



TAILOR-MADE BRAND DESIGN

Taranko was established in Gdansk, Poland, in 1987. Taranko is a very well recognized brand, known for its perfect cuts, classic high-quality fabrics mixed with fresh trends and novelties. The company employs more than 250 people and owns about 40 stores throughout Poland. The headquarters with brand design and production is located in Gdansk, and it gives a possibility to pay high attention to details. Each collection consists of about 300 designs. A large range of costumes, dresses, blouses, skirts, pants and coats in sizes 34 to 42 makes the clothes perfect - you can mix and match them, so they suit work and shopping, a walk or coffee with friends. In addition to the wide range of pieces, Taranko emphasizes the high quality of its products. The clothing is made from the highest quality fabrics and knitted fabrics bought by Taranko in Italy, France and Germany. To emphasize their uniqueness, the production is also accessorized with high-quality buttons like Swarovski. Taranko also sells accessories such as jewellery, bags, scarfs and hats. All accessories are perfectly fitted to the collections.



Gosia Taranko,
brand manager, Taranko Sp. z o.o.

► **EBJ:** What have been the greatest milestones until today?

Gosia Taranko: The greatest milestone was the decision to start our own store chain. It wasn't easy, especially because the Polish fashion market in the mid-1990s was immature. During this period, competition in Poland rose, and the concept of wholesale stopped being profitable. However, the importance of having 'company stores' increased. In 1997, as a response to the needs of the market, Taranko opened its first monobrand store, which was located in Gdansk. We had to take a risk and believe in our success. It appeared that it was the best decision we ever made. Back then, the first Taranko store was 20 m². Now our stores are about 120 m². Back then we had one store, now we own around 40. Due to the determination and hard work of the founders, the Taranko brand has gone from a microbusiness to a thriving company employing 275 people. The presence of Taranko on the list of Forbes 2010 Diamonds (the ranking of the best-developed Polish companies) is just one of many examples of recognition. ►►►►

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 PRODUCTS

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TARANKO

EBJ: What products make up your core business?

Gosia Taranko: Our iconic piece is the dress. We are famous for making perfectly fitted dresses for all occasions. We found out that women love to wear dresses, but nowadays it is hard to find the perfect one. We offer high-quality fabrics, the perfect cut and a fashionable design for an affordable price.

EBJ: What distinguishes your products from those of the competition? What are the unique selling points/special features or characteristics?

Gosia Taranko: We are the perfect example of classic with a modern twist. We believe in perfect cuts, high-quality fabrics, but we add a lot of freshness, trends and novelties which all contribute to the unique Taranko style. What is Taranko style? It is the outfit that makes you look very elegant but never boring, fashionable but not like a fashion victim, sexy but not vulgar, comfortable but never too sporty. It is just an outfit that on any occasion makes you look and feel perfect. Each collection consists of about 300 designs. A large range of business attire, dresses, blouses, skirts, pants and coats in sizes 34 to 42 makes the clothes perfect. You can compose and assemble them so they are suitable for work and shopping, a walk or coffee with friends. In addition to the wide range of pieces, Taranko emphasizes the high quality of its products. The clothing is made from the highest quality fabrics bought by Taranko in Italy, France and Germany. To emphasize its uniqueness, the products are also accessorized with high-quality buttons like Swarovski. We also sell accessories such as jewelry, bags, scarves and hats. All the accessories match perfectly with the collections. What distinguishes us from others is that we have our own style and philosophy about clothing.



EBJ: What target groups (e.g. industries) do you address with your products, and what is your core target group? What percentage of the company's turnover does it account for?

Gosia Taranko: We do not target our customers by age, but by style and lifestyle. We make clothes for business women who are self-confident and energetic but always in a feminine way. They do not like boredom in their wardrobe, but at the same time want to be elegant. Taranko customers are demanding. They pay attention to details, make purchases in a thoughtful way, are willing to pay extra for quality and originality – and care about looking perfect.

EBJ: Are there national/international activities? In what regions/countries are you active? What plans for expansion are there?

