

BOGNER ON THE RISE



Alexander Wirth

In September 2016, the multi-talented Willy Bogner – ski racer, film director and entrepreneur – handed over as Chairman and CEO of **Bogner** to Alexander Wirth.

Although only 41, Wirth has an impressive career encompassing both retail and industry at home and overseas. He earned his first laurels at the German retail specialist **Peek & Cloppenburg**, subsequently moving industry-side to work at **René Lezard** and **Burberry**; and finally spending seven years at **Ralph Lauren**, where he was CEO and VP for Central Europe. Wirth understands and lives the combination of sport, fashion and luxury, a key requirement for propelling a label like Bogner to the top – and keeping it there.

For a long time, the market had been influenced by rumors that the company would soon be sold, as well as various other speculations. Now a sense of calm has returned and there is no longer talk of a sale.

The first significant improvements can be seen, not only consolidating Bogner's top-ranking position in the global marketplace but also allowing continual progression. The company's aspiration is to take and maintain pole position in the premium, luxury and sport fashion segment. The **Sônia Bogner** line remains a priority and a focus for womenswear.

Bogner embodies elegant athleticism. With the relaunch of its 'Fire + Ice' collection, the brand has chosen much cooler, more youthful positioning. Wirth has already invested heavily in the product and recreated the Executive Board's production/procurement remit. Other important milestones for the company's restructure included strong positioning in its Sales, Digital, IT and Communications departments, as well as a new CFO. Along with creativity the company places considerable emphasis on quality and very close collaboration with suppliers – plus an optimal price-performance ratio.

Feedback from buyers at the recent **Premium** and **Ispo** trade shows has been excellent. Trust in the brand has also returned.

Wirth sees major opportunities in the DACH (Germany-Austria-Switzerland), EMEA, USA, Canada and Asia regions, especially in the light of the planned 2022 Olympic Games in Beijing. Focused talks are already taking place. The outlook for the cult German brand is positive.

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