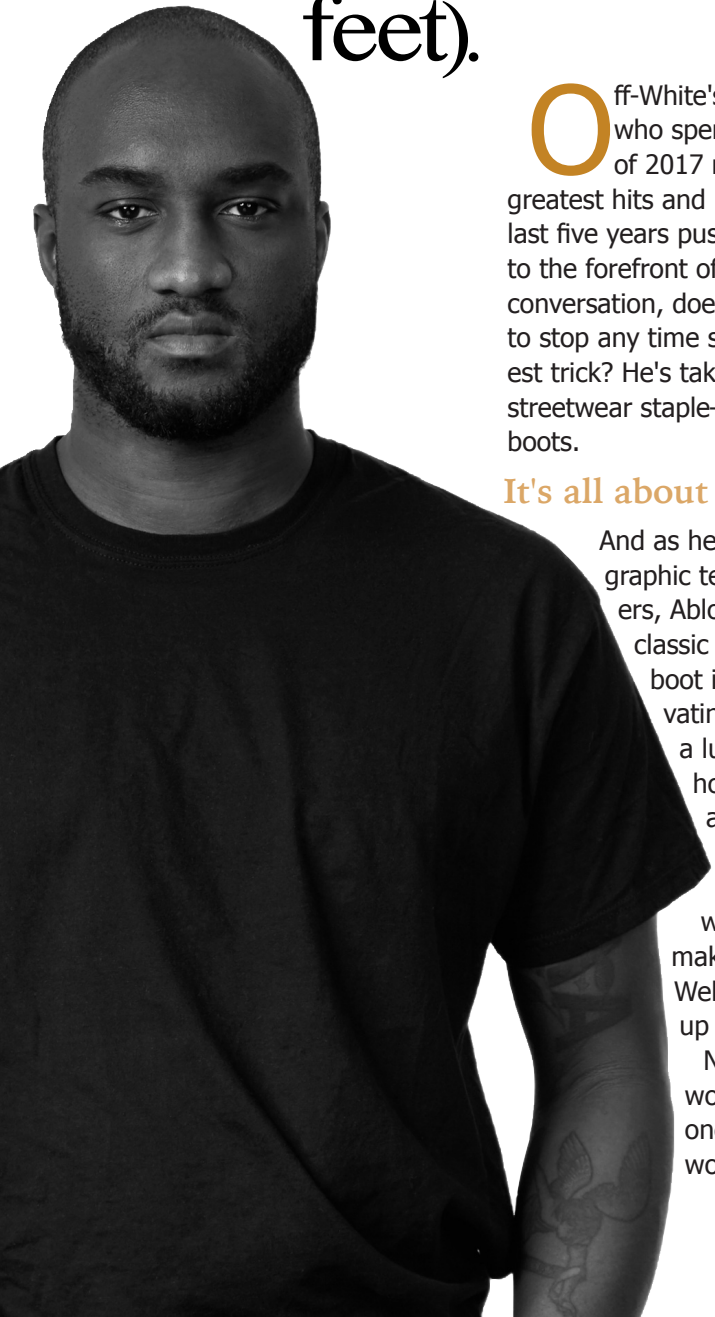




# The Monthly Boot

## Virgil Abloh's velvet take on the 6 inch boot is not for the faint of heart (or feet).



**O**ff-White's Virgil Abloh, who spent the better part of 2017 remixing Nike's greatest hits and has spent the last five years pushing streetwear to the forefront of the fashion conversation, doesn't seem ready to stop any time soon. His latest trick? He's taken on another streetwear staple—Timberland boots.

### It's all about elevating

And as he's done with graphic tees and sneakers, Abloh's take on the classic 6-inch work boot is all about elevating the shoes to a luxury level. But how do you take a boot designed for construction and horrendous weather and make 'em fashion? Well, you do them up in velvet.

Now, you might wonder why anyone would want a work boot in one of

most luxurious, stain-vulnerable fabrics known to man. After all, it more or less undercuts the durable nature of the Timberland style. But this is To a lot of guys, a pair of scuffed Timbs is just as embarrassing as a stained T-shirt or wrinkled suit. By creating a version in velvet, Abloh has essentially upped the ante on the idea of keeping your Timbs box-fresh.

