

WWD *In Person*

SECTION II

PHOTO BY DONATO SARDELLA

Kathy Ireland with an array of her licensed products.



Kathy Ireland

IF AMERICAN MEN ONLY KNOW OF KATHY IRELAND doused in sunshine and water, and wearing a tiny yellow bikini on the 1989 cover of *Sports Illustrated*, they don't talk to their wives and girlfriends enough. By Rachel Brown

In perhaps what is one of the industry's most unlikely career trajectories, Kathy Ireland has gone from being the California girl of men's

fantasies to building a \$2 billion brand with her name attached to more than 15,000 stockkeeping units, ranging from windows to panties,

carried at more than 50,000 stores — all with the promise of simplifying women's lives.

Quietly, for a company of its size and scope, Kathy Ireland

Worldwide has become a licensing juggernaut, reaping profits from sales of products it doesn't make. Roughly 30 licensees do that job.

Forbes estimated the company, which it valued at \$300 million, pulls in \$35 million to \$50 million annually in royalties.

In five to seven years, KIWW president and chief operating officer Stephen

(Continued on page 4)



WWD IN PERSON



On "Suddenly Susan" with Brooke Shields and Brett Cullen, 1997.

Through the Years

1963: Kathy Ireland is born.

1974: Her first job: paper route.

1980: At 17, Kathy is discovered by Elite models. She signs in 1981. She would appear on covers for Vogue, Cosmopolitan, Women's Fitness and other magazines, and in campaigns including Bulova, Fruit of the Loom, Caress Soap, Budweiser, Cheerios and Baked Lays Potato Chips.

1984: First of 13 consecutive appearances in the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit issue, with three times on the cover.

1989: Kathy is on the cover of the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit issue, which remains the magazine's best-selling swimsuit issue.

1990: Ireland comes to management company Sterling Winters.

1992: Ireland turns down modeling assignments and a series regular role on "Baywatch." She takes a \$50,000 personal loan to start her company, Kathy Ireland Worldwide, and hires Jon Carrasco from Sterling Winters to serve as creative director. She would buy Sterling Winters in 2001.

1993: Partners with Moretz Sports and the KIWW brand launches with a pair of athletic socks that she designs, using moisture-wicking technology. KIWW accepts an offer from Kmart to sell apparel on a non-exclusive basis.

1994: Ireland's son Erik is born. ■ KIWW expands apparel collection at Kmart to include swimwear, activewear, accessories, sweaters and more. The brand becomes Kmart's bestselling "young fashion" line.

■ Her philanthropic efforts kick into high gear, as she becomes the founding ambassador to the Dream Foundation, which grants wishes to terminally ill adults; she begins HIV/AIDS activism working for AIDS LA.

■ Ireland becomes a certified fitness instructor and starts producing fitness videos, forming Sterling Winters Company Studios.

1995: Ireland begins giving fitness information on ESPN, supporting her athletic wear design program.

1996: KIWW launches its Web site, kathyireland.com with the decision not to sell product but to use it as a broadcast/informational channel.

1997: Ireland becomes chair of March of Dimes WalkAmerica and opens neonatal intensive care units around the country.

1998: Ireland gives birth to daughter Lily.

■ She signs a contract to launch home goods at independent retailers.

1999: Home products are purchased by the Nebraska Furniture Mart (a Berkshire Hathaway company) which remains a major account.

■ Ireland is named Woman of the Year from the National Association of Women Business Owners.

2000: Ireland becomes the first female and first designer to host the LGPA Tournament. It is the first of three she will host. She launches a golfwear collection. ■ The company produces "Once Upon A Christmas," which is now syndicated annually in more than 80 countries and was the highest rated made-for-TV movie on the ABC Family Channel.

■ KIWW licenses ACafe by Chef Andre for cooking and entertaining products, and signs with Berkshire Hathaway Shaw Industries for products in carpet, area rugs, ceramic flooring tiles and hardwood.

2001: KIWW acquires Jardin JduJ, a garden design company directed by landscape designer Nicholas Walker. Jardin wins the San Francisco Flower and Garden Show Gold Medal. ■ "Twice Upon Christmas" premieres at the White House with First Lady Laura Bush.

2002: Ireland becomes Ambassador of Hope for City of Hope.

■ She releases her book "Powerful Inspirations: Eight Lessons That Will Change Your Life."

■ KIWW licenses Pacific Coast Lighting for indoor and outdoor light fixtures.

■ Kmart files for bankruptcy.

2003: Ireland gives birth to daughter Chloe.

■ After Kmart emerges from bankruptcy, KIWW parts ways with the retailer and launches home products in independent distribution channels. It licenses the Alta division of Hunter Douglas for custom window coverings and Martin for home and office furniture.

■ Ireland begins a program to establish home-based businesses for single parents. She is named Mother of the Year by the National Mothers Day Association.

2004: KIWW receives its first Good Housekeeping Seal and licenses Hannah Candle Co. for home fragrances for her brands ACafe and Jardin.

■ Ireland is the highest-ranked woman, ahead of Oprah Winfrey,

on Inc. magazine's list of Top 10 Celebrity Entrepreneurs.

2005: KIWW earns its second Good Housekeeping Seal and launches mattresses by Therapedic International.

■ Ireland publishes three children's books: "An Angel Called Hope," "Mona's Favorite Words," and "What Do Mommies Do."

2006: KIWW partners with Hallmark for bedding.

■ Sixth fitness video, "Core" is released.

2007: Home products earn third, fourth and fifth Good Housekeeping Seals. KIWW licenses Minka Aire for ceiling fans.

■ Ireland addresses the United Nations' Youth Assembly on social responsibility.

2009: KIWW makes License Global Magazine's list of the most powerful licensing brands in the world. During this year, it licenses cabinets, fine jewelry, home shelving, bedroom and dining room furniture.

■ Kathy Ireland Weddings hosts more than 100 weddings at its licensed Oasis Estates and retreats annually.

■ Stephen Roseberry is named president and chief operating officer of Sterling and Winters and Kathy Ireland Worldwide.

■ Ireland publishes her fifth book, "Real Solutions for Busy Moms: Your Guide to Success & Sanity," in English and Spanish.

2009: Ireland's sixth book, "Real Solutions For Busy Moms Devotional: 52 God-Inspired Messages For Your Heart" is published.

2010: KIWW ranks 28th on License Global Magazines' 125

most powerful licensed brands in the world.

■ Ireland hosts the Oscars Red Carpet on ABC to the highest ratings in history wearing jewelry designed by Elizabeth Taylor and from her own collection.

■ She receives the Lifetime Achievement award from the CEO Roundtable, a Humanitarian Award from Jewelers for Children and becomes the Ambassador for the Make a Wish foundation.

■ KIWW licenses LaJobi for infant to child furnishings, Bush for office furniture and Rogaska Crystal for crystal ware. The company partners with Window World and sells \$400 million in replacement windows annually, incorporating baby-and-animal-safe innovations.

2011: KIWW licenses furs with American Legend and launches a best selling designer collection from the Fur Vault at Macy's; partners with Bauhaus, a La-Z-Boy company, for upholstery, and Lloyds of Chatham for additional upholstery. She signs with Panties Plus for intimate apparel and launches Kathy Ireland for Mon Cheri bridal.

■ Chef Andre contributes recipes to Janet Jackson's New York Times Bestseller "True You."

■ Nicholas Walker is the centerpiece of the Architectural Digest tribute to Elizabeth Taylor for designing the Elizabeth Taylor Garden, and Ireland receives the Design For Life award for battling HIV/AIDS.

2012: Marking 20 years since planting the seeds of KIWW, Ireland's bridal collection is named the exclusive designer for the Festival of Brides at Disneyland.

■ Between Las Vegas Furniture Market and High Point, KIWW reaches 20 showrooms in the home industry.

■ The company will announce its partnership with Gorham, a Lennox company, for fine table glassware and flatware.

■ Ireland is slated to address Googleplex as a keynote speaker.

ADVERTISEMENT



Young girl grows up by the beach. Becomes first papergirl in her neighborhood. Discovered by modeling agency while in school. Appears in 13 Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issues. Becomes a designer. Becomes a businesswoman. Builds a worldwide empire that grosses over 1.9 billion dollars annually. Travels the world in the fight to end poverty. Called an icon, prefers Mom. ■



WWD IN PERSON

Business Model

Wedding and special occasion dresses by Mon Cheri. Furs by American Legend.

(Continued from page one)

Roseberry believes goods bearing the brand's name could generate \$10 billion in retail sales.

"At that point, you are talking about a company that looks very different from how it looks today," he said.

The future firm will certainly more closely resemble the current company than its predecessors. When Ireland struck the seated pose for photographer Paolo Curto in Mexico that would become the cover of *Sports Illustrated* — which is still the magazine's bestselling swimsuit issue — she was four years from launching her brand and five years from having the first of her three children. But the seeds of her formidable business success were already sewn. Spotted by an

three times on the cover. That spawned a brief acting stint, in which she appeared in TV shows such as "Suddenly Susan," "Melrose Place," "Boy Meets World," "The Larry Sanders Show" and others.

She didn't exactly know what to do after modeling — a foray into brewing beer was short-lived — but she had an entrepreneurial zeal evident from a young age (at four, she sold painted rocks for nickels in her hometown of Santa Barbara, and at 11 she had a newspaper route). She wasn't afraid of failing in pursuit of professional longevity.

More than two decades ago, long before it was commonplace for models and actresses to leverage their celebrity to make money with merchandise, she began assembling a team (Roseberry and Jon

“My modeling description was basically ‘Shut up and pose,’ and that wasn’t what I was interested in moving forward.”

— KATHY IRELAND

Elite Model Management agent at the age of 17, Ireland never felt she was born to be a model. From Day One in front of the camera, she was concerned that the lens soon would be turning elsewhere.

"I knew it was temporary. I knew that the look was always changing," said Ireland, chief executive officer and chief designer of KIWW, about modeling. "I saw beautiful young people who didn't make it in that industry just because their look didn't happen to be the look of the moment. I knew this wasn't going to be a lasting, secure place to earn my income. I always knew I belonged on the other side of the camera."

Her modeling career was most notable for appearances in 13 consecutive *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issues, between 1984 and 1996, with

Carrasco, currently executive vice president and creative director, were two of the early hires) to support a Kathy Ireland enterprise that then largely consisted of exercise videos and spots with fitness tips syndicated to ESPN. She had a vision for it to become much more.

When he was brought on board at KIWW after being an executive assistant at Sterling/Winters Co., a management firm Ireland bought in 2001, Carrasco said Ireland had already set lofty goals to develop a prominent brand, and he was absolutely convinced she could meet them.

(Continued on page 6)



Photographed by Michael Grecco for FORBES, February 27, 2012 - Cover.



Make more than money. Make history.

KATHY IRELAND, SUPERMOGUL, FORBES COVER FEBRUARY 2012.



Forbes

Change the world.

WWD IN PERSON

(Continued from page 4)

"She was modeling, but it was not something she wanted to do," Roseberry recalled. "She definitely wanted to build a brand. She wanted to build something sustainable so she could address families."

To underscore her commitment to families, Ireland in 1994 concocted a somewhat clunky mission statement: "Finding solutions for families, especially busy moms." Subsequent mission statements — ("Finding solutions for people in business" and "Finding solutions for people in love") — were etched into the company code in 2000 and 2006, respectively, to suit its broadening customer base.

Socks began to turn Ireland's grand vision into a reality. John Moretz, chairman and chief innovation officer of sock maker Gold Toe Moretz Holdings Corp., which was acquired by Gildan Activewear Inc. last year for \$350 million, contacted Ireland with the idea of modeling socks for his company (Moretz Mills at the time). Ireland no longer wanted to be just a pretty face and determined socks were the perfect product to prove that she could prosper beyond an obvious tie-in like swimwear.

"My modeling description was basically 'Shut up and pose,' and that wasn't what I was interested in moving forward. I thought, If they'd be open to working with our team, we would be involved every step of the way, from design to marketing to distribution," she said. "If they would embrace that, we might be on to something."

Not everybody thought Ireland had hit on something special. "We hit the streets, knocked on doors. Doors slammed in our faces. Everything from 'You're not good enough, not smart enough, love the socks, but who needs you?'" recalled Ireland. "I didn't realize it at the time, but one of the greatest gifts from that modeling career was all the rejection."

Sporting-goods stores like Big 5 did eventually bring in the socks, where they found an audience. Soon, the socks' solid performance was repeated at retailers outside of the sporting-goods arena as well. The socks had done the hard work of validating that Ireland could carry a brand.

Kmart and Wal-Mart came calling. The mass-market giants wanted Ireland's apparel exclusively. Ireland took to the Kmart executives, including former ceo's Joe Antonini and Floyd Hall, and merchandise manager Rocco Ingemi, who later joined Ireland's company as executive vice president of retail and brand management. She was also satisfied with how Kmart operated.

"We started by conducting factory surprise inspections. You learn a lot when you show up unexpectedly. My dad worked in labor relations with farm workers. I grew up attending Cesar Chavez rallies, and how people are treated is always far more important than any profit margin," said Ireland.

In 1994, Kmart exclusively introduced Kathy Ireland swimwear and body collections. Ireland would go on to

At her office in Santa Barbara, Calif.



PHOTO BY DONATO SARDIELLA

With outdoor furniture by Jardin Nicholas Walker from Kathy Ireland Designs.



PHOTO BY TRACEY MORRIS PHOTOGRAPHY FOR GENIUX MAGAZINE © 2012

"I was 40 before I learned that 'No' was a complete sentence."

have merchandise in almost every Kmart apparel department, from maternity to fitness. At its height, her Kmart clothing lines registered an estimated \$250 million to \$300 million in annual sales.