Gosia Taranko: In 2014 we opened two new stores in Poland, and we have two others planned. In 2013, we opened a store in Karaganda, Kazakhstan, which is a franchising store. It is a good time for our company to expand in the east, so we have already found some business partners there. Most importantly, however, in 2013 we opened an online store, which received a warm welcome worldwide and expands our brand to be an international one.

EBJ: What makes your company a success (recipe for success)? What are your strengths?

Gosia Taranko: The Taranko brand was established in 1987 in a more than 1,000-year-old city: Gdańsk. Within our home city, we are the perfect combination of tradition and novelty. We strongly believe that only companies which do not forget their origin can become leaders. The Taranko brand's success is rooted in our beliefs. We are a family business, which for us is not only a business. It is our passion; we simply have it in our blood. This year we are celebrating our 27th anniversary, and as we look back, we see how our company has thrived, but what we also see is our values, which are still the same as they were when we started. Nowadays in the world of fast-changing fashion and instability, people like to see brands that are dedicated to their origins and DNA. I can easily say that we are the ones who stayed true to our identity but modernized as the world changed.



TARANKO



EBJ: What importance do regular customers and new customers have for you, and how do you achieve customer loyalty?

Gosia Taranko: Our brand has a wide group of regular customers. They like us because they know that we represent a specific style, high quality and fashionable designs. We offer super-fashionable clothes, ready to wear in the city. Our clients like to know that if they wear size 34, they can buy 34 via our online store, and it will fit. It is a matter of trust about how the garment is made and designed; in this case we never disappoint our customers.

EBJ: Where do you see your company in the next three years? What wishes or visions do you connect with this? What goals do you have?

Gosia Taranko: We plan that, three years from now, our brand awareness will strengthen and our store chain will grow, also meaning franchising. We are happy that we see how our company develops, but we still want more and see room for progress. We have dreams and plans which go much further, but I would rather not reveal them and keep them our little secret.

Gosia Taranko: Has your company had any activities recently that have had an effect on your strategy? (opening a new branch, tapping into a new market, expanding the product range...) An enormous change came with our online store. We are able to reach a global audience now, and since then we have constantly worked on discovering new markets. We are also now working on refreshing our brand image by designing more boldly and by creating fresh new photo shoots. We want to reach higher and higher.



► **EBJ:** What trends/lines of development are you seeing currently, and do they have an effect on your corporate strategy?

Gosia Taranko: There was a period in the market when Polish women wanted to be dressed up only in international fashion brands. Now we see a huge change because customers are more demanding and fashion-aware. They want to stand out. They have started to appreciate Polish brands and have become proud of what we offer. In my opinion it is an enormous change in the market. It shows that, in the past 20 years, not only has the market adapted and become more mature, but also it has developed its own style and character. I think that, thanks to these changes, we had better conditions to build the brand, and now as the market is more mature and demanding, our strategy

fits perfectly. It is very important to stick to your strategy, but it has to be flexible if the market changes. Our industry is unpredictable. Fast-changing fashion and the Internet are only two aspects which show that one day you can be the leader and another not exist. This is why it's important to stay focused on your goals and listen very carefully to what comes from the outside world and your market.



EBJ: What have been the most important steps in your career?

Gosia Taranko: There have been many steps, starting with my studies (I have a master's in economics at Gdańsk University and a master's in fashion brand management, Polimoda, Florence). I was an online store project manager, which was a huge success. But, honestly, I feel that each month something important happens. It is a very nice feeling to have a dream job at your family business. Taranko is and will be a lifetime experience, and I can't wait to see what else is coming.

EBJ: Do you strive for innovations, and if so, in what areas (products, technology, logistics, sales, marketing)?

Gosia Taranko: I am happy to know that we are already a successful company, but even if we were a leader, there would always remain a lot of room for progress. I love what I do, and maybe this is why I always search for innovation in all aspects of my work. I keep exploring because the industry is extremely interesting. On one hand there is production and its technology, fabrics and so on, and on the other hand, we have branding, PR and marketing, which are so abstract sometimes. Fashion combines imagination, aesthetics and feelings with numbers, technology and innovations. It's important to know that only by constantly moving can you survive and succeed in this market. Maybe this is why I love fashion so much: because it is never boring.



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