### Velvet Construction

If the velvet construction wasn't enough to make you nervous wearing these remixed boots, know that Abloh, as he's wont to do, has also upped the price a considerable amount. But there's no doubt that wearing a pair will, like velvet itself, be one of the smoothest style moves you can make in 2018. And if you're looking for another reason to wear the velvet blazer you copped for New Year's Eve, these are the shoes you've been searching for.

A regular pair of wheat or black Timbs will run you a bit under 200 bucks, while the Off-White versions are \$745.



# Timberland lays off dozens of employees in restructuring

New Hampshire-based Timberland says it is laying off dozens of employees as a part of what it says is a reconstructive effort.

Timberland said Tuesday that it had laid off roughly 45 employees nationwide, including a number of employees at its headquarters in Stratham. The Portsmouth Herald reports the company says it is providing outplacement services to impacted employees in order to help them transition "into their next opportunity."

Spokeswoman Leslie Grundy says the layoffs are a part of an effort to pursue goals outlined in the company's growth strategy.

<https://nypost.com/2018/05/04/timberland-lays-off-dozens-of-employees-in-restructuring/>



In 2011, Timberland was sold for \$2.2 billion to its current parent company, VF Corp.

## Gray on gray suede is didn't they think of

Over the past few years, Timberland boots have made a major comeback in the style circuit. Whether that's because of the average guy's re-commitment to old-school workwear or the fact that hip-hop style is now fully baked into the population's psyche is hard to say, but one thing's for sure: there's never been a better time to rock a pair of fresh Timbs. Most guys are happy with the classics—the wheat and black versions of the brand's classic 6-inch boot—but there's an all-new, all-gray colorway that could give those staples a run for their money.

Thanks to their premium suede upper, these are like the fine Italian sofa of the boot world. In fact, we might argue that these gray boots are even more wearable than the wheats, which frankly don't look as good as they should with black jeans. But gray and black? That's been a winning combo since the

## so simple, why this earlier?

dawn of time. (Or at least since the Raiders first took to the gridiron.) Additionally, if you're not the kind of guy to get down with some murdered-out vibes, these gray boots are an easy way to break up your look.

Of course, if you're really feeling daring, you could always throw these on with your chunkiest, coolest tweed suit while the weather will still allow it.

<https://www.gq.com/story/timberland-boot-gray-suede-6-inch>





# How Timberland used customer data to reboot its brand

There are few shoes more recognizable than the Timberland yellow boot. You know the one: The high-top styling, the sturdy-looking nubuck leather, the rubber lug sole to protect feet from sheets of rain or piles of snow.

But the durable boot — and the rest of Timberland's footwear and apparel line — was having trouble weathering a fast-changing retail climate.

Timberland's revenue was basically flat from 2006 to 2012. It was losing market share in the Americas, its home turf and most crucial market. And it was barreling forward with a confusing and slapdash patchwork of marketing and product strategies.

## Rebranding across the world

Here in the United States, it had become something of a hip-hop brand as rappers name-checked "Timbs" in countless songs. In Asia, it was thought of as a comfort brand. Still more customers perceived Timberland as gear for the rugged outdoorsman, the kind of guy who hikes in the woods for days with nothing but his backpack.

In the past year, though, Timberland has staged an impressive turnaround, with sales surging 15 percent in the most recent quarter even as the broader retail industry has posted only modest growth. Its sales have improved in every global market and every product category, delivering a fatter profit margin — about 13 percent in 2014, up from 8 percent in 2011.

## Cornerstone Comback

The company says that the cornerstone of the

— — —  
"The brand had become stale in many ways, and the focus wasn't there," said Stewart Whitney, Timberland's president.  
— — —

comeback has been a two-year customer study in which it collected data from 18,000 people across eight countries. In analyzing the trove of responses, Timberland was able to diagnose its problems and to zero in on its ideal customer — an urban dweller with a casual interest in the outdoors.

"Research wasn't a driving factor as much in the previous 20 years," said Jim Davey, vice president of global marketing. "It was kind of a product-driven organization."

