



Body Glove Announces New Japanese Distribution Partnership With itochu fashion system

California-based heritage watersports brand strengthens and expands global reach with new Japanese partnership



REDONDO BEACH, California (August 18, 2020) — Today, trusted California-based watersports brand, Body Glove, announces a partnership with itochu fashion system Co. Ltd. (IFS), to expand Body Glove's presence in Japan. Founded in 1953 by Bill and Bob Meistrell, Body Glove is known as the first dive and surf brand to design a wetsuit. For 67 years, Body Glove has remained a respected name in all products related to water and water-based action sports. In partnering with IFS, Body Glove looks to build momentum in Japan leading up to the Tokyo Summer Olympics when long-standing Body Glove athlete Tatiana Weston-Webb, ranked the sixth best women's surfer in the world, will compete in surfing's Olympic debut.

IFS founded in 1971, has half-century of excellence and expertise in brand business. They hold rights for many licensees such as Prince, Air Walk. The IFS alliance understands the needs of Body Glove and will execute the brand's vision in an authentic way, working hand-in-hand with Body Glove's leadership to further penetrate the market and build on the foundations of the brand's 30-year presence in the region. IFS will work with Body Glove's existing licensees and will help to secure new agreements that will facilitate business opportunities with key retailers.

“Body Glove has experienced enormous growth over the past several years, and despite the economic slowdown resulting from COVID-19, 2020 has remained strong as consumer shopping patterns have shifted. Body Glove has been in Japan for three decades and the region is a significant priority for the brand. As a country that loves the outdoors, active living and water sports, we see incredible growth potential in the partnership with IFS,” says Peter Maule, Global SVP of Body Glove. “We have long-standing licensee partnerships that are a cornerstone for our business that will continue. IFS will be instrumental in helping these partners expand their business as well as developing new and relevant categories for the brand.”

With over 70 product categories, Body Glove remains a leader in the market of inflatable stand-up paddleboards and kayaks, soft top surfboards, PFDs, aquatics and swimwear. With strong sales in Victoria's Secret, Amazon and Dicks Sporting goods, the brand has consistently recorded double-digit growth year over year since Marquee Brands acquired it. The global brand is currently sold in 108 countries and has made recent strides in Australia, New Zealand, the U.K. and the European Union. IFS will work to fast-track the brand's launch in retail shops and the potential growth in Japan could double retail sales within a year.

“COVID-19 has immensely changed the surrounding environment of our daily lives and our business. However, we strongly believe that challenging times bring opportunity. With Body Glove's great partnership, we will drive forward a new approach to brand business by adapting to the new market requirements after COVID-19” says Takaaki Komatani, President of itochu fashion system co., Ltd.

For more information about Body Glove:
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About Body Glove

Since 1953, Body Glove has been all about the water. Body Glove has established itself as the leading watersports brand in the world by providing innovative, high quality products that protect people and enhance their lives, in and out of the water. Body Glove aims to protect the environment through product manufacturing as well as through the organizations that they support. Learn more at www.bodyglove.com.

About itochu fashion system:

Established in 1971. itochu fashion system has been offering a broad range of branding services by utilizing its unique fashion marketing skills and expertise as a branding company. Its clientele covers wide range of field including but not limited to fashion. Learn more at <https://www.ifs.co.jp/en/>