



LYNN SHANAHAN NAMED CEO OF KELLWOOD CO.

By Lisa Lockwood

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NEW YORK — Lynn Shanahan was elevated to chief executive officer of Kellwood Co., owned by affiliates of Sun Capital Partners Inc.

She assumes many of the duties formerly handled by Jill Granoff, who wore two hats as ceo of Kellwood and Vince. Following Vince Holding Corp.'s successful initial public offering last month, Granoff became ceo of Vince.

Shanahan joined Kellwood in July as ceo of Kellwood Brands, responsible for the overall management of such lines as Rebecca Taylor, David Meister, Sam Edelman, XOXO, My Michelle, Sag Harbor and Briggs, as well as private label businesses. She will now add corporate responsibilities such as finance, human resources, information technology, e-commerce and legal. She reports to Chris Metz, managing director of Sun Capital, and Mark E. Brody, managing director and group chief financial officer of Sun.

“Lynn brings 30 years of expertise in brand building, unrivaled industry knowledge and a charismatic leadership style to a pivotal moment of our growth,” said Metz.

In an interview Wednesday, Shanahan told WWD, “What attracted me to Kellwood was the great possibilities for this company and the foundation for continued growth of great brands.” She said Kellwood has “the amazing ability to deliver product in short times; we can design and sample a collection to be on the floor in 90 days.” Kellwood, which is based in New York, has a volume of about \$500 million, according to industry sources.

After divesting itself of brands such as Adam, BLK DNM, Zobha, Lamb & Flag and Baby Phat over the last two years, Shanahan said the company is once again open to acquisitions. “We’re looking for businesses that are between \$50 million and \$100 million that have EBITDA growth. We’re not looking for start-ups,” she said.

Among other growth opportunities for the company are Rebecca Taylor, “which has experienced double-digit growth since 2011,” said Shanahan. She is looking to extend the label into other product categories and internationally. They also seek to expand its current roster of eight retail stores. She called David Meister “a niche dress brand,” which has a custom business at Bergdorf Goodman. In addition to also selling Saks Fifth Avenue and Neiman Marcus, Meister recently launched David David Meister on HSN.

Shanahan also noted that the Sam Edelman young contemporary collection will be shown to retailers in February and will launch in stores in July. She has hired Leslie Singer, former executive vice president of sales and merchandising at NYDJ, to become president of the Sam Edelman division, effective today. Shanahan is also renewing a long-term licensing agreement with XOXO, and shoring up and expanding Kellwood's private-label business, which manufactures merchandise for such retailers as Wal-Mart, Target, Macy's, Nordstrom and J.C. Penney. She also looks to expand the company's e-commerce operation.

Shanahan has made several key hires. In addition to Singer, she tapped Joe Lombardi as chief financial officer of Kellwood. He succeeds Lisa Klinger, former cfo of Kellwood and Vince, who became cfo of Vince. Earlier, he was cfo of Barnes & Noble. She also named Jim Scarfone senior vice president, human resources. Most recently, he was senior vice president of h.r. at Ulta, and before that was senior vice president of h.r. and administration at Duane Reade.

Prior to joining Kellwood, Shanahan founded C2 Group LLC, a company that partnered with fashion and lifestyle companies to provide operating management, brand development and overall growth strategies. Through C2 Group, she was president of Marimekko NA. Earlier, she was group president for Tommy Hilfiger, where she was responsible for U.S. wholesale, e-commerce, licensing and marketing.

Meantime, Vince, which raised \$200 million in its IPO, raised an additional \$175 million in new term loans. Proceeds from the transaction were used to pay down Kellwood debt, which was due in 2014 and 2017. Kellwood has entered into a new five-year, \$120 million revolving credit facility with Wells Fargo Bank, NA to provide for its working capital needs under the new Kellwood corporate structure.