



# Mona Bijoor's JOOR raises \$2.25 million to expand internationally

GEORGE JOSEPH

Fashion buyer and corporate strategist Mona Bijoor's JOOR, an online wholesale marketplace for contemporary fashion brands and independent boutiques, has raised \$2.25 million in funding. The company will use this to expand internationally and accelerate the growth of its online network of boutiques, buyers and brands.

Endorsed by the Council of Fashion Designers of America, JOOR creates a sales channel for retail buyers and brands. JOOR claims it is the only global marketplace that gives brands and boutiques the ability to transact,



interact and make strategic buying and selling decisions. Since its launch last year, the company has grown from working with 75 brands and 500 boutiques to over 250

brands and 7,500-plus boutiques.

'While fashionistas have been some of the earliest adopters of the Web, the underlying relationships between brands and boutiques remain stuck in the stone age of trade shows and fax machines,' said Brian O'Malley, partner, Battery Ventures, which led the Series A financing with participation from Lerer Ventures, Great Oaks Venture Capital, Landis Capital, Forerunner Ventures, William M. Smith and Richard Mishaan. 'We're excited by JOOR's vision to build an online marketplace for the trade, opening new lines of communication and visibility previously unheard of in this industry.'

New York-based Bijoor got in to the venture after being on the brand and the buyers' side for 12 years.

'I recognized this pain point in the wholesale market. Brands and buyers were only able to operate in the physical realm and there was no online channel to place orders,' she said. 'With times being tough, store owners have a limited amount of time to attend trade shows and for discovery. JOOR incorporates the best practices in social media and e-commerce and applies it to the wholesale world. It is part of a significant movement in fashion that recognizes the tremendous potential of digital platforms to increase profitability and efficiency.'

'Our vision is to become the system of record for independent retailers and designers globally. Our vision is to expand into other verticals outside of women's,' she said. 'The biggest challenge for JOOR is growing our international retailer and designer base. We've experienced tremendous response from brands and boutiques in the US who have embraced JOOR.

We feel that the international response has the potential to be even more significant. We raised the financing so that we can scale internationally.'