



Xcel Brands Appoints Ken Downing as Creative Director for Halston

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Appointment Represents Next Step for Halston as a Driving Force in Xcel's Creation of a Live-Selling Ecosystem that Enables Its Brands to Connect Directly with Consumers

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jul. 21, 2022-- Xcel Brands, Inc. (NASDAQ: XELB), a media and consumer products company with unparalleled expertise in livestream shopping, today announced that it has appointed Ken Downing as Creative Director of the Halston brand, effective August 1, 2022. Widely known for his tenure as the visionary fashion director of Neiman Marcus, Downing will oversee the evolution of Halston in his new role and serve as the public face and voice of the brand, including through hosting Halston livestream sessions over all screens.

"This appointment is another key step in bringing our vision for Halston to full fruition and in our broad strategy of continuing to build our live-selling ecosystem, supported by well-known and authentic personalities, that enables our brands to connect directly with customers," said Robert W. D'Loren, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Xcel. "Ken's creative vision and expertise in brand building are unparalleled and his magnetic, warm personality has made him one of the most highly recognized and respected people in fashion. We're extremely pleased to bring Ken on board to guide the creative vision of Halston as we solidify our leadership within the fast-growing retail livestreaming marketplace."

Xcel Brands is one of the largest apparel and jewelry providers within the interactive TV market and is strategically investing in livestreaming technology platforms and partnerships. The company produces and distributes apparel and accessories under the Halston label, available at premium retailers that include Neiman Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue and Bloomingdale's and others, including Macy's, HSN and more.

"It's an honor to reenvision and evolve the future of Halston, an iconic American luxury brand that has been a cultural touchstone for more than 50 years," said Ken Downing, Creative Director of Halston. "Live selling through livestreaming platforms will continue to be a key way for Halston to communicate and engage directly with customers and fans and the momentum Xcel is building through these channels makes this an incredibly exciting time to join the company."

Downing previously served as Senior Vice President and Fashion Director for Neiman Marcus, where he was credited with revitalizing the retailer's voice by bringing a freshly relevant and global point of view to the brand. His bold style proclamations, fearless approach to seasonal trends, and close relationships with designers and customers alike helped catapult Neiman Marcus to a position of international fashion leadership, while driving unprecedented sales volumes both in-store and online.

During his tenure at Neiman Marcus, Downing drew on his instinctive knowledge of trends and customer shopping habits, overseeing the fashion direction and image of the company and serving as the public face and voice of the brand. The company launched a series of high-touch customer experience and fashion-centric digital initiatives under his guidance, including real-time runway fashion coverage, VIP events and social media interviews with designers, celebrities, models and influencers, to cement the company's relevance among the next generation of shoppers.

He also previously served as Chief Creative Officer of international retail developer Triple Five Group Worldwide, for which he helped launch American Dream, a revolutionary 3.3 million square foot shopping, dining and entertainment complex in East Rutherford, New Jersey. For Triple Five, he was responsible for reinventing the retail experience for all of the group's properties through architectural and interior design, advertising and marketing campaigns, public relations, and special events. He joins Halston from Hearst's HLC Commerce division, where he served as Chief Brand Officer.

Downing holds degrees in fashion design from the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) and apparel design from the School of Apparel Design and Development at Seattle Central College. He currently serves on the boards of the FIT Museum, Delivering Good and the With Love Halston Foundation and is a former member of the CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund.

About Xcel Brands

Xcel Brands, Inc. (NASDAQ: XELB) is a media and consumer products company engaged in the design, production, marketing, livestreaming, wholesale distribution and direct-to-consumer sales of branded apparel, footwear, accessories, fine jewelry, home goods and other consumer products, and the acquisition of dynamic consumer lifestyle brands. Xcel was founded in 2011 with a vision to reimagine shopping, entertainment and social media as one thing. Xcel owns the Judith Ripka, Halston, LOGO by Lori Goldstein, and C. Wonder brands and a minority stake in the Isaac Mizrahi brand. It also owns and manages the Longaberger brand through its controlling interest in Longaberger Licensing LLC. Xcel is pioneering a true omni-channel sales strategy that includes the promotion and sale of products under its brands through interactive television, digital livestream shopping, brick-and-mortar retail and e-commerce channels. The company's brands have generated nearly \$3 billion in retail sales via livestreaming in interactive television and digital channels alone.

Headquartered in New York City, Xcel Brands is led by an executive team with significant livestreaming, production, merchandising, design, marketing, retailing and licensing experience and has a proven track record of success in elevating branded consumer products companies. With an experienced team of professionals focused on design, production and digital marketing, Xcel maintains control of product quality and promotion across all of its product categories and distribution channels. Xcel differentiates by design. www.xcelbrands.com

About Halston

Roy Halston Frowick was the creator of luxury American fashion, whose groundbreaking designs still influence and inspire us today. Founded in the 1960's, the HALSTON label took the fashion industry by storm. Originally known for his innovation in millinery, Halston used his signature materials of jersey, cashmere and suede to reinvent the jumpsuit, the shirtdress, and the classic caftan, permanently leaving his mark on fashion. The 1970's and

the era of Studio 54 became synonymous with Halston's designs. Soon after, he was named "the premier fashion designer in America" by Newsweek. His strong connection to pop culture was evident through his friends and clients, which included Andy Warhol, Bianca Jagger, Elizabeth Taylor and Anjelica Huston. Halston went on to create one of the best-selling fragrances of all time in his signature tear-drop shaped perfume bottle designed by Elsa Peretti. Halston created strong codes that are quintessential to the brand even to this day, as a new team of innovators continue to evolve the HALSTON legacy through its various collections. HALSTON has been worn by modern style icons including Gisele Bundchen and Halle Berry among many others, and is carried by some of the world's premier retailers including Neiman Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue, Net-A-Porter and Harvey Nichols, and stores worldwide. For more information, please visit www.HALSTON.com.

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