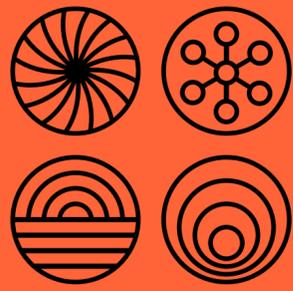


FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

CASE STUDY:
ELVIS & KRESSE





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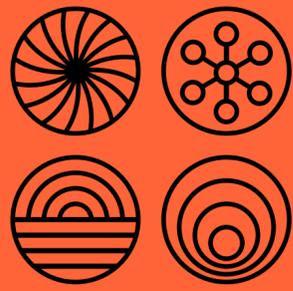
Founder/Owner	Kresse Wesling and James Henrit
Type	Luxury accessories from rescued materials; Social enterprise with B Corp certification
Sector	Accessories/Homeware
Established	2005
Location	Tonge, Kent, UK
Size	Small
Website	elvisandkresse.com

"The primary purpose of the business is to rescue decommissioned fire-hose. We started the business exclusively to save London's hoses from landfill. Over time our goals have grown, we can focus on challenging failures in fashion and luxury. In our view, if an industry's profits are reliant on environmental degradation or human exploitation then those industries have structurally failed."

"We have taught people how to love damaged, decommissioned fire-hose. We have taught people how to love leather scrap. I think we can teach people how to love littered aluminium cans too."

ELVIS & KRESSE





CASE STUDY: ELVIS & KRESSE

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Transforming waste materials into luxury products, through craftsmanship and a passion to eliminate waste streams and honour materials.

Preventing all of London's used firehose from going to landfill since 2005.

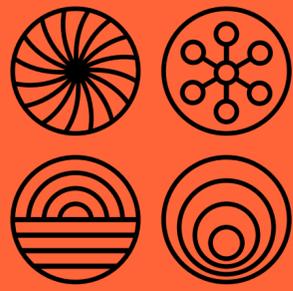
Business founded as a form of protest, although Kresse prefers the term "actionist" rather than "activist".

Sustainable practices and social equity permeate every aspect of Elvis & Kresse, from energy use to employment strategies and customer service.

Transparent business with open book accounting.

First fashion-related businesses in the UK to obtain the B Corp certification.





OVERVIEW



Elvis & Kresse is a luxury goods business creating an alternative to the traditional luxury fashion model. Their core objective is to reduce waste through their core principles: Rescue, Transform and Donate. Elvis & Kresse rescue fire hose, and more recently leather offcuts, transforming these into high-quality bags that rival the leading names in luxury fashion. Their aim is to grow a business and diversify their activities in order to have a greater impact on reducing waste.

Elvis & Kresse are able to succeed on their own terms, avoiding unsustainable fashion practices (such as a preoccupation with fashion seasons) and sharing a message of sustainability with their customer base. They see their products as “the story customers will want to retell”.

Their business is a social enterprise that is involved in trade but has a core social and environmental purpose. They run a profitable business and donate half of their profits. To enshrine this ambition in their business they are certified as a B Corp, an accreditation system for sustainable businesses that requires signatories to structure their company articles so that the planet and people are at least as important as shareholders.

Elvis & Kresse are now starting a new project to rescue littered aluminium waste by creating a solar forge that can be used around the world. This is partly to ensure the metal parts of their

bags are made from rescued material, but their ambitions are wider than that: “We helped people cherish fire hose and so we can teach people to love aluminium, while also creating technology for all.” This project is based on a commitment to open source all of the research, development, and design that underpins the solar forge. A range of partners are looking to join them and each has to sign up to the conditions of sharing.

As Elvis & Kresse slowly scale up their impact, they are able to ensure more material is being re-used, more profit can be donated, and more people who are fascinated by their approach have the pleasure of their products.

"We don't make trendy or seasonal products. We don't make one bag one year and an entirely different bag the next year. We make classic shapes that we tweak and improve all the time. If you buy a tote bag from us today it's the same tote bag we've been making and improving for 15 years."

ELVIS & KRESSE

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With special thanks to the many Fostering Sustainable Practices project partners, participants and Advisory Board members.

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The Fostering Sustainable Practices project investigates creative practices in design-led fashion micro and small enterprises (MSEs) as an evidence base for change towards a more sustainable fashion industry. Project findings are underpinned by two-and-a half years of work with more than forty fashion MSEs, who demonstrate sustainable prosperity in and through Fashion.

This collaborative research is led by Centre for Sustainable Fashion, a University of the Arts London research centre, based at London College of Fashion. Project partners are based at London College of Fashion, The Open University and Middlesex University's Centre for Enterprise and Economic Development Research (CEEDR; a partner in Surrey University's Centre for Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity).

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