

Title:

Surfing with the Billabong Brand

Word Count:

464

Summary:

Information about the leading Australian company; Billabong which was founded in 1973 and is today, a key player in the surfwear industry, also owning other significant surf brands such as Von Zipper and Kustom.

Keywords:

wallets, accessories, business

Article Body:

Billabong set its roots in Queensland. It was founded in 1973, by Rena and Gordon Merchant. The company started out as a manufacturer of board shorts and slowly expanded its operations.

In 1981, the company decided to become an aggressive player in the surf apparel market by branching out to an international crowd. At first, it expanded its business to include New Zealand and the United States, then to South Africa, Japan and finally to Europe. Once the ball was set in motion it was only a matter of time before it became a global effort.

As the brand gained exposure and popularity the company decided to branch into other sports related apparel markets. They started experimenting with different lines of sports packages such as snowboarding and skateboarding.

In 1991, once they were satisfied with the quality of their new products, the company began to manufacture and distribute to the snowboarding and skateboarding crowd on a much larger scale. As they expanded into these other areas, they were able to discover much success.

In 2000, Billabong international was listed as a publicly traded company on the Australian Stock Exchange. Once enough capital was generated, the company quickly decided to bolster its position in other key sports related industries by purchasing such name brands as Von Zipper, Kustom Palmers Surf, Element and Nixon. Each of these brands helped them gain position in other related sporting good categories.

In 2005, the company decided to give itself a bigger retail foothold by opening a number of Beachworks locations around the globe. These effective retail

locations began successfully selling a number of the company's top products. In 2007, Billabong in a long overdue move, decided to acquire Xcel, a premium wet-suit brand based in the United States. With this acquisition, it positioned the company to be one of the strongest surf related brands in the world,

Popular Culture

Many of today's top surfing stars endorse the Billabong brand name. These endorsements have led to an increase of brand awareness and popularity of their popular surf related apparel line. Many teenage skaters, snowboarders and surfers today sport the billabong brand apparel because of this. It has become a mainstay in teenage popular culture.

Ranges

[Billabong](http://www.kjbeckett.com/acatalog/billabong.html) has had a successful expansion into many of the sporting goods extreme categories. They can now boast apparel for skaters, surfers and snowboarders. Their products range in size and age from t-shirts to surf shorts to sandals, sunglasses to watches and other snowboarding related items.

Company

The company is a publicly traded company, yet its founders still maintain a 20% share in it. With its aggressive marketing style and attractive celebrity endorsements Billabong has placed itself in a solid position to hold the market share for years to come.