

Chris Riccobono | Founder, Untuckit

By Sean Teehan
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Clothing retailers have spent years taking brick-and-mortar operations online, but with its June opening of a store in Farmington's Westfarms mall, Untuckit is doing just the opposite.



Chris Riccobono

That's because Chris Riccobono, chief executive of the business-casual clothing line that started as a strictly online company in 2011, sees opportunity in expanding the business into the physical world, and not just for the point-of-sale revenue. "Our stores simply ... give customers a new touchpoint to experience the brand, while we get the chance to understand what they need and like about shopping with us," Riccobono said.

New York-based Untuckit started opening stand-alone stores in 2015, and currently has 65 physical shops across the U.S. and Canada.

The Westfarms location is the company's first in Connecticut.

The brand is known for selling casual shirts designed not to be tucked into pants.

Many people have declared brick-and-mortar retail to be on its way out. What's driving Untuckit's push for physical stores?

Given our wide demographic of 25- to 70-year-olds, we knew early on that many of our custom-

ers would want to touch and feel the product, so opening physical stores really gave us the opportunity to create a 'trust bridge' between us and our customers as they got to know the brand. We want to continue growing that connection, which is why we're continuing to open stores.

Why do you see the Greater Hartford market as a good match for Untuckit?

We like to open locations where our customers are, so after seeing so many people from the Hartford area were shopping with us online, we wanted to give them the chance to experience the brand in person. Plus, we're lucky to be in the company of some other awesome brands at Westfarms.

With the advent of online shopping, and apparel services like Stitch Fix, how do you see the role of physical stores changing in the clothing industry?

There will always be a customer who wants to touch and feel a product in their hand before buying it. That's not to say the majority of retail won't live online, but I do think there will always be a place for physical retail spaces — so long as they are smart and seamless — for those customers still looking for a special experience with a brand they love.

What do you think a clothing customer desires that will never change, no matter whether people shop online or at stores?

Lucky for us, men's shirts can only be worn one of two ways: tucked in or untucked. The prints and fabrics or collars and buttons might change, but there will always be a desire for a good looking shirt to wear untucked.

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