



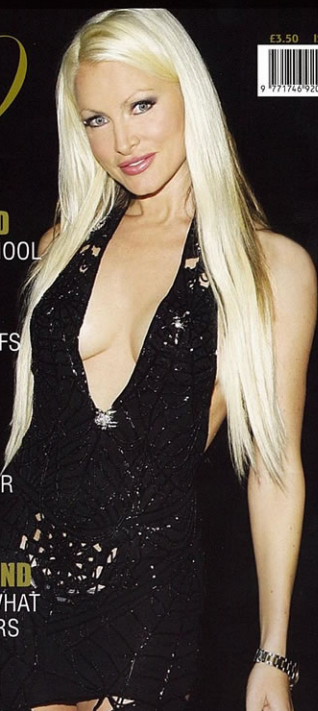
# START YOUR BUSINESS

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## 50 Issue

SPECIAL EDITION

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**DOUG RICHARD**  
ON HIS NEW SCHOOL  
FOR START-UPS

**HAVE FAITH**  
CAN YOUR BELIEFS  
HELP YOU IN  
BUSINESS?

**CAPRICE**  
FASHION MODEL  
& ENTREPRENEUR  
ON SURVIVING  
THE RECESSION

**CONSUMER MIND**  
DO YOU KNOW WHAT  
YOUR CUSTOMERS  
ARE THINKING?



# ON THE COVER

## Caprice Bourret

Having started Caprice Lingerie with Debenhams in 2000, Caprice took the reins in 2006, investing her own money to start By Caprice Lingerie, a successful line which is now sold around the world.



*"Let me tell you something - it's about business! Let's cut all the B.S! Of course it gives me pleasure when ladies tell me how much they love my stuff, but I also love the fact that I have so many customers buying my stuff! I want to build a business and this is how you build a business - I want to keep on going for the next 50 years."*

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# EDITORIAL

Considering that I reached the 'big 50' a few years ago, I'm glad that I can enjoy this celebration! For our 50th, we've got a packed edition including a special feature on the team behind SYB.

Check out **pages 44-47** where we get intimate with Caprice. She tells us about the growth of her business, from starting out in 2000, to launching her very own bedding line in June this year. She also reveals how she made the personal transition from international model to business woman, and shares tips for budding entrepreneurs.

Turn to **page 38** to hear entrepreneur Doug Richard talk about his academy School for Startups, and the upcoming event MADE: In 48 hours, which teaches small businesses how to grow. Doug reminisces about his journey so far, the mistakes he's made and learned from, and his time on the BBC's Dragons' Den.

Andy Preston is a leading expert on sales and selling for small businesses - on **page 15** of The Entrepreneur section he takes a timely look at the reasons behind England's failure at the World Cup, and how these mistakes can be avoided in the business arena.

With the rise of social networking as a business tool, the question of the day is: 'To Tweet or not to Tweet' - turn to **page 16** of The Entrepreneur section to hear Judith Germain's advice on using social media to improve your company's reputation.

Enjoy this month's issue!

**CHRISTINE SHAW**  
MANAGING EDITOR

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WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF

# Caprice

Californian-born beauty Caprice is a woman with many strings to her bow. Voted GO Magazine's Woman of the Year, and Maxim's International Woman of the Year 3 times in a row, Caprice has appeared on over 300 magazine covers worldwide.

From a successful career in modeling, Caprice branched out into acting, appearing in the West End in *The Vagina Monologues* and *Rent*, as well as various TV shows.

Not satisfied with conquering the entertainment industry, Caprice made a foray into the business world. Having started Caprice Lingerie with Debenhams in 2000, Caprice took the reins in 2006, investing her own money to start *By Caprice Lingerie*, a successful line which is now sold around the world.

The range has been a huge success nationally, with over 2 million women in the UK wearing her designs. Since December 2007, she has also launched lines of swimwear, nightwear, occasion-wear and casual-wear. Now, in addition to this, Caprice has launched *By Caprice Bedding*.



**To start off, let's talk about your new bedding line that launched on 1st July exclusively at Littlewoods. Your previous ventures have been lingerie, swimwear and sleepwear - what about this project piqued your interest?**

It was a long shot for me, but I saw that there was a niche in the market... I know Kylie did her thing, and then Jordan had her thing. It's different - There's one style that's a bit more classic, one that's a bit more rock and roll. We've had 3 weeks of sales and the sales have been phenomenal. Because the market is so saturated with everything you have to find a place in the market where it's lacking a bit, and with my bedding there was a bit of a gap. I have that loyal customer base so we launched and, thank God, it's doing very well!

**How involved do you get in the design process of the bedding?**

I'm very involved! Even going to HK and negotiating cost prices... very involved!

