**"Now our shop window is open to the world"**

**It started with leopard-patterned training tights, a running top with the text "you have just been passed by a Power Woman" and zebra-patterned triathlon garments. Today, the growing company launches new collections each month – and its sights are set on the world.**

One day, all of a sudden, the Economics student and interior store owner Anna Wretling discovered an unoccupied spot in the market – the missing link between fashion and sports.

– I couldn't understand why training couldn't be made to be more glamorous. That I was questioned for switching from high heels on one day to competing in an Ironman the next provoked me. I wanted to make a point of it – of course it's possible to run a triathlon and still look great in leopard-patterned tights, says Anna.

What was initially an experiment has become a full-time job with an important purpose: to show and advance the enormous power of women.

– My company is scalable. I own the brand, the entire production and the customer base. My vision is boundless and my business model is therefore worldwide. Products are sold around the clock and the garments are not season-bound. In addition, the global potential is enormous and that's exciting, says Anna.

She built the first e-commerce website by herself for SEK 24,000, started producing prototypes, looked around for factories and materials, set up a company, made packing and customer service arrangements, tested products and finally sold the first garment. Sweden has since been something of her "trial market" where she quietly has been able to test her products on a decidedly demanding audience.

Swedish customers want the best possible quality without having to pay for it. So, if you are successful here you have great potential to succeed internationally, says Anna.

After budding slowly for a while, it is now time to appear – for real. Large investments have gone into a new website with more advanced ordering systems, while the warehouse has been expanded.

– We simply want to open our shop window to the world. We are ready, says Anna.

To help her, she has a number of hungry investors, both female business executives and seasoned e-commerce professionals. Competition is heavy in the sports fashion industry, but it's monumental when facing investors. Sweden may be a country known for equality, but in terms of external capital it's everything but. A mere 0.77 percent of the venture capital is awarded to women.

– It's not just about capital. It's about getting the right capital from the right investor, who understands PowerWoman and the company's message. Being able to say no to money, though you need it for growth, requires strength and confidence in oneself and in your long-term entrepreneurship, says Anna.

Making the wrong decisions today will have consequences down the line. Staying cool and not panicking, but on the contrary – having confidence in your business model and your conviction – is an art form when lots of people want to steer you in different directions.

During the spring she is making another investor round. Bringing in more capital for growth is a must if you want to grow fast and have high ambitions – but it's also a hard, full-time job in itself.

– The market for raising capital on Stureplan is full of individuals with an inferiority complex and a need for affirmation. A common misconception is that, just because I am a woman, I'm not interested in volume, money and exits. Especially because I'm passionate about my brand and women's health on a deeper level. It is both a passion and a mission.

According to Anna, many believe that women cannot run profitable large companies, but studies have shown that the exact opposite is true.

– Women simply start and run companies in a different way, and this has to be considered in the present, stereotypical template for what a successful company looks like. There is a lot of money to be made in consumer goods aimed at women.

As an entrepreneur in a growth company, Anna Wretling wears many hats; 18 is an oft-mentioned figure.

– As an owner, I am alone in the risk-taking and I have to master an incredible mental pressure. But my strength is that I can keep a level head even when the pressure increases.

Maybe it's because Anna is curious and loves to test boundaries, but not necessarily because she has to be first to cross the finish line. The competition itself is not the biggest driving force.

– Just like when I'm training, I try to use what I have as effectively as possible. I'm neither the type who procrastinates on the gym bike or looks at Instagram photos during work hours. What I do, I do wholeheartedly, says Anna.

She grew up in an entrepreneurial family and realised early on that she was not a good fit for traditional large enterprises.

– I'm more of an agile person; someone who's inquisitive and likes quick changes. I am incredibly good at adapting, this is probably my greatest strength – that I quickly respond to new information by steering in a new direction. When it's nimble, it's enjoyable. With PowerWoman, we have brought big thinking into a small company. We have a big head to a small body and are now ready to take the next step.



