

Ralf Felix Messemer

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Creative with a huge Passion for Footwear and Fashion.
Experienced in Global Corporations as well as Local Start-ups.
Senior Product Line Manager / Designer with a track record of highly successful product launches.
In my recent roles I managed the Creative Process, planned Footwear Collections and led Design teams to create exciting and innovative products.
Check out my portfolio: www.ralfmessemer.com

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

STROLE FOOTWEAR September 2019– Septemebr 2023

Partner Design & Development

STROLE, a US start-up, is part of the Romeo & Juliet group (Bearpaw), based in Sacramento/California.

- > I helped to successfully launch this new foowear brand with contemporary Styling and Innovative comfort technology at it's heart.
- > Directed Design & Development of 6 collections for men and women.
- > Designed, developed and patented SOFT STRIDE, a unique technology to enhance underfoot comfort.
- > Coordinated technical development in China.
- > Hired and mentored Product Development and QA staff.

SARA SUOLE Pvt. Ltd. October 2017– September 2019

Head of Design - RUOSH & FLORSHEIM

Samar Lifestyle, a division of Sara Suole Ltd., owns a portfolio of footwear brands targeting the Indian and SE Asian markets.

As a contracted Consultant I managed and coached a team of 5 designers to create commercial and innovative footwear collections for RUOSH and FLORSHEIM

- > I directed and managed Creative Process, Product Strategy, Design & Development.
- > Researched and presentet Macro Trends, Seasonal Trends and Design stories relevant to our target consumers.
- > Planned and implemented the product and design calendar
- > Created meaningful, engaging and specific Design Briefs.
- > Led a team of Inhouse and Freelance designers in India and Italy to turn these briefs into successful Product Designs.
- > Supervised and improved the Prototyping in various factories.
- > Presented Final Collections to Sales team and Wholesale customers.

C & J Clark International Ltd. (Clarks) Februar 2016 - September 2017

Senior Product Line Manager

I successfully created and managed a Premium Men's and Women's footwear collection within the Clarks Retail division. This range consisted of ca. 160 lines for women and men, aimed at modern, fashion aware customers who value good quality, premium materials and excellent comfort.

- > I Developed the Seasonal strategy in collaboration with Buying & Merchandising, Product development, Sourcing and Marketing teams.
- > Grew the business and changed perception by including Sustainability as a key element for new product developments.
- > Increased brand relevance to a younger customer through Collaborations with NORTON Motorcycles, Christopher RAEBURN, V&A museum, CHEANEY etc.
- > Maximised margins by a better defined price architecture and target ex-factory cost prices.
- > Introduced a continuous flow of Newness by planned 'Product Phasing' throughout the season.
- > Infused enthusiasm for the new collection at sales events and key account presentations.
- > Mentored and developed junior team members, many of whom moved into Senior positions within the International footwear business.

C & J Clark International Ltd. (Clarks) September 2006 – January 2016

Business Unit Manager / Senior Range Manager

I was leading a cross functional team to plan, design and commercialise a Men's Premium Fashion Collections.

- > I created a short and medium term strategy and engaged key stakeholders to gain support from the wider business.
- > Used the Clarks Archive to create exciting new product stories based on our back catalogue, this changed consumer perception and added new business.
- > Ensured the collection was developed to an agreed time table and delivered the targetted margin.
- > Have grown the International Dress business by 20% year on year during peak periods to a total of 2.15 Mil. pairs.
- > Established a new Product Category 'Dress Style' (Hybrid) that went from strength to strength and generated additional business.
- > Increased profit by moving products into lower cost factories from China to India.
- > Launched the Clarks Premium Dress collection in USA and generated 110K pairs additional wholesale business.
- > The Men's Premium Collection exceeded commercial targets in all key markets.

C & J Clark International Ltd. January 1998 - September 2006

Senior Designer / Clarks International Men's division

I was leading a team of junior designers to create a global shoe collection while maintaining the typical Clarks hand-writing. My designs consistently featured as bestsellers and were often chosen for Advertising and PR activities.

- > Trend analysis, market visits, fashion & footwear shows.
- > Continuous design of exciting, innovative men's product, often selected for marketing activities.
- > Creation of many best sellers and brand perception changing products.
- > Helped to establish Clarks as a major global player in Footwear.
- > Improved relationships with partner factories.
- > Additional buying responsibility / selecting Off-shelf products for UK Retail.
- > Coached Junior Designers to move into more senior positions

Previous Experience

Salamander AG Shoe Factories

Designer for CAMEL BOOTS and CAMEL TROPHY ADVENTURE BOOTS

Peter Kaiser Shoe Factories Ltd.

Designer ladies shoes and boots

Ara Shoe Factories

3 months work placement

EDUCATION

Fachhochschule Niederrhein, Germany

BACHELORS DEGREE (ENGINEERING) DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY