

A New E-Commerce Site Is Giving Ukrainian Fashion Brands Unexpected Opportunity at a Critical Time

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A Marsala style

As Russia's assault on Ukraine continues, many businesses are struggling to stay afloat, with day-to-day operations hampered and production and shipping limited across the country.

But during this extremely challenging time, there have been countless stories of perseverance and determination.

And this month, 30 Ukrainian apparel and footwear designers got a huge opportunity to sell their products to a global audience via a new e-commerce site, [Angelfor.com](https://angelfor.com).

Former Zappos and Vivienne Westwood executive Jen Sidary launched the venture after a whirlwind monthlong development process.

Sidary, who lived in Ukraine in 2020 and was immediately struck by the passion and creativity of the fashion community there, has been entrenched in the business ever since. She leads Ukrainian Fashion NYC Project, which is supported by the USAID Competitive Economy Program, and helps brands enter the U.S. market.

After Russia attacked Ukraine in February, Sidary knew she had to do more. She leaned into her past experience at Zappos — where she learned all aspects of the e-commerce business — and got to work.

“Many people have been watching the courage and strength of the Ukrainian people as they resist and uphold their strong values,” Sidary said. “We’re here to introduce you to another amazing force within Ukraine: their phenomenal fashion industry. They are inspiring, courageous and you will see their values reflected in their creations.”

Here are three shoe brands to shop on [Angelfor-fashion.com](https://angelfor-fashion.com)

Marsala

How It Started

Energized by opportunity following Ukraine’s revolution, Maria Masliy founded the brand in 2015. “I was a photographer and director who loved footwear,” she recalled.

Aesthetic

Colorful and feminine, the collection ranges from flats to heels.

Sustainable Story

The designer recently launched an eco-capsule made of cactus leather.

My Twenty Five

How It Started

Founded by designer Katya Lysenko in 2016, the designer decided to venture into footwear design after she couldn’t find the perfect New Year’s Eve Shoes. She set out to create shoes that were both stylish and comfortable.

Aesthetic

High heels with a bit of drama. Embellishments and rich materials like velvet are incorporated throughout.

Fit Matters

To perfect the fit of her shoes, the designer personally measured more than 300 feet of women in Ukraine.



A lifestyle image from My Twenty Five

Kachorovska

How It Started

Designer Alina Kachorovska grew up in the shoe business under the tutelage of her grandmother, who began working in a footwear atelier in the late 1950s, and her mother, who oversees production at the factory in their hometown of Zhytomyr. She launched the brand seven years ago.

Aesthetic

Feminine pieces that aren't reliant on trends, but can be worn season after season.

Unique Concept

In addition to the growing e-commerce business, which now accounts for almost 50% of total sales, Kachorovska has three stores in Ukraine, which are combined with the family's coffee shops



Colorful pumps from Kachorovska fall '22.
CREDIT: Courtesy of Kachorovska