



# Caren Boshier

Buying Director

London, UK

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## Links

[LinkedIn](#)

## Languages

English (Native)

## About

Leads high-performing, cross-functional teams in Product Innovation and Implementation for Profitable Business Growth.

Experienced, self-motivated, and driven leader, with proven success in creating and delivering profitable, brand growth, for global, omnichannel retail organisations. A creative and strategic thinker, with excellent commercial judgement, intuitive insight into fashion trends, and identifying product opportunities, to deliver customer satisfaction across all channels.

An effective manager, with a proactive and collaborative approach, who enjoys supporting the development of high-performing teams, and inspires them to be curious, agile, and organised, to deliver best practice outputs.

Areas of strength include:

Collaborative Team Building | Business & Product Strategy | Creative Problem-Solving | Product Innovation | Internal & External Relationship Development | Critical Path Management | Communication & Influencing | Customer & Market Awareness | Process Improvement | Global Sourcing | Quality Assurance

### BRANDS WORKED WITH

ALLDERS DEPARTMENT STORE LTD. - Womenswear

Arcadia Group Ltd

Aspiga

CREW CLOTHING COMPANY LTD.

Gap Inc.

KOOKAI FRANCE

Marks and Spencer Ltd

Menswear Jaeger & Austin Reed

## Experience

### ● BUYING LEAD

Marks and Spencer Ltd | Jan 2021 - Jan 2023

Responsible for developing, implementing, and leading the commercial product, sourcing, and ESG strategy, managing ongoing operational, quality, and risk management, by setting clear frameworks for the Design, Buying, and Technical teams to create and operate within, working collaboratively to deliver an efficient, end-to-end process of high-quality, profitable products, to anticipate, delight, and exceed customer expectations, increase customer acquisition, spend and loyalty.

- Slashed the Critical Path by 15 weeks to re-launch the brand in 2021, and delivered OTIF of 95%, achieved sales of £19m, which was +20% to plan, and collaborated with internal and external stakeholders to accelerate the integration of the brand into the M&S hierarchy.
- Delivered profitable sales growth of £19m to £42m in 2022, and created the Product, Sourcing, and ESG Strategy for the 3-year plan to reach £150m by 2026, for all channels including Wholesale, International, and 3rd party platforms.
- Set clear metrics for the team to range build efficiently, ensuring SKU profitability, robust price architecture, and balance across categories and channels, to deliver an innovative, and compelling customer offer in line with brand KPIs.
- Drove product innovation, and price strategy to deliver increased sales of 55%, margin by 4% for 2023, and cut development costs by 40%, by reacting to emerging trends, interpreting market data, and navigating global economic challenges by pivoting to find cost-effective, global sourcing routes, and partnering with M&S Sourcing Team to leverage synergies.
- Negotiated and agreed with the M&S Finance Director on mutually beneficial payment terms for supplier partners, strengthening relationships, and leading to improved team negotiations to achieve optimum product costs, resulting in a 2% margin increase, increased sales volumes of 18%, and availability from 75% to 90% in 2022.
- Championed and advanced the ESG Strategy in conjunction with the wider Technical Team, resulting in a 54% increase in sustainable fabric options for AW23, with a plan to hit 75% for SS24.
- Cut customer returns rate from 45% to 30% in 1 year, by leading cross-functional initiatives with Buying, Technical, Design, Marketing, and Online teams, to react to customer feedback and returns data, and agree on and implement improvements.

- Nominated and attended the 9-month, Future Leaders Programme in the 2022 cohort, to further develop my leadership skills, management, and coaching styles, which positively impacted the PDP discussions and motivation of my team.
- Ownership of the product team's financial budget, managing a team of 25.
- Excellent knowledge of all MS Office, and good proficiency in PLM.

## ● HEAD OF BUYING

Menswear Jaeger & Austin Reed | Jan 2018 - Jan 2020

- Redefined the product strategy, and customer profile, with a laser focus on lifestyle, and end use, to deliver £42m sales, +39% to plan, and increased profit by 41% for AW18/19.
- Strengthened the brand image by modernising the customer-facing images, collaborating with outside agencies to target online marketing, social media platforms, and influencers who aligned with the new brand DNA.
- Managed and supported the team through COVID-19 lockdowns, ensuring regular communication for personal well-being and business updates, re-assuring the expectations of the supply base by agreeing payment schedules for outstanding invoices and financial support, re-activating production with a team of 2 to manage costs, and defining the future team structure and liaising with HR to follow redundancy procedures.