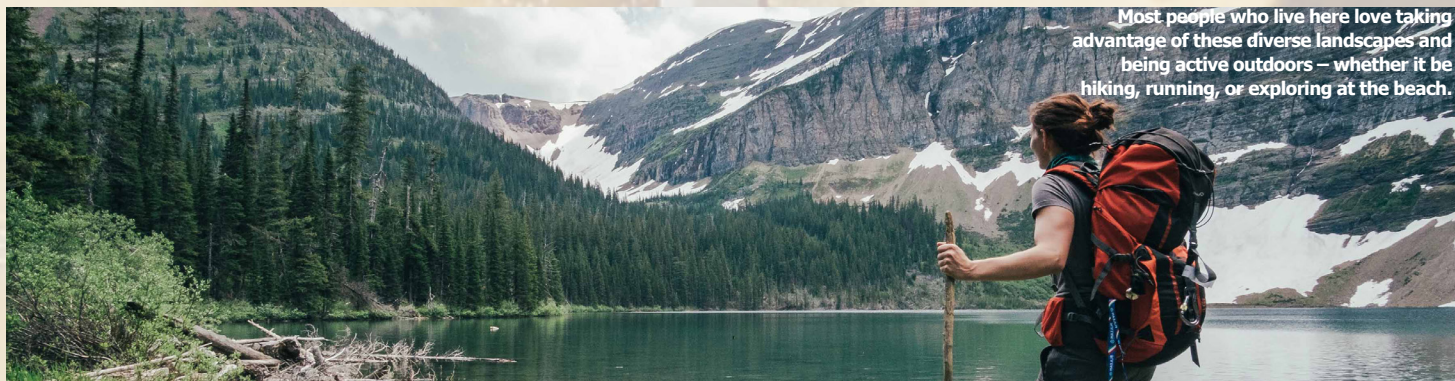
This data-driven approach was implemented after the family-run business was bought in 2011 by VF Corp., an \$11 billion apparel company based



Whether we're stuck in traffic or in an office all day, it's refreshing to get out of the confines of our everyday lives. The sound of the trees blowing, the cool breeze on your skin - nature just has a way of relaxing you.

in Greensboro, N.C., that has undertaken a similar analysis at other brands, including the North Face and Vans.

Timberland's switch to a consumer-data-driven approach reflects a broader change in an industry where the power dynamics between retailer and customer have shifted to favor the shopper. Unprecedented access to pricing information



Most people who live here love taking advantage of these diverse landscapes and being active outdoors — whether it be hiking, running, or exploring at the beach.



# Re-Tooled: How Timberland got back on its feet

The brand of high-performance outdoor footwear and apparel is booming again. The company, owned by VF Corp (VFC, +0.51%), saw revenue rise more than 15% to \$1.8 billion last year, and its operating profit rate climbed for the fourth year in a row, to 13%. And Timberland has ambitious plans to reach \$3.1 billion in revenues and 18% margins in 2019, fueled by a bigger emphasis on higher-income city dwellers around the globe who love the outdoors, and perhaps more importantly, the outdoors look.

Not that long ago, the brand was in a rut: When

VF bought New Hampshire-based Timberland for \$2 billion in 2011, the brand's sales were stuck at the same levels as in 2006, and its operating margin at about 8%. What's more, Timberland didn't seem to know what it stood for. Enter VF, which also owns brands like The North Face and Vans. VF, the world's largest apparel maker, gave Timberland tools it didn't have before, and prompted it to zero in on what it did best and aim to reach a more targeted set of customers.

Whitney, a 15-year Timberland veteran who became its head last year after overseeing its Asia expansion for six years, explained how Timberland got back on track, and how it plans to achieve its ambitious 2019 goals.



Timberland's brand president, Stewart Whitney, recently hosted Fortune at its store in New York's SoHo district.

<http://fortune.com/2015/10/13/retooled-timberland/>



100% of our Footwear and Apparel is PVC free.

100% of our Footwear contains recycled, organic, or renewable material.



At Timberland, we strive to be Earthkeepers in everything we do. We work hard to make our products responsibly, to protect the outdoors, and to serve the communities around the globe where we live, work and explore.



We have completed one million hours of community service.



80% of our employees are engaged in service.