# Skims hires Michael Kors veteran to spearhead rapid EMEA store roll‑out



Skims has named Robin Gendron as its first president for Europe, the Middle East and Africa, a hire that signals an accelerated push into permanent retail across the region. According to Business of Fashion, Gendron — a 15‑year veteran of Michael Kors who most recently served as president of EMEA — will lead the roll‑out that includes the brand’s first standalone stores in Dubai and London, with the UK flagship set for Regent Street in mid‑2026. The Crown Estate has confirmed Skims has signed a ten‑year lease for a 12,000 sq ft unit at 245–247 Regent Street, while regional reporting indicates the Dubai debut will be a permanent flagship.

Gendron arrives with deep experience in the very markets Skims now seeks to crack. FashionNetwork records his promotion to Michael Kors’ EMEA presidency in June 2021 and details a career spanning senior retail, e‑commerce and operations roles in Montreal, the United States and London. That operational track record is exactly the selling point Skims is flagging: having an executive familiar with European and Middle Eastern retail ecosystems will be central to scaling a D2C‑born label into permanent bricks‑and‑mortar. When he took on the Michael Kors EMEA role, Gendron told FashionNetwork it was an “honour in driving the brand’s vision for the region,” language that underscores his industry standing.

Skims’ leadership is explicit about the stakes. Jens Grede, co‑founder and chief executive of Skims, told Business of Fashion that “[Robin’s] leadership will be instrumental in navigating complex markets.” The company also describes its EMEA debut as coming with “high expectations for rapid scaling,” a push it says is supported by logistics investment and a newly established regional warehouse.

The rollout will be multi‑channel. The Crown Estate’s announcement frames the Regent Street lease as a strategic West End location intended to broaden the street’s retail mix, and Skims’ chief commercial officer, Robert Norton, is reported to have welcomed the fit between the brand and the site. In the Middle East, regional reporting points to a Mall of the Emirates location for the Dubai flagship, underscoring the brand’s intent to convert Gulf online demand into permanent in‑market presence. At the same time, Skims is pursuing wholesale doors across EMEA — the company itself has named partners in Switzerland, Turkey and Scotland — moves that sit alongside flagship ambitions.

Those wholesale arrangements are already visible on the ground. Globus, the major Swiss department store, hosts a dedicated Skims brand page listing more than a hundred items across lingerie, loungewear and menswear trunks and confirms availability for collection at Zurich and Geneva stores, providing direct evidence of the brand’s Swiss entry via a national retailer. Business of Fashion and other reporting also list luxury partners including Beymen in Turkey and established online luxury platforms among the wholesale roster, part of a broader strategy that mixes direct retail, franchising and selective wholesale distribution.

The appointment and store pipeline come amid an aggressive global expansion blueprint. Business of Fashion’s reporting and an earlier exclusive profile detail plans for 16 new US openings this year — bringing the domestic store count to 22 — and five franchise openings in Mexico this autumn, with the company aiming to enter seven new markets in the coming months. Industry reporting has previously estimated Skims’ annual sales are approaching nine‑figure and near‑billion‑dollar territory, framing the expansion as a bid to translate online momentum into a permanent, experiential retail footprint.

Moving from pure‑play e‑commerce to a hybrid model with flagship stores brings logistical and executional demands. Skims has pointed to a new regional warehouse launched earlier in the year as a key enabler for faster fulfilment and replenishment across EMEA. That backbone, combined with wholesale listings already live at retailers such as Globus, will be essential if the brand is to meet the rapid scaling the company expects — but it also places pressure on inventory planning, local merchandising and the cost structures of high‑rent flagship locations.

Bringing in an EMEA chief with veteran luxury and omnichannel experience reflects Skims’ recognition that execution in Europe and the Middle East will be as important as brand appeal. The hire gives the company a familiar hand to steer complex lease negotiations, wholesale relationships and the operational demands of a larger store fleet. Whether that experience suffices to convert online fervour into sustainable physical‑store economics will be a test for Skims over the coming 18 months as the brand opens its Regent Street flagship, launches in Dubai and deepens wholesale distribution across the region.

