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## Today Show's Jill Martin Knows How To Sell On TV -- Now She Is Building A Lifestyle Brand On QVC

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Jill Martin is NBC Today Show's million-dollar baby. Last year her Steals-and-Deals segment, which runs twice a month, brought in \$60 million in sales on NBC's new e-commerce platform. Now celebrating five years with QVC as creative director for the G.I.L.I. brand (Got It. Love It.), Martin is building a lifestyle brand that she hopes will become QVC's biggest ever . Martin has found the hook that she believes will take her the distance. " The overall arc of my entire career is summed up in one concept: Problem/Solution , " Martin shared with me.

“People want to live their lives elegantly and comfortably with a bit of luxury that doesn’t break the bank. I’m building a brand starting with fashion and now home that solves that problem, plus is fun and happy and brings excitement to their lives everyday.”

Exciting is undoubtedly the best word to describe Jill Martin. Drawing on her experience dressing for her TV appearances as a New York Knicks broadcaster, Martin leveraged her problem-solving approach to fashion into three best-selling books, including her New York Times bestseller, *I Have Nothing to Wear*.

That brought her to *The Today Show* as its lifestyle contributor with *Steals and Deals* and its *Ambush Makeover* segment where Martin supplies her problem/solution strategy to fashion-challenged women. She started with *The Today Show* about a decade ago.

### **Martin’s journey with QVC**

Despite her broadcast experience, she was not an overnight success with QVC. On *The Today Show* she is primarily a curator of other brands’ products to solve viewers’ problems. QVC expected her to design the products as well and it took her seven product presentations to get it right.

“I pitched to QVC six times before I was accepted there,” she says. “It’s hard enough to get the meeting with them, then you go into a little room with your idea and start pitching. But none of the first six ideas were right. Then I hit with a home organization concept that was the right problem/solution for QVC.”

Martin launched the organization line on QVC eight years ago. Its success, plus her dynamic personality combined with her problem/solution approach, led the company to ask Martin to take over as creative director for QVC’s proprietary G.I.L.I. fashion brand. She just completed her fifth year in that role.

“We merged the home organization line into G.I.L.I. and built it up from there into fashion accessories, footwear and handbags. And now we launched a home decor line, which is a passion project for me,” she says.

Her problem/solution thumbprint runs throughout her expanding G.I.L.I. line. “It’s all about helping women make their lives better and easier. It’s accessible elegance, it’s comfortable, it’s relatable and it’s happy.”

### **Holistic approach to building a lifestyle brand**

Martin believes that the clothes you wear and the way you decorate your home is critically important to the life you lead. Happiness is the goal and she is intent upon bringing that forward in the G.I.L.I. product line on QVC.

“The way you dress in the morning sets the tone for the day. You will make better decisions based upon how you feel,” she says. “So when you open your closet in the morning, everything should be something that you love yourself in and that feels comfortable and that fits you right. It sets you up for success that day.”

That same holistic thinking applies to her home line. “You should only bring items into your home, whether it be the closet, the bedroom or the living room, that make you feel your best so you can live your life to the fullest.”

“I think a home should be filled with love, comfort, happiness, and be a place that you want to live in and share with people you invite into your home,” she continues.

Martin points to her signature palm-tree doormat as exemplifying her fun and functional design philosophy. “Think about your doormat. It’s the first thing people see, so when they come to your door, they think this is a fun place. It is exciting, happy and welcoming. That is what I bring into my line.”

### **QVC makes design accessible**

QVC is the perfect partner for Martin’s ambitions. As the QVC name implies, it delivers quality, value and convenience to customers based on a business model that is truly unique.

Martin knows first hand QVC’s stringent quality-control standards. “Its QA is really extraordinary. People say, I’ve drunk the QVC ‘Kool Aid,’ but I know it, believe it and live it.”

On the value front, QVC’s reach into millions of homes allows it to source product and sell them at amazing prices. Take the recent G.I.L.I. maxi-dress that QVC featured as a Today Special Value. Martin sold over 67,000 of them on her most recent appearance. “Imagine in a store how long it would take to sell that many units,” she says.

That is because in a 10-minute presentation devoted to each product, Martin can describe in detail what went into making the item, its fabrication, and how to wear or decorate with it. “It’s like having me go shopping with each individual,” she describes.

Then after its live airing, the video goes onto a second life online, which is where the convenience comes in. “I’m able to reach millions of people, whether I’m on the air or even when I’m sleeping, because it is online 24/7.”

Of course, it is Martin’s enthusiasm and authenticity that enables her to reach out through the television, computer or mobile screen. “I’m so grateful to QVC. People want to buy from a person they trust. I would never back anything that I don’t fully believe in 100%. And the viewer knows that. They are very discerning.”

### **Collaborating to bring solutions to other problems**

In order to maintain her status as a trusted partner with her viewers, Martin is turning to collaborations as the next path on her journey. It is an approach that is new for QVC as well. “I’m not an expert on everything. So things that I’m not an expert on, I get the expert, and we collaborate.”

Those collaborations include a line with Jennifer Miller in jewelry, a capsule collection of athleisurewear with fitness-guru Tracy Anderson and most recently a line of pool floats with FunBoy.

“FunBoy does the best floats, hands down. They’re thicker so they won’t puncture. I gave them my print and design and they delivered,” she shares. The over-sized floats come in two styles, priced from \$42 for the round 50-inch float and \$62 for a lip-shaped model.



Perhaps no other product in Martin’s G.I.L.I. collection encapsulates her fun, happy, exciting approach to design as her unique lip-shaped take on the pool float. QVC agrees.

“Jill brings such an element of fun and authenticity to QVC’s G.I.L.I. by Jill Martin fashion and home lines. Jill is always surprising and delighting our customers,” Rosemary Murphy, the QVC and HSN’s vice president of buying, fashion accessories says. “Her creativity and ability to collaborate with other brands has helped bring the G.I.L.I. brand to life.”

Influencer-extraordinaire Oprah is going to supply some extra lift to the G.I.L.I. product line this summer. Martin’s lip floats captured her imagination and she will be featuring it among her O List for Summer. “I’m so thrilled,” Martin exclaims.