

Abstracts of the article **“Diesel founder Renzo Rosso: the jeans genie”**

Written by James Collard
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*Diesel started as a denim company in a sleepy Italian town,
but founder Renzo Rosso is turning it into a major force in fashion,
with cutting-edge collaborators, a new luxury line
and even its own radio station*

(...) “I’m very happy with how things are going,” declares Diesel’s Renzo Rosso, a young-looking, denim-clad 53-year-old exuding energy with a ready smile and eyes that twinkle under his mop of curly hair. Rosso has good reason to be happy.”(...)

(...) “But uptown on Fifth Avenue, which Rosso calls “the world’s favourite shopping street”, there’s a sleek new Diesel store – a long-desired trophy for the Italian, and a sign of how, pace the crunch, Diesel is steadily cracking the difficult but lucrative nut that is the American market.”(...)

(...) “Think of Diesel, and we most likely think of the denim brand, best known for cool jeans and accessories and some rather heavily branded T-shirts – the kind of clothes any prosperous, twentysomething European might wear for a night out. Oh, and we might recall some quirky, envelope-pushing advertising campaigns such as World War II sailors kissing passionately on the dockside.”(...)

(...) “Tomorrow, the world’s fashion press will see the Diesel Black Gold show at Bryant Park, showcasing the more high-end, luxurious label, which Rosso launched at last year’s New York Fashion Week. (...) That’s still the case, but in the past decade, its visionary boss, Renzo Rosso, has quietly set about becoming a real force in fashion – as well as expanding Diesel’s reach and broadening its appeal. The thinking behind Black was that there’s a customer who has grown up with Diesel – liked the edgy ad campaigns, the lively palette, the ever more inventive reinventions of that global fashion staple, a pair of jeans – but who has got older and richer and wants to wear something a bit more high-end, a bit more special.”(...)

(...) “The company Rosso co-founded 30 years ago, and gradually took full control of, is still run from Bassano, a handsome little Italian town north of Venice, next to the mountains. But before coming to New York, Rosso had been scouting store locations in India – in Delhi, Mumbai and of course Bangalore, where the IT brahmins love to wear cool Western clothes and drink Starbucks cappuccinos in the mall – while Diesel’s most extraordinary new marketing project is Diesel Radio, described as the first global radio network.”(...)

(...) “For most of us, if we’re feeling a bit flush, a little bit fashion-forward, we might splash out on a Margiela shirt, some sneakers by DSquared2 or a Viktor & Rolf frock. But if you’re Renzo Rosso, you’re more likely to acquire a controlling stake in the company. For while all of the above have their own, clearly defined creative visions – the visions that got them on the fashion radar in the first place – it is joining forces with Renzo Rosso’s Diesel, now a major fashion holding company, that has made these brands globally recognised.” (...)