

## **Elizabeth R. Hooks**

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### **SKILLS SUMMARY**

Merchandising, Branding, Marketing

Buying, Business Analysis, Photography Styling

Window and Merchandise Display Installation, Trend-forecasting, Product Development

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

#### **Senior Merchandising Manager, Ponte Vedra, FL / Savannah, GA May 2015-Present**

*Natural Life, Inc.*

- Work directly with CEO to develop Brand and Merchandising Strategy that supports company vision
- Implement strategy through development and management of a Merchandising Team
- Act as Team Leader in both creative and operational visual processes from conception to implementation across multiple channels
- Project-manage multiple Projects at any time, including: Trade Show Installations, Wholesale Catalog build, On-Location Photo-Shoot, Retail Store Floor Sets
- Develop merchandise placement strategy for E-Commerce, Trade Shows, and Retail Outlets, and tools to ensure Brand and Visual Merchandising consistency
- Collaborate across all teams and build partnerships to create aspirational and business-driven Branding, Marketing, and Visual Merchandising
- Create and manage product merchandising and brand strategy for Wholesale and Consumer Websites
- Develop Merchandising skills in team members (NL Store, Key Accounts, Trade Shows, Field Merchandisers, etc.)
- Design floor plans/fixtures/props that support and enhance Brand Visuals and Business Strategy
- Manage budget to ensure department efficiency in all areas (i.e. Retail Store, Photography Dept, Travel, etc.)
- Curate and style Product Photography for Brand Marketing and Wholesale/Retail Channels

#### **Merchandising and Buying Consultant, Jacksonville, FL 2012-2015**

*Violet Boutique (July 2012-Jan 2015)*

- Re-designed, conceptualized, and merchandised store (fall 2012). Included: creating new aesthetic concept for store, designing and building of new fixtures, creating layout of floor plan and all fixtures, directing merchandise placement, installing window and interior store display elements
- Merchandised and directed seasonal floor moves; Strategized and directed merchandise moves based on sales volume, inventory levels, seasonality and product newness, color story, and aesthetic appeal; Designed and built window installations and interior merchandising display elements based on seasonality, functionality, and creative enhancement
- Managed vendor buy meetings; Sourced new "brand-right" product for store inventory; Developed relationships with wholesale vendors and artisan makers; Identified product brands, (based on sales volume and customer demand), to re-stock, increase line offering, markdown, and drop

*Rethreaded, Inc. (July 2013-September 2014)*

- Developed and taught merchandising techniques to establish visual and merchandising standards. Included: basic merchandising standards, color-story development, life-styling vs. straightforward, how to identify shopping patterns and highest volume fixtures, and creating a "Rethreaded Woman"
- Member of "Retail Store Concept Team": Collaborated on design, aesthetic, display and merchandising functionality of Rethreaded concept retail store launched in September 2014

- Member of "Product Development Team": Worked with various potential collaboration projects; Taught "Intro. To Design" classes outlining basic elements of design; Worked directly with original team of seamstresses to develop confidence and artistic design skill

**Anthropologie Home Office, Philadelphia, PA June 2010-May 2012**

*Acting Interim Buyer: Sweaters (August 2011-May 2012)*

- Responsible for all financial goals for the sweater department, including: sales, "Open to Buy", IMU, style count, monthly and quarterly retails, attributes by category
- Planned, balanced, and executed the sweater assortment based on current and historic selling, trend analysis, concept and merchandising stories, silhouette, fabrication, and seasonality
- Collaborated with all design partners from initial sketch reviews/product development to final "hindsight" past season review, included: Working to create unique styles with each designer at "sketch review" presentation; Reviewing all proto samples at finalization stage; Communicating through entire buy process; Collaborating on all fittings/colorings/yarn selections; Providing feedback on current product selling; Creating cohesive end of season presentation to be utilized for future designs
- Traveled regionally bi-weekly: To strengthen existing, and develop new, market partnerships; To search for inspiration ideas and samples; To attend market shows, participate in events, and visit vendor showrooms

