



Case study Dressed to impress

Jack Wills Fashionable growth

Jack Wills

Funded by



Background

Jack Wills is a premium priced, British “preppy” casual clothing retailer operating in a clearly defined niche, targeting 16 to 24 year olds. With 21 stores at investment, an online business and successful catalogue “The Handbook”, Jack Wills was an established successful multi channel retailer with an aspirational brand, strong management team and impressive sales growth record.

Inflexion invested for a minority stake in July 2007, securing the transaction by demonstrating commitment and deliverability, quickly assembling a high calibre team of proven retailer entrepreneurs to provide ongoing advice to the company.

Strategy

- Expansion of existing stores
- Growth of online and catalogue business in line with growth in UK stores
- Introduction of a second brand for the 24–35 demographic
- International expansion
- Realisation of economies of scale to drive margin enhancement and operational improvements
- Enhancement of entrepreneurial management team with additional experienced industry experts

How growth was achieved

Jack Wills has continued its growth trajectory opening new stores and increasing sales, in spite of the challenging UK retail environment. The business successfully launched its second brand “Aubin and Wills” and now has 8 dedicated stores. The overseas expansion programme has also started.

Inflexion introduced a new Chairman, Peter Saunders, former CEO then Chairman of the Bodyshop and has worked closely with the board to professionalise the internal reporting and finance function.

Job creation

When Inflexion invested Jack Wills had 186 full time employees; it currently employs 804 full time employees.

Investors:	Inflexion Private Equity
Location:	London
Sector:	Retail
Stage:	Minority investment – 2007
Exit:	Currently in portfolio
Company website:	www.jackwills.com
Investor websites:	www.inflexion.com

“Inflexion have provided fantastic support as our business has grown, introducing us to useful industry contacts and providing invaluable advice when needed.”

Peter Williams, CEO, Jack Wills

