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Behind the Brand



WITH AN ENVIABLE HERITAGE, DUNE IS A LEADER IN AFFORDABLE LUXURY FASHION. HERE, BEN JOBLING, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF DUNE INTERNATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FRANCHISE AND WHOLESALE DIRECTOR, THE DUNE GROUP, TALKS ABOUT THE BRAND'S CONTINUED EXPANSION IN BOTH STORES AND ONLINE PRESENCE.

OXFORD STREET LONDON, UK

Dune
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Dune is a global leader of affordable luxury fashion footwear and accessories. Established in London, the fashion capital of the world, the Group has a heritage spanning four generations. This is a truly global brand operating in 82 locations across 12 countries (Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Libya, India, South Africa, Philippines and Estonia) on a franchise basis. It also directly manages some 200 locations in the UK, US, France, Germany, Holland, Denmark and Switzerland.

Dune attracts confident and fashion-conscious customers who value their individuality and have high expectations for quality, attention to detail and wearability. There is a diverse customer profile, owing to the broad appeal of its product.

"We have worked very closely with our partners on the changing retail environments within their markets, particularly in the online space, as well sharing with them our learnings on the changing customer interactions with Dune here in the UK," explains Ben Jobling, Managing Director of Dune International and International Franchise and Wholesale Director, The Dune Group. "In terms of perception, what has been really positive is the acceptance of the consumer in seeing us as a destination lifestyle brand across the Ladies', Men's and Accessories segments.

As a lifestyle brand, Dune has ensured, through its new retail



store format, that it highlights the brand's strength in the Menswear and Accessories collections as much as the Ladies range. As a result, the Group's international partners are achieving equal success across all areas of the offer.

"We are very fortunate to have fantastic in-house Design and Buying teams that have embraced the growing global nature of our business. This has led to regionally-designed product for our international partners," he explains. "It has been great to see that some designs created for our international partners adopted and introduced into our UK stores, with equal success."

2015 proved to be a busy year for openings across the Dune portfolio, but a number of locations stood out, including Palladium Mall in Mumbai, Shangri-La Mall in Manila, a reopening in Dubai Mall with the new store format and the opening of the brand's eighth store in Saudi Arabia, within Nakheel Mall.

"What has been interesting is that as our exposure online has increased, the number of countries that have shown a demand for Dune to come to the market has also grown," says Jobling. "Following this, we are looking at introducing the brand to Australasia, South America and further development across the MENA region."

Indeed, Dune operates a global social media platform that allows its international partners to add locally-generated content. Operating this way enables the group to ensure that its core brand messages are delivered globally whilst at the same time allowing it to view feedback and comments, both to this content and local content, at the same time as its partner.

"I believe that one of the key reasons behind the success of the brand has been the recognition of our diverse customer base – both in the UK and internationally. More important to us is ensuring that the Dune DNA in all of our products is maintained and recognisable. This ensures that no matter who the customer is there is reassurance in the products they are buying," He adds.

Another key driver is the brand's recognition of the shifting ways in which the customer interacts, and their expectations when it comes to each of the sales channels; Dune understands the need for these to be seamless.

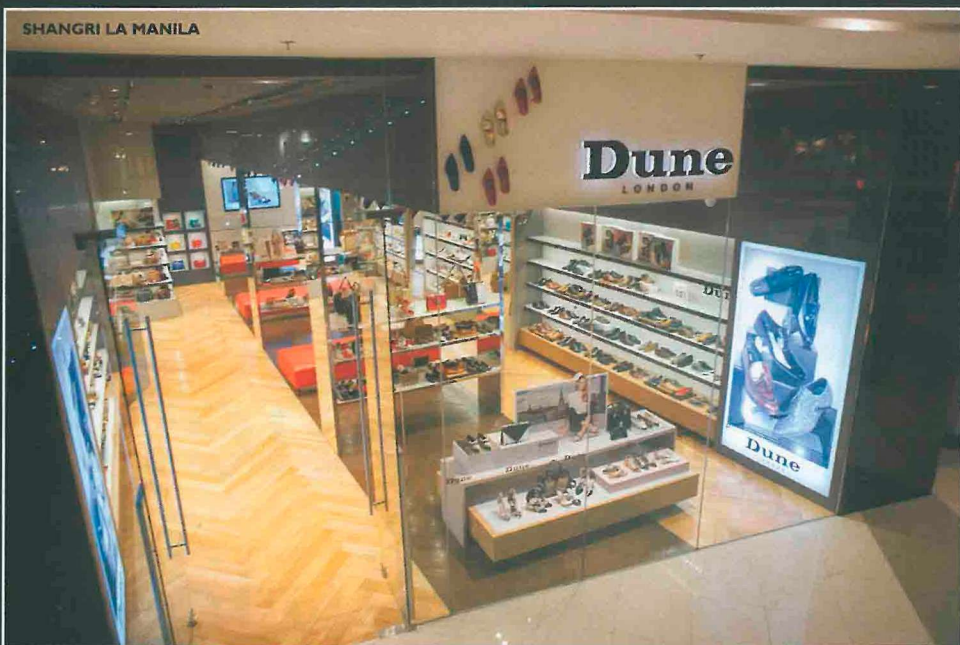
"This and the knowledge that as a brand our products must always reflect who we are in terms of direction, quality and affordability."

Dune has ten core values that are always considered when making daily decisions, the most important of which, perhaps, is 'Responsibility'. This ensures that the company considers its customers, whether direct through stores or in its partnerships across channels, when it makes any decision.

"We are seeing from our online demand that there are real opportunities to continue to grow the brand across multiple markets – the most interesting aspect to this growth will be as the world becomes more 'border free', through the online environment. We need to ask ourselves how we can create a seamless retail experience for the customer, no matter where and how that interaction with Dune takes place," Jobling concludes.



BROADWAY, NEW YORK, US



SHANGRI LA MANILA