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## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.businessoffashion.com/news/retail/skims-taps-michael-kors-veteran-to-lead-emea-expansion/), [[2]](https://www.businessoffashion.com/news/retail/skims-taps-michael-kors-veteran-to-lead-emea-expansion/), [[5]](https://www.thecrownestate.co.uk/news/the-crown-estate-signs-skims-to-regent-street-location-for-uk-debut), [[7]](https://www.entrepreneur.com/en-ae/news-and-trends/skims-makes-middle-east-debut-with-flagship-store-in-dubai/495630)
* Paragraph 2 – [[6]](https://us.fashionnetwork.com/news/Michael-kors-appoints-new-emea-president%2C1303884.html), [[1]](https://www.businessoffashion.com/news/retail/skims-taps-michael-kors-veteran-to-lead-emea-expansion/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.businessoffashion.com/news/retail/skims-taps-michael-kors-veteran-to-lead-emea-expansion/), [[2]](https://www.businessoffashion.com/news/retail/skims-taps-michael-kors-veteran-to-lead-emea-expansion/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[5]](https://www.thecrownestate.co.uk/news/the-crown-estate-signs-skims-to-regent-street-location-for-uk-debut), [[7]](https://www.entrepreneur.com/en-ae/news-and-trends/skims-makes-middle-east-debut-with-flagship-store-in-dubai/495630), [[1]](https://www.businessoffashion.com/news/retail/skims-taps-michael-kors-veteran-to-lead-emea-expansion/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[4]](https://www.globus.ch/marken/skims), [[1]](https://www.businessoffashion.com/news/retail/skims-taps-michael-kors-veteran-to-lead-emea-expansion/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[3]](https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/retail/skims-plan-for-global-domination/), [[1]](https://www.businessoffashion.com/news/retail/skims-taps-michael-kors-veteran-to-lead-emea-expansion/)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.businessoffashion.com/news/retail/skims-taps-michael-kors-veteran-to-lead-emea-expansion/), [[3]](https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/retail/skims-plan-for-global-domination/), [[6]](https://us.fashionnetwork.com/news/Michael-kors-appoints-new-emea-president%2C1303884.html)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.businessoffashion.com/news/retail/skims-taps-michael-kors-veteran-to-lead-emea-expansion/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.businessoffashion.com/news/retail/skims-taps-michael-kors-veteran-to-lead-emea-expansion/> - Business of Fashion reports that Skims has appointed Robin Gendron, a long‑time Michael Kors executive, as its first president for Europe, the Middle East and Africa. The piece explains Gendron spent over fifteen years at Michael Kors and most recently served as president of EMEA. He will oversee Skims’ regional expansion, including plans for standalone flagship stores in Dubai and on London’s Regent Street targeted for mid‑2026. The article notes wholesale rollouts into Switzerland, Turkey and Scotland with partners such as Globus and Beymen, references a new regional warehouse launched earlier in the year, and quotes CEO Jens Grede on scaling.
3. <https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/retail/skims-plan-for-global-domination/> - BoF’s exclusive profile outlines Skims’ aggressive retail strategy and ambition to become the ‘Apple store of apparel’. Jens Grede, co‑founder and chief executive, describes stores as a major growth lever as Skims scales beyond e‑commerce into permanent physical locations. The feature details plans to open sixteen new US stores this year, including a Chicago flagship, expanding the domestic footprint to twenty‑two stores, and five franchise openings in Mexico this autumn. It also lists international wholesale partnerships with Globus, Harvey Nichols, Beymen and LuisaViaRoma, and highlights the brand’s plans to enter new markets within months as annual sales approach billion‑dollar levels.
4. <https://www.globus.ch/marken/skims> - Globus, the Swiss department store, hosts an official SKIMS brand page showcasing a broad range of the label’s lingerie, loungewear and shapewear collections now sold in Switzerland. The retailer’s online catalogue lists more than a hundred SKIMS items, including bras, bodysuits, loungewear and menswear trunks, with prices displayed in Swiss francs and options for in‑store collection. The page confirms SKIMS’ distribution at Globus’ Zurich and Geneva locations and underlines strong customer demand since launch. The listing functions as direct evidence of SKIMS’ wholesale partnership and entry into the Swiss market through a major national department store and more to come.
5. <https://www.thecrownestate.co.uk/news/the-crown-estate-signs-skims-to-regent-street-location-for-uk-debut> - The Crown Estate’s official announcement confirms SKIMS has signed a ten‑year lease for a 12,000 sq ft flagship at 245–247 Regent Street, marking the brand’s first standalone UK store. The release states the unit will open in summer 2026 and describes the location as an important addition to Regent Street’s retail mix. Laura Thursfield, Retail Leasing Director at The Crown Estate, and SKIMS’ chief commercial officer Robert Norton are quoted praising the fit and anticipated customer appeal. The statement highlights The Crown Estate’s aim to curate a diverse West End retail offering and supports reporting about SKIMS’ broader international expansion.
6. <https://us.fashionnetwork.com/news/Michael-kors-appoints-new-emea-president%2C1303884.html> - FashionNetwork reports that Michael Kors promoted Robin Gendron to president for the Europe, Middle East and Africa region, effective June 1, 2021. The story notes Gendron had been with Michael Kors for more than fifteen years, holding roles across Montreal, the United States and London, including senior vice‑president responsibilities for retail, e‑commerce and operations in EMEA. The article quotes Capri Holdings’ leadership praising his breadth of experience across sales, merchandising and ecommerce, and records Gendron’s comment about his honour in driving the brand’s vision for the region. The piece provides context for his industry standing ahead of later moves elsewhere.
7. <https://www.entrepreneur.com/en-ae/news-and-trends/skims-makes-middle-east-debut-with-flagship-store-in-dubai/495630> - Entrepreneur Middle East reports SKIMS will open a flagship store in Dubai, marking the brand’s first permanent Middle East retail presence. The article states the location will be at Mall of the Emirates and notes regional retail banners and signage already on site, while the official launch date remained unconfirmed. The piece positions Dubai as an attractive market for SKIMS because of high spending tourists and strong luxury retail demand, and comments this step shifts the brand from online‑only Gulf sales towards physical stores. The article underscores SKIMS’ broader international expansion strategy and regional franchise and partnership activity in region.