

**Becky Kabu** (May 2007 - New York)

## **1 What your company is/does, and your role in it?**

Summer Fashion ( [www.summer-fashion.com](http://www.summer-fashion.com) ) is an online fashion retailer that specialises in providing Spring / Summer clothing all year round.

It was borne to solve the problem that whilst many of us enjoy summers abroad, an increasing number of us also choose to travel in 'winter' months whether that's for full moon parties in Ko Pha Ngan or Christmas day BBQs on Bondi beach.

In essence, **Summer Fashion** enables the global traveller to access summer clothing when it suits them and when the rest of the fashion industry is replacing summer lines with jackets, jeans and woolly jumpers.

Our strapline is, "Always Summer Somewhere" and it's for this very reason that we exist; to provide people with summer fashion whenever they need it.

My roles at Summer Fashion have evolved with the growth of the business. Initially I focused on building the brand's content strategy and social media engagement, which was fascinating. It really helped re-affirm just how much we all love summer and crave those days away from the day-to-day grind. Today, I am overseeing the product management and buying processes. This includes testing new lines and product types which is fun. For instance, this summer we are expanding into summer accessories with a new line from Hammamas. These towels are perfect for Summer Fashion customers as not only are they great beach towels, they also double up as sarongs, throws, picnic blankets, baby wraps and so much more.

## **2 What inspired you to set it up?**

When I first started working towards making Summer Fashion a reality, it instantly pulled me in with how our travel, buying and general life behaviours continue to change.

My time in New York (May 2007) on the programme played a massive part in adjusting my own outlook on life. It certainly advanced me professionally and the business / managing information modules equipped me with many new skills. Mountbatten also provided me with experiences, memories and friendships that will stay with me forever. I certainly think that partaking in Mountbatten helped broaden my horizons and helped me to become a more well rounded individual both professionally and personally.

## **3 How did you go about setting it up and getting established?**

Summer Fashion was set up with two additional business partners – one of whom already ran an established online clothing company and the other was heavily involved in marketing and digital media services.

With our combined skills and experiences, we were able to launch the business cost effectively and get it to market relatively quickly. We looked for creative and

technological solutions that would quickly enable us to go live, test the market and provide us with a credible platform to build the brand and products to sell.

Today we also use a number of important marketing channels that enable us to gain traction, awareness and of course sales. These include developing content to rank well on search engines, keyword advertising (pay per click), email advertising and of course various social media channels such as Facebook, Pinterest and Google+. All of these elements combine to create an integrated marketing effort to engage with our target audience of people that love summer and fashion.

#### **4 What your future plans involve**

We are a young business but are already proud to be stockists of brands such as French Connection, Havaianas, Vero Moda, Superga and Franklin & Marshall amongst many others. As we grow we will seek further investment that will allow us to bring more great summer brands and summer specific products on board. We are also keen to invest heavily in to the latest technologies to embrace mobile and social commerce, two engagement channels that are exploding due to our constant connectivity. Did you know that the average person now checks their phone 150 times per day?

#### **5 Any words of advice/wisdom or encouragement for others thinking of setting up on their own**

I'm a risk averse person by nature so if I can make the jump from those corporate comforts then anyone can.

What I would say is not to jump too early. Do your research, depending on your concept, try and start it out as a hobby and see what kind of traction you get. Our biggest mantra is to test, learn, scale. By doing this you won't over expose yourself and it's so much easier to change direction or stop altogether if things don't go to plan.

Essentially, if you believe you have a great idea, have done your due diligence and are super passionate about it, then go for it. There's nothing like seeing your own ideas take flight in the real world.

**Offer:** Mountbatten Alumni members can benefit from an exclusive 20% discount (applicable to everything on the site!) with this code at check out:  
**IGALG1092**