*Assistant Buyer: Sweaters, Fine Gauge (June 2010-May 2012)*

- Managed all aspects of buying procedures from initial product design finalization to product delivery into retail store locations, included: Assisting with balancing the total class buy; Creating production purchase order hand-off; Participating and negotiating costing and engineering; Collaborating in all product fit, color, and detail meetings; Entering all purchase orders; Communicating with vendor contacts; Monitoring and tracking product delivery into the distribution center; Analyzing product sales based on region, store, color, size, and attribute selling information; Participating in product markdown procedures
- Managed monthly and quarterly "Open to Buy" by utilizing various spreadsheet and analysis tools to make strategic business decisions based on revenue generation, product delivery, and style balance
- Collaborated with internal messaging teams (catalog, web merchandising, retail merchandising, public relations) to convey cohesive messages based on seasonal and brand appropriate trends
- Participated in high-level business meetings with directors and company executives communicating business strategies, product development, and trend analysis
- Created exclusive projects with market vendors to add special "top tier" product buys into regionally specific locations

**Urban Outfitters, Savannah, GA August 2009-May 2010 \*\*While attending SCAD**

*Merchandising Lead: Women's, Men's, Accessories, Housewares*

- Assisted with processing and preparing merchandise for placement on the sales floor
- Participated in analysis of weekly business and walkthroughs assessing plans for future moves of merchandise
- Styled and outfitted in-store and window mannequins based on current fashion trends, specific customer-base, and company inspiration
- Created inspiration "tear-sheets" to communicate both business and creative strategies to entire store team
- Provided customer-centered service experience through listening to customer needs and offering thoughtful suggestions

**Anthropologie, Austin, TX October 2006-August 2009**

*Merchandiser: Apparel, Intimates, Accessories, Home*

- Managed and executed the process of merchandise flow to sales floor
- Decided merchandise placement based on business strategy and creative concept
- Analyzed, strategized, and created goals to grow department revenues

- Used entrepreneurial business strategies to ensure visually pleasing color stories, innovative outfitting, and practical merchandising choices
- Assisted with visual display from inspiration to execution
- Gathered and communicated feedback to corporate headquarters from five district stores, answering product-specific questions
- Created story and inspiration boards to communicate both business and creative strategies to entire store team

**Uncommon Objects, Austin, TX January 2006-June 2009**

*Associate/Freelance Merchandiser*

- Created visually pleasing windows, showcases, and displays to achieve increased traffic and sales
- Assisted customers with residential and commercial interior design needs
- Worked directly with production crews for film and print set design
- Handled such retail-specific customer service oriented tasks as point of sale, guest satisfaction, and shop upkeep

**EDUCATION**

**Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah, GA September 2009-May 2010**

Master of Fine Arts (in progress), Luxury Fashion Management

**Flagler College, St. Augustine, FL September 2001-April 2005**

Bachelor of Arts, Cum Laude

**Press/Activities**

*Bridge Eight Literary Magazine*, Brand Strategy Consultant, summer 2015-fall 2016

"Meet Elizabeth" Natural Life Blog Feature, summer 2016

Rethreaded Pop-up Shop Install Leader, 2014

"Sweater Manufacturing," Cotton Inc. educational course, participant, fall 2011

"Cool Think Tank" team member, summer 2011

"Coterie" Anthropologie exclusive customer insight focus group, meeting leader, spring 2011

"United Colors of Benetton Retail Reinvention," selected as class participant, spring 2010

SCAD Guest speaker: Fashion 300 & 400 level Merchandising Classes, winter 2009-spring 2010

"The not-so-little Black Dress," selected for fashion exhibition fall 2009

"Love Lois," fashion runway show, co-designer and coordinator, summer 2008-spring 2009

Catalog location scout, Austin, TX: Anthropologie June catalog, spring 2009

*Lucky Magazine*: The Vintage Hound, September 2008

Project Transitions: "Holiday Swing," auction setup, 2008

*Good Magazine*: South Congress Fashion Show, model, fall 2007

Junior League Benefit Luncheon: "Austin Settings," table setup and display, spring 2007