

# River island



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## **Biography**

River Island was introduced by Bernard Lewis in 1948, a family business and it started out as a small shop in London with the trading name of Lewis Separates. There have been many changes to the brand name such as Chelsea girl and Concept Man and not until 1989 it officially became known as RiverIsland today.

Between the period of twenty years, from the 1960s to 1980s, Chelsea Girl was a well known high street store and was famous for its long haired girl logo. A group of approximately 45 students from Uxbridge and Middlesex has teamed together with the store to regain its reputation in the name of Chelsea Girl.

River Island could be considered to be one of the UK's biggest and most successful privately owned high street companies with over 250 stores operating all over the world and is still growing. Moreover, to ensure their customer a great, unique and fashionable look, unlike New Look and other high street stores which buy other brands design then altered it, River Island has their own in-house designer. River Island always focuses on providing their customer the hottest look, hence, they also concentrate on providing their employees with a good working environment so that they can work efficiently and at their best. River Island stores across the country are always similar in both decoration and layout. In recent years, River Island has changed all of their stores to have a unique and similar layout. The general colour schemes are usually white walls with some emphasis of bright green to create a fresh feeling; the flooring is laid with creamy coffee coloured tiles with black paneling. Bright spot lights have also been used to create a posh

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look. In order to help the customer to feel comfortable and relaxed the stores have been designed to have an open air space which is simple but act as an effective background helping the clothes stand out and also enabling the customer to find their clothes. The layout of River Island is known to be like a walk-in boutique where you have trends that are divided into sections in the shop, which helps customers to know what they're looking for, i. e. casual, smart or going out.

### **Style**

River Island is a UK's leading high street brand, providing a big range of stylish clothes, but most importantly, their prices are affordable and the quality is great. River Island design clothes for both men and women at the age range from 16-30. With 250 stores and selling many different types of clothing like jeans, skirts, knit wear, jacket etc... or even accessories such as jewelry or shoes. To “ Get the most out of it” the company also provides online shopping so that it is more convenient for their customers.

“ The design team represents the culture that's around them and that's the culture our customers understand,” says Richard Bradbury, River Island's managing director. This year, the brand have reported mega profits, as mentioning this, River Island will have to thank their young team of designers, buyers and in-house stylists. The company's general theme for clothes line is usually smart looking, quite often the customer will see that there is a combination between smart-casual. Additional glitter, sequins, diamonds and jewels appear on all types of clothes to add a bit of bling and to meet with the young fashion trend. Moreover, these decorations also appear on purses or handbags so that they are all are matching.

One of the company philosophies is focusing on finding new talent and bringing them up to contribute to the new high street trend, collection after collection is required to meet with demand of customers who searching for the new look everyday. In order to do that, every two weeks, Style Challenge is launched by one of our insiders. The themes will be different each time to make sure there's something for everyone. Youthful could consider being the inspiration for each design, but still could suit any age range as long as they are the person who is seeking a celebrity or catwalk style at a cheaper price. River Island always concentrated on the style and the quality. The company clothes are so trendy, chic, young, affordable and of a very high quality. Not only the clothes, but also the stores provide an exciting and fun environment to shop within. The average price of each garment is affordable:

### **Ethical issue**

RiverIslandis committed to providing a fair deal between the company and their employees. The company has understood that to make an excellent business, it has to build strong relationship with its suppliers, consumers and employees. Corporate Social Responsibility has always been the company's strategy.

### **Ethical Supply Chain**

At River Island, it works enthusiastically with its suppliers and official agencies around the world to provide a standard health and safety regulation to its employees. The company always ensures that their suppliers sign a contract which commit to World Wide Ethical standards and those who violate them will be prosecuted. To support this policy, the company have ordered the buying and technical teams to visit their factories throughout

the year and actively engage in looking out for mistakes, hence, improve it. Today, River Island products are made across the world such as in the European Union, Turkey or India. Although there are many ethical and trading issues happening within fashion industry, River Island believes that through gradual changes, it will manage to solve the problem.

According to source,

“ In June 2008 RiverIsland became a member of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI). Established in 1998 the ETI is a trade union organization and non-governmental organisations committed to working together to identify and promote good practice in the implementation of codes of labour practice.”

River Island committed to the adoption and integration of the ETI Base Code into our World Wide Ethical Policy through its supply chain. River Island believes that to be one a ETI member, the company will be able to gain more experience to tackle the related issues within the industry.

### **Environment:**

Nowadays, being green is one of the main focus's of each individual company. In order to protect the environment, River Island is strictly committed to a number of main key points targeted such as :

- reducing problems the environment is having, this includes dropping levels of energy consumption (including the use of renewable energy sources)
- reducing the level of product packaging,

- increasing the levels of recycling and increasing the use of biodegradable materials.

The retail environment of River Island is very edgy, lively and vivid. The staff are committed to provide the customer a high quality service. River Island also believes that making the customer feel happy is its first priority, as customer service is converted into sales in retail.

### **Promotion**

In recent years, River Island has gained many important titles from its competitor. Top shop has been at the top for years but slowly losing its “style crown” losing its “best shop on the high street” title of three years to rival River Island. River Island also won in the “best bags” and “best place to spend GBP50” categories in the Company Magazine. The winners were chosen by more than 6000 people through the voting system on the “company.co.uk” website.

River Island advertises itself in magazines for having garments, accessories or products that are copied from celebrities or the catwalk. In order to advertise and campaign, River Island has joined forces with Look in autumn 2007 – the UK’s first glossy high street fashion weekly magazine- to celebrate and introduce its autumn collection. The collection has been styled and photographed by the Look fashion team. More interestingly, River Island’s store windows nationwide have also been specially designed by Look to make a connection between the company and the magazine to promote different aspects of the collection. Look publishing director Julie Lavington comments: “We are extremely excited to be working with River Island on such a major project. The collaboration exemplifies our brand credentials,

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and it's great that River Island are harnessing the power of Look's reputation as the authority on high street fashion. After all, we're driving hundreds of thousands of women in-store every week!" . In order to expand its market sale, River Island has also launched an online marketing with NME. com (a music brand ).

In addition, River Island have celebrities such as Pixie Lot and JLS to model its garments which brings fans to shop in River Island. Together with the advertising campaigns, River Island also sponsors Graduate Fashion Week which brings advertising all over the world, for designers and students who would love to start a career in the fashion industry. Fashion Weeks with new designs and colours, serve additionally to promote new concepts. These Fashion Weeks not only display an array of new products, but also serve to communicate with the audience visually. Dresses and accessories worn by models doing catwalks, are more lively and enthralling than the mere display on mannequins. Normally with a range of Fall, Spring, Summer and Winter collection, Fashion Weeks boost market demand and promote its associated businesses as well. In addition, presence in graduate fashion week is the opportunity for their company to have a review from other people who have visited the show. It gives people an idea to what River Island has to offer as a fashion retail store and how they are incorporating designs from students into their clothing range.

River Island was one of the retailers which has joined in High street fashion week to show its line up. The event was taking place on London's Oxford Street from September 7 to September 11. This is a great opportunity to promote the company image.

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River Island satisfies its customers with trend, quality, design and durability. That is one reason that River Island is, day by day, getting support and demands by its customers. It provides a range of comfortable draper footwear to soothe aching feet of all day long. River Island won the Draper Footwear Award in 2008 while another proof of its excellence emerged when this brand bagged ‘LK Today Fashion High Street Fashion Award for Best Denim’.

Fashion is not only a phenomenon for luxurious life, but this concept deals with humanity as well. That is why, modern fashion companies are aware for the fact of supporting special people of society with special needs. River Island is responsive towards special people and that is why it supports BDF (Birth Defect Foundation), now known as New Life Foundation

Other than the BDF, River Island also helps Heart and Design; an association that combines creativity of fashion communities with heart and lungs treatment. Fashion is not only for healthy people, but it also helps to make ailing people healthy, it supports them in fighting for health.

River Island is a well know high street brand that has over 50 years experience on fashion retail, it provides a big range of stylish clothes but most importantly its price are affordable and its products are good quality. The company satisfies its customers with trend, quality, design, global, human, culture and society friendly. At one end it emphasises collective psychology and trends of a society, and at the other end, it deals with the individual needs of customer care. Healthy trends, balanced life, and busy lifestyle are, what the modern fashion companies have to consider deeply. It



is no more a matter of looking good and attractive, true fashion and accessories join comfort and trend together.