

## Katy Zilinski

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### Professional Summary

Senior apparel executive with 18+ years of experience leading design, merchandising, and product development for global brands and high-volume retailers. Proven track record of driving profitable growth, building scalable systems, and leading cross-functional teams across licensed, lifestyle, and mass-market apparel. Proficient in Adobe Creative Suite, PLM & PDM Systems. Excels in strategic planning, team leadership, and detailed execution, ready to bring a wealth of experience and a fresh perspective.

### Professional Experience

#### Founder & Principal Consultant — KEZ Design & Consulting

January 2025 – Present

*Executive advisory firm providing interim leadership and consulting services to apparel brands and manufacturers.*

- Defined and led product, design, and merchandising strategies for apparel brands navigating growth or organizational transition.
- Executed end-to-end product and GTM strategies, improving speed-to-market, margin visibility, and cross-functional alignment.
- Built scalable operating models, SOPs, and team workflows adopted across multiple organizations.
- Served as trusted advisor to executive leadership, providing interim oversight, organizational design, and strategic planning.

#### Contract Director of Product Development — Maxima Apparel

May 2025 – December 2025

- Defined and led product development strategy across multiple apparel categories, supporting accelerated growth.
- Built and optimized cross-functional workflows, improving costing accuracy, speed-to-market, and execution consistency.
- Executed a blank-based product model with highly intricate embellishments, balancing design integrity with margin and production feasibility.
- Oversaw product development for Pro Standard, a premium licensed sports apparel brand across major North American sports leagues.
- Served as primary liaison with licensed sports stakeholders across the NBA, NFL, MLB, WNBA, and NHL.

**Contract Vice President, Merchandising & Product — Land's End Uniforms**  
**August 2024 – July 2025**

- Rebuilt merchandising and product development operations, establishing scalable organizational frameworks.
- Reduced development bottlenecks and improved speed-to-market through cross-functional alignment.
- Modernized tools, workflows, and reporting to support long-term growth.

**Vice President, Product Development & Design — Epic Studios**

September 2021 – August 2024

- Led product development, design, and merchandising for a \$170M annual multi-channel apparel business.
- Drove \$75M in incremental gross profit through new programs, account expansion, and optimized assortments.
- Set product strategy across Walmart, Sam's Club, Amazon, Uniqlo, Levi's, and Dockers.
- Built and led global teams of senior designers and merchandisers across multiple regions.

**Senior Design Director — Jordache Enterprises**

October 2014 – September 2021

- Directed design and product development for major accounts including USPA, Lands' End, Walmart, Aeropostale, Tractor Supply, Meijers, and Amazon.
- Scaled business revenue from \$25M to \$70M through category expansion and account growth.
- Implemented Browzwear 3D design tools, reducing development iterations and improving speed-to-market.
- Led overseas development, seasonal line architecture, and executive presentations.

**Senior Designer — Macy's Inc., Charter Club**

July 2013 – October 2014

- Designed woven collections including blouses, dresses, outerwear, and linens.
- Managed fittings, approvals, and overseas vendor communication.
- Maintained brand consistency while partnering cross-functionally with merchants and production teams.

**Senior Designer — PVH, Tommy Hilfiger**

April 2011 – July 2013

- Designed sweaters, knits, and swimwear for men's and women's assortments.
- Owned seasonal print direction and supported merchandising strategy.
- Conducted global trend research and led overseas development reviews.

### **Designer — Kenneth Cole Productions**

November 2006 – April 2011

- Designed knits, graphic tees, polos, denim, and private-label footwear.
- Created tech packs and partnered with production to ensure quality and fit.
- Supported trend research, concept development, and seasonal presentations.

### **Education**

Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), SUNY

B.F.A., Accessory Design & Fabrication — May 2007

A.A.S., Communication Design — June 2005

### **Skills**

Adobe Creative Suite • Browzwear & Lotta 3D • Enovia, PLM & PDM Systems • Product Lifecycle Management • GTM Calendars • Team & Systems Building