

littala to focus UK sales around an extended partnership with Skandium

littala is pleased to announce that it is to broaden its 10-year partnership with Skandium in the UK. As part of this, littala's retail distribution will be concentrated at Skandium's two littala shops and at the in-store department of Selfridges, while the littala store on Regent Street London will close. Skandium will also take responsibility for sales of littala products to a national network of retailers in both Britain and Republic of Ireland.

Skandium, which recently celebrated its ten-year anniversary, operates two large high street shops in London, one of which, on Brompton Road in Knightsbridge, has an littala in-store department with over 100 square metres of retail space. Following this September's refurbishment of the Skandium shop on Marylebone High Street, 100 square metres of retail space is now dedicated to littala products. A closer partnership between Skandium and littala will see both retail outlets benefit from the same littala campaigns and promotions available at other European based littala stores.

According to **Elina Björklund**, littala's Brand Director, a deepening of the relationship with Skandium will enhance the efficiency of littala's internal processes and promote the company's long-term expansion plans for the British market.

"littala and Skandium began to forge closer relations when Skandium became littala's representative in the UK in 2007. Since then, Skandium has consistently been one of our most active retailers internationally so strengthening this partnership is a natural progression for littala."

"littala decided to combine the retail know-how we've built up with our own stores with that of a strong local partner. Skandium is Britain's best-known retailer of Scandinavian design and has a very good reputation among consumers and with the media.

"Operationally, littala will benefit from being able to focus all its distribution and marketing efforts in the UK with one partner from now on."

The choice of the enlightened consumer

The two main owners behind Skandium – Swedish-born **Magnus Englund** and **Chrystina Schmidt** from Finland – are very enthusiastic about the new arrangement:

"littala has always played a major role in Skandium's business, and this will be further reinforced thanks to the broader-based partnership we now have."

Despite the challenges posted by the current economic situation in the world, Englund believes that littala is well placed to extend its foothold in the UK:

"littala sales in our shops have been increasing year on year and littala products are definitely the best seller in our collection. The quality, heritage, product development and range width are unique and hard to match."

"We very much believe that littala and its core values will continue to attract a growing number of consumers in the UK. During a downturn, people tend to give more thought to what they buy, and littala's commitment to quality and long-lasting design against throwawayism strikes a note with today's more enlightened consumers. The number of this type of consumer is growing all the time in Britain."

Considered international expansion

iittala's retail concept, which was launched in 2002, has gone from strength to strength. The chain of iittala stores has grown steadily; in Japan the company's second city centre store opened in Tokyo in spring 2009, and the third store opened in a premium outlet park mid-October.

In the Netherlands its ninth store opened in Haarlem in June, and six iittala in-store departments have been opened in Bijenkorf department stores during 2009. In Germany one in-store department opened at Kaufhof in Cologne in September and the next will come to Kaufhof Frankfurt on 11th of November. There are currently a total of 37 iittala standalone stores worldwide and around 100 in-store departments in premium department stores.

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