

THE OTB GROUP TAKES A STAKE IN CALZATURIFICIO STEPHEN, AN OUTSTANDING ITALIAN MANUFACTURER OF HIGH-END FOOTWEAR

- *The international fashion and luxury group has acquired a majority stake in the company, already a long-standing OTB supplier providing luxury footwear for the Group brands*
- *The operation is part of the OTB strategy to acquire high-profile know-how and manufacturing capacity in product categories of strategic importance for the development of the Group brands*
- *OTB's focus on optimising the supply chain and Italian craftsmanship is also reflected in its investment in the M.A.D.E. campaign, an initiative to promote the top entrepreneurial Made in Italy stories among the Group suppliers, presented with the Minister of Enterprises and Made in Italy Adolfo Urso, of which Calzaturificio Stephen is part.*

Breganze (Vicenza)/Pianezze (Vicenza), 25 March 2024 – The OTB Group has acquired a majority stake in Calzaturificio Stephen, an historic Italian manufacturer of luxury men's and women's footwear, and a strategic Group supplier for more than twenty years. The shareholding was purchased through Staff International, OTB's production and logistics hub.

The operation is part of the Group's long-term strategy to acquire high-profile know-how and production capacity in product categories of strategic importance for the development of the brands in the OTB portfolio. The Group has always guaranteed over the years solid support for the Italian supply chain, through financial programmes such as the *C.A.S.H.*¹ project, and through communication campaigns promoting Made in Italy excellences, such as *M.A.D.E.*, *Made in Italy*, *Made Perfectly*.

The OTB Group's stake in Stephen will ensure greater stability and even faster and more solid growth for the Vicenza-based footwear manufacturer, which was established in 1967 by Francesco Bertollo.

Through the operation, OTB will join the family that founded the company, now represented by the second generation with siblings Stefano, Antonella and Valeria Bertollo, who will continue to run the business thanks to the strength of their know-how and the technical expertise that have always distinguished the excellence of their work. OTB will provide Calzaturificio Stephen with access to its resources aiming at supporting the company's further development and evolution in terms of technology, innovation, and sustainability.

Stefano Bertollo will continue in the role of Chief Executive Officer of the company, which now has 70 employees and a great growth potential.

¹ The **C.A.S.H. Project** (Credito Agevolato-Suppliers' Help) allows suppliers to collect their receivables from OTB in advance through a bank, and offers them the opportunity to benefit from extremely favourable economic conditions, possible thanks to the high creditworthiness of the Group that acts as guarantor. The project has proved to be particularly effective because it has enabled the companies in the supply chain to face even the most complex periods, such as the pandemic, with greater confidence. C.A.S.H. now involves 65 active suppliers who have assigned 86% of their receivables. Since the programme began in 2013, the total volume of payments disbursed has exceeded EUR 550 million.



The operation is part of the OTB Group expansion policy designed to acquire know-how from the top players in Made in Italy operating in strategic merchandise categories.

"OTB's brands are known all over the world for the originality, creativity and craftsmanship of their products, thanks to the use of raw materials of the highest quality and the skills of our experts, masters of savoir-faire. Made in Italy became our trademark, thanks to a close collaboration with the companies in our incredible supply chain: a unique asset that makes us extremely competitive on international markets," said OTB Chairman and Founder Renzo Rosso. "This is why as a Group we invest in local players who have built the reputation of Italian fashion around the world, to guarantee their continued growth and increasingly sustainable development".

OTB GROUP

OTB is an international fashion group comprising the iconic, unconventional brands Diesel, Jil Sander, Maison Margiela, Marni and Viktor&Rolf. It also controls the Staff International and Brave Kid companies and holds a stake in American brand Amiri. OTB – short for "Only The Brave" – believes in the possibility of pushing beyond the frontiers of fashion and style to support the creativity of international talents and express in full the innovative spirit and uncompromising courage of its founder and chair, Renzo Rosso. With around 7,000 employees worldwide, the Group is founded on a digital approach centred on the consumer, a concrete long-term commitment to the creation of a sustainable, technologically driven business, and close attention to social issues through the OTB Foundation.

For more information:

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