The ride with Kmart was sweet, but it wasn't always smooth. The retailer filed for bankruptcy in 2002, and its troubles made Ireland wonder whether her brand should link itself with a single store.

In 2003, the year Kmart emerged from bankruptcy, she decided to end her relationship with the retailer. The decision didn't meet with universal approval. Executives at her company — even the vice chairman and chief financial officer — weren't sure leaving Kmart was the right move.

"She called a meeting and said she wasn't going to go for-

ward, and people said, 'You are earning millions and millions of dollars a year, and they have come out of bankruptcy, so you should do it,'" Roseberry remembered. "She was very clear about the fact that she had to go and prove herself in another area."

That new area was home. Kmart had the exclusive on her apparel, but she hadn't touched the home category there. Ireland had dabbled in some home goods and was eager — as she had done with socks — to once again establish her brand chops beyond the obvious. "She said, 'We need to go into a sector that is not associated with the discount channel, so we can start all over again,'" said Roseberry.

In separating from Kmart, Ireland was forced to rely on independent retailers. She rel-

ished the change.

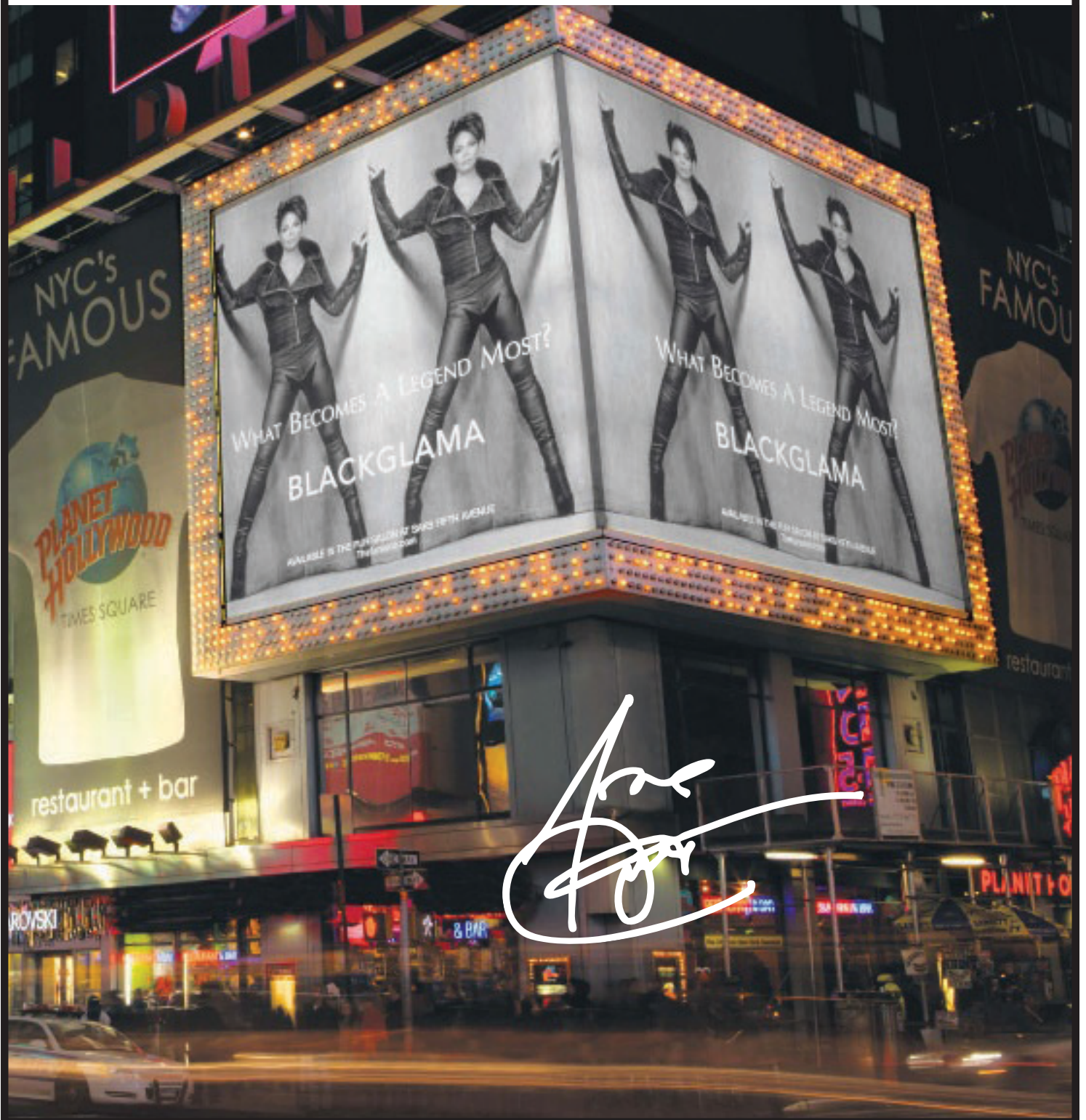
"Something that Warren Buffett said, and I believe it to be true, is that big boxes will never be able to compete with independent retailers when it comes to customer service," said Ireland.

