

ASOS PLC

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Recent profit warnings put a £200mln dent in ASOS founder's net worth

The founder of ASOS PLC (LON:ASC) has seen his net worth plummet by more than £200mln over the past year, with a pair of profit warnings rocking the online retailer's share price.

Nick Robertson, along with Quentin John Griffiths, founded ASOS at the turn of millennium, and has managed to keep a decent chunk of the company's shares following its initial public offering in 2003.

READ: ASOS predicts 70% profit plunge as US distribution troubles persist
The 51-year-old currently owns a 5.5% stake, although the value of his holding has plunged over the past 12 months.

A Black Friday cock-up caused ASOS to hit the earnings alarm back in December, while issues in its new delivery hubs in the US and Europe triggered another profit warning.

Unsurprisingly, the share price has followed the one-time King of AIM's fall from grace, tumbling from almost 6,300p in October to less than 2,300p today.

As a result, Robertson's stake is now worth 'just' £105mln. Barely six months ago, it was nearer to £320mln, although he did trouser £15mln after selling a slug of shares in April.

He's not the only founder of a billion-pound-plus company to have seen the value of his stake collapse in recent years.

Is Mike Ashley still a billionaire?

Sports Direct International PLC (LON:SPD) boss Mike Ashley was once sitting on shares in the no-frills sports retailer worth some £3.3bn back when the shares were soaring above 900p in April 2014.

A week or so after hitting all-time highs, the Newcastle United owner sold a chunk of his shares for £200mln.

How he must wish he'd sold more. The stock has never scaled those heights since, with a string of issues taking their toll on the company's value.

Accusations of nepotism, 'Victorian workhouse conditions' at its distribution hubs and senior figures departing have all pressured the share price.

As have some of Ashley's investments, which now include Goals Soccer Centres PLC (LON:GOAL), GAME Digital PLC (LON:GMD) and House of Fraser, among a litany of others.

In fact, the company blamed the House of Fraser acquisition in particular when it revealed earlier this week that it was having to delay publishing its accounts, given the "complexities of the integration" and the department store chain's

Price: £25.64

Market Cap: £2.15 billion

1 Year Share Price Graph



Share Information

Code: ASC

Listing: AIM

52 week High Low
6152 2033

Sector: Retail

Website: www.asos.com

Company Synopsis:

Asos. com is the UK's largest online fashion and beauty store, attracting over one million visitors a week.

Asos. com is traded in the NEX Exchange [HERE](#).

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uncertain outlook.

All of that has seen the shares collapse by almost 70% over the past five-and-a-bit years, and they recently fell to levels not seen since the end of 2011, meaning Ashley's stake is now worth a mere £755mln.

Tim Steiner bucks the trend

More generally, retail stocks have taken a battering in recent years amid weaker consumer confidence, while those who are still spending are doing more of their shopping online.

Still, one retail boss has seen his wealth surge in the past couple of years.

Tim Steiner, one of three former Goldman Sachs bankers who set up Ocado Group PLC (LON:OCDO), has seen his wealth increase by almost £500,000 every day in 2019, thanks to the online grocer's booming share price.

Steiner owns a 3.6% stake in the company, which has seen its value has go up by 42% over the past six months. As a result, those shares are currently worth just shy of £300mln.

Compare that to the end of 2017, when the shares were valued at just a quarter of the 1,143p they current change hands for.

Ironically, the share price surge has come after the company moved away from pureplay retailing, instead looking to maximise the value of the technology which it now sells to other grocers.

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