

RETAIL

Topshop founder Ralph Halpern dies at 83

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Topshop and Miss Selfridge are now owned by U.K.-based Asos. Image credit: Asos

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Ralph Halpern, founder of British retailer Topshop and former CEO of the Burton Group, has passed away at the age of 83.

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Mr. Halpern fostered a fruitful decades-long career, putting Topshop on a main stage and helping Burton Group evolve and introduce additional brands, including Harvey Nichols. Beginning his career as a young man at British department store Selfridges, Mr. Halpern had an eye for luxury and what had the potential to reach fashion greatness.

"Our father left an irreplaceable mark on the spirit of entrepreneurship and the UK's retail landscape, and he did it in his own very special way," said Jenny Halpern Prince, Mr. Halpern's daughter, in a statement.

A top-notch legacy

Mr. Halpern joined the Burton Group in 1961. He created Topshop in 1964, as the shop originally targeted young people, a clear new direction as all under the Burton Group previously focused on solely on menswear.

Following continued success of Topshop, Mr. Halpern became CEO of Burton Group in 1979, serving in the position until 1991. During his tenure, Burton Group continued its expansion to include more than menswear, introducing additional brands including Dorothy Perkins and Evans, and later adding Debenhams and Harvey Nichols.

He left the company in 1991.

Like Mr. Halpern, Topshop has come a long way and is inextricably linked to the world of luxury.

Last year, U.S. department store chain Nordstrom announced its acquisition of a minority interest in four Asos brands, fostering a mutually beneficial partnership.

Asos, an online British fashion and cosmetics retailer, owns the Topshop, Topman, Miss Selfridge and HIIT brands, all of which Nordstrom now distributes to appeal to younger audiences. Nordstrom now has the exclusive multi-channel retail rights for Topshop and Topman in all of North America, owns a minority stake globally and is also the only bricks-and-mortar presence for these brands worldwide ([see story](#)).

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