

CATCHING UP WITH PEI's OSCAR FELDENKREIS

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How did Perry Ellis and Original Penguin stay strong for so many years?

We consider both [Perry Ellis](#) and [Original Penguin](#) by Munsingwear our core lifestyle brands, both with a rich heritage. Perry Ellis will be celebrating its 50th anniversary in Spring 2026. As part of this milestone, we're further elevating our offering. Perry had an uncanny ability to predict what his consumers wanted even before they knew it. He was a merchant as well as a designer and he innately understood consumer mindsets. An innovator with fabrics and silhouettes, he knew how to create a line that was understandable and accessible, pushing the boundaries with his wit and whimsical twists on American sportswear classics.

For today's Perry Ellis guy, we follow that original ethos, making clothes that are elevated, but easy. The Perry Ellis consumer wants to look effortlessly stylish. We've invested in our design and sourcing teams to offer the innovation and quality that Perry would appreciate.

Original Penguin by Munsingwear celebrates 70 years in Summer 2025. When Munsingwear launched the label in 1955, the brand quickly grew from a military underwear supplier to outfitters of upscale suburban sport. Original Penguin became synonymous with the first iconic golf shirt in America and the iconic penguin logo was beloved by the masters of mid-century culture and sport. The brand became an instant American classic, synonymous with fun.

Today, our design teams draw inspiration from our extensive archive of garments and images. Original Penguin offers a full range of men's, women's and children's clothing, accessories and fragrances, branching out into the sports arena with the addition of tennis, pickleball, and paddle apparel and accessories.

Your goals for these two brands?

Elevating the product while keeping it accessible. This includes designing, sourcing, and producing the best possible product at all our price levels, showing respect for both our brands and our consumers. Competitive pricing is key as we continue to seek innovative fabrics and global factories to drive regular-price business. We take an omni-channel approach to marketing and diversify across a variety of platforms. We continue to invest in brand ambassadors and sports collaborations across all our brands.

New brand ambassadors include Miami Dolphins Quarterback Tua Tagovailoa, NHL's Matthew Tkachuk, Former NFL MVP & CBS Sports Analyst Matt Ryan, and many others. Just today, we are announcing a groundbreaking partnership with the National Hockey League, with Perry Ellis serving as the official Off-Ice Style Partner for the 4 Nations Face-Off Tournament.

How important to your business these days is direct-to-consumer?

We continue to expand and open stores in key markets, with a focused effort on the growth of our ecommerce businesses. We continually elevate the look and feel of our websites and seek cutting-edge technology to make the e-commerce shopping experience seamless.

Looking ahead, what changes are you making?

We continue to focus on technology and innovation for faster decision making and speed-to-market. Utilizing cutting edge 3-D rendering allows for fewer samples and more sustainable processes. This digital approach is key to our future success. We are at the forefront of incorporating Predictive Analytics, Business Intelligence and now AI/Machine Learning as we look forward to the future.

We pride ourselves in taking an entrepreneurial approach and being nimble to adapt to the ever-changing retail landscape. We nurture our longstanding relationships, especially with the leadership of department stores. Listening to them and understanding their new vision creates mutual trust and respect. I'm a big advocate of visiting our customers on a regular basis. It allows us to keep a pulse on what's working, and what we can do to help them develop new opportunities for success.

What are your long-range goals for your business?

We will continue to focus on global expansion and seek new licensing partnerships which is really one of the most powerful components of our corporate strategy. We have more than 140 licensees in more than 55 countries. Product and geographical expansions will create new opportunities to increase consumer brand awareness, build further brand equity, and generate more revenue with focus on key volume drivers unique to the region. We have

many distributors worldwide for Callaway in Europe and we just started shipping Nike to China. We also signed a distributor in Southeast Asia for PGA Tour as well as Ben Hogan. Perry Ellis has a great presence in Latin America, and we're expanding casual sportswear into Europe and Australia.

What are the greatest challenges you're up against?

I would say supply chain disruptions will continue to be an issue that we have no control over. Geopolitical conflict, inflation, and climate change are all factors that can ultimately create logistical delays impacting manufacturing and delivery. We need to be proactive and diligent from a planning and inventory management standpoint.

Your predictions for the menswear industry in 2030?

The winners will be those who offer quality and innovation. With the rise of social media, influencers are touting the intrinsic value of a true luxury garment, so "fake luxury" risks being exposed. I also believe consumers will begin to crave authenticity, a plus for brands with a genuine heritage. Brands that are not elevating and/or innovating could lose substantial ground while innovative brands will easily pivot to accommodate inevitable shifts in consumer demand. It's an exciting time for the apparel business.