

CHRISTOPHER SWORD

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GLOBAL CONSUMER PRODUCTS LEADER

Leadership | Business Strategy | Profitable Growth | Brand Management | Product Strategy

Passionate business leader with diverse international experience leading through challenges to accelerated and sustained growth. Career spans multiple industry sectors including consumer products, apparel, and sporting goods; exceling in publicly traded and privately held ownership structures in environments ranging from start-ups to Fortune 2 corporations. Successful at creating sustainable growth and improving profitability through organic / acquisitive means, creative strategies, and clear execution. Purpose-driven with performance focus. Respected leader who can focus and elevate teams, and lead high-performing talent.

P&L Ownership • Leadership and Team Building • Accelerated and Sustainable Growth • Marketing • Turnarounds
eCommerce • Sales and Demand Generation • Supply Chain Management • Mergers & Acquisitions • Legal Affairs

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

ROVR PRODUCTS | BOULDER, CO | Innovative outdoor consumer products company.

CEO **2021-PRESENT**
Successfully led fundraising round to recapitalize the company. Appointed CEO and Board Member to lead growth strategy and scale business.

RAREWATERS, BLACK LAB SPORTS, ADVENTURES ACADEMY | CO AND CA | Incubators, sports and outdoor, technology.

BOARD MEMBER AND INVESTOR **2016-PRESENT**
Member of leadership groups (and investors) charged with directing, advising, and mentoring unique businesses and creative teams.

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO | BOULDER, CO | Leading institution for the outdoor recreation economy.

INSTRUCTOR, MASTER'S PROGRAM **2021-PRESENT**

BELL+GIRO | SANTA CRUZ, CA | Market leader in cycling, snow and powersports helmets, accessories/apparel/footwear.

PRESIDENT **2019-2020**

As President of Bell+Giro and a member of the Vista Leadership Team, our goal was to rediscover profitable organic growth for this iconic business (Bell, Giro, Blackburn, C-Preme) within challenging market spaces. Steered the team through an organizational realignment (realizing improved ownership, and overhead savings of 8%) and a cultural turnaround (from a low point upon arrival, focused on communicating with and investing in the team, and on the Why vs. the What), while elevating areas of competitive advantage, cutting back distractions, and investing in key partners.

- This strategy and execution resulted in the company's best annual financial results in seven years (sales growth to \$330M and EBIT +34%).
- We also built and implemented a strong plan to navigate the pandemic and help the business emerge even stronger (enhanced supply chain performance and forecasting, commitment to core products and consumers, and investment in e-commerce).

PEARL IZUMI | LOUISVILLE, CO | Market leader in cycling and triathlon apparel and footwear.

PRESIDENT **2016-2019**

Recruited to move this team and 60+ year old brand in a new direction, and back to profitable growth. Built and established a mission- and vision-driven strategy to better connect with consumers, and fundamentally change the depth and direction of the business. Led major reorganization (personnel and cost realignment, 75% new leadership team), all-new brand positioning, and completely redefined product line.

- Redefined foundation (reorganization, 40% reduction in SKUs, 33% less time to develop products, DTC retail and e-Com realignment) and refocused potential (depth of brand to exploit macro trends).
- Exceeded all financial targets each year, building from \$75M to \$90M and returning to both growth and profitability.
- Expanded e-Commerce to support blended channel strategy (grew sales 4.3X, from 5-10% of total, and margin from 55-65%).

OBERALP NORTH AMERICA | BOULDER, CO | Autonomous division of a privately held Italian brand group.

PRESIDENT **2007-2016**

Founded subsidiary and built business from first stages to market leader. Led all functions for four distinct brands – Dynafit, Salewa, Wild Country, and Pomoca – within core footwear, apparel, and equipment product lines. Managed marketing and organic growth strategies, as well as acquisition planning and integration efforts for newly acquired brands. Directed sales planning and execution; managed key client relationships ranging from single-store retailers to REI. Oversaw unique product development for the American market. Managed supply chain to ensure adequate merchandise inventories. Built and led an industry-leading team.

- Grew annual revenues to \$15M from \$500k (53% CAGR), achieved profitability in second year (vs. six-year industry average), and reduced seasonality from 100% winter to 60% – by leading transition to wholly-owned subsidiary and focusing on sustainable growth.
- Achieved more than 8X category growth over four years through 2015 due to strategic focus on footwear and apparel.
- Increased market share of ski bindings to 50% from 5% with integrated marketing plan and innovative product development efforts.
- Expanded Salewa accounts to 200+ from scratch in just two years by creating and implementing a focused product and brand strategy.

RUSSELL CORPORATION | ATLANTA, GA | The Outdoor Division within a \$2B diversified athletics company.

