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# Breuninger Transformation Case (2016–2023)

## A strategic blueprint for cultural relevance and exponential growth in modern retail

### Context

Breuninger, once a respected regional department store rooted in tradition, faced the fundamental challenge of remaining relevant in a luxury market shaped by cultural acceleration, digital disruption, and shifting generational values. The brand lacked emotional resonance, cultural clarity, and differentiation in an increasingly experience-driven economy.

### Vision & Ambition

To transform Breuninger into one of Europe's most emotionally powerful and culturally resonant premium department store brands – one that would seamlessly integrate heritage, innovation, and aesthetic intelligence into a future-facing growth model.

*"Our ambition was to turn Breuninger into a cultural institution – where beauty, commerce, and meaning converge at scale."*

### Strategy & Execution

The transformation was led jointly by ownership, CEO, and CMO, built on a proprietary cultural branding system designed to elevate Breuninger from a transactional retailer to a relational cultural platform brand.

- Cultural Integration**  
Embedding fashion, architecture, design, personalities, art, and music into the brand DNA
- Experiential Store Redesign**  
Reimagining physical retail as curated emotional and aesthetic environments and platform
- Narrative-Driven Campaigning**  
Moving beyond product to build emotional capital through cultural storytelling
- Digital Reinvention**  
Investment in luxury e-commerce, platform strategy, and brand-driven technology
- New Brand Architecture**  
Relaunch of Design, private labels, cultural activations, and new partnerships

### Results & Impact

**Commercial**  
– Revenue doubled: from €650M to €1.4B  
– +1 million new customers acquired (last 3 years)  
– Market leadership in luxury e-commerce (DACH region)

**Cultural**  
– Recognized among Europe's most design-forward department stores  
– Strategic collaborations with many brands and global tastemakers  
– Breuninger became emotionally relevant to a new generation

**Strategic**  
– Shift from retail-driven to brand-led operating model  
– Omnichannel success with high Customer Lifetime Value and cultural brand equity  
– International expansion blueprint established

### Conclusion

Breuninger's transformation is a story of modernization – it is proof that when beauty, culture, and commerce are strategically aligned, brands grow and they become movements.

For leaders today, this case offers a clear insight: the future of growth lies in scale and meaning.

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