Ingemi added, "With independent retailers, it is true brand building. You are guiding and directing what the brand stands for. When you become important through independent retailers, you are building a grassroots association with the customer, who begins to trust your brand."

Ireland's venture into home had an audacious inauguration. Around four years before she exited Kmart, at her first High Point Market, the North Carolina expo for home furnishing makers and retailers,

(Continued on page 8)

CONGRATULATIONS KATHY



WWD IN PERSON

(Continued from page 6)

she ran into Irvin Blumkin, chairman and ceo of Berkshire Hathaway-owned Nebraska Furniture Mart. He instructed Ireland to walk him through her furniture assortment solo, without being propped up by her support staff.

"If she doesn't know her stuff, I'm not buying," said Ireland, recounting Blumkin's demand. Well, he bought her stuff.

"Today, we have a great relationship," said Ireland.

That relationship helped lay the foundation for what's become an extensive home repertoire that spans carpets and flooring with Shaw Industries, interior lighting with Pacific Coast Lighting, bedding with Hallmart Collectibles, bedroom and dining-room furniture with Vaughan Furniture, window coverings by Alta, windows with Window World (alone worth a reported \$400 million in sales), and much more.

Most of Ireland's \$2 billion at retail last year came from home items. But she has been steadily increasing her strength in other categories. Brides are key targets to drive diversification. Her connection to them often kicks off with their weddings. At three properties in California and two in Hawaii, licensee Oasis World Estates hosts hundreds of Kathy Ireland weddings a year. For their weddings, brides can get their Ireland-branded wedding rings from Elan Luxury Collections, feed their guests with catering services from ACafe Society by Chef Andre, and outfit themselves, their bridesmaids and their mothers in Kathy Ireland wedding and special-occasion dresses by Mon Cheri Bridals.

After that trip down the aisle, Ireland foresees the bride sticking with her brand throughout her life.

"If we've earned her trust on her wedding day, then we've earned it when she's

tomer needs, we're working to bring it to her, and to bring it in a beautiful way. The diversification of our brand and retail partners allows us to serve her where she is, how she is," said Ireland.

Roseberry elaborated, "We are not close to the goal of our ceo in terms of where we want to be. We still have so many [potential] categories, and you want to pick a [license] specialist in each of those categories."

The size of the company, owned entirely by Ireland — and the expectation it will continue to grow — has trig-

fully over the next few years. In this segment, in which Ireland currently has a licensee for skin care and has been affiliated with a wig company, Ingemi said that Ireland would be an ideal fit for products from nail items to hair care to hair color.

"She's been involved with that business before, and we are really looking to expand upon it," he said.

In five years, Ireland imagines her brand as an all-encompassing resource. "What you think about when you wake up in the morning, and you wash your face, you put on your make-up, you get dressed, your hair care, how you spend your day, your leisure activities, your work — [I want] to be able to make beautiful things that address [my customer's] needs from the time she wakes up to the time she goes to bed, at every age, at every stage of life," she said.

Ireland has been married since 1988 to emergency room

Fine jewelry by Elan Luxury Collections.



Kathy Ireland bridal gowns, furs, lighting, rug and couch.

"And our team — I mean, it seems like a well-oiled machine. We've known each other so long, we know how we work. We look at the calendar 18 months out, and we start with all the dates that are important. Of course, things come up last minute, but when we start with that as a foundation, it really helps. Then we fill it in exactly where things can work. Our kids are only going to be young for this small period of time, it means there's a lot of business opportunities that I say no to at this point in time... I was 40 before I learned that 'No' was a complete sentence."

Would her kids one day join the business?

"Only if they wanted to. Our kids have been exposed to it for sure," she said. "I mean, they help with design. They come up with some great designs. I love it. And since they were little, I'd hand them a disposable camera, and at that eye level, how they see the world — we got some cool stuff, some really great design inspiration. All three of them are creative. They've got great eyes. They're interested in photography. They're such individuals.... They haven't expressed interest in wanting to join the family business. [They're going to] do their own thing."

When Ireland founded her brand with socks, did she ever imagine she'd be in the advantageous position she's in now, having segued from model to model-mogul to her preferred title of mom-preneur, with acquisitions and \$10 billion in sales a long-term goal?