## ● HEAD OF BUYING

CREW CLOTHING COMPANY LTD. | Jan 2015 - Jan 2017

- Delivered 2 consecutive years of sales and margin growth by re-structuring the team, implementing the new lifestyle product strategy and managing the re-branding, setting metrics for balanced range building, and initiating improvements to the critical path, with a focus on consolidating and strengthening the supply base for improved relationships, production processes, negotiations, quality, and on time deliveries:
  - o 2015 +7% sales, +1% margin.
  - o 2016 +5.9% sales, +2% margin.
- Devised and delivered the first supplier conference in 2015, communicating the brand strategy to 20 Global Suppliers, which resulted in building mutually beneficial and transparent, business relationships to deliver business KPIs.

## ● SENIOR BUYING MANAGER

Gap Inc. | Jan 2006 - Jan 2014

- Responsible for the UK, French and Italian markets, identifying regional needs and communicating these to influence the creative direction of product opportunities to the central design team in New York, to deliver exciting and commercial collections to satisfy market needs.
- Successfully launched 4 new departments, approx. 1500 SKUs, growing from 5% to 20% of the total brand turnover, in the UK, French, and Italian markets, collaborating with internal and external stakeholders to manage the on-time delivery of all marketing, online, and store assets.
  - o 2007 - Gap Maternity - Delivered sales from £1.5m online and in 3 stores to £12m in 12 stores in 2 years.
  - o 2009 - Gap Fit - Best LFL Global performance - £3m sales online and in 5 stores 2012 to £16m turnover in 15 stores, resulting in the Global adoption of my range-building strategy.
  - o 2011 - Gap Body - Increased sales in 3 years from £5m online and in 10 stores to £19m in 20 stores
  - o 2013- Pure - Premium Womenswear Collection - Identified, sourced, and developed premium fabrics and yarns in Denim, Knitwear, and Jersey resulting in an incremental sales increase of £4.6m.
  - o 2013 - Created and sourced 3rd party gifting collaborations, with (Red), Moleskine, Assouline, Taschen, Jellycat Ltd., and Manhattan Toy Company with incremental annual sales of £150k for the 2 UK flagship stores.

## ● SENIOR BUYER

KOOKAI FRANCE | Jan 2005 - Jan 2006

- 2013- Pure - Premium Womenswear Collection - Identified, sourced, and developed premium fabrics and yarns in Denim, Knitwear, and Jersey resulting in an incremental sales increase of £4.6m.
- 2013 - Created and sourced 3rd party gifting collaborations, with (Red),

Moleskine, Assouline, Taschen, Jellycat Ltd., and Manhattan Toy Company with incremental annual sales of £150k for the 2 UK flagship stores.

SENIOR BUYER - KOOKAI FRANCE –  
04/2005 – 10/2006

Managed the Knitwear, Jersey, and Denim departments and increased sales by 24% and intake margin by +4% through sourcing new and faster routes to market, reactive trading, and re-negotiation of terms with existing suppliers.

Improved profitable growth by cutting markdown and increasing sell-through rates from 40% to 75% - by re-balancing the stock holding of the Kookai brand and market-specific own-bought product from 70/30 to 50/50, through identifying the opportunity of the UK customer demand.

● **SENIOR BUYER**

ALLDERS DEPARTMENT STORE LTD. – Womenswear | Jan 2004 - Jan 2005

Managed a team of 3 to create, source, and deliver a multi-product, lifestyle collection for Women, which delivered a +19% to plan within the first 3 months.

● **SENIOR BUYER**

Arcadia Group Ltd | Jan 1992 - Jan 2003

Motivated to gain access to the creative clothing industry, progressed from Buyer's Administrator to Senior Buyer gaining invaluable experience in direct sourcing, relationship management, negotiation, presentation, analytical and trading skills across multiple clothing categories at Top Shop and Dorothy Perkins.

● **Buying Director**

Aspiga | Nov 2023 - Now

Full ownership of the buying, design and merchandising teams, giving creative, and commercial direction, for this BCorp certified brand. Working closely with the Founder, to generate and clarify ideas, galvanise and develop the team to successfully deliver against business and personal goals.

