



Sarah Connelly

Powerhouse retail leader shaping strategies, bringing ideas to life, and evolving the retail experience.

📍 London, UK

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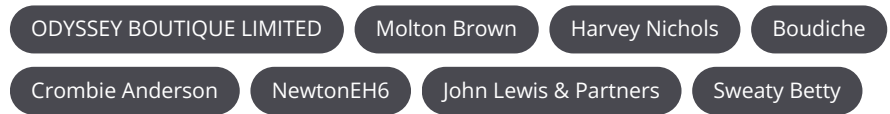
Languages

English (Native)

About

High-achieving retail leader with 17+ years in client facing and leadership roles in the luxury goods sector, including 10+ years spearheading my own business; I've honed my visionary thinking and strategic approach into an efficient power-house method for getting any concept off the ground. As a solo-preneur I drove new and innovative ways to evolve the customer experience, including transforming my multi-award-winning business from traditional brick & mortar boutique to exclusive by-appointment access; and successfully implementing fee-based in-person and online fitting & shopping services that accounted for 21% of revenue, and increased average sale value by 14%. Obsessed with retail excellence and inspired by authentic personalised service, for my next move, I'd love to collaborate with a brick & mortar fashion and lifestyle business to drive their strategic vision, refine their retail proposition, and deliver extraordinary customer experiences.

BRANDS WORKED WITH



Experience



● Professional development

Career Break | Jan 2022 - Now

Pausing active marketing for my own business to bring the next compelling chapter of my career to life.

Progressed through Badass Careers' signature leadership development programme empowering high-achieving women with the clarity, confidence, and skills to craft a professional brand proposition.

Embarked on a 5-month 'Quantum-Leap Tour' of Australia; immersing myself in a new living experience, while actively building local & international relationships and progressing through the Career Glow-up programme. Plus exploring new neighbourhoods, living-locally and learning about Australian history & culture; and managing budgets, property and accommodation needs across two continents and opposing time-zones.

Took on roles with John Lewis & Partners across selling and operations, and with Sweaty Betty as a concession manager, giving me the opportunity to observe and engage in the working practices of large, modern organisations.

Participated in training with the Association of Business Mentor's and enrolled as a mentor for the Help to Grow: Management programme; sharing my front-line experience and expert advice on a voluntary basis to support entrepreneurs across the UK in defining strategies and achieving their business growth and development goals.



● Founder

Sarah Connelly | Nov 2019 - Now

2023: Pivoted from full-time entrepreneur to focus on landing a permanent role, while fulfilling my personal multi-passionate projects on a part-time basis: empowering cool women with brilliant ambition to be, do, and have exactly what they want. In business, in life, AND in lingerie.

Business Strategy Consulting - Bespoke business strategy consulting for small format brick & mortar fashion & lifestyle boutiques. Challenging solo-preneurs to clarify business objectives, and translating strategies into a clear roadmap of activities to deliver on outcomes.

Lingerie Fitting & Styling - Delivering signature fitting & styling, and personal shopping services to clients around the globe, including: hosting virtual consultation and pre-fitting appointments, sourcing individual lingerie collections to match the client brief, and communicating consis-

tently with clients & prospects via email, website and social media.

2019-2021: Managed multiple critical paths, and proactively approached complex decisions, to stay on course in delivering a seamless customer experience in a luxury retail setting while staying true to vision & values, and underpinning business strength.

Drove a comprehensive end-to-end transformation; repositioning to a self-branded personal shopping & styling business model to enable a more flexible service offering and expanded partnership opportunities, including secondment of key skills to collaborative brands Simone Perele (France) and Adina Reay (UK). Increased average sale value by 14%.

Defined and implemented strategic initiatives to improve customer engagement on a digital-first basis, drive retail footfall, and successfully sell-thru special edition collections and sell-out events. Influenced 42% over-target sales revenues during a week-long branded partnership pop-up in March 2020.

Conceptualised innovative new ways to evolve online & in-store customer experience, including implementation of niche fee-based fitting & shopping services accounting for 21% of sales value.

Executed a cohesive multi-channel promotion strategy to drive targeted traffic, and attract and nurture leads, via direct email marketing, website & social media campaigns. Increasing bookings for by-appointment services by 60%.

Developed and maintained local and international relationships with clients and prospects via personalised correspondence, digital marketing (email, website, social media) and in-person events. Grew database by 19% in 1 year and increased email open rate to 28%.

● **Small Business consulting, mentoring and peer support**

Informal | Jan 2015 - Now

Constructively challenging solo-preneurs and small format brick & mortar business owners to clarify objectives, and translating strategies into a clear roadmap of activities to deliver on outcomes. Including implementing financial practices that ensured businesses comfortably sustained operational costs and provided consistent personal income throughout multiple pandemic lock-downs; and initiated online meet-ups providing peer-to-peer support and skill sharing that saw social media engagement grow; online coaching and courses launched; and wait-lists for post-lock-down styling appointments full to capacity.

● **Owner**

ODYSSEY BOUTIQUE LIMITED | Aug 2010 - Nov 2019

> Brought to life from concept, and maintained day-to-day operations at my stand-alone brick & mortar store; including defining a seamless customer experience across all touch-points online and in-store, and developing processes for observing performance objectives & results to enable better decision-making and investment of resources.

> Forecast sales targets and developed strategic initiatives (including collaborations, in-store activations, and marketing campaigns) to achieve growth objectives; consistently fulfilling financial goals. Increasing turnover by an average 13% year-on-year.

> Led and managed a team of 3; initiated staff development & reward programmes to drive performance, inspire continuous growth, consistent customer engagement, and delivery of retail operating standards inline with business objectives.

> Sourced, edited and merchandised collections to match customer requirements and influence demand, and managed stock flow within budget across seasons. Successfully selling-through collections at an average 85%.

Education & Training

1999 - 2001 ● **Edinburgh Napier University**
BA(Hons), Graphic Communications Management

1996 - 1999 ● **Edinburgh College of Art**
Visual Communication,