

Daren K. Carter
310.990.8150
Los Angeles, CA
Orange County, CA
darenkirk@gmail.com
linkedin.com/in/DarenKirk

SUMMARY

I am an accomplished Global Sales, Business Development, and Product executive with a proven track record of directing innovative business, sales, account management, training, and operational strategies that drive record revenue and engagement for sustainable lifestyle brands across fashion, retail, home goods, and CPG. For 20 years, I've leveraged my expertise in team leadership, spotting trends, guiding product development, and cultivating strong relationships with notable industry-leading companies and retailers to achieve breakthrough results.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Kastel Denmark, 2021– Present

Sales Manager, Los Angeles, CA

- Spearhead sales strategy and vision, enabling Kastel Denmark to swiftly expand its UV-protective activewear into a new category (golf)
- Serve as a key member of the leadership team, reporting directly to the Owner, Charlotte Jorst, and collaborating closely with C-suites
- Personally open and manage new accounts, pushing the company to exceed its 2020 goals at \$2M sales, with 2021 slated for \$3.2M
- Recruit and lead top industry sales reps across all regions of the US, successfully growing the team's sales reps from three to ten
- Elevate and steer marketing decisions by scouting and onboarding a marketing firm to enhance social, data & analytics, ad spending, positioning, messaging, and trade show involvement, resulting in increased connections, brand visibility, sales, and engagement
- Cultivate exceptional relationships with sports/golf retailers to activate opportunities for high-volume product sales in department stores
- Establish standard operating procedures for the company's new custom embroidery services, enhancing consistency and efficiency

AromArt International: 2019 – 2021

Director of Sales & Product Development, Los Angeles, CA

- Recruited to scale the home fragrance and decorative accessories company's newly launched US operations, shaping sales and product development strategies to enable continuous expansion within the Western market, with yearly earnings generating \$5M
- Reported directly to the President, serving as a trusted advisor and thought partner on business decisions and revenue opportunities

- Leveraged buyer relationships to secure deals with wholesalers and retailers including West Elm, Pottery Barn, Burlington, Bed, Bath & Beyond, Century 21, TJ Maxx, Ross, and Family Dollar
- Traveled to China to survey and evaluate 300K SKUs of all-natural scented candles, reed diffusers, essential oils, aromatherapy diffusers, LED candles, room and linen sprays, and other accessories to identify the most appealing products for the US market
- Partnered with designers to direct product development, branding, and packaging decisions that met US standards and audience needs
- Stayed up-to-date on the latest trends, research, and market knowledge to ensure effective product differentiation and pricing
- Created cohesive yet versatile collections, gift packages, and bundles that achieved company budget guidelines while driving ROI
- Developed visually compelling sales presentations and pitch decks for retail buyers that clearly showcased the brand's value

Makesy/The Wooden Wick Co, 2018 – 2019

Global Sales Director, Laguna Beach, CA

- Directed global sales strategy for a world-class candle making startup with over 40 utility and design patents worldwide
- Established foundational best practices including sales materials and pitches to successfully revive and engage accounts
- Generated \$3M in new business by opening 100+ B2B accounts with companies like Illume Brand, TJ Maxx, HomeGoods, and Marshalls
- Attended trade shows and met with US-based manufacturers in Las Vegas and Atlanta as well as global manufacturers in Germany and France to strengthen existing relationships, showcase new product developments, and secure new business
- Developed licensing deal for 50 European countries, generating an additional \$2M in the first year
- Proactively strengthened and transformed customer relationship management to earn trust and facilitate increased sales YOY

Crate & Barrel, 2016 – 2018

Design Expert & Furniture Selling Specialist, Torrance, CA

- Collaborated closely with a diverse range of clients at Crate & Barrel to generate interior design plans that match their personal aesthetic and budget, quickly becoming a top-performing sales associate and contributing up to 30% of location's daily sales volume
- Nurtured exceptional relationships with clients, providing best-in-class customer service to ensure an engaging and positive experience
- Leveraged intensive interior design and furniture training to design 2D and 3D floor plans and inspiration boards for in-store and in-home consultations, persuading clients to furnish their homes with Crate & Barrel furniture, lamps, draperies, and accessories

Oil & Vinegar, 2014 – 2016**Corporate Sales Manager, Torrance, CA**

- Defined and directed creative sales, partnership, and outreach strategies for in-store events and promotions at Oil & Vinegar, a high-end Gourmet Specialty Retail company carrying 400+ exclusive and private label products
- Doubled number of in-store events per week, achieving \$65K sales each month (\$15K above targets)
- Established relationships and executed outside sales events at Honda, Ferrari, Maserati, luxury hotels, and L.A. Women's Expo
- Launched first influencer strategy, sourcing tastemakers and bloggers and successfully expanding brand visibility and media coverage

Daren Kirk Showroom, 2003 – 2014**Sales Director, Los Angeles, CA**

- Established innovative fashion wholesale business from the ground up, managing field sales and business development for ten branded designer collections featuring Men's and Women's contemporary apparel, jewelry, bags, and fashion accessories
- Cultivated loyal relationships and secured global distribution YOY in Nordstrom, Nordstrom Rack, Bloomingdale's, Saks 5th Avenue, Anthropologie, Fred Segal, Bebe, JustFab.com, HauteLook.com, Zulily.com, Disney, Overstock.com, Burlington, and more
- Created first e-commerce strategy, negotiating deal with JustFab.com to supply 80% of site merchandise, generating \$2.3M in 8 months
- Developed private label programs for Bebe, TJ Maxx, Ross, and Burlington stores, introducing a \$1.5M new revenue stream
- Drove strong relationship with Nordstrom and introduced collection of handbags, resulting in \$175K sales in three months
- Maintained long-term relationship with Sundance Catalogue, selling 9,000 units of leather handbag line for three years
- Secured long-term contract with Magellan's, selling travel accessory that ran for years in travel catalog and in-flight magazines

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts – BA, Missouri Southern State University
Marketing Management

CERTIFICATIONS

Certified In Content Marketing, Lynda.com
Certified In, Digital Marketing, Google

EXPERTISE

Sales Strategy

Business Development
Product Development
Business Strategy
B2B / B2C
CRM
Account Management
International Travel
Overseas Manufacturers
Contract Negotiation
Retail / Ecommerce
Visual Merchandising
Lifestyle Brands
Sustainability
Team Leadership
Social Networking
Team Building
Project Management
Cross-functional Team Leadership

TECH SKILLS

Social Media + Digital Marketing: Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Yelp, Twitter
Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook