



# Natalie Binns

Fashion Buying, Sourcing & Sustainability | Freelance & Consultant

📍 London, UK

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[Website](#) [LinkedIn](#)

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## Languages

English (Fluent)

French (Basic)

## About

I'm Natalie, an expert in fashion buying & sustainable sourcing. I help fashion brands launch and grow with sustainability at the forefront.

My expertise includes:

- Sourcing manufacturers and fabrics
- Product & Brand Strategy - product-market-fit, competitor analysis
- Managing production and supplier relationships
- Sustainability strategy
- Cost price negotiation and improving target margin
- Range building
- Improving lead times
- Design direction and product development
- Preparing to wholesale

I am also an accomplished speaker and lecturer, available for panel talks, workshops and training.

Here's what a recent client had to say about working with me:

"I was introduced to Natalie when I asked around for a recommendation to help me find a new supplier. She did exactly that, and then I knew I had to find a way to keep her in the business.

Natalie now helps to manage my range and stock levels, and has helped me negotiate supplier terms I didn't know I could negotiate. Natalie has not only helped me increase my margins, but also given me peace of mind to know that everything is under the watchful eye of a true expert in her field. My only wish is that I'd found Natalie sooner, I would highly recommend her."

Cat, Founder, Pattie & Co

### BRANDS WORKED WITH

- AllSaints
- ASOS
- BHS
- Glue Store
- Natalie Binns Consulting
- Omnes

## Experience

### ● Buying Consultant | Head of Buying

Natalie Binns Consulting | Sep 2019 - Now

Helping fashion businesses develop awesome product that sells, without compromising on sustainability goals.

Some of the ways I help businesses are:

- Sourcing - finding the right suppliers to partner with including manufacturers/mills with low MOQ suited to start-ups
- Sustainability - understanding sustainable fabrics and ethical manufacture
- Improving lead times and setting up a critical path with realistic time-lines
- Production including fittings, approvals, managing factories and managing stock into the business
- Cost price negotiation and improving target margin
- Range building and trading - encouraging multi purchases, increasing basket value, capitalising on bestsellers, managing risk
- Design direction and product development - sample shopping, inspiration gathering, cost engineering
- Competitor analysis and market research
- Improving efficiency in ways of working an implementing scalable processes



## ● Buying Consultant | Head of Buying

Omnes | Sep 2019 - Feb 2020

<https://www.omnes.com/>

Led the product team (designers, pattern makers, garment tech, production) for a sustainable fashion e-commerce start-up, taking them from conception to launch leading buying strategy and design direction.

- Built customer profile and trend mood boards to establish clear brand direction for the SS20 launch.
- Developed 4 collections of dresses, jumpsuits and separates (100 options) using sustainable woven fabrics, working with CMT factories in the UK and Europe, implementing critical paths to achieve target launch date.
- Briefed tech packs to pattern maker and saw garment development through from proto to production including fabric sourcing, print development and fittings.
- Placed orders for fabric, trims and production negotiating price and delivery to meet business targets. Built relationships with sustainable fabric mills and negotiated small print runs in order to minimise stock risk.
- Drove sustainability by ensuring factories could produce audits (BSCI and Sedex), visiting factories at various stages of production and working with design to ensure garment end of life was considered.



## ● Senior Womenswear Buyer

BHS | Aug 2018 - Aug 2019

BHS International owned by the Al Mana Group operates 5 retail stores in the Middle East and 14 UK concessions offering Womenswear, Menswear, Kidswear and Homeware.

As Senior Womenswear Buyer I acted as a head of department, leading the product strategy for Womenswear, managing 3 direct reports, working with high levels of autonomy and reporting directly to the Buying Director. A key part of my role was engaging with and understanding customer requirements in a global market, delivering a range which balanced trend-led product with core commercial styling and delivered on the BHS reputation for quality and value (400 options per season).

Being a start-up business, it was necessary to work quickly to overcome inherited problems and set-up new processes to increase efficiency. Leading my team, initiating KPIs I created a new critical path which successfully improved on time deliveries by 35% and enabled seasonal timelines to be moved three months ahead, saving the business cash through consolidated shipments, booking orders in downtime as well as strategically placing orders so as not to be overcommitted on short lead time product.

In my first season, I improved margin 2% on the season prior by leveraging factory relationships, negotiating and setting expectations to mitigate MOQ issues. I also took ownership of a struggling project to launch UK concessions with an elevated SS19 range, creating strategy, developing existing products, range building and filling gaps, completing the project within deadline and overachieving sales density in our flagship concession store.



## ● Womenswear Buyer

AllSaints | Aug 2017 - Aug 2018

Allsaints is a British premium high street retailer which operates 242 global stores and concessions (UK, North America, Europe, Asia and the Middle East) selling Women's and Men's clothing and accessories.

In my role as Womenswear Buyer I was responsible for soft wovens (dresses, tops, bottoms, jumpsuits, print and textile) managing 300 options per season with one direct report, approx. 35% of the womenswear mix. I started on a fixed term contract which was made permanent after only three months in the business due to performing beyond expectation, acting as a leader amongst my peers implementing new ways of working across the buying team to streamline processes and work more efficiently.

I led the seasonal product strategy, presenting to the CEO and directors drawing on sales history, competitor analysis and forecasting trends and worked collaboratively with the design team to ensure commercial success of the product range seeing significant success on skirts and trousers, previously underpotentialised categories for the brand, skirts +279% YOY, trousers +28% YOY. On dresses I drove sales by reducing duplication and introducing a new entry price point to drive volume. I also worked strategically and collaboratively with suppliers across all categories to ensure all orders could ship by sea driving a 2% increase in global margin.



### ● **Womenswear Buyer/Designer**

Glue Store | May 2013 - Sep 2016

Glue Store is a multi-brand youth fashion retailer with 32 stores across Australia carrying a mixture of local and international brands as well as several own label brands, inspired by youth culture, streetwear and fashion trends. The closest comparison in the UK would be Urban Outfitters.

In my role as Womenswear Buyer I developed monthly ranges for two own brand womenswear labels (Nude Lucy and Lulu & Rose), managing 100% of the womenswear own label business with one direct report. Within my first six months, I successfully improved full price sell-through, reduced markdown and turned around performance to see both brands ranking in the top 5. I saw particular success in jersey where I developed a range of staple jersey basics trialing and repeating in season with a fast lead time supplier to capitalise on bestsellers and minimise risk. By booking bulk greige ahead of time, I was able to maximise margin and build a competitive promo offer to drive volume sales.

After 1 year, due to the success in Glue Store, both brands were wholesaled to a major department store, increasing sales on Lulu & Rose by 426% and Nude Lucy by 125% YOY. I had to adapt quickly to a wholesale critical path whilst continuing to create close to season collections which I did by increasing face to face development with factories locally and overseas, building strong supplier relationships, as well as hands on fabric sourcing directly in Guangzhou markets to reduce lead time.

I created the first ever look books for both brands which resulted in them being represented by leading sales agents in four countries. Nude Lucy and Lulu & Rose are now successful wholesale brands stocked in Glue Store, David Jones, The Iconic as well as boutiques across Australia and New Zealand.



### ● **Senior Assistant Buyer / Assistant Buyer**

ASOS | Jun 2008 - Jun 2012

Asos.com is a successful online fashion retailer aimed at 20-somethings and shipping to 196 countries. The website sells over 850 brands however 45% of their sales come from their own ranges of clothing, accessories and beauty.

I started my fashion career at ASOS.com working my way up from Buyers Admin Assistant adapting to a lot of change in the business during a rapid period of growth. In my most recent role I was responsible for the 'Going Out' Tops department, managing a budget of £3M per season working with design, merchandising and technical teams and presenting monthly to directors.

Significantly I reduced delivery slippage by 20% by adjusting the balance of suppliers to include more European factories and reduce reliance on FOB. I also saw potential in our bestselling silhouette and created a new standalone category 'camis and vests' growing it to become 20% of woven tops sales, driving an increase in gross margin through volume sales and ensuring repeat sales from the customer by delivering continuous newness.



### ● **Buyers Admin Assistant**

ASOS | Jun 2007 - Jun 2008

Ensuring on time delivery by monitoring the critical path and building strong relationships with suppliers.

## Education & Training

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2006 - 2007 ● **University of the Arts London**  
Access Certificate, Fashion Business

2000 - 2003 ● **University of the West of England**  
Bachelor of Laws (LLB), Law