



## Q&A with Peter Huston

*Brand President/CMO, Noa Brands*

**Q: What differentiates your company from other competitors in the marketplace?**

**A:** Noa Brands may be a new name to the marketplace, but each of our individual brands has been a visual merchandising leader for decades. It is the strength of our brands and the diversity of our design that give us a unique place in the industry.

Atrezzo was established in 1978 and features our premier quality and craftsmanship, 100 percent designed and produced in Spain. Atrezzo's inspiring team works hand-in-hand with every client, and the result is an amazing portfolio with one of the widest range of products available in the market.

Goldsmith has been a premier fashion leader and innovator of quality mannequins since 1927. Based in New York, Goldsmith has designed and produced mannequins for many of the world's most prominent retailers for generations.

Fusion is the world's largest producer of custom mannequins, and pioneered the production of highly durable mannequins made with e-flex™, our proprietary polyurethane material, and patented magnetic fittings. From high-fashion to highly

defined athletic, Fusion specializes in custom-designed mannequins that embody the true spirit of our customers' brands.

Pop provides its clients with fashion-forward design without paying high prices, by combining Asian production and value with European design integrity.

And now, we have joined together to create a true global footprint that includes owned manufacturing, warehousing, logistics and customer service on three continents—Europe, Asia and North America. We are uniquely positioned to help our customers grow and maintain a consistent brand presentation, no matter where that may be in the world.

**Q: What is your company's philosophy toward customization?**

**A:** Keeping our focus on the individual needs of our customers is the core of our company culture. Because of this, we wholeheartedly embrace both custom design and customization of existing designs—it is as natural to us as breathing.

We see more customers wanting designs that are

specific to their brand and store presentations. Our first approach is our strong stable of brands, each offering an extensive and unique catalog of designs with an endless amount of custom finish options. In addition, most items can be customized to meet the specific needs of any customer.

As for pure custom design, our Fusion brand has established its entire business model on custom design, and it represents more than 90 percent of the brand sales. We believe this model provides the best long-term value and builds deep and lasting relationships. Custom mannequins are a critical differentiator, as they quite literally put shape to a brand image.

**Q: Tell us about any new company innovations that you've developed/are developing.**

**A:** Frankly, we see the merger of our stable of unique brands under one company umbrella, and the establishment of a true global footprint, as highly innovative and necessary for the industry as a whole. As retailers expand into new markets, they need sound and trustworthy suppliers that can gracefully help them achieve their growth plans.

In addition, we perpetually are searching for ways to make our customers' lives easier, be it new designs, materials or services. Most recently, our commitment to 3-D design has proved to help our customers move swiftly through the development process by providing tools that lead to "speed to decision" on the part of all stakeholders. We also see 3-D technology helping to make our manufacturing process more efficient. And to answer the demand for more environment-friendly materials, we have added recyclable materials to our offering, including papier-mâché.

**Q: Are you seeing more or less collaboration in the industry?**

**A:** Collaboration is absolutely necessary for any company focused on meeting the needs of their customers. Today, retailers are demanding more from their resources, including design, shorter lead-times, inventory management and technology innovation. Retailers are willing to partner with key suppliers in order to meet these challenges. Conversely, suppliers must collaborate with their supply base to meet the greater demands of the marketplace. This trend will continue as resourceful companies seek to thrive in an ever-changing global arena.

**Q: Are you experiencing more or less global sourcing/sales? What other countries have you worked in?**

**A:** Noa Brands is shipping to six of the seven continents (there apparently is low demand in Antarctica). We see this trend continuing as the world becomes increasingly smaller. As many of our customers are looking to foreign markets for their growth, we have structured our company to accommodate their needs no matter where they may grow. From sourcing to logistics, our network is becoming increasingly global.



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