

From fashion to merchandise: The story behind Merchgirls

A chance meeting led Hannah Chipkin and Pippa Joseph to become the creative duo that is Merchgirls.

SMARTshop

Cape



Volcom \$79.95



May The Label \$149



Junk \$159



Chip Chop! \$225

Faux fur



Dotti \$79.95

These have texture in spades, so keep the rest of your outfit plain.



Ladakh \$129



Lulu & Rose
@ Glue \$149.99



Sportsgirl \$189.95

A classic style that never dates.

Checks



Dotti \$89.95



Jeanswest \$119



Jendi \$165



Sportsgirl \$169.95

*Not too hot,
not too cold -
a cape is like
the Goldilocks
of cover-ups.*

Victoria, Melbourne, May 7, 2021 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Hannah Chipkin, a fashion designer at the time, saw an ad for a manufacturer claiming ‘We can make everything. No job too small.

Already on the hunt for a manufacturing partner, Chipkin called the number and Pippa Joseph answered, and before long the two were working together.

In 2015, when Chipkin had just closed her fashion business, she was approached by the Australian Ballet to [design a merchandise](#) range.

“I picked up the phone and asked Pippa to do it with me,” said Chipkin. “She was immediately on board.”

From there, Merchgirls was born. With Chipkin on design and Joseph on production, the duo made a name for themselves in the art space, working with theatre companies, art galleries, and bands on bespoke retail merchandise. Hannah Chipkin, a fashion designer at the time, saw an ad for a manufacturer claiming ‘We can make everything. No job too small’.

Going corporate

Chipkin says the transition from retail to corporate merchandise kicked off with a call from employment marketplace Seek.

“They were really the start for us understanding there’s a market for mass [promotional merchandise](#) and that really changed where we put our focus,” she says.

Since then, Merchgirls has worked with the likes of Australian Open, PEXA, Business Chicks, Mecca, and ANZ, and has designed event merchandise for Virgin, Google, and YouTube.

“Companies understand there’s an expectation to provide a takeaway item and those that put value into it want to do it properly,” says Chipkin. “They’re the people that want something different from the norm.”

Merchandise in a sustainable society

With people more conscious than ever about minimising waste, it begs the question: is merch still necessary in 2020? According to Chipkin, as long as it’s meaningful and reusable, it is.

“If something is fit for purpose and well-designed, then it’s a desirable, useful item,” she says. “If it’s just a mousepad with a logo, it’s not the most thoughtful thing.”

The focus on sustainability also means eco-friendly products such as plantable pencils and reusable bags are becoming more popular.

“We try to keep our footprint as light as possible but we are producing large volumes for certain customers so we need to be as mindful as we can,” says Chipkin.

“If you put thought into it, give it purpose and do it well, then it’s worth doing.”

The next step

In 2020 and beyond, Merchgirls is upping the ante with its new Corporate Kits, designed to give clients a better idea of what their product suite might look like.

“We’re taking our most popular products, branding them in a cohesive way, and using it as a helpful tool to showcase what we can do and how it can look,” says Chipkin.

“We want to play on the idea of ‘emerchency’. The Merchgirls are there to revive your merch.”

In the year ahead, Merchgirls is looking forward to working with new and existing clients. The dream client, though?

“A streaming service like Netflix or Stan,” says Chipkin. “We’d love to talk to someone in that area, we’ve got ideas.” Airlines also ‘fly’ high on the dream client list.

Source

- <https://www.spicenews.com.au/spice-loves/from-fashion-to-merchandise-the-story-behind-merchgirls/>



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