"Yes and no," she said. "Back then, there was a bigger vision. We still have a long way to go and so much to accomplish."

thinking about design in other areas," said Ireland.

Steve Lang, chief executive officer of Mon Cheri Bridals, put it this way: "If a young lady gets engaged and wears a Kathy Ireland product, you have her name, you have her anniversary date, you can hit her with messages about carpeting and honeymoons, and this and that."

Ireland asserts her possible solutions for customers are endless. She's considering opening branded retail stores abroad. Both at home and internationally — Ireland's products are available in about 50 countries — cosmetics, shoes, activewear, hats and swimsuits (no longer a liability for being "too obvious") are among the many possible product extensions she's contemplating.

"Everything that our cus-

gered questions about an IPO.

"I never say never," responded Ireland, who emphasized, however, "I love being a private company. It allows us the freedom to make choices."

More likely in the near term are acquisitions. Within the next year, Roseberry predicted there would be at least one. He said the firm is eyeing media and consumer product brands trading at excellent values for purchases.

"She is very inspired by what Warren Buffett has done with Berkshire Hathaway. He buys good companies and lets them run themselves," said Roseberry, noting, "As a company, we don't have a single penny of debt. We are very proud of that. [During the recession] most companies leveraged themselves. She did not."

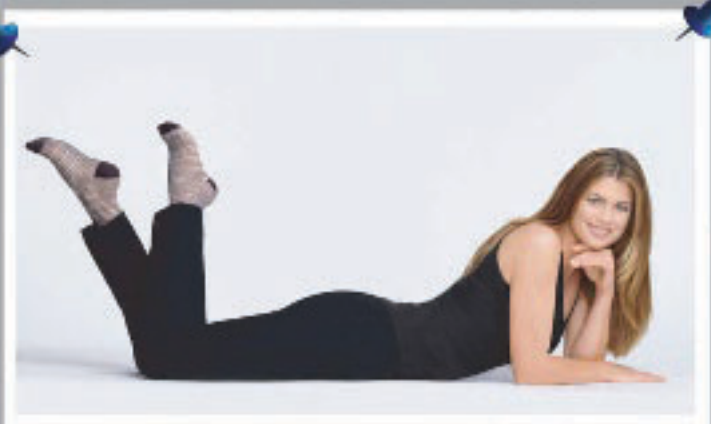
Beauty is an area the company wants to develop more

physician Greg Olsen, and they have three children— Erik, 18 this month, Lily, 13, and Chloe, 9 — so she's well aware of the requirements of family life. For someone whose mission is making life easier for families, Ireland maintains a rigorous schedule.

"I don't advocate the amount of sleep I get. I keep thinking, Some day I'll get more sleep. But there really is no typical day, every day is so different. I'm usually up between 4 and 6 a.m.," said Ireland. "My priorities for myself are my faith, my family and being of service through our work, and if I don't honor those priorities, I'm a mess. Coping skills are out the window, stress is unmanageable, I'm not very effective at anything. So it's important to get those priorities honored."

"I start the day, I take the kids to school," she related.





kathy ireland®

*Our fashion story starts with socks.
The dream continues...*

Please contact jm@moretzmarketing.com and kathyireland.com

WWD IN PERSON



Furniture from Martin.

Teamwork

A massive licensing operation drives the business. By Rachel Brown

KATHY IRELAND WANTS to make things easier for families, and she's assembled a big family of licensing partners to do just that.

Since teaming with Moretz Mills for socks in 1993, Kathy Ireland Worldwide has signed license agreements with about 30 companies to produce Kathy Ireland-branded goods that rack up \$2 billion in retail sales. About half of the licenses are in the home category, for which Nebraska Furniture Mart and Raymour & Flanigan are two of the brand's largest retailers, but KIWW has been pushing to broaden its license portfolio to

diminish its reliance on home and to serve its customers' many needs.

The company concentrated on building its business in home products in 2003, after it cut its exclusive ties to Kmart, where apparel was Ireland's strong suit, and only recently has seriously reentered the apparel arena. Within the last two years, KIWW has delved into special occasion and wedding dresses with Mon Cheri Bridals, intimates with Panties Plus Inc., and fur items with American Legend.

"We're expanding our fashion," said Ireland, "but we're doing it carefully and correctly." When deciding upon licenses,

she continued, "We look at our mission statements. It's got to look within those mission statements and tie together. There's so much that we don't yet have. People complain that we're growing the brand so slowly, but it's at such a pace where I feel comfortable because it's important that we do it right."

Besides apparel and numerous categories of furniture, the brand licenses categories from rugs and hard flooring to ceiling fans, lighting to replacement windows, bedding to upholstery and home textiles, tableware to candles, clocks, window treatments and other home decor accessories. And, of course, socks.

