US retail giants slip in global rankings, fast fashion and sportswear brands on the rise

By Robin Driver - 16 January 2018

Deloitte’s Global Powers of Retailing ranking 2018, which lists the largest 250 global retailers, shows that US retail giants are losing their grip on the international market, while e-commerce, European fast fashion and sportswear brands are all gaining ground.

Big US department stores are among those that lost out in the ranking this year: Macy’s fell two positions, settling at the number 37 spot, while Sears has fallen from 39th to 45th since 2017. The once mighty American Eagle Outfitters and Abercrombie & Fitch are nowhere to be seen, having dropped out of the top 250 global retailers altogether.

Gap, not so very long ago the world’s biggest fashion company, has also been overtaken by Japanese group Fast Retailing, Uniqlo’s parent company, which knocked it into 61st place.

In contrast, the 2018 ranking shows strong progress for leading European fast fashion brands such as H&M, which overtook Sears this year to occupy 39th place, and Inditex, which is now hot on Macy’s heels in 38th place.
Just about bucking the trend in the US are Nordstrom, which managed to climb three spots to 65th place – overtaking British retailer Marks & Spencer in the process –, and L Brands, which scrambled up from 78th place in 2017 to 76th this year. Kohl’s also managed to hold onto its 52nd place from 2017 for another year.

2018’s biggest winner, though, must have been Canadian department store chain Hudson’s Bay, which shot up from 114th place last year to 87th.

Nike also achieved a solid rise, up 14 places to 109th. Indeed, the ranking showed generally positive progress for sportswear brands, with Dick’s Sporting Goods, Foot Locker and Decathlon all moving up.

In what has become a slightly predictable outcome, pure-player online retailers also continued to perform well: Amazon consolidated its place in the top ten, this year, by jumping four places to the number six spot, while China’s JD.com climbed eight places to 28th position.

Deloitte’s report confirms some of the most noticeable retail movements that have been shaking up the sector recently. As reflected by the ranking, faced with ruthless opposition from online retailers, malls, department stores and other traditional brick-and-mortar retailers are under increasing pressure to diversify their offer and tap into the new experiential retail trend to tempt customers in store.

Sports and activewear, on the other hand, is an ever-growing category with brands as varied as Amazon and British lingerie retailer Ann Summers having released collections in the last few months in an attempt to cash in on the fitness market.

Deloitte’s Global Powers of Retailing ranking is compiled using retail sales data from 2016.

By Robin Driver

Copyright © 2020 FashionNetwork.com All rights reserved.