## **Special Feature with Danny Lomas**

**By James Richardson** 

## Driffield man loving life as presenter and model while meeting some of the world's biggest names

ith over 230,000 Instagram followers and a hugely-successful career as a page career as a presenter and model, former Driffield School & Sixth Form student Danny Lomas is regarded as one of the most sought-after figures in the UK fashion

A successful four years with YouTube fashion channel PAQ has increased Danny's profile further and saw him listed among The Sun's Top 100 influencers and the Evening Standard's most

The 23-year-old has interviewed some of the world's biggest celebrities, including Formula 1 superstar Lewis Hamilton and teenage singing sensation Billie Eilish, whilst he has also rubbed shoulders with the likes of Madonna, Neymar and a host of the planet's most-renowned fashion

Some of Danny's clients include Gucci, Prada, Calvin Klein, Clarks, Ralph Lauren, Levi's and Nike, brands he continues to work for.

Now, Danny is back living in Driffield, where his love affair with the world of fashion started as a teenager and led him to East Riding College, where he studied the subject alongside jobs at Driffield Skatepark and The Priory clothing store



Driffield's Dan, second left, with PAQ.

for a job, Danny put together his CV and distributed it to various stores on

resh out of college in 2016 and looking a trip to the Designer Outlet on the outskirts of York.

Had he decided to take a job with Paul Smith at the Outlet, it could have been a different story for Danny but it was a message on Instagram that changed his life forever and set the path to a life

"When I was at college, I wasn't great on a sewing machine or writing case studies but I really enjoyed looking online and building up my knowledge." Danny told the Wolds Weekly.

"I didn't know what I wanