

TOP 50™

PEOPLE IN E-COMMERCE



2023



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InsideRetail



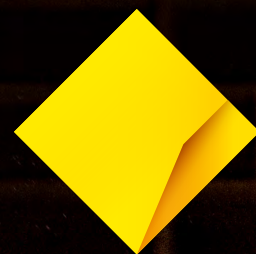
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Editor's note

When *Inside Retail* published the first Top 50 People in E-Commerce in April 2016, only 7 per cent of retail sales were being made online, direct-to-consumer brands were all the rage and TikTok didn't exist. Seven years later, e-commerce penetration has more than doubled, marketplaces have taken over and we're all watching dance memes. The online retail landscape has evolved, and it's bigger and better than ever.

The pace of change is why many people love working in e-commerce. There are always new platforms and opportunities to explore, and new leaders emerging – like this year's number one, Ellie Degraeve. Despite launching her online shop Go For Zero relatively recently, she has quickly made a mark in Australia's e-commerce community through her authentic communication style and desire to use business as a force for good.

For other people, the camaraderie is their favourite thing about working in e-commerce. Tinyme director and COO Ben Hare told me about his love for attending industry conferences (admittedly more so to catch up with friends than to stay up to date with the latest technology and trends), while Designerex co-founder and co-CEO Kirsten Kore simply said "e-commerce is special"

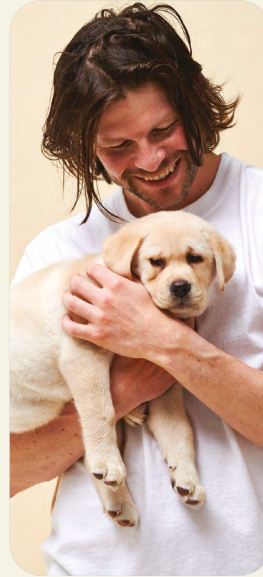
I have to say, I agree. Over the years, I've noticed the genuine affection that people in this industry seem to feel for one another – including, in many cases, their direct competitors – and been impressed by their willingness to share information outside their own organisations. This isn't the case in every industry, and I hope I was able to capture some of that collegiality in this report.

Congratulations to all the Top 50, thank you to the sponsors and to everyone else, happy reading.



Heather

HEATHER MCILVAINE
EDITOR, TOP 50 PEOPLE
IN E-COMMERCE



Contents

4	EDITOR'S NOTE
7	FOREWORD
8	JUDGES' PROFILES
10	TOP 50 PROFILES



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In the spirit of reconciliation, Top 50 People in E-commerce acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

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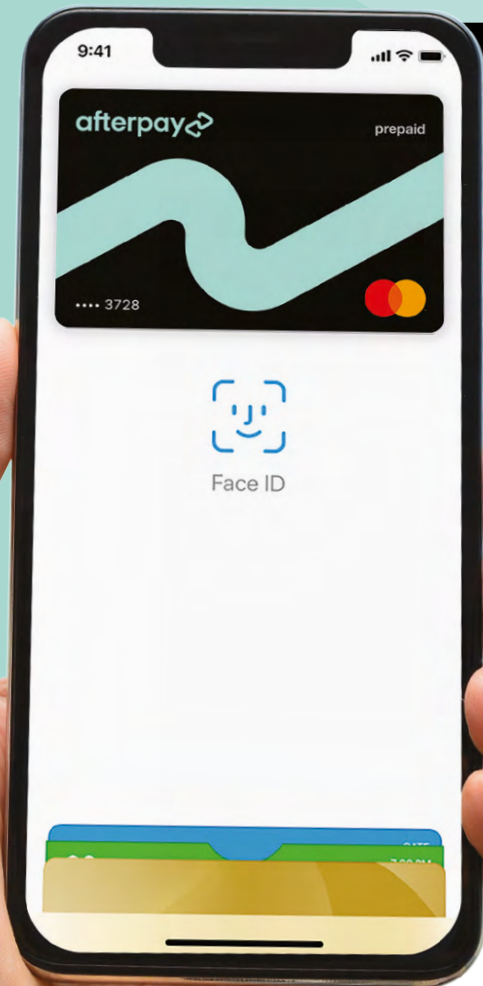
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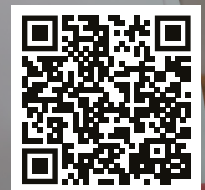
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FOREWORD

As Australia eased pandemic restrictions last year, the e-commerce and logistics industries benefited from continued high rates of consumer spending. As consumers cautiously returned to retail stores, their total spending grew 12.5 per cent in the year to October, while the size of the online shopping market is estimated to have grown 12.6 per cent over the year.

The appetite for spending at major online sales events helped lift retail spend in 2022. NAB merchant terminal sales data showed that consumers spent more than \$71 billion during the four-day Black Friday-Cyber Monday sales period in November, while CouriersPlease's parcel volumes reached record highs the following days.

The e-commerce and logistics industries also faced new and ongoing challenges. The inflation rate quickly grew to 7.3 per cent by the September quarter, our industries were greatly affected by increased fuel prices and labour shortages, and some supply-chain disruptions continued.

For many industry players, however, the overall growth in spending enabled them to invest in improving their capabilities, enhancing the customer experience and fulfilment processes and minimising their environmental footprint. As a result, several individuals rose to lead Australia's online retail businesses through challenges and periods of significant growth, bringing a promising level of creativity, innovation, dedication and passion to their roles, and nurturing these qualities within their teams. As such, a resilient, agile industry has emerged, with a preparedness to manage increased demand and fulfil new customer expectations.

For CouriersPlease, it is an honour to present *Inside Retail's* Top 50 People in E-Commerce for the fifth consecutive year. This report recognises the talented individuals who have contributed significantly to Australia's e-commerce industry, through innovation, drive and commitment to success.

We also recognise individuals who have made significant contributions to the industry, people in product developer roles, marketers, technology specialists, those in procurement, and warehouse and delivery workers. This workforce is the backbone of the industry and their dedication and collaborative spirit ensured households and businesses across the country continued to access essential and discretionary goods.

As we look at the year ahead, we anticipate that the emerging global economic climate may bring with it tighter market conditions, as consumers are likely to be more cautious with their spending. To continue the success of the last two years, I expect the e-commerce sector to continue to innovate to offer customers increased value. Ultimately, just as in the last two years, the industry will emerge from 2023 more resilient, innovative and sustainable and, thereby, more successful.

On behalf of all the team at CouriersPlease, I congratulate the Top 50 People in E-Commerce for 2023.



RICHARD THAME

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
COURIERSPLEASE



JUDGES' PROFILES



HEATHER MCILVAINE

EDITOR, TOP 50 PEOPLE IN E-COMMERCE

In addition to editing the Top 50 People in E-Commerce, Heather is managing editor of features and premium content at *Inside Retail*. She has covered a wide range of topics and trends - from luxury e-bikes to the rise of resale - and interviewed countless founders and CEOs about their growth strategies.



DEAN BLAKE

FEATURES AND PREMIUM EDITOR,
INSIDE RETAIL

Dean is features and premium editor at *Inside Retail* and editor of *Inside FMCG Magazine*. Previously, he was deputy news editor of APAC at *Inside Retail*, covering breaking news in Australia and New Zealand. Dean is fascinated to see how retail is being reinvented to be a force for good in the modern world.



RICHARD THAME

CEO, COURIERSPLEASE

Richard has decades of experience in executive leadership, franchise excellence and logistics. As CEO of CouriersPlease, he has enabled the company to deliver rapidly growing parcel volumes on the back of the online shopping boom, revitalised its franchise model and ensured it continues to focus on innovation, sustainability and service excellence.



SHANNON INGREY

VICE-PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER, APAC,
BIGCOMMERCE

Shannon is a proven executive with more than 15 years of global experience across management, marketing, sales and operations. Before BigCommerce, he served as chief revenue officer at courier tech company Shippit. Prior to that, he established and built the APAC business for Bronto before it was sold to Oracle.



RACHEL KELLY

INVESTOR, ADVISER AND
NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

After more than 25 years of executive experience at The Just Group, T2 Tea and Afterpay, Rachel now advises start-ups, with a focus on social impact, retail tech and Web3. She is a board member for a number of impact businesses, including Stuff, i=Change and Global Sisters, and is passionate about retail and supporting entrepreneurs.



LOUISA SIMPSON
E-COMMERCE CONSULTANT

Louisa has worked in online retail for more than 15 years, with stints at Mecca, Pacific Brands and Coles Group. Over the last five years, she has worked with a multitude of large and small Australian businesses to help them grow their e-commerce capabilities and deliver significant revenue growth.



MARK BAARTSE
E-COMMERCE AND MARKETING CONSULTANT

Mark is an independent consultant who helps digitally led companies with their growth strategies. He has worked at Showpo, Woolworths, Officeworks, Microsoft and Vodafone, and was named a Top 50 CMO in Australia in 2018 by *CMO Magazine*. He was ranked 15th in the 2019 Top 50 People in E-Commerce by *Inside Retail*.



KELLY SLESSOR
E-COMMERCE COACH AND DIGITAL MARKETING EXPERT

Kelly has 20 years of experience in building retail technology that responds to customer needs, drives conversions and increases revenue. Over the past year, she has worked with more than 1000 retailers, hospitality providers and shopping centres to grow their traffic, conversions and revenue.



MADELINE KULMAR
CO-DIRECTOR, RETAIL OASIS

As one of the founding members of Retail Oasis, Madeline has worked across retail projects for well-known brands, including Michael Hill, King Living, Mirvac, Jaycar, Myer, Accent Group, United Cellars, The Iconic, Afterpay, Williams-Sonoma and many more. She enjoys researching start-ups, sustainable brands, new retail concepts and stores.

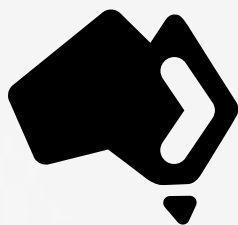


JASON PALLANT
CO-DIRECTOR, CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND INSIGHT RESEARCH GROUP, SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Jason is a senior lecturer and co-director of the Customer Experience and Insight (CXI) Research Group at Swinburne University of Technology, where he combines academic research and practical insights to help brands solve business problems concerning customer experience and emerging technologies. He is also director of knowledge enablement at martech agency The Lumery.



2023 TOP 50™ PEOPLE IN E-COMMERCE



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HOW WE FOUND THE TOP 50

The journey to find the 2023 Top 50 People in E-Commerce began in September 2022, when we asked *Inside Retail* readers to nominate outstanding e-commerce professionals in Australia. Candidates were asked to describe their achievements from the last 12 months in three areas: commercial success, innovation, and broader impact. And their applications were scored by our panel of expert judges. The final ranking was determined by each candidate's average score.

This year's list includes C-level executives with decades of leadership experience, alongside start-up founders and digital specialists with a wide range of skills, from marketing to logistics. Many of them have been in the Top 50 before. In recognition of this achievement, we've used the following symbols to identify those who keep raising the bar of online retail year after year:

- ⚡ HAS BEEN IN THE TOP 50 TWO OR MORE TIMES
- 💎 HAS BEEN IN THE TOP 50 FIVE OR MORE TIMES

01.

Ellie grew up in a hotel owned by her family in Belgium, where she learned the value of hard work and importance of customer service. With a background in business psychology and coaching, she worked for Ahold Delhaize, a Dutch multinational retail and wholesaling company, for six years. She moved to Australia in 2016 and launched Go For Zero in 2018. It is her first e-commerce business.



ELLIE DEGRAEVE

FOUNDER & CEO, GO FOR ZERO

THE HONEST ENTREPRENEUR

Ellie Degraeve grew up in her family's hotel in Belgium – room number 15 – and from an early age, she was taught the value of hard work and customer service.

"My parents were so customer-focused that if someone rang the bell at night, they would get out of bed and make up a room for them," Ellie tells *Inside Retail*.

She assumed all businesses operated this way, so when her infant daughter kept getting rashes from mainstream baby products, she was surprised to learn that many brands knowingly used harsh ingredients in their formulations.

"I just kept digging deeper. I looked at the lack of government regulations. I read about the unethical manufacturing processes and greenwashing. I was shocked at how companies could do this to their customers," she recalls.

At the time, there were a number of online retailers specialising in toxin-free and sustainable products in Australia, but they weren't as transparent or as focused on reducing waste as Ellie would have liked.

"I wanted one place that ticked all the boxes. It had to be super transparent and honest, it had to choose right over easy, the donations had to be clear. I couldn't find it, so I decided to start my own," she says.

She opened a pop-up store on the Sunshine Coast as a proof of concept, and after turning over \$80,000 in just two months, she launched Go For Zero online in 2018.

But while Ellie had plenty of retail experience under her belt – she had

worked as a business coach and international retail strategist before moving to Australia in 2016 – she didn't know anything about growing an e-commerce business.

"I had to learn about Google and Facebook advertising," she says. "Now it's all very obvious, but in the beginning I had no idea."

Early on, she started using Instagram Stories to demonstrate products and help educate customers about their environmental benefits. This approach not only gave her instant feedback on which items were in demand, but also boosted Go For Zero's credibility. Today, it's one of her key differentiators and a major revenue driver.

"People are super confused about sustainability," she says. "I want to give them hope and motivation, but also the products to make a change."

Go For Zero now offers more than 2,000 low-waste and toxin-free products, from reusable silicone baking mats and blocks of laundry detergent, to shampoo bars and organic deodorant – all shipped plastic free.

It is a certified B Corp and carbon-neutral company, and stocks only Australian-owned brands, with a strong focus on female-founded businesses. It also donates \$1 from every order to a number of social and environmental charities, through i=Change.

Last year, Go For Zero received the Telstra Best of Business Award for Promoting Sustainability in Queensland. It was a powerful moment of validation for Ellie, and she is just getting started.

After a successful 2022 in which she

launched 16 own-brand products, partnered with Upparel to recycle old hair ties and increased revenue by nearly 50 per cent, Ellie is looking to expand the business through a wholesale relationship with one of the country's biggest retailers and build a mobile app that will enable customers to track their environmental impact.

"I want to rewrite the rules of retail," she says. "I want to be part of this new model where you have to be transparent, you have to help people make the right decisions, you can't do greenwashing or fake marketing. Sustainability is not an exception anymore, it should be the norm."

For Ellie, Go For Zero is much more than a place to buy products. It's a vehicle to create change on a much larger scale. ♦

JUDGE'S COMMENT

"Ellie has raised the bar for Australian entrepreneurs, demonstrating that you can build a successful purpose-driven business while innovating and developing locally sourced products that make a lasting impact. She's reminding us all in a very practical way of the impact our purchasing decisions have on the environment."

– Richard Thame

STEFFEN DALENG

FORMER CMO, BOOKTOPIA

THE GROWTH DRIVER

Inside Retail: Booktopia was one of the big e-commerce success stories during the pandemic. How did you handle the reopening of bricks-and-mortar stores in 2022?

Steffen Daleng: It's sad to see an industry disrupted the way physical bookstores have been. The pandemic grew the demand for online books significantly and benefited online booksellers temporarily. But it is important to remember that the tailwinds were a result of a significant proportion of book buyers not being able to choose their preferred means of product exploration and purchase: stores.

When stores opened back up again, I was thrilled to see life being breathed back into our industry and customers regaining the ability to shop how they preferred. While being realistic about the environment in which we were operating, we did our best to retain as many customers as possible and preach to the converted, while anticipating volatile demand. A big part of operating well came down to our ability to predict and adjust to those demand changes.

IR: Booktopia is really well known for its use of technology, especially in the warehouse. What role does innovation play in other parts of the business?

SD: Innovation starts with people. Fostering a creative and compelling work environment with talented people is the bedrock of innovation. To execute, they need a mandate to make change, and they need to have, or be able to gain, the knowledge to execute their ideas cleverly with the right tools and people, so having

access and budget for that is critical.

Some of our major milestones have been achieved by understanding our customers well and understanding all the nuances of our user journeys and the transactional mechanics of e-commerce.

IR: You've achieved a lot in your career, especially considering you arrived in Australia less than 10 years ago. How do you approach professional networking and development?

SD: I love retail and growth. Putting things into existence. Solving hard problems, cleverly. It's a hobby. I love talking to other people, and I consider it a great privilege to share my learnings and thoughts with anyone who asks.

I've spent most of my adult life running my own businesses, so I don't think about my own career or career progression in that way. I want to do fun, hard and interesting things. I see a business as a stand-alone identity to nurture, and think about how I can help my team members achieve their dreams and career aspirations.

IR: What most excites you about working in e-commerce right now?

SD: Up until Covid, pureplay e-commerce retailers had the best digital talent, the most investment, and the largest budgets. Covid changed that, and we saw significant investment in digital from bricks-and-mortar retailers. I think that is incredibly exciting. The entire industry has been elevated. More and more people want to work in e-commerce and investment is pouring into areas that support online retail.

E-commerce is a furnace of innovation and change right now, and absolutely everything about it is thrilling.

IR: What do you think will be the key for online retailers to grow in the years ahead?

SD: The combination of talent and technology. Be accurate in your future projections. Have optimal inventory positions for efficient sell-through. Be careful in your selection of technology and martech. Think about your scalability and cost base. Can you scale up or down in tune with your business needs? Set your inventory and operational cost base prudently and watch your cost of acquisition incessantly. Be able to identify and willing to remove your least profitable customers and sources of revenue. Find people who understand customers and sales psychology, and have an understanding of the tools in the market that can help them execute their tactics. ♦

JUDGE'S COMMENT

"Steffen's unique and successful growth strategy across Booktopia's portfolio of sites and marketplaces, with the customer journey at the core, is why he has made this list three years running – proving he is one of Australia's most elite in the e-commerce world."
– Madeline Kulmar



A lifelong entrepreneur, Steffen has built multiple online retail businesses around the world. After arriving in Australia in 2014, he drove digital growth at The Co-op before joining Booktopia in 2018. As CMO, he was responsible for the company's martech strategy and roadmap and launched the FAB Award, which allows Australians to vote for their favourite book each year. He left the business in January 2023. ⚡

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03.



Erica is a passionate, energetic and highly driven female business leader with an exceptional record of building, leading and motivating teams to achieve outstanding results. She continues to break through the glass ceiling and thrive within traditional male-dominated executive positions and actively mentors women in business and sport. An accomplished keynote speaker on a variety of topics, Erica is also a proud mum of three. ⚡

ERICA BERCHTOLD

CEO, THE ICONIC

THE DISRUPTOR

Anaturally curious person who loves talking to strangers, Erica Berchtold was planning to become a journalist when fate intervened.

"I was working in PR and ended up being exposed to the Harvey Norman business. I absolutely loved the business and begged them for a job," she tells *Inside Retail*. "They gave me a job as a buyer, and I really came into my own there."

She soon became general manager of sportswear chain Rebel, which Harvey Norman owned in the early 2000s, and later general manager of Specialty Fashion Group's Crossroads and Autograph brands, before Super Retail Group tapped her to run Rebel once again after acquiring it in 2011.

"I'm an accidental retailer," Erica says. "I didn't imagine my career would be retail. But now I wouldn't want to do anything else."

It helps that she is endlessly fascinated by people and what makes them tick. Why does one person respond to 50 per cent off, and one person respond to half price? As CEO of The Iconic, she has the opportunity to ask these questions daily.

"We might launch a promo, and for some reason, it's just not working. I'll say, 'Let's change the artwork a bit,' and all of a sudden, it starts a fire," she says. "I'm naturally a very curious person, and I think retail gives you a lot to be curious about."

Since joining Australia's leading online fashion retailer in 2019, Erica's understanding of e-commerce, and the various levers you need to pull to be successful, has grown considerably.

"By the time I left Rebel, about 10 per cent of our sales were online, which was actually quite large for a traditional retailer in pre-Covid times. But I'm now embarrassed

to think that I thought I knew everything about online retail. I'm glad I didn't say that out loud, because it's a different world," she says.

"The way that you have to engage customers and develop a sense of loyalty when you don't have physical touch points is quite foreign."

At the time, however, Erica wasn't dwelling on all the things she didn't know about e-commerce. She was five months pregnant when she started the role, and was more preoccupied with questions like, "When am I going to have the baby? And, how's that going to work?"

Ultimately, she says, the idea that you can ever know everything about a business or particular industry is a fallacy, particularly in a fast-changing environment like e-commerce.

"As soon as you bed something down and go, 'Here's a great way of retailing this particular category,' customers get sick of that and want something new," she explains. "As a retailer, you're never going to stop learning or wanting to find new ways of doing things."

This has been one of the key themes at The Iconic the past few years, as it has gone from being one of Australia's original e-commerce disruptors, to becoming a major player that is now being disrupted by a new generation of online retailers.

Under Erica's leadership, The Iconic has significantly expanded the range of products it offers – from fashion to beauty, sportswear, homewares and lifestyle products – and transitioned to a hybrid business model, where brands and suppliers can list products on the platform and do their own order fulfilment and delivery, or outsource it to The Iconic.

One particularly innovative feature that the company launched last year is called "size refill". This enables The Iconic to redirect an order directly to the supplier

if it doesn't have the right size in stock in its warehouse. "Not many retailers in the world have that," Erica says.

The Iconic also launched autonomous mobile robots (AMRs) in its Yennora fulfilment centre, increasing its capacity and speeding up its already fast processing times significantly. The AMRs will be crucial as the retailer looks to grow its fulfilment-as-a-service offering for brands in the future.

The retailer also created its first NFT, established an incubator program for First Nations designers and set a new sales record on Black Friday, while achieving many other milestones.

"There's so much we're onto," Erica says. "One minute, I'm thinking about that cool new technology that's going to give us more capacity in the fulfilment centre, and then we've got a runway show. That's what I love about my role." ♦

JUDGE'S COMMENT

"Erica has transformed the business by focusing on key business metrics, leading to massive improvements across multiple business areas. These include driving growth by overseeing some innovative marketing efficiencies, and improving logistics offerings while reducing costs. The addition of a dedicated range for people of diverse abilities is a lovely cherry on top."

– Mark Baartse

JAMES REU

E-COMMERCE MANAGER, LSKD

THE COMMUNITY BUILDER

Inside Retail: Can you talk about your career journey? How did you end up in your current role at LSKD?

James Reu: Whilst a lot of my skills were developed during my agency work, I also gained practical experience building my own e-commerce start-ups. Though it was often challenging, I enjoyed the process of learning on the fly and building something from the ground up. When I was introduced to LSKD, the first thing I noticed was the positive energy in the office. In addition to the product, the brand's mission, values and overall purpose instantly resonated with me.

IR: LSKD is known for having an incredibly loyal and engaged customer base. How are you continuing to nurture this community as you grow?

JR: With the right mechanisms in place, we're able to rely on our systems to deliver highly relevant marketing comms to each cohort. This helps keep our customer base active and engaged. However, the key to our retention strategy is gathering customer feedback. Whether it's through product reviews, post-purchase surveys or social media posts, asking for feedback gives us insight into how we can improve and be 1 per cent better for our community.

IR: One of the big challenges facing many online retailers right now is the rising cost of digital advertising. How are you addressing this at LSKD?

JR: Although digital advertising will always be a crucial part of our marketing strategy, we've recognised that shoppers are becoming more savvy and selective. To address this, we focused on refining our

website experience and found new ways to educate customers so they can make informed purchase decisions. In 2022, we also placed greater emphasis on areas like first-party data acquisition, growing our community groups, and optimising our website for search engines – key elements that will support a well-rounded marketing strategy.

IR: What role does LSKD's mobile app play in the business? And how do you see mobile commerce evolving over the next few years?

JR: Our mobile app is primarily a platform for building and engaging with our community. It's also a convenient way for customers to shop and stay connected to the brand. I believe m-commerce will be heavily influenced by the increasing use of social media and the adoption of new technologies. For example, digital wallets and payment apps have already made it easy for shoppers to store information and make purchases quickly.

IR: Can you talk about the YouPay tool you launched last year?

JR: YouPay allows online shopping carts to be shared via a unique link and someone else can purchase the goods for you. Our objective was to create a new type of gifting experience, but noticed a shift as our customers started posting their cart links into our Facebook community group. To our surprise, members of the group started to pay for one another's carts and this snowballed. It was as if we had discovered a new way to gamify shopping that I like to call 'community commerce.'

IR: What's next for LSKD in 2023?

JR: Without giving too much away, personalisation will remain a huge focus, exploring international markets and continuing to elevate our omnichannel experience with more physical stores opening across Australia.

IR: On a personal note, what excites you most about working in the e-commerce industry right now?

JR: E-commerce is a rapidly changing industry, with new technologies and innovations being developed all the time. It's exciting to be in an environment where you're constantly having to solve problems, pivot and find new ways to stay relevant in an evolving market. ♦

JUDGE'S COMMENT

"James demonstrated a consistent and holistic impact with clear commercial outcomes. This ranged from developing systems to provide better personalisation to customers, to relaunching an integrated rewards system, taking a novel approach to Black Friday countdown, and innovating shared payment schemes."
– Jason Pallant

A self-described e-commerce fanatic, James has seen it all, from small agencies to global head offices. He is now taking LSKD's online experience and retention strategy to a new level, implementing personalisation, loyalty, reviews, on-site search and a mobile app that claimed the top position on the iOS App Store's shopping chart. James' efforts have resulted in significant growth for the business.



04.

05.



Since joining Tinyme in 2010, Ben has been instrumental in developing the online retailer's export strategy, building out its business platform and launching a new brand, Opiqo. As a co-owner and director, he oversees the finance, HR, compliance, IT, customer service and supply chain, and recently launched UK production functions, and is heavily involved in the strategic direction of Tinyme. Ben is a frequent speaker at industry conferences. 

BEN HARE

DIRECTOR & COO, TINYME

THE STRATEGIC GENIUS

A lot has changed since Ben Hare first entered the e-commerce industry to join Tinyme, a mass-customisation brand that makes personalised kids' products, in 2010.

"My very first day, I actually went to the Online Retailer conference in Sydney. I hadn't even set foot in the office," Ben tells *Inside Retail*.

Compared with his previous line of work – Ben spent nearly eight years at Goldman Sachs – most people in e-commerce were surprisingly unconcerned with traditional markers of success, such as profitability.

"I was staggered at the lack of focus below the top line at that point in time," he recalls. "Everyone was very focused on revenue, sometimes not even that – traffic or vanity metrics."

Nowadays, e-commerce leaders are much more aware of their cash flow and the strength of their underlying business model, and less likely to raise funds in the hope of growing into their cost base.

Fortunately, that's never been a problem for Tinyme, which has been profitable since day one and has always used its cash flow to grow. The brand has an online presence in 10 markets – Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the US, the UK, Ireland, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia and the United Arab Emirates – and recently opened its first overseas production facility in the UK.

"It's the biggest project and biggest investment we've ever made in the business," says Ben, who oversaw the factory build and launch in the first half of 2022.

"I headed over in February to select the premises, and we shipped our first order in May, which was a massive effort from the team, to be able to pull that together."

Ben is optimistic about what the new factory means for the brand's growth potential in the UK, which is its second-biggest market after Australia. As a made-to-order business, Tinyme has a longer lead-time than most online retailers, so anything it can do to speed up delivery is crucial.

In addition to growing overseas, Tinyme is also targeting category expansion in 2023. After 16 years in the kids' space, the brand recently made a foray into products for adults with the launch of a new brand, Opiqo, last year.

The brand currently sells customisable photo panels and magnets, jigsaw puzzles, diaries and calendars, but there are plans to add many more products in the months and years ahead.

"It's a big part of our history, it's a big part of our future, so new products are something we'll be doing a lot more of," he says.

This is one of the main reasons Ben loves working at Tinyme – where he has since become a director and co-owner along with co-founders Mike Wilson and Nick McLennan – the business has never stopped innovating and improving.

"It's a pretty cool combination of manufacturing, retailing, technology and design. There are so many levers that we can pull to get better. I love that challenge of continually improving," he says.

"Our business is totally different to what it was 12 months ago, and will be

totally different in 12 months' time – if you can't cope with that, you probably won't like it here."

Over the years, Ben has learned the importance of hiring people who are a good fit for the company's culture and values over those with just technical skills and experience. He has also learned the importance of saying no to some opportunities.

"We have thousands of ideas that we could work on, so knowing what to say no to is probably one of the biggest learnings," he says.

But while he has grown a lot as a leader, in one way he has stayed the same: He still loves attending industry events and engaging with his peers.