Jon Carrasco, executive vice president and creative director of KIWW, stressed that Ireland seeks out licensees that are innovative leaders in their fields. Speaking of Ireland's reignited ambition to develop her brand further with licensed apparel products, he added, "She's always had a passion for fashion, [but] we had a period of time where we distanced ourselves from the Kmart association, so that when we go out to independent retailers with fashion today, it's a new statement."

The license partners that have been brought into KIWW's fold report favorably about Ireland and the performance of merchandise that bears her name. When his company was in discussions last year with KIWW to become a licensee, Mike McCrea, vice president of marketing at fur specialist American Legend, was invited to a brand summit during which various licensees discussed their sales. "It was this big love-in," said McCrea. "They were encouraged to express any needs or concerns. We weren't yet a partner, but I'm looking around at all of them saying that the economy hasn't been good, but sales are up 15 to 20 percent. It made me a believer."

The early results of American Legend's Kathy Ireland fur collection of 30 styles priced from \$695 to \$30,000 have made McCrea an even bigger believer. The Fur Vault picked it up at Macy's last fall, and he said, "They were very happy with it." In global retail sales, McCrea disclosed that Kathy Ireland's involvement with American Legend would yield in excess of \$250 million annually. "When they [shoppers] come in and see Kathy Ireland at Macy's, they see a brand that they trust," said McCrea.

Although it is a smaller figure than American Legend's, Mon Cheri Bridals chief executive officer Steve Lang is pleased that Kathy Ireland wedding and special occasion dresses have quickly hit \$3 million in sales. "This has the ability to go to the \$15 million, \$20 million, \$25 million range with just what we are doing. I have high hopes," he said.

Panties Plus' intimates line with Ireland is on track to generate \$10 million in wholesale revenues in 2013, according to ceo Abe Hanan. He said the line, which includes bras retailing from \$32 to \$42, underwear from \$8 to \$16, sleepwear from \$35 to \$45 and shapewear from \$15 to \$30, will go into Bealls, Stage Stores and other department stores by July.

The entrance of Kathy Ireland merchandise into department stores demonstrates the expanding reach of KIWW.

(Continued on page 12)

Bedding by Hallmark Collectibles.



Baby furniture from LaJobi.



A woman with long, wavy blonde hair is posing in a light pink lace bra and matching underwear. She is standing in front of a white-framed window with a brass handle. To her left, there is a potted plant with green leaves and white flowers. The lighting is soft and natural, coming from the window.

kathy ireland®

INTIMATES/SHAPEWEAR/SLEEPWEAR

kathyireland.com

pantiesplus.com

WWD IN PERSON

(Continued from page 10)

which had been largely dependent on smaller, independent retailers for post-Kmart sales. In order to be carried by retailers catering to the mass market and those who cater to a niche luxury segment, the brand has developed a range of products, from entry-level price points to more expensive premium merchandise. Stephen Roseberry, KIWW president and chief operating officer, said selling \$35,000 earrings was a big step for the brand.

"Because she started at one level of distribution, people don't think about the fact that so many of the things that are sold today are at a different price point," he said.

Still, the primary customers for Kathy Ireland products are middle class and from Middle America. Lang explains that a KI wedding dress is "the average girl-next-door type of dress. We are not about getting married at the Ritz Carlton."

Thomas Blumenthal, president and ceo of Gearys Beverly Hills, which stocks Ireland's jewelry, said, "She represents our opening price point. It is something that a mom can buy without asking permission, so to speak."

Ireland knows her customers better than anyone, and she doesn't hold back from giving her thoughts about how her brand's products can satisfy them. She vets every product and keeps in close touch with the licensees, frequently having meetings with them via video conferences, the phone or in person. She makes sure they adhere to eight style guides inspired by trips around the world that were created when her brand was founded.

In the last 11 months, Roseberry said members of KIWW's staff have circled the world 2.5 times.

"We get design inspirations everywhere we go," said Carrasco, mentioning that a Monkey Mischief design motif in the La Vida Buena style guide was inspired by the variety of monkey species Ireland noticed in Costa Rica.

"I heard someone say I slap my name on products," said Ireland. "People who know me, know I'm such a control freak, that would never work for me."

"There's nothing wrong with a celebrity endorsement if you're a celebrity [and] if that's your path, but that's never been our path," she added.

McCrea painted a similar picture of Ireland's exhaustive participation in the process of product development: "She is the ceo of the company. No question about it. It is not a typical celebrity brand where they rubber stamp things. She is absolutely hands-on."



Kathy Ireland
Home and Office
products.



Bush office furniture.



Window coverings by Alta.

KIDS IN DISTRESSED SITUATIONS

K · I · D · S ·

Giving Back in Brand New Ways®



congratulates Kathy Ireland on being honored at

KIDS IN DISTRESSED SITUATIONS

6TH ANNIVERSARY

WOMEN IN INDUSTRY LUNCHEON

MAY 31, 2012

rsvp: kids_luncheon@frontier.com or
845-758-7586403

K.I.D.S. brings hope to over 7 million children and their families in need every year by giving them new clothes, shoes, home goods, books, toys, furniture and personal care items.

112 W. 34th Street, Suite 1133 • New York, NY 10120 • 1-800-266-3314 • www.KIDSdonations.org

WWD IN PERSON

Giving Back, Paying Forward



Ireland appeared on "Dancing with the Stars" in 2009 to draw attention to her charitable causes. Her partner was Tony Dovolani.

PHOTO BY ADAM LARKEV/ABC VIA GETTY IMAGES

Philanthropy plays a major role. By Rachel Brown

KATHY IRELAND WILL do almost anything — even dance on television — for a cause she believes in.

In 2009, Ireland signed up for ABC's "Dancing with the Stars" to raise money for a variety of organizations, including the Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation, Athletes and Entertainers for Kids and Feed the Children. At the time, she told the blog SheKnows.com, "With the economy as it is, nonprofits are hurting. Businesses are closing right and left — businesses that nonprofits depend on. This is an excellent opportunity to bring awareness to nonprofits that are close to my heart."

Typically, Ireland's philanthropic efforts aren't so public. She has continued to be an avid proponent of the Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation.

"When Elizabeth first started fighting HIV/AIDS, people were dying of

AIDS," said Ireland. "Today, people are living with HIV, and Elizabeth did so much quietly that people are just not aware of. She was amazing, just brave and courageous."

Ireland has followed Taylor's lead in pursuing her own charitable endeavors. In 1990, she started the Kathy Ireland Mentor Program in collaboration with the public safety education organization 9-1-1 for Kids. The program has matched more than 1,000 teen mothers with professional businesswoman mentors. Ireland sought out Taylor to mentor her in design, which developed into a relationship that she described as "life changing," and is adamant that others should receive similar treatment.

"I strongly believe in mentorships," she said.

Stemming from Ireland's religious beliefs — she became a devout Christian at age 18 — she is a vocal advocate for Israel, where she has a home. Ireland backs the Anti-Defamation League and the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. She was a keynote speaker at AIPAC's conference in March.

"Christian faith brought our family to Israel," Ireland said in her speech. "Our journey there awakened us as well as friends and loved ones who joined us to the reality that only Israel in the Middle East is truly protecting the

values of freedom, of democracy and of individual liberty that we in America hold so dear."

Ireland's philanthropic and business efforts have garnered numerous accolades. On May 31, K.I.D.S., or Kids In Distressed Situations, an organization that has delivered more than \$1 billion worth of merchandise to poverty-stricken communities, will recognize Ireland at its Women in Industry Luncheon.

"We chose her for a number of reasons. She has really been a role model to other women in terms of taking the initiative in pulling herself up from her bootstraps," said K.I.D.S. president Janice Weinman. "She has not only been philanthropic to a lot of nonprofits and causes, but she is also very involved in them. She takes an active role in promoting their missions."

On May 19, Ireland will receive an honorary doctorate from California State University Channel Islands.

In 2010, the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County gave Ireland its Wise and Wonderful Woman Award. The next year, the YWCA Greater Los Angeles feted her with the Phenomenal Woman of the Year Award. She has been named by UCLA as one of the Top 10 Women's Health Advocates in America.

Other organizations that Ireland has supported include St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, the Alliance for Global Education, the Dream Foundation, the Alliance for Christian Education and the Make-a-Wish Foundation. In addition, she has worked to provide relief for Haiti by visiting the earthquake-damaged country. After a trip there, she wrote on Twitter, "Being in Haiti was one of the most beautiful, heartbreaking adventures in my life."



Promoting fitness for children with PBS Television show characters The Boobahs.

PHOTO BY NANCY KASZEMAN/ZUMA CORBIS

On kathyireland.org, the charitable portion of Kathy Ireland Worldwide, the model-mogul promotes eight goals:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
- Achieve universal primary education.
- Promote gender equality and empower women.
- Reduce child mortality.
- Improve maternal health.
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.
- Ensure environmental sustainability.
- Develop a global partnership for development.



Ireland worked closely with Elizabeth Taylor, whom she calls a mentor, to fight HIV/AIDS.



kathy ireland[®]
for MON CHERI



kathy ireland AMERICAN LEGEND

AVAILABLE AT THE FUR VAULT AT MACY'S