

# MAKING A SPLASH

Fast fashion company Splash is not your average retailer and CEO Raza Beig is not a standard leader. He talks teamwork, tactics and the future of fashion – and explains just what love has got to do with it

**RAZA BEIG** / CEO SPLASH



**D**uring the last twenty-five years Splash has been making waves in the Middle East's fashion and retail industry. Founded in 1993 as a single brand store in Sharjah, Splash is now one of the largest fashion retailers in the region with more than 287 stores across 13 countries. The man who is responsible for sailing Splash to sartorial stardom is Raza Beig, a CEO who puts heart and soul in everything he does.

#### A PERFECT FIT

Recently named the 'Best CEO in the Fashion Retailing Industry' at the European CEO Awards, Raza has been with Splash since the

very beginning; indeed, he was the company's first employee. Originally hired as a store manager, Raza's flair for business meant that within a matter of months he was made a buyer, and several years later the company's general manager. It wasn't long before he was then given full control of the company and was appointed as Splash's CEO. Raza reflects modestly upon his rapid rise from the shop floor to the boardroom: "As Splash started to progress I dabbled in new departments, and slowly and steadily, started to have an influence on other areas – anywhere from HR to marketing. Before I knew it, I was the general manager and then the CEO." Despite harbouring initial reservations about accepting the role of CEO – "When I was

offered it I said I'm not ready, I need a year" – Splash's success proves otherwise. Raza was clearly the right person for the job. A perfect fit.

#### TEAM TACTICS

Raza attributes the company's achievements and accolades, (Splash received the 'Most Admired Fast Fashion Retailer' prize at the 2017 Retail ME Awards), to several factors. The first of which is the strength of his team. "Where we are today – and we are practically a household name in the region – all comes down to the fact that there was a fully developed team who worked towards building the brand." The majority of Splash's senior management team have, like Raza, worked for the company for

more than a decade. Raza's ability to retain and maintain a motivated and excited workforce is testament to the company culture he has created. Splash embodies a progressive and experimental ethos. "At the beginning of every year we ask ourselves what can we do differently", says Raza. "We are constantly doing new things, which are sometimes risky and fail, but what is nice about our business is that we acknowledge our failures and do not penalise people. Therefore, people are more experimental and vocal."

#### THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

Persistently daring to be different and an agile approach to business has reaped rewards for Splash. However, Splash's status as the lead-

*"At the beginning of every year we ask ourselves 'what can we do differently?'"*

ing trendsetter and tastemaker in the UAE might have been a distant dream for Raza if it were not for the partnerships the company has forged with its suppliers. Raza takes great pride in the relationships Splash has formed: "They are almost like family relationships

now because we know each other so well," he says. Splash's suppliers, many of whom have collaborated with the company since its inception, are a crucial component of the company's DNA. As Raza notes: "If your product is well defined and you have the right partner servicing it you know the product is going to be on point. The quality and pricing of your product will hit just the right note." The seamless integration between the Splash team and the company's suppliers has enabled Splash to perfect its winning formula: the creation and dissemination of stylish, yet affordable clothes that its consumers can't get enough of. Clothes fly off Splash's shelves; global sales hit the \$1 billion mark. →



**IN LOVE WITH FASHION**

Nevertheless, numbers are not what drives Raza: “I believe that I have never tried to run a race. I have never been in competition in size or volume. We try to be a people’s company and work for the customer. As an organisation, we definitely have a heart.” Splash’s motto, ‘In Love with Fashion’, reflects Raza’s passion for both fashion and customer satisfaction. Whilst functioning as a catchy tagline, the motto came to fruition organically amongst the Splash team. “The word love”, explains Raza, “came from our emotions because we all seem to love what we do. We believe in it unconditionally and try to deliver the emotion of love in all aspects of our business.”



**A FASHIONABLE FUTURE**

The proliferation of e-commerce is changing the face of retail and the way we shop; more and more money is being spent online. Despite describing himself as “historically a bricks and mortar retailer”, Raza

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plans to implement a new structure so that Splash can continue to engage with its increasingly tech-savvy customers. The opportunity for further expansion and the diversification of Splash into new media is a clear motivation for the future. “The drive to grow is still alive and kicking”, says Raza. “Wherever regions continue to grow, we will grow with them.”



**THE CLOTHING LINE WITH A HEART**

With the values of Love, Care, Share, Hope, Help and Joy deeply embedded within its DNA, Being Human Clothing, only 6 years young, has grown from a single store to a global fashion business with presence in 15 countries worldwide through more than 500 point-of-sales and is still growing. The apparel range is centered on a fashion-forward approach. Its experienced design teams in India and Israel ensure that global design trends are met and international quality standards are assured.

Being Human Clothing is a brand under Being Human - The Salman Khan Foundation, a charitable trust devoted to education and healthcare initiatives for the underprivileged in India. The Foundation was launched by Salman Khan, one of the most successful actors of the Indian film industry. He also performs the role of a brand ambassador for the brand.

Visit [beinghumanclothing.com](http://beinghumanclothing.com) to know more.

Salman Khan