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The Limited Wakes Up to Plus-Size Potential

Eloquii Fashion Line Launched Online, Stores Could Follow

By: [Natalie Zmda](#) Published: [November 07, 2011](#)

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The ranks of plus-size women are growing in the U.S., yet there are still few fashion marketers serving them. Now, they have one more. The Limited has launched Eloquii, a brand designed and marketed exclusively to plus-size women. While fashion bloggers have long derided the lack of fashion available for larger women, The Limited CEO Linda Heasley actually listened. Kate Shevack, a Limited consultant who worked on the Eloquii launch, said Ms. Heasley encountered questions at a fashion event from bloggers frustrated that the only clothing that seemed to be available to them were cheaply made stretchy black pieces and dowdy tops.



Eloquii

"That coupled with the reality that in the U.S. over 50% of women are plus-size, yet only account for 19% of apparel sales, we definitely see this as a new business opportunity," said Ms. Shevack. "We did a lot of research, from a category standpoint, and it became clear no one was doing it well, from a merchandise standpoint and from a customer-service standpoint."

Indeed, Americans are getting heavier. As of last year, 49 states had an adult-obesity rate greater than 20%. And in total, 34% of adults are considered obese, while 68% are overweight, as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Yet few marketers appear to be taking notice. "I can go out and see women my size and know exactly where they bought everything they're wearing," Lesley Kinzel, who has run a blog at [Fatshionista.com](#) since 2007, [told Ad Age](#) last year.

Eloquii, which launched with several hundred stock-keeping units, comes in sizes 14 to 24 and features a range of career and lifestyle wear, with prices starting at \$30 for tops and going up to \$168 for blazers. Dresses range from \$90 to 148, while pants range from \$70 to \$90. One distinguishing factor is that the line is not just larger cuts of current fashions found at The Limited. Shoppers can also shop by fit -- with shapes such as diamond, emerald and heart -- representing a variety of body types.

"We've taken some of the fashion inspiration from The Limited, but we've gone through painstaking fittings -- looking at inseams, waist levels, sleeve lengths. We used a spectrum of fit models," Ms. Shevack said. "[Our customer is] looking for a chic, figure-flattering wardrobe. She loves fashion and fashion publications just like her skinny girlfriends, and she just wants to shop just like them too."

For now, Eloquii will be available only online, though Ms. Shevack sees opportunity for brick-and-mortar storefronts, eventually. Eloquii is offering free shipping and returns as a means of enticing shoppers.

"We're asking customers to take a leap of faith and try us," Ms. Shevack said. "So far as we can

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The Limited worked with Hornall Anderson to create an identity and name for the brand. It settled on Eloquii, derived from the word "eloquent" because the brand "allows full-figured women to eloquently express themselves."

"After talking to The Limited, we realized they were on a mission to give the plus-size woman a voice, we were able to bring that into a name that literally speaks to that," said Anne Connell, VP-strategy at Hornall Anderson. The agency led the brand development and initial creative concepts. Pod1 built Eloquii's e-commerce site.

The launch campaign, "Rejoice in the Double Take," will have significant play online, with a presence in social media, digital advertising and search. Initially, the brand also plans to focus its efforts on public relations outreach and product placement.

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