

Beyond Yoga

Culver City, Calif. | www.beyondyoga.com

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Byond Yoga grew out of founder Jodi Guber Brusky's passion for the Body Positive movement. She saw a gap in the market for activewear that would allow women of all sizes to feel and look great, so in 2006, she launched a company to meet that need.

It was certainly an auspicious time to launch an activewear company, and Beyond Yoga has experienced "explosive growth," says Michelle Wahler, co-founder and CEO. "Over the past decade, the activewear industry has evolved into a lifestyle, with athleisure becoming a staple in how women dress every day."

(It also doesn't hurt that there are now 37 million U.S. practitioners of yoga as of 2016, up from 20 million just three years previously.)

"With women around the world adopting athleisure as the new uniform, we have seen a shift in all of our demographics. Our consumer now spans a broad age range and is truly global in scope. With these changes, we have had to quickly adapt to the modern consumer; that means being mobile-friendly and providing more responsive technology," she says. "We have also had to scale our staffing dramatically over the past several years to support the market demand while still remaining nimble enough to quickly adapt."

What does responsive technology look like? Beyond Yoga uses Dropbox as its corporate server and file sharing system, G Suite for email, Magento for e-commerce and Zendesk for customer care. It uses the Joor b2b wholesale platform, Pebble Post for international business and Tableau to tackle analytics relative to e-commerce and wholesale demands, says Wahler.

Two years ago, Beyond Yoga transitioned to an ERP system from RLM "to really set the table for our continued growth," says Wahler. It also implemented RLM's PLM module to manage BOMs, fabric inventory and purchasing requirements, and replaced QuickBooks with RLM's financial module.

RLM acts as the company's centralized hub of information. The cloud-based system allows the company to feed information seamlessly from design, production, sales, accounting and e-commerce into one place, in real time. It is flexible, customizable and scalable, she says.

Wahler says the company rarely develops technology in-house and prefers to rely on experts. When it finds what it needs, it's "fast to move, but also cautious to minimize disruption," she says, noting that even the "smallest hiccup" can reverberate throughout the organization. And despite predictions from some that it

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would "take years and millions of dollars in consulting fees to make the transition" to RLM, the Beyond Yoga team came together and accomplished the migration in a matter of months without consultants, she says.

The benefits of the new ERP system are many: it is easy to use, and each page can be exported to Excel, which makes for "incredibly quick" ad hoc analysis and reporting, says Wahler. The order entry process is about 50 percent faster — which will accelerate further with its addition of Joor — and has fewer errors. Visibility into inventory has improved, allowing for more accurate forecasting, and, because the system virtually feeds in the company's wholesale and e-commerce inventory, "we are able to see everything with a click of a button," she says. Tasks that previously ate up one to two days now require less than 15 minutes.

The new system jives well with the company's goal to make information virtually available to its employees anywhere and on any device. "Our employees can work at their desks, outside at picnic tables or in conference rooms with the exact same capabilities. We think this makes our team stronger, happier and more productive," she says.

"Athleisure is a competitive space and we know that in order to continue being as successful as we have been, we always need to be moving forward. This goes for design and fabric innovation, quality and selling, as well as the infrastructure to support all of our amazing people and customers," Wahler concludes.

— Jordan K. Speer

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