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Holland & Barrett appoints first CIO to create 360 degree customer view

Holland & Barrett, Europe's leading health and wellbeing retailer, has hired its first ever Chief Information Officer (CIO) to drive forward its ambitious plans to create an intelligent and frictionless customer shopping experience.

Mark Fabes joins from Starbucks where he was Technology Vice President at EMEA. In his role as the new Holland & Barrett CIO, he will be responsible for creating systems that drive customer, brand and business insight from a more streamlined and coherent view of the data collected through Holland & Barrett stores, website and hugely successful loyalty card programme.

The new role will enable the business to better analyse customer information and shopping habits to help the retailer develop hyper-targeted communications and promotions that create a more meaningful customer experience at every touchpoint.

Hollandandbarrett.com fulfils more than 100,000 orders each month and operates 760 stores across the UK and Ireland. Additionally, Holland & Barrett's 'Rewards for Life' loyalty card is one of the most successful in the UK market with around 7 million activated cards in circulation, used for in excess of 60% of in-store transactions.

At Starbucks, Mark was responsible for leading the technology strategy and services within 39 markets and more than 2,500 stores which included driving mobile ordering in its restaurants. Prior to this, Mark spent five years as IT Director at McDonalds.

Commenting on his appointment, Mark said: "One of the biggest areas of focus in retail in the next couple of years will be about having a comprehensive 360 degree view of your customer. The overarching aim is to leverage deeper knowledge of how their customers engage with their business across all touch points, helping them reach decisions that create a truly blended experience across all channels. I was impressed by Holland & Barrett's commitment to leverage data as part of a broader ambition to become the trusted partner for their customers in their purchasing decisions."

Holland & Barrett has already been using customer data to offer promotions tailored to a customer's shopping habits which has helped to drive sales. But it is now working towards building a closer relationship between the Holland & Barrett brand and the customer through a number of data driven projects.

Holland & Barrett International Chief Executive Peter Aldis said: "We are delighted to welcome Mark to Holland & Barrett. We have ambitious plans for the future of our business and we are very excited to have Mark's big brand experience to help us take our end-to-end customer experience to the next level."

The CIO hire is the first since Holland & Barrett was acquired in June in a £1.8bn deal by L1 Retail from Nature's Bounty, formerly owned by private equity firm Carlyle. Holland & Barrett will benefit from help and support from the L1 Advisory Board which supports the investment team led by L1 Retail managing partner, Stephan DuCharme. The Advisory Board includes internationally renowned retailers including Clive Humby, co-founder of customer data company Dunnhumby which launched Tesco Clubcard, the world's first supermarket loyalty card.

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For further information please contact Pegasus on behalf of Holland & Barrett International on:

01273 712000 or email: hollandandbarrett@thisispegasus.co.uk

About LetterOne / L1 Retail

L1 Retail is the retail investment arm of LetterOne. LetterOne was founded in 2013 and is an international investment business headquartered in Luxembourg. LetterOne's strategy is to build a new portfolio of successful companies that are leaders in their fields and sectors. It makes long-term investments of its own capital in companies in which its sectoral experience and strategic and geographic expertise will improve performance and help companies grow. It has recruited world-class CEOs, sector investment teams and Advisory Boards to invest at scale. It buys and build assets, which it can develop over time as platforms of long-term sustainable growth. It invests through L1 Energy, L1 Technology, L1 Health and L1 Retail.

L1 Retail's Advisory Board of internationally renowned retail leaders and specialists are deeply involved in supporting its investment team. Karl-Heinz Holland served eight years as Chief Executive of Lidl Group, the pioneering German food retailer. Clive Humby, one of the founders of dunnhumby (today part of Tesco), was pioneering the use of data in retail organisations long before the existence of 'big data'. John Walden has been at the forefront of multi-channel, consumer-driven retailing for more than 20 years. Most recently, as Chief Executive of Home Retail Group, John drove the digital transformation of Argos.

About Holland & Barrett

Holland & Barrett International is one of the world's leading health and wellness retailers and the largest in Europe, supplying its customers with a wide range of vitamins, minerals, health supplements, specialist foods and natural beauty products. With over 145 years of experience in the industry, the Holland & Barrett name is a familiar sight in almost every major city and town across the UK and is becoming increasingly more visible further afield, in markets as diverse as the Netherlands and Malta to the UAE, China and India. For more information, please visit www.hollandandbarrett.com.