**You have always been really involved in the design process for the By Caprice Lingerie lines - do you think this 'hands-on' approach is one of the reasons why the brand has been so successful?**

I think the brand has been successful because I don't come from a school of design so when I design the trends aren't my Bible. I've had designers on board and they all have the same kind of flair, they all design the same "T" more or less - it's just a different face or a different embroidery! With me, I don't come from that same school so my stuff is very, very different, even down to the things in my underwear line. I do this particular way of making the underwear where it's a very soft mesh. Most of the design school designers make it quite rigid and tough and so I just pay really close attention to everything and obviously I wear all my stuff. I listen to all my customers who are constantly giving me their opinions and telling me what they like and don't like and I really take everything on board.

**You have managed to make the transition from international model to businesswoman - how have you achieved such a radical career-change?**

It's taken years - it was difficult. It was difficult on my ego as well. I had a bunch of yes-people who were around me and I had everyone doing and saying whatever I wanted. I had to take a step back and when you do that they forget about you. That's just how the business is. Then I suddenly didn't have yes people and when I go to the office I work my 12-hour days and even when I'm on holiday I'm thinking about work - it's a difficult lifestyle. But now I make more money than I ever did modelling and I have security. With modelling you're in your 30s and you're over the hill sister!

**Did you find that your previous career meant that people treated you as 'just a pretty face'? If so, how did you deal with this?**

I didn't care what their incentive was - if they were nice to me then that was all that mattered to me!

**Did the recession affect your business?**

Big time! I do a lot of arbitrage - I buy in dollars but I get paid in sterling. Back then I didn't understand that - I took a heavy, heavy hit and lost thousands of pounds just in currency exchange; now I know better! Now I'm actually making money with currency exchange. Also, buyers were cutting orders in half and that cut my business in half.

**How did you deal with this?**

I had to change my business model and I did it fast!

**You recently signed up to stock By Caprice Lingerie in BHS as part of an overhaul of the store's image. How did this come about?**

The buyer called me up, the idea worked, and I thought this was great so I was happy to get involved.

**You made your name as a model, and continue to model for By Caprice - but if you had to pick one, do you prefer the boardroom to being in front of the camera?**

Definitely business! I love entertainment but modelling bored the hell out of me. I love TV work, stage work - modelling just bored me. But thank god for modelling because I made a hell of a lot of money.

**You have previously said that your lingerie line is designed to make ladies feel beautiful, confident and sexy - is this what motivates you to get so involved in the design process?**

Let me tell you something - it's about business! Let's cut all the B.S! Of course it gives me pleasure when ladies tell me how much they love my stuff, but I also love the fact that I have so many customers buying my stuff! I want to build a business and this is how you build a business - I want to keep on going for the next 50 years.

**How do you feel about plans to label adverts that have been airbrushed? Do you think airbrushing is detrimental to the self-confidence of young girls, or would you say it is simply a necessary step in the world of advertising?**

You know what? It's absolutely crucial to be honest. It will affect sales. For me, I'll be very honest, I airbrush the hell out of myself - I'm 38 years old and things aren't as perky as they used to be! I airbrush, and if I don't, there was one time where somebody accidentally sent over un-airbrushed images

and it absolutely had a negative impact on sales - 100 per cent. If you can, everyone would want to be airbrushed. At the end of the day we live in a vain society - if we weren't vain we wouldn't talk about it in the press all the time. So I airbrush, and I want the pictures to look as fabulous as possible because it impacts my sales. As you want to aspire to look like something and when something looks fabulous it sells better.

**When we sent over a whole collection that wasn't airbrushed it really did impact sales.**

**Do you have any tips for young businesswomen out there who might be intimidated by what is generally perceived as a male-dominated world of business?**

It is a man's world. All I have to say is a lot of it is passion - really don't go in there just to make a fast buck. Go in there because you love what you do - know everything about you.

Bring in the best possible team - get the best team and you'll have the best results. Don't get greedy - the customer is a lot smarter - they want a lot for their money so put the majority of the money into the product initially otherwise you'll start up and you might fail if you get greedy and want profits right away. Look to the future.

Really understand that in business if you put money in you really won't break even for 3 years - really understand what cashflow is; understand it and live it - that's what I do. I know what's coming in and going out for the next year. Even if you have an investment that looks big, don't go nuts - make the if money work for the next year. Don't be stupid because you will lose your business, I guarantee it.

**The world of business is pretty stressful - how do you unwind when you're not working?**

I meditate twice a day. Meditation gives me clarity - how fantastic is it for half an hour twice a day to think of absolutely nothing?

**You own the 'By Caprice' brand - what made you decide against signing license deals for the brand instead?**

I have 100% equity. I started off in a license deal with Debenhams in 2000 and I saw how rich I was making them, so I thought sod this I'm going to do it for myself! I work ten times harder but I make a much better profit as well - and I own equity in a successful company.

**Where do you see the 'By Caprice' brand heading next?**

I want to head to America; now America is gaining momentum and they're buying European brands again so I'm going straight for America! You know what though? The people in England are amazing; I love the English. I'm very happy making England my base.



*"Even if you have an investment that looks big, don't go nuts - make the money work for the next year."*