consulting Limited
Retail Buying Consultant - September 2010 - Present



Established Be Inspired Consulting Limited, a bespoke consulting service to the Licensing and Retail Industries providing expertise on creating, launching & repositioning toy licences & toy brands in the UK, Europe and US. 'Be Inspired' enables the growth of global clients' businesses ranging from entrepreneurs & SME's, to some of the world's largest suppliers, licensors, licensees & retailers.

- Provide clients with business advice involved in the retail trading, brand licensing & range development (primarily relating to the Toy market).
- Create & implement category buying & merchandise plans to meet strategic objectives of various major UK retailers.
- Created successful licensed product ranges eg luxury luggage, sporting apparel & accessories in conjunction with former Olympians, Chris Boardman & Victoria Pendleton. Also developed premium toys, children's gift collections, plus other categories.
- Advise best practice to toy licensees & licensors such as Disney, BBC & recommend potential new partners.
- Present to 200+ audiences of licensors & licensees at major toy industry events.
- Create & run negotiation training courses & handle contract negotiations with brand owners on behalf of toy licensee clients.

Selected Achievements

- Developed over 50 new branded toy ranges from conception to completion; the two most successful of which were TV advertised & delivered £8M+ UK sales each in their first year.
- Transformed the look, quality & brand appeal of over 20 licensed toy ranges. Devised marketing plans to support their relaunch, created & negotiated tactical promotional support to deliver £25M+ incremental global sales.
- Speaker at the House of Commons on UK Retail and the Future of Licensing
- Co-wrote a chapter in 'Secrets of Success in Brand Licensing' book & previously monthly columnist for leading toy trade magazine.

Representative Contracts

Jollyes
Interim Head of Own Brand - Pet Accessories

Introduced their first private label range 'Rufus and Rosie' across 8 non-food pet accessories categories. Reported into the CEO, fully responsible for creating & managing the strategy, critical path, range, logistics, launch plan & commercial forecasts, ensuring all deadlines were met for a successful and timely launch. .



Halfords Group plc
Interim Buying Manager - Cycling Apparel & Helmets
Headhunted by ex-Trading Director of Home Retail Group. Created strategy & budget plan, sourced, developed multi-channel ranges delivering £26M sales incl. licensed range working with Olympic cyclist Chris Boardman. Led team of 2.



Wyevale Garden Centres
Interim Buying Manager - Toys & Gifts

Headhunted by ex-boss, ex-Commercial Director of Home Retail Group. Planned, sourced & developed their first children's toys & gifts ranges. Devised category & launch marketing plans. Exceeded target of £8M sales, £5M profit & met stock turn & open to buy plan of 250 SKU's introduced. Recruited, managed, developed a team of 5 Buyers & Merchandisers.



BBC
Consultant
Worked with the 'Dragons Den' team helping entrepreneurs get their products to market, prior to & following, their appearance on the programme. Assisted 20 entrepreneurs generate in excess of £80M in global sales.



Following my work with Dragons Den, Peter Jones' Enterprise Academy (PJA) invited me to provide monthly lectures & coaching on Entrepreneurship to their degree students & mentor them on-going; I did so for several years.

Interplay UK
Brand & Licensing Consultant
Assisted CEO & his Senior team with sharing the knowledge they needed to diversify into an entirely new sector of the toy market. Led the development of 'My Style' branded range & created compelling TV and press Marketing plan to support it. Guided their move into the world of Licensing and handled all contract negotiations with the licensor on their behalf.



Home Retail Group

Buying Manager - Various ranges, June 2006 - May 2010



Headed up the Buying across multiple prestigious categories of Toys, Gifts & Homewares. Responsible & accountable for the planning, monitoring & delivery of £160M+ Sales, £75M Profit & 40% Market Share. Achieved Divisional & Corporate objectives through a multi-format platform whilst maintaining Quality, Serviceability & Price Competitiveness.

- Direct management of 5 Senior Buyers & their teams with the strong ability to support, develop and inspire.
- Negotiated, developed, selected & presented to the board, 1500+ branded & own label SKU's each season.
- Developed & executed category plans to meet revenue goals incorporating sales, profitability & market share potential.
- Created many exclusive ranges on new toy licenses & evergreen brands to drive consumer footfall & own each property.
- Formulated anti-competitor strategies; constantly monitored offers & range direction; revising activity if needed.
- Recognised as earning a global business reputation of having a firm, fair, professional & supportive working practice.

Re:creation PLC

Head Of Marketing, Toy Licensing & Toy Product Development, May 2005 - April 2006

Led & motivated a team of 5 Senior Brand & Product Managers; implemented & managed all aspects of the development of best-in-class branded toy products & supported with dynamic promotional activity. Created pitch proposals to secure licensed properties, negotiated their contracts & collaborated with media agencies to deliver compelling TV & Press Marketing campaigns.

Home Retail Group

Senior Toys Buyer, June 2002 - September 2005

Responsible for the range creation, negotiation, presentation to the Board and delivery of toy ranges worth £45M. Led and inspired a Buying team of 3.



Mothercare

Senior Toys Buyer, February 2000 - May 2002

Led the Buying of Girls Toys & Creative ranges & managed a Junior Buyer of Outdoor Toys.



Home Retail Group

Senior Buyer (on various ranges), Jan 1989 - Jan 2000

Progressed through 6 promotions to Senior Buyer, gaining an excellent grounding in cutting edge buying for one of the UK's leading retail brands.



- Economics and Business Studies Course, Milton Keynes College & Further and Higher Education
- 4 A' Levels, The Royal Latin Grammar School, Buckingham
- Advanced Negotiation Training
- Media Trained to give televised and press interviews

- Providing lecturing & coaching on Entrepreneurship to students at 'Dragons Den' Peter Jones' Enterprise Academy (PJE)

- The Institute of Directors
- The Entrepreneurs Circle - awarded Northamptonshire's 'Entrepreneur of the Year 2012'
- The Retailers Association 'Special Recognition Award' for work with entrepreneurs