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The Story Behind Crescendo Apparel: Clothing for Pear-Shaped Women

May - 13 | By: [careergirls](#) | [2 comments](#).

Filed under : [career women](#), [dress for success](#), [entrepreneurship](#)

After having forged a decade-long career as a successful financial analyst, Kathryn McKechnie traded in her spreadsheets for fashion spreads in 2008, when she launched Crescendo Apparel, her line of pants, skirts and wraps for pear-shaped women. As far back as she can remember—and certainly while she was analyzing data for the likes of Andersen Consulting and LaSalle Bank—McKechnie was a fashion junkie, the kind of style enthusiast who dog-eared her copies of *Vogue Italia* and anticipated with relish every new season.

There was, however, a rub: Most clothing lines failed to accommodate her curvy figure, while the labels that did failed to meet her sense of contemporary style. For most of her adult life, she paid to tailor clothes that were too big for her waist because there was no other option. And even then the fits weren't great. Over the years, McKechnie realized she was far from alone. "There were so many women like me out there, struggling with the same dressing-room issues."

With a mind for research, McKechnie undertook to investigate the fashion industry further. She found that the most fashionable, contemporary design houses focus on clothing for what the industry's come to call "the ideal figure." They work with straighter, smaller and less forgiving cuts than required to fit a pear-shaped figure. Lacking options, scores of women who aren't plus-sized nevertheless shop from the plus-sized rack—often the most style-starved in the shop—heading straight to the tailor thereafter.



"I couldn't help but wonder," says McKechnie: "'Ideal' according to whom?" When she dug into the industry statistics, she learned that 64% of women are pear shaped, while 4% fit the description of the ideal figure. "I've always been a math person," says McKechnie, who graduated with high honors in finance from The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, "but you wouldn't need to pass so much as an algebra class to understand the implications of these numbers." At the expense of its own bottom line, in other words, the multi-billion dollar fashion industry was ignoring the needs of a solid majority of women.

"That was the inspiration I needed," she says. "I realized that my business and financial acumen put me in the perfect position to create an offering for curvy women, a market segment whose fashion and fit needs had been ignored for far too long."

Featured in Today's Chicago Woman magazine as a model for any woman who dreams of changing careers in pursuit of her passions, McKechnie went on to earn a second degree in Fashion Marketing and Management at the Illinois Institute of Art in September 2007. "We've fused the fashion-forward sense of contemporary design with measurements to accommodate women with pear-shaped figures," says McKechnie. "At Crescendo, we're making curvy the new ideal."

Does this line of clothing sound like something made for YOU? Crescendo is now looking for Fit Models in Chicago!

Focus Group and Fit Party- *Refining the Brand and Cut*

-Would you describe yourself as curvy - particularly below the waist?

-Are you currently at your ideal weight or within 10 pounds of a healthy weight?

-Do you have difficulty finding clothing that fits YOUR body well - particularly the gap between the waist and the hips/buttocks?

-Are you dying to wear the latest trends but can not find them in a fit for your body type?

-If you or someone you know answered yes to all of these questions, we are interested in your/her thoughts

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[May 2009](#)

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[January 2009](#)

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[November 2008](#)

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and will pay you for your time.

Event Info: Thursday, May 28, 2009 6:30 to 8pm, or 7:30pm to 9pm

RSVP: Contact kmckechnie@onshore.net and reference this Ms. Career Girl post. Include your name, daytime phone, and email.

Crescendo Apparel LLC is a women's clothing line for pear shaped women that provides fabulously fitting separates to take a woman from brunch with girl friends to a night on a the town. Crescendo is launching for Fall 2009 and will offer pants, skirts, and wraps through home parties and trunk shows beginning July 2009.

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2 Responses to "The Story Behind Crescendo Apparel: Clothing for Pear-Shaped Women"



Kari Says:

June 16th, 2009 at 3:21 pm

This is an inspiring article on a woman with a mission: to make other women feel good about themselves. It doesn't really get much better than that.



Anna Dell' Era Says:

July 8th, 2009 at 3:21 pm

Hey! In a small village of Sierentz, France, I lucked out and found a fabulous "just my kind of skirt" with the brand name Crescendo by Dinodzo. The shop buyer often shops for her apparel in Paris. (Is this the same Crescendo?) If so, this "dream" skirt is just perfect for my ample hip and thigh section! Not since wearing clothing by Willi Smith, African American designer, have I been so thrilled to don clothing that accentuates my assets. Hallelujah!

I hope it is not too late to offer my comments via email to Ms. McKechnie.

Thank you thank you thank you!

Where can I find more apparel by Crescendo? I live in France near the Dreilandereck(Triangle)(Basel, Switzerland, Freiburg, Germany, Mulhouse, France) Thanks a bunch! Anna

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