"I love the collegiality of our industry," Ben says. "You meet up with people from a whole range of different businesses – very successful, motivated people – and they're all happy to talk. I love that." ♦

JUDGE'S COMMENT

"Ben's continued contribution to the industry and his business was a standout in the submissions this year. He's a legend in the industry, a champion of innovation and an overall great guy."
– Shannon Ingrey

HANNON COMAZZETTO

FOUNDER & CEO, AIRROBE

THE VISIONARY

Inside Retail: What drove you to start AirRobe?

Hannon Comazzetto: Working as a consultant with leading fashion houses, I was exposed first-hand to the amount of waste the fashion industry creates. I knew we needed a solution that would flip the linear fashion model to a circular model – where all products are able to be reused, repaired, recycled or upcycled. The modern consumer wants brand-led, conscious fashion. Businesses should take responsibility for their products. So I decided the only way to tackle the problem with impact was to bring fashion brands on the journey – a solution that helped both the merchant and the consumer. And that's what AirRobe does; we bridge the gap between merchants and consumers to make it easy and beneficial for all stakeholders to go circular.

IR: Since launching in 2019, you've had some pretty big wins, including partnering with The Iconic, among more than 160 fashion brands. Can you share some of the biggest highlights from your growth journey so far?

HC: You can't beat building an incredible team around you. We have brought together a group of whip-smart people who believe in our mission of creating a better world powered by circular economies. Seeing these amazing and talented folks come and join the fight and giving it their all is a feeling that remains unrivalled.

Beyond that, building AirRobe into a global business has been a true highlight. Following our launch in Australia, we now have brand partnerships in North America, Europe and New Zealand.

IR: You clearly have a talent for inspiring people to get on board with

your ideas. What's the secret to your success?

HC: There isn't any secret sauce. It has come down to simply communicating a vision upfront and bringing people into the fold who share that vision: creating a better world through the power of global circular economies. Once you've done that, it's about channelling the tenacity to wake up and put one foot in front of the other to move a little closer to that vision each day.

IR: For many years, the online fashion industry has been all about discounts, rapid delivery and endless product drops. How do you see this space evolving in the years ahead?

HC: Unfortunately, it's hard to see this changing overnight. However, we at AirRobe are part of a global community of many inspiring companies, not-for-profits and movements helping to change consumer behaviour en masse. Our goal is to reframe and emphasise both the importance and benefits of buying less and buying better. In terms of evolution, I'd like to see holistic supply chains beginning to self-govern and manage waste responsibly. The onus shouldn't be solely on the consumer to manage sustainability measures, every stakeholder has a role to play and should be held accountable.

IR: Last year, you spoke on a panel at South by Southwest about female entrepreneurship. Can you share what that was like?

HC: Invigorating! To be on a stage as revered as SXSW was an absolute honour and serious 'pinch me' moment. I spoke alongside some incredible women, including some other Aussie female founders who have led and paved the way for others like me. The

creative energy in the room, both on stage and in the audience, was electric. While I hope we are not far off from a future where 'female founders' is not a conference topic (or a title) in itself, it's always good to get together and remind people that we're kicking ass.

IR: What are your top priorities for the business in 2023?

HC: Expanding our foothold in the US market. We have a pipeline of exciting fashion retailers we're bringing onto the platform that will scale up the global AirRobe network. ♦

JUDGE'S COMMENT

"Hannon and her team have created a product that can make a tangible difference to the waste challenge fashion presents. AirRobe has achieved astonishing growth over the last 12 months and has built strong alliances across the retail landscape. Hannon's recognition of the contribution of her team members demonstrates excellent leadership for a truly innovative offering."

– Louisa Simpson

Hannon launched AirRobe in 2019 to address the global textile waste problem. Today, nearly 50,000 customers use the platform to rent, sell and recycle their wardrobes. Prior to AirRobe, Hannon worked across start-ups and corporations, advising on \$1 billion M&A transactions and launching a world-first music royalty marketplace. She supports founders who are women or members of minority groups through one-on-one mentorship.



06.

07.



Rob founded his first digital agency in the late '90s, becoming an early disrupter in digital design, building high-performance digital solutions across the government and corporate sectors, including multiple ASX-listed companies. He founded Knobby, Australia's first subscription underwear brand, in 2014. Based on the Sunshine Coast, Knobby has grown into a multimillion-dollar company, sending over 1,500 orders worldwide daily.

ROB RAND

FOUNDER & CEO, KNOBBY

THE BRANDING EXPERT

Shortly after he and his wife moved to far-north Queensland in 2012, Rob Rand had what he calls a "lightbulb moment".

"The nearest shops were a six-hour round trip away, and underwear was definitely the last thing on the list," Rob tells *Inside Retail*.

As a longtime digital and marketing consultant, Rob was inspired by the incident to start Knobby, an online subscription brand that provides customers with a new pair of underwear featuring a fun and unique design every month, eliminating the need to go to the shops to stock up.

"I've always had an interest in textiles, and it was a great opportunity to find a product that really connected with people as well," he explains.

At the time, the online subscription craze was in full swing, with businesses in the US, such as Trunk Club and Harry's, making headlines and drawing investment. Over the years, the landscape has changed and subscription is no longer the novelty it once was. Yet, Knobby continues to resonate with customers.

"I think the thing that keeps Knobby going is the fact that we've built a strong community," Rob says. "We've built a culture through underwear. It empowers people. It's hard to believe because it's just underwear, but it really does."

This is something Rob is looking to lean into, following Knobby's recent rebrand, in which the business launched its first ever TVC in 2022.

"We wanted to move away from the whole larrikin persona. People had taken our name and built up a persona through

innuendo that dictated what the brand had become. We lost a little bit of control," he explains. "We wanted to be more accountable, diverse and empowering, but still be Knobby, still be fun."

One of the top priorities of the rebrand was making Knobby more circular. Rob recently launched an Australian-made range that is not only made out of Australian wool, but also cut, sewn and packaged in Melbourne. He is also developing the first biodegradable waistband, and working with the University of the Sunshine Coast to engineer a material from used underwear.

"The goal is to become the most sustainable underwear brand in the world. We are definitely ticking the boxes, week in week out," he says.

Technology will play an important role in Knobby's success in this space. As a subscription business, it can't plug into existing e-commerce platforms, so it has often had to build its own tools to meet the specific challenges it faces.

"We're doing orders 18 months out, so we have to forecast how many pairs we'll need across eight different styles, eight different sizes, and then you have people who cancel, people who join, credit cards fail," Rob says. "There are so many variables"

In addition to accurately forecasting demand, Knobby's custom-built platform is also able to identify when customers are likely to drop off, and offer alternatives to keep them engaged.

"There are a lot of solutions out there that might send an email to try to stop someone from cancelling, but we've built churn software that looks at when they're most likely to cancel based on historical

data, and we'll say, 'Hey, why don't you drop back to every second, third, or fourth month?' We're trying to make them pause and not actually lose them forever," Rob explains.

Since introducing the churn solution last year, and different automated responses to incomplete transactions, based on whether they are due to insufficient funds or expired cards, Knobby has saved a substantial amount of revenue.

It speaks to Rob's belief that usefulness is the one thing all great businesses have in common.

"It wasn't like Knobby was an overnight success. It was the result of so many things coming together," he says.

"The big thing for me is being able to find something that connects with people's daily lives – whether it's a product, a service or your own profile. It has to be useful, and then customers are going to keep wanting it. The rest will just happen organically." ♦

JUDGE'S COMMENT

"Rob is unrelenting about driving purpose, impact and revenue, showing us you can do it all. Looking at every element of how the product is used and its lifecycle and ensuring that there is a sustainable lens – material made from recycled bottles, biodegradable products and household items made from used or unwanted products."
– Rachel Kelly

ROD WILLIAMS

GM OF DIGITAL, BABY BUNTING

THE DIGITAL ARCHITECT

Inside Retail: Over the last few years, you've been leading a major headless replatforming project at Baby Bunting. Can you share what the results have been since going live in 2022, and any lessons learned along the way?

Rod Williams: We've seen some really positive results since we've moved to our modern composable commerce architecture at the start of 2022. For our team, they've loved the opportunity to work with the agility and flexibility of the new architecture, which has been a selling point to help attract new digital talent and drive increased engagement and productivity. It's allowed us to shift the time that used to be spent on servers, scalability and patching toward efforts to increase our pace of customer experience and feature development.

For our customers, we've seen positive conversion and basket-size increases, particularly on mobile devices, and a sustained improvement in our online net promoter score. They're enjoying a faster, easier browsing and checkout experience. With the agility of our new architecture and technologies, we're able to respond more quickly and efficiently to customer feedback and introduce new features like our upcoming marketplace capability.

Key tips for those embarking on a headless replatforming project: ensure you have the right cross-functional team and partners engaged early in the project; start go-live and migration planning as early as possible and trial it; and embrace an agile delivery methodology to progressively test and release the new solution.

IR: What are some of the other projects you're working on now?

RW: We have two major priorities: accelerating our online range expansion,

and improving online fulfilment customer options and experiences. To facilitate this, we're soon launching a new marketplace capability that will extend our product range through partnerships with selected third-party suppliers, and provide our customers with an even bigger selection of the products and brands they love.

We're also preparing to activate a new distributed order management capability. This will enable us to better leverage our inventory across our warehouses and stores based on proximity to customers, improve our fulfilment performance, and trial and activate new delivery options. As a dad of two young kids, I'm particularly excited about offering faster delivery options, using our store network to offer same [and] next-day delivery, which is something I would have loved for those inevitable 'need it now' parenting moments.

IR: What technology or trends do you think will be really big in e-commerce in 2023 and the years ahead?

RW: The continued growth and innovation in digital payments is extraordinary. The new generation of payments orchestration platforms is now disrupting the traditional payments solutions. These offer significant benefits for retailers who want to improve their customer payments experiences and options, success rates and fraud management, while lowering payments costs.

The incidence of high-profile customer data breaches, combined with Google's ending of support for third-party cookies, suggests that the growth of first-party customer data management, governance and personalisation platforms will continue to be a dominant tech trend. Retailers need to ensure they can collect and

manage first-party data in a secure and compliant way. They also need to ensure they can activate that data efficiently across all touchpoints to offer personalised experiences and reward loyalty, while providing compelling value for customers so they will be confident and comfortable sharing their data.

IR: On a personal note, what do you love about your job?

RW: What I love most is the passionate and capable team we've been able to build. They are a great set of individuals who care for, and get excited about, improving the Baby Bunting experience for our customers. Seeing their development as e-commerce experts and the next generation of digital leaders is incredibly fulfilling – even more so knowing their successes translate into direct improvements for our customer. ♦

JUDGE'S COMMENT

Rod has led the Baby Bunting business to massive growth, increasing the digital contribution significantly in both absolute terms and relative to the rest of the business. A massive replatform has led to meaningful growth in many fundamental business drivers, powering both current and future growth."

– Mark Baartse



Rod is an experienced digital transformation leader with a strong track record of delivering results. Since joining Baby Bunting in June 2020, he has implemented a headless commerce architecture, rolled out digital Black Friday campaigns, and launched an international website in New Zealand. He recently took on responsibility for fulfilment, to measure and improve the end-to-end online customer experience. ⚡

08.

09.



As head of customer and people, Lydia is responsible for ensuring the Miss Amara experience is best-in-class for customers and employees alike. Since joining the business in May 2020, she has implemented a paid parental leave policy, established a trade and commercial division and grown the brand's free styling offering, resulting in an uplift in Miss Amara's revenue, conversion rate and average order value. ⚡

LYDIA BERTINI

HEAD OF CUSTOMER & PEOPLE, MISS AMARA

THE PROBLEM-SOLVER

Like many young Australians, Lydia Bertini got a part-time retail job to support herself while attending university. But it wasn't long before she realised that interacting with people at David Jones was far more interesting than studying for her law degree.

"I was looking forward to being on the shop floor and connecting with customers so much more than I was looking forward to sitting alone with a huge textbook," Lydia tells *Inside Retail*.

"I ended up spending more and more time at my retail job, and then I took on a full-time role with David Jones as a sales manager. I did their management course and was there for six-and-a-half years. That was the beginning of my retail career, and I never looked back."

From David Jones, Lydia went to work for Pandora as a regional sales manager, where she had the opportunity to travel internationally and understand how a successful global brand works from the inside. She then joined Tigerlily, where she looked after the store network, and later Sheike, where she was national retail manager.

For Lydia, the appeal of working in retail has always been about problem-solving. Particularly when it comes to bricks-and-mortar retail, she loves being presented with questions and problems that require her to think on her feet and come up with out-of-the-box solutions – it's energising.

As a parent, however, the demands of the job and constant travel can also be difficult to manage. So in 2020, in search of a more flexible workplace, she decided to make the leap into e-commerce, and

landed at Miss Amara, an online rug brand that she had long admired.

Over the past three years, she has been surprised at times to discover just how seamlessly her skills and experience – accumulated over 15 years of working in stores – have translated to the world of online.

"In a bricks-and-mortar environment, you do a lot of training around how to connect with customers authentically. I think the exciting thing about e-commerce is that you have the opportunity to curate that more than you do in stores," she says.

"We can use those core principles of journey-mapping, asking relevant questions, finding out the customer's 'why', but in a more multifaceted way."

One example of this is the free styling service Miss Amara offers to help customers design their room around its rugs. The service is a unique point of difference for the brand, and a major revenue driver, but Lydia saw an opportunity to improve it even further.

Over the past year, she has invested in training and education – all team members are now qualified stylists – and optimised the look and feel of their proposals. As a result, demand for the styling service has almost doubled and the conversion rate is up by 24 per cent.

"That's something I learned from bricks-and-mortar. When I worked at David Jones, [then CEO] Paul Zahra would be standing on the shop floor at Christmas time, welcoming customers. I believe that all those touch points contribute to revenue," she says.

"You might not be able to quantify it, but the more you listen to your customer

and the more you can tailor your offering to them, the better your conversion rate is going to be."

Another area of focus for Lydia is growing the brand's burgeoning B2B segment. Since she first identified that interior designers and stylists were purchasing rugs more frequently than the average customer, trade sales have increased and are forecast to account for 10 per cent of total sales by the end of this year.

"We're seeing organic growth in that segment just by listening to their needs and catering to them," she says.

Within the business, the establishment of a paid parental leave scheme at Miss Amara is one of Lydia's proudest achievements.

"It was something I felt really passionate about, because it enabled me to reclaim my career and forge a new path in the e-commerce industry, which I've been so grateful for," she says. ♦

JUDGE'S COMMENT

"It's exciting to see Lydia bring a unique skill set and perspective from bricks-and-mortar into e-commerce. Her ability to understand and improve the customer experience is second to none. And the employee engagement initiatives she has implemented at Miss Amara are outstanding."

– Heather McIlvaine

KIRSTEN KORE

CO-FOUNDER & CO-CEO, DESIGNEREX

THE GAMECHANGER

Inside Retail: For those who aren't familiar with Designerex, can you briefly describe the business?

Kirsten Kore: At Designerex, we are tapping into the growing market and consumer desires for accessibility, affordability, diversity, personal expression and sustainability within the fashion industry. It is a two-sided marketplace, which has become the world's largest peer-to-peer (P2P) fashion rental technology platform. Designerex enables people to profit and earn income from their designer dresses, as well as enabling people to access and rent designer fashion for one-off special occasions.

I am pretty amazed that we have had over 70,000 designer dresses listed, with over 1,000 brands available, such as Zimmermann, Fendi and Rachel Gilbert, and scaled into the US market. The success of the platform can really be seen in our case studies and incredible community. For example, one Melbourne Designerex user rented out her \$400 dress 30 times, which returned over \$2,500 in rental income to her and enabled 30 women to wear just one dress.

IR: It sounds like 2022 was a big year for Designerex, including getting some exciting capital investment. What was your personal highlight from the last 12 months?

KK: I was extremely excited coming into 2022; I saw it as pivotal for Designerex coming off the back of 2020 and 2021. It did indeed come through and was our best year ever. I have so many highlights, but a few that I'm really proud of are our

technological innovation with Australia Post, launching three-hour delivery, partnering with Ticketek and signing with Uber in Australia and the US to facilitate one-hour delivery. These are all internally driven initiatives, given P2P renting is much more complex than resale and linear consumption. A focus on solutions that move the needle for our customers is why we develop proprietary technology to facilitate transactions for global scale.

IR: You started Designerex without any background in fashion or tech. What have been the biggest lessons learned about e-commerce in the last few years?

KK: Yes, I literally quit my job in real estate to go and solve a problem I had as a consumer. This was a true 'dive in head first' type of approach. After coming across this broken fashion system, and one that didn't cater to my needs, in 2015, my co-founder, Costa Koulis, and I excitedly lodged a patent and started custom-building a solution. We had to whiteboard every aspect of the customer journey, and literally make it up as we went along, as there was no one doing it and we had no playbook.

Lessons I quickly learned: customer is king, e-commerce tools and technology are ever-evolving and you don't need everything, you just need meaningful solutions specific to your niche, and there's enough hunger and agility in the industry to develop your own solutions with your partners, you just have to ask.

E-commerce is special. Everyone is on a mission to spark joy in people's lives.

IR: Sustainability is at the heart of Designerex. Why do you think this is an important factor for success?

KK: It's quite clear now that for any business to have true success well into the future, sustainability will have to have a significant thread through all aspects of the business. We are very fortunate that sustainability is already at the core of Designerex and we live and breathe it daily. Every single transaction means we're repurposing fashion, it's fabulous.

Our case studies prove that renting is the most sustainable way to consume fashion, [so] our only way forward is to scale Designerex – more impact, more repurposing and less fast fashion being consumed. I truly believe that Designerex is a necessary gamechanger for the fashion industry, for people, and for the planet – and a means to a sustainable future. ♦

JUDGE'S COMMENT

"Kirsten's innovative, sustainable circular business is years ahead of the curve. Her successful customer-focused strategy, in partnership with Australia Post and Uber Direct, puts convenience at the forefront, whilst still keeping sustainability at the centre of the business."
– Madeline Kulmar

In 2015, Kirsten quit a promising real-estate career and dove into the unfamiliar world of fashion, technology and e-commerce to build peer-to-peer dress rental platform Designorex with co-founder Costa Koulis. Now offering more than 70,000 dresses from over 1,000 brands, Designorex has attracted \$1 million from investors, including Wayne Baskin, Shane Lenton and Pixelforce, the company behind Kayla Itsines' Sweat app. ⚡



10.



Supercharge your digital revenue



Accelerate Growth



Prevent Fake Accounts



Eliminate Reseller/
Bots Abuse



Prevent Coupon Abuse



Create Frictionless Customer Experience



Guarantee results for chargebacks & approvals

Powered by the largest network of online retailers

ADOREBEAUTY

SHOPBACK

BOSS
HUGO BOSS

ASOS



MüDeal

NORDSTROM

SHEIN

asics



Learn more about
Forter's 90-Day
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11.

ADRIAN RAFTER

PERFORMANCE MARKETING LEAD, QUAD LOCK

Since joining Quad Lock in 2016, Adrian has played an instrumental role in scaling its online advertising. He is now responsible for leading performance marketing for the brand globally, and coaching the performance marketing team to greater success. In 2022, he helped propel the online business to achieve strong growth and successfully launch a new range.

"Adrian's impressive growth numbers are just the beginning of his professional and personal achievements in 2022. Fine-tuning his digital channels and experimenting with new platforms helped him contribute significantly to his business." – Shannon Ingrey

13.

NICOLA CLEMENT

FORMER GM OF OMNI-EXPERIENCE, MYER

In her nearly four years at Myer, Nicola transformed the department store into an online juggernaut, which outperformed many of the country's leading pureplay retailers in FY22. A self-described 'intrapreneur', Nicola drives change through innovation and smart use of technology. In December, she announced she was leaving Myer to attend the University of Oxford's Executive MBA program. ⚡

"A true 'intrapreneur,' Nicola has led the transformation of Myer from department store to e-commerce powerhouse, showing the importance of delivering the basics brilliantly while changing our perception of a much-loved brand by delivering real growth and a better customer experience." – Richard Thame



12.

BRIAN TOWNSHEND

GM OF OMNI-DIGITAL, STORE OPERATIONS & TEAM MEMBER EXPERIENCE, SUPER RETAIL GROUP

Brian has worked in e-commerce for 25 years. After spending a decade at a digital agency in the UK, he founded his own consultancy, where he built and executed strategies for brands such as Marks & Spencer and Canon. After 10 years, he moved to Australia and joined Super Retail Group, where he is now responsible for all things e-commerce and digital in-store.

"Brian sets the industry standard for omnichannel personalisation that looks at ecosystem efficiency (back office and stores) and how to enhance key consumer touchpoints that deliver against specific growth metrics. This focus on strategy and high quality, measured and accountable omnichannel execution set him apart." – Rachel Kelly



14.

ROB GODWIN

AUSTRALASIAN DIRECTOR & HEAD OF COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS, LOVEHONEY GROUP

Rob has dedicated the past 19 years to evolving the sexual wellness industry and bringing it into the mainstream. This has culminated in his current role as the sole Australian director and head of commercial operations at the world's largest sexual wellness company, The Lovehoney Group. He is responsible for supporting, nurturing and developing staff, revenue and commercial activity in Australia and New Zealand. ⚡

"Rob has taken a holistic, people-first approach to growing the company. A focus on customer satisfaction, while also taking a very empathetic approach to team management, has driven great business success. His focus on mental health initiatives for both staff and the community is especially inspiring." – Mark Baartse



15.

JOSH HOWARD

FOUNDER & CEO, SINGLE USE AIN'T SEXY

Since launching sustainable soap brand Single Use Ain't Sexy over two years ago, Josh has leveraged his significant experience in television and technology to grow the business and build awareness. In 2022, he focused on product development and innovation. So far, the business has helped more than 40,000 customers save tens of thousands of single-use plastic soap bottles from landfill. ⚡

"Josh's commitment to eradicating single-use plastic, and creating innovative products that not only have a positive impact but are also beautifully designed, is truly groundbreaking. The online experience brings together the purpose and products and tells the story visually."
- Kelly Slessor



16.

WILLIAM CONDITSIS

CO-DIRECTOR, BABYBOO

William is one of the driving forces behind Babyboo, overseeing 45 employees and three global offices, and implementing structures, processes and growth strategies to enable the business to scale. In 2022, he led the acquisition of a new warehouse to support four-hour delivery in Sydney, and led the switch to eco-friendly packaging. He is forecasting explosive growth in 2023. ⚡

"Wow...where do I even start? It's stories like William's that make me wish everyone were able read these submissions. International expansion, product innovation and operational excellence - keep smashing those milestones!" - Shannon Ingrey



17.

AIRI SUTHERLAND

HEAD OF DIGITAL & MARKETING, BILLINI

Airi has worked for some of the biggest brands in the world, including McDonald's, Uber, Air New Zealand and Vodafone, going from e-commerce co-ordinator to head of digital in five years. One of the highlights of her career was receiving McDonald's Moving the Needle Award for delivering over \$100 million in incremental revenue from e-commerce channels in the first year.

"Airi has grown the team at Billini and delivered very strong growth for the business both locally and internationally. She has targeted improvements across both the e-commerce and digital marketing space, leading to strong commercial performance for the business."
- Louisa Simpson



18.

OMAR SABRÉ

CO-FOUNDER, CEO, CREATIVE DIRECTOR & LEAD PRODUCT DESIGNER, MAISON DE SABRÉ

Omar was a young dentist when a family illness propelled him to start a business with his brother Zane Sabré. What started as a hobby soon became a multimillion-dollar leather accessories brand and landed the siblings on the *Forbes* 30 Under 30 list. In 2022, Omar launched 15 new products, secured a pop-up in David Jones and established a five-year sustainability pledge.

"Maison de Sabré's ongoing success is largely thanks to Omar's creativity and forward-looking attitude. His championing of sustainable leather tanning processes has set Maison de Sabré apart as an ethical option for customers who want luxury products without the environmental price tag." - Dean Blake

19.

LUCAS FERRIER

SENIOR MANAGER OF DIGITAL CHANNELS, SALVOS STORES

Lucas is responsible for leading The Salvation Army's digital transformation through e-commerce. In 2022, he focused on training store staff to list second-hand items online, improving the user experience and implementing AI-driven search, which resulted in a significant increase in sales. He is passionate about creating a positive social and environmental impact in his career.

"Salvos' e-commerce business has grown significantly under Lucas's leadership, thanks to his use of advanced technology to improve search and pricing – no mean feat, given the site has thousands of unique products – and design thinking to map out different customer journeys."
– Heather McIlvaine

21.

CHARLIE GANZEN

E-COMMERCE MANAGER, ANZ, LOVEHONEY GROUP

Charlie started honing his e-commerce skills in his teens while working in his family's business, Get Wines Direct. Following the sale of the business, he joined POS software company Retail Express, before moving to Youfoodz, and then Lovehoney in 2021, where he is one of the youngest managers in the company. Over the last 12 months, he has focused on increasing AOV.

"Charlie leads the e-commerce team at Lovehoney in Australia and New Zealand, and is responsible for delivering sizeable revenue growth over the last 12 months. By streamlining e-commerce operations in the region, Charlie has been able to deliver significant improvements to efficiencies within his team." – Louisa Simpson

20.
MATTHEW HORN

GM OF CUSTOMER & DIGITAL, COUNTRY ROAD GROUP

After escaping life as a corporate lawyer, Matthew joined the early leadership teams at The Iconic and Uber Australia and learned first-hand what it takes to build and grow an online business. He joined Country Road Group in 2020 and is now driving its digital and technological transformation. In 2022, he spearheaded the launch of the group's first mobile app and implemented cutting-edge personalisation technology, which has led to a significant increase in conversion rates. ⚡

"Matthew continues to develop the offering and team at CRG. Growth upon growth at scale is no easy achievement. Congratulations on another great year." – Shannon Ingrey

22.

JULIE MATHERS

CEO, SNUGGLE HUNNY

Julie has worked in retail for 30 years, including 14 years in e-commerce, and is a firm believer in the triple bottom line. She is known for launching eco-friendly online retailer Flora & Fauna, which she sold to BWX for \$27.9 million in 2021 and exited in February 2022. Since purchasing babywear business Snuggle Hunny in March 2022, she has overseen a brand refresh, range expansion and replatforming. 💎

"Julie has the unique ability to combine purpose, people and product to create a movement that customers, suppliers and partners want to be a part of. Underpinning this movement with technology and design has allowed Snuggle Hunny to improve conversions in just seven short months, providing a platform for scale." – Kelly Slessor



“Aligent are true experts when it comes to e-commerce. They are a trusted advisor and partner. They have a deep understanding of e-commerce ecosystem and can handle all the complex areas that often get neglected – think Performance, integrations, and security. Above all they share our values with being transparent and upfront and have been able to deliver on their promises.”

Lee Munro, Director. Munro Footwear Group



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(Multiple Finalists)

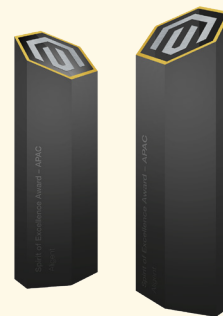


Online Store of the Year
Omnichannel Retailer of the Year



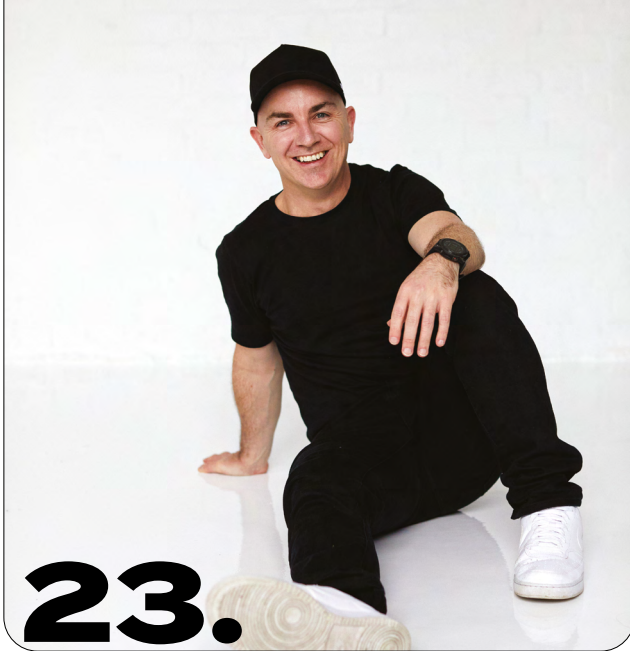
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23.

BRENDAN GILLEN

CEO, FIGHT GEAR DIRECT

From introducing Australian brands to the world as e-commerce manager of Wesfarmers' workwear division, to driving digital change at PETStock and 2XU, to growing Superdry's ANZ e-commerce arm into a multimillion-dollar store, Brendan has had a successful career. Now, he is using his skills and lessons learned to turn his own business, Fight Gear Direct, into an online powerhouse. ⚡

"Brendan describes his job as 'get shit done' – and it's clear he's doing just that. In the last 12 months, he has rethought Fight Gear Direct's marketing and fulfilment model and made its first acquisition. Encouraging staff to build their own e-commerce start-ups is a great way to keep them engaged and teach them what it takes to grow an online business." – Dean Blake



24.

GEOFF HUENS

CO-FOUNDER &
DIRECTOR,
BEER CARTEL

Geoff is a pioneer of Australia's online liquor retail industry. Since leading Beer Cartel's acquisition of gifting business Brewquets, the subsidiary's revenue has increased eight-fold. An innovative thinker, Geoff drives operational excellence across both businesses and strives for continuous process improvement, new product development and the identification of new growth drivers.

"Geoff spearheaded a range of innovative initiatives, from operational improvements like local distribution, to product innovations, including establishing new product relevancy through gifting and the Great Australian Easter Beer Hunt. Notably, Geoff balances this with sharing business insights publicly and participation in committees to establish industry codes and frameworks." – Jason Pallant



25.

HANNAH BLACK

CHIEF GROWTH OFFICER, LVLV

Starting as a marketing intern in 2016, when LVLV was still recording orders on Post-it notes, Hannah has been involved in every stage of the company's growth, from managing increased order volumes during Covid-19, to expanding its warehouse footprint in every state, to undergoing a \$35 million acquisition in April 2022. She is now responsible for the end-to-end management of growth projects.

"Hannah is an octopus doing 100 things at once! She's launched a wide range of new products (including some amazing personalisation), helped the business launch in Asia, expanded their logistics breadth and quality, and overseen a record turnaround of a website replatform, allowing them to do further innovation, ensuring the next phase of business growth." – Mark Baartse



26.

DEAN SALAKAS

CEO, THE PARTY PEOPLE

Dean is an e-commerce veteran and frequent speaker at industry events. Since launching Australia's first online party store in 1999, he has continued to drive innovation and growth in the business. In 2022, he oversaw the acquisition of Mega Party Warehouse and worked with service providers to create a new retail channel using augmented reality mirrors. ⚡

"Dean has pioneered innovative technology that uses augmented reality mirrors to allow customers to virtually try on costumes in shopping centres, creating a new channel for the business." – Kelly Slessor



27.

MIKE HALLIGAN

CO-FOUNDER, SCRATCH

As a marketer who liked design and knew how to code, Mike unexpectedly found himself in the world of e-commerce after he was asked to build online stores for some of Australia's most innovative blogs. He started his own e-commerce agency, before eventually joining one of his clients. In 2018, he started Scratch, a healthy dog food brand that became a B Corp last year.

"As an innovative pet food retailer, Mike is pioneering healthy and sustainable food for dogs. Scratch has had strong customer and revenue growth over the last 12 months, and is market-leading in its innovative approaches to work-life balance, which include a four-day work week and equal parental leave benefits for partners." – Louisa Simpson



28.

VANJA STACE

CHIEF EXPERIENCE OFFICER, KING LIVING

Since launching her first website in 2006, Vanja has turned into an e-commerce specialist, working across major retailers including City Beach, Napoleon Perdis Cosmetics and Sass & Bide. In her current role at King Living, she is responsible for creating and supporting a premium, positive and memorable experience across all parts of the journey, to drive growth.

"Very impressed by how Vanja has taken global economic challenges and turned them into an opportunity to enhance the online experience and not rely solely on the showroom, rethinking the traditional model. This has led to the creation of an online shopping destination that complements and enhances the in-store experience and is grounded in the consumer journey, mindset and data." – Rachel Kelly



29.

OLIVER RANCK

FORMER HEAD OF MARKETING, MYSALE GROUP

Driven by a deep-rooted curiosity, Oliver has had a broad range of experiences, from teaching himself to build websites in his teenage years, to selling jeans online during his university days, to running B2B publishing business Octomedia. In 2021, he joined Mysale Group, where he oversaw the customer lifecycle across 12 e-commerce sites. He left the business in January 2023.

[Disclosure: Inside Retail is owned by Octomedia. Oliver remains a director, but is no longer CEO.] ⚡

"Targeted communication and personalising the shopping experience have been at the core of a successful platform transformation at Mysale. Oliver has driven customer growth and introduced sustainable packaging to ensure Mysale remains a global e-commerce leader." – Richard Thame



30.

NATASHA NEAL

SENIOR AUSTRALASIAN PR & MARKETING MANAGER, LOVEHONEY GROUP

Natasha started working for Lovehoney on a casual basis in 2018. Since then, she has helped grow the company's marketing and commercial teams in Australia and developed a more localised communications strategy for the region. In 2022, she played a pivotal role in launching Decentraland, the world's first sexual wellness store in the metaverse.

"Natasha really pushed to break down stigmas and make sexual wellness mainstream. This was demonstrated through both practicalities of navigating advertising restrictions as well as innovative experiments in VR and Web3 technologies. This was combined with a strong support of communities and charities that closely align with the industry and business values." – Jason Pallant

31.

**MELISSA WILKINSON**

FOUNDER, PERSONALISED FAVOURS

Since launching Personalised Favours in 2012, Melissa has grown it into an award-winning e-commerce business with thousands of five-star reviews. During Covid, she successfully pivoted away from weddings to focus on gifts for all occasions, and in the last 12 months, she launched a new lifestyle range and introduced more personalisation options. She is passionate about prioritising mental health in the workplace.

"Melissa's flexibility in pivoting her business to the changing environment, her intuition to expand their product range to meet changes in events, and her willingness to learn from her customer base are all examples of why she made the list for 2023." – Madeline Kulmar

33.

**AISLING CUNNINGHAM**

CO-FOUNDER, LULA EYE MASK

Aisling started Lula Eye Mask with her sister Margaret Cunningham in 2021. While launching the business, both sisters were diagnosed with breast cancer, received treatment and survived. They are committed to promoting breast cancer awareness and have raised nearly \$50,000 for Mater Hospital Brisbane. Aisling is responsible for all creative and digital aspects of the business.

"What an inspiration Aisling is. By sharing her personal cancer story and her brand mission to help women enjoy self-care, guilt free, Aisling has created a growing personal care business. Her strength in PR and social is evident on site and you can 'feel' the brand ethos shine through." – Rachel Kelly

32.

ASHLEIGH MURRAYGLOBAL SVP OF
E-COMMERCE & DIGITAL,
LYRE'S SPIRIT CO

Ashleigh has 15 years of experience in digital marketing and e-commerce across various industries, including FMCG, retail, events and tourism. Since joining Lyre's in 2019, she has opened direct-to-consumer operations in 32 countries, rolled out an integration with Amazon Alexa and launched an augmented reality experience. She is responsible for all digital touchpoints across the company.

"Now a global success story, Ashleigh and the Lyre team are changing the way we drink, making non-alcoholic drinks accessible, affordable and great tasting in a uniquely spirited Australian way." – Richard Thame



34.

**JOSH MAMMOLITI**

CO-FOUNDER & DIRECTOR, THE BLUE SPACE

After spending a decade in e-commerce at some of Australia's biggest building brands, Josh combined his passion for digital and renovations to launch The Blue Space in 2015. The Blue Space not only makes it easy to buy kitchen, bath and laundry fixtures online, but also makes it effortless to get them delivered. Josh aims to make the company an amazing people-first place to work.

"In 2022, Josh focused on solving one of the biggest problems in e-commerce: the reliable delivery of big-box items. By creating a dedicated delivery network for The Blue Space, he set it up for success at a time when Australia's logistics network was stretched thin, and ensured that customers got what they ordered, when they needed it." – Dean Blake

When you own your data, you own your growth

The image shows a screenshot of the Klaviyo analytics interface. At the top, a breadcrumb trail reads "Analytics > Custom Reports > New Report". Below this, there are three main sections:

- Message performance:** A list of four questions with checkboxes:
 - Where are drop-offs occurring in my message funnel?
 - How much revenue are my messages generating?
 - What messages are having deliverability issues?
 - How are customers engaging with my messages?
- Report Options:** A vertical list of four report types, each with an icon and text:
 - Email revenue by message (envelope icon)
 - SMS revenue by message (speech bubble icon, highlighted in yellow)
 - Multi-channel revenue by month (document icon)
- Message Preview:** A yellow speech bubble containing a personalized message:

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BRONTE JACOBSON

DIGITAL GROWTH MARKETING MANAGER, MISS AMARA

Since graduating with a marketing degree in 2003, Bronte has worked across e-commerce sites in travel, insurance, online lotteries and retail, with a strong focus on building her digital skill set. She spent three years at Super Retail Group, leading BCF's online marketing team, before moving to Miss Amara in 2022.

"Having only joined Miss Amara in January of 2022, Bronte set her sights on success. She built and rolled out a successful marketing strategy and identified gaps in the business' current plan to look after its future. She championed big changes to help grow their audience and saw lifts in revenue, despite emerging from a pandemic." – Madeline Kulmar

37.



HEATHER EARL

E-COMMERCE & DIGITAL MARKETING MANAGER,
NUTRITION WAREHOUSE GROUP

Over her nine-year career in e-commerce, Heather has brought her expertise in digital marketing to multiple brands, including Rockwear, Surf Dive 'n' Ski, RVCA, Auguste The Label and now Nutrition Warehouse Group, where she works closely with the marketing and development teams to roll out improvements across seven e-commerce sites in line with the company's overarching roadmap.

"Heather's focus on upgrading and streamlining Nutrition Warehouse Group's e-commerce offerings has helped the business take advantage of a burgeoning health and wellness industry. Her efforts to connect the dots on customer data led to a massive jump in conversions and shows the power of properly utilised data." – Dean Blake



36. ZOLTAN CSAKI

CO-FOUNDER, CITIZEN WOLF

Zoltan launched his first pureplay e-commerce business as a side hustle to his full-time job in advertising in 2006, and has been experimenting and learning about the online retail industry ever since. As one of the co-founders of Citizen Wolf, he is responsible for product, brand and e-commerce, as well as public speaking. In 2022, he led the brand's \$1 million-plus equity crowdfunding campaign. ⚡

"Zoltan is attempting to change shopper buying habits in fashion for the better, driving innovations in product fit technology that aim to reduce fashion waste and returns. Innovations over the past 12 months led to clearly demonstrated commercial benefits, as well as successful crowdfunding campaigns." – Jason Pallant



JASON DANIEL

FOUNDER & CEO, LSKD

Jason has turned his passion for fitness, action sports and adventure into an international street and sportswear brand with a highly engaged customer base. Since transitioning from a wholesale business model to a direct-to-consumer brand in FY20, LSKD has enjoyed explosive growth. Jason is committed to being 1 per cent better every day, enjoying the journey and creating a community.

"LSKD's rapid growth is a testament to Jason's inspiring vision and values, and its partnerships with charities – such as Wear It Purple and the National Breast Cancer Foundation – are a reminder of the power of business to do good. I'm excited to see how Jason taps into all the possibilities of omnichannel retail in the future." – Heather McIlvaine

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39. LOTTIE DALZIEL

FOUNDER, BANISH

When Lottie made a New Year's resolution to "do better for the planet" in 2018, she didn't realise how hard it would be to cut through the greenwashing and find eco-friendly alternatives to everyday products. Spotting a gap in the market, she launched Banish to help consumers reduce their environmental footprint. In 2022, she launched the podcast *How To Save Our Planet*. ⚡

"Personalisation, community education and category expansion have underpinned the success of Banish over the past 12 months. Lottie has achieved this whilst continuing to enhance the brand's recycling program to support more accurate forecasting of volumes. She has navigated the challenges of significant growth by maintaining the focus on consumer data, experience and purpose." – Rachel Kelly



40. JAYLON MARTIN

HEAD OF E-COMMERCE & TECHNOLOGY,
MAKEUP CARTEL BRANDS

Jaylon started his e-commerce career as a freelancer, building online retail stores for clients. In 2017, he joined Australian Sports Nutrition, where he oversaw a site redesign and replatforming, before moving to fast-growing clean beauty business Makeup Cartel Brands. He is responsible for ensuring the company is constantly innovating and improving its tech stack.

"A big checklist of achievements for 2022. Jaylon tackled many pieces of the tech stack, as well as increasing conversions. And 2023 is going to be a good year, with all these new components humming." – Shannon Ingrey



41. AARON LUM

HEAD OF REWARDS STORE, QANTAS

Aaron is responsible for the design and execution of Qantas Rewards Store, an online department store that allows Qantas Frequent Flyer members to earn and use Qantas Points on more than 20,000 products across 700 brands. Aaron has over 10 years of experience in the retail, e-commerce and loyalty sectors, and has previously worked at Woolworths in commercial, marketing and logistics roles. ⚡

"In a travel industry affected by Covid-19, Aaron's focus on reimagining the Rewards Store created an essential link with customers looking for more innovative ways to continue to enjoy the benefits of membership and have access to more than 20,000 products." – Richard Thame

42. ROB WARD

CO-FOUNDER & CHIEF GROWTH OFFICER, QUAD LOCK

Rob launched Quad Lock in 2011. After bootstrapping the tech accessories brand into a global business with sales in more than 100 countries, he sold a majority stake to Quadrant Growth Fund in 2020. As CEO, he scaled Quad Lock into a more than \$100 million operation, using a test-measure-learn mindset. In 2022, he stepped down as CEO to focus on the company's growth.

"From a customer standpoint, Quad Lock delivers on the promise of a great digital experience, which allows you to 'choose your own journey'. From a business standpoint, Rob and the team have achieved phenomenal growth, identifying new market segments and opportunities – which has allowed them to scale." – Kelly Slessor



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43.

MATTHEW MOSSE-ROBINSON

CEO, PERSONALISED FAVOURS

After starting his career in corporate banking, Matthew made the leap into e-commerce when he joined Personalised Favours in 2013. Together with founder Melissa Wilkinson, he helped grow the online gifting business from a start-up run out of their homes into a sophisticated e-commerce operation with a team of 50. He is now co-owner and oversees all aspects of the business.

"Matthew championed multiple simultaneous initiatives to improve internal efficiencies, increase employee wellbeing, and improve customer experience. This was combined with innovative 'pivots' during lockdowns to benefit both the business and consumers." – Jason Pallant



44.

TRACY JONES-HARRIS

HEAD OF DIGITAL & E-COMMERCE, CAMILLA

Tracy is an e-commerce leader with 10 years of experience in fashion retail, including stints at City Chic, Noni B and now Camilla. She is bringing her diverse experience in implementing multichannel capabilities and global growth to her current role driving the brand's digital strategy. In 2022, she created and deployed a full-funnel marketing strategy to grow in the US.

"Between spearheading Camilla's marketing strategy in the US and setting up a weekly online shoppable video series, Tracy has been an integral part of the fashion brand's growth in the past year. These may have been daunting projects to undertake, but the results speak for themselves." – Dean Blake



45.

ARGYLICA CONDITSIS

FOUNDER & DIRECTOR, BABYBOO

Argylica started Babyboo in 2011 at the age of 17. Despite having no business contacts or background in e-commerce, she has grown the brand into an award-winning disruptive fashion empire, boasting 1.5 million followers on social media and a 2023 revenue run rate of \$50 million. In 2022, she oversaw the switch to compostable packaging. ⚡

"Having taken her brand from a start-up to one of Australia's largest online fashion brands, Argylica has hustled her way to the top. She has used her 'superpower' in social media to grow her following exponentially and has set her sights on international success – I have no doubt she will be victorious." – Madeline Kulmar



46.

NICCII KUGLER

FOUNDER, NASH + BANKS

Following a successful career in sales and marketing, Niccii launched Nash + Banks – a curated e-commerce platform for conscious brands across fashion, beauty and home – in 2018. She is responsible for every aspect of the business, from building the website, to uploading SKUs, to packing boxes and overseeing a small team of freelancers.

"Niccii has done an amazing job being very hands on while managing to really diversify the business; launching a physical shop in a month, and launching B2B with some impressive clients signed. All this was achieved while building a sustainable business that gives back to the community." – Mark Baartse



MATTHEW BANKS

FOUNDER, MERCHANTS OF THE SUN

A problem solver and big thinker, Matthew launched Merchants of the Sun at the start of the pandemic in 2020. The brand offers gold and silver jewellery that transcends trends and aims to break the mould of gendered fashion while keeping its carbon footprint to a minimum. He is inspired by the limitless possibilities of online retail, and says this is just the beginning of his e-commerce career.

"I admire how Matthew is using his brand to encourage mindful consumption and reduce waste; for instance, by incentivising customers to return jewellery items they no longer want, so they can be recycled into new products. With his recent expansion into the US, it's clear that big things are ahead."

- Heather McIlvaine



48.
LEAH TU'INUKUAFE

E-COMMERCE MANAGER,
MOTTO FASHIONS

Leah has worked in e-commerce and digital marketing for over 10 years. An accomplished professional, she has led teams to improve the customer journey and drive digital transformation at brands including Tabcorp, Webjet, Tennis Australia and Best Friends Pets, where she was responsible for creating and implementing trading strategies, optimising conversion rates and managing e-commerce platforms. She departed the business in September 2022, and is now at Motto Fashions.

"Leah is a data-driven e-commerce leader who uses her commercial acumen to find the answers to all the important questions around customer abandonment. She has demonstrated a passion for understanding and improving the customer journey, resulting in a material revenue improvement for the business." - Louisa Simpson



49.
ALEXANDER BABICH

FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR, KULANI KINIS

Former tax adviser and self-taught online retailer Alexander launched Kulani Kinis with his wife Danielle Atkins in 2015. He is responsible for ensuring the brand's operations and marketing activities run smoothly, which is no small feat, given its rapid global growth in recent years. He now oversees a team of more than 40 people and is looking to reduce the brand's environmental impact in the year ahead.

"The year 2022 was big for Kulani Kinis, with the launch of a dedicated online store in Europe, major wholesale push in the US, and significant investment in new backend systems and processes. As a result, the business showed impressive revenue growth and cost savings, thanks in large part to Alexander's vision and leadership." - Heather McIlvaine



50.
REBECCA SMITH

FORMER CHIEF MARKETING & DIGITAL OFFICER, FRANK GREEN

Rebecca is a committed brand, marketing and e-commerce leader with experience in global corporations, founder-led organisations, social enterprises and start-ups. In her three years at Frank Green, she helped grow the business by expanding the range and attracting a new, younger customer base. As of January 2023, she is now GM of marketing at Brownes Dairy. ⚡

"Rebecca and her team significantly grew Frank Green's e-commerce platform in 2022, with viral campaigns such as the TikTok Lucky Bag campaign contributing to their phenomenal growth." - Kelly Slessor

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