

Consumer & Retail

Looking Beyond Sector Experience

A European fashion retailer enters a
new phase of growth

An Amrop Case Study



Amrop

Leaders For What's Next

EXECUTIVE SEARCH | LEADERSHIP ADVISORY | BOARD SERVICES



The Client

A major European fashion retailer with approximately 20,000 employees was preparing for a new phase of growth, including building its presence from the ground up in several European markets, supported by a significant multi-year investment programme. The ambition was clear. The leadership requirements were less obvious.

The business needed more than an experienced sector executive. It needed a Managing Director for this new region who could translate investment into sustainable growth, lead experienced teams through organisational change and create confidence across a complex stakeholder environment.

A conventional brief would have prioritised deep fashion retail experience. At a moment of change, however, optimising for familiarity risked narrowing the field too early and overlooking leaders with more relevant transformation experience.

The Leadership Challenge

The mandate combined strategic and executional demands: commercial judgement, pace, transformation experience, credibility with seasoned teams and the confidence to challenge established assumptions without losing organisational trust.

That made the search less about matching sector credentials and more about identifying transferable leadership capability at scale.

Our Approach

Before approaching the market, Amrop worked with the CEO and HR leadership team to reframe the mandate around the future requirements of the business rather than historic pattern matching.

Drawing on Amrop's global Consumer & Retail Practice, we widened the search universe beyond fashion retail. Candidates were assessed on what they had built, how they had led through change, how they operated at scale and whether they could mobilise teams and stakeholders around a new direction.

This changed not only who entered the process, but how relevant experience was defined.

The Strategic Question

The issue was not simply who could do the job today.

It was what kind of leadership the business would need for what came next.

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The Outcome

Amrop recommended a candidate from outside fashion retail, whom the client subsequently appointed as Managing Director.

The successful candidate brought a strong track record of organisational change, experience in a large-scale, fast-moving, customer-focused environment, and the leadership capability needed to support the company's next phase of growth.

The appointment matched the business's future agenda rather than reproducing its past, demonstrating the value of challenging sector orthodoxy when the strategic context itself is changing.

Why It Matters

The most consequential executive searches are rarely solved by matching titles and sectors. At strategic inflection points, defining the brief is part of the leadership decision itself.



Amrop Consumer & Retail Practice

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