DIRECTOR, MARKETING & MERCHANDISING (MOSSY OAK)

2006

Led marketing and product teams for technical hunting category. Established and implemented all marketing and merchandising strategies and plans through a consumer-driven process. Managed internal functions, external agencies, and shared services (including sales, planning, finance, distribution, customer service, production and sourcing). Managed client relationships from small specialty to Bass Pro, Dick's and Walmart.

- Grew division sales 50% through organic growth, dealer acquisition, and brand extensions.
- Achieved highest profitability of any Russell division by combining good cost management with pricing power from brand building.
- Reengineered product development process to full-package sourcing model via a new Hong Kong office (select four-member team).

DIRECTOR, MARKETING & CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT (MOSSY OAK, MARMOT, JAGGED EDGE)

2002-2005

Led marketing team across brands. Created marketing strategy and brand positioning and implemented all marketing plans for Mossy Oak, establishing it as the market's leading brand in hunting apparel. Created and launched critical new sub-brands and product line extensions, including the industry's first technical line (APX) and a sportswear line (Elements). Led supply chain and fulfillment integration for the launch of Russell's first consumer e-commerce effort. Oversaw corporate development, due diligence, and integration efforts for acquisitions.

- Led strategic expansion by acquiring Jagged Edge to support launching the industry's first "mountain technical" line of hunting apparel.
- Oversaw sale of Marmot brand to K2 Sports; supported corporate acquisitions of Spalding, Brooks, and Moving Comfort.

APPLIED THEORY CORP | NEW YORK, NY | \$80M internet solutions provider, web development and managed hosting.

DIRECTOR, SALES AND WESTERN ALLIANCES / GENERAL MANAGER, DENVER

2001-2002

DIRECTOR, CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT

2000-2002

Led due diligence on 40+ potential targets. Developed market strategy, prospect company evaluation and selection, transaction closing, and integration. Oversaw integration and turnaround efforts of Denver operation; managed team and all functional operations, including marketing, web/multimedia development & design, sales, HR, finance, and IT. Negotiated contracts and final sale of company.

- Closed acquisitions totaling over \$22M in total revenue.
- Built strategic alliances and indirect sales channels for western expansion, increasing indirect sales to 28% from 5% of total.
- Drove 85% revenue growth, a cultural turnaround in Denver, and restructuring to support long-term web services.

FORD MOTOR COMPANY | DETROIT, MI AND DENVER, CO | Member of the Marketing Leadership Development Program.

At the time company focused on an aggressive strategy to re-invent itself using marketing to drive product design and strategic direction.

MARKETING AND FRANCHISE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, LINCOLN MERCURY (DENVER, CO)

1998-2000

Led all distribution channel and consumer-focused marketing in a \$200M revenue region. Managed dealer franchising, sales distribution network strategy, and business consulting. Negotiated and approved contracts.

- Grew total sales by 10% and increased Lincoln market share by 2 percentage points.

MARKETING MANAGER, GLOBAL MOTORSPORTS (DETROIT, MI)

1996-1998

Created and launched Ford's international Motorsports Marketing Division. Developed global marketing strategy for all racing categories, including NASCAR and Formula One, impacting expenditures of over \$128M. Collaborated with Champion and No Fear to launch innovative merchandise and apparel sales strategy. Conducted integrated marketing campaigns focused on relationship and event marketing.

- Reduced spending by 10% while focusing and amplifying the consumer impact of sponsorship programs.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, WORLDWIDE MARKETING PLANS & STRATEGY (DEARBORN, MI)

1995-1996

Managed global brand and marketing plans for compact pickup PD programs. Oversaw brand management for Ranger platform and created the company's first consumer brand plan. Led cross-functional statistical diagnosis of market decline later used as company-wide standard.

- Improved 4x4 mix to 28% from 15% as leader of profitability enhancement initiative.
- Won the 1996 Customer Driven Quality Award for redefining Ford's Marketing Strategy Document.

PRUDENTIAL | PHILADELPHIA, PA

ASSOCIATE MANAGER, INTERNAL CONSULTING

1990-1993

EDUCATION

DUKE UNIVERSITY, THE FUQUA SCHOOL OF BUSINESS | DURHAM, NC

Master of Business Administration

1995

VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY | VILLANOVA, PA

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

1990

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Community: Board Member, ActiveBoulder (2012+); Founder, Phoenix Project (Marshall Fire Recovery), Fundraiser, Restore Colorado Trails.

Languages and Interests: Spanish (basic) and German (basic). Sports: mountain biking, competitive racing (IRONMAN finisher, marathons, bike racing), skiing/snowboarding, fly fishing, hiking, and camping. Also personal investing and travel (visited all 50 states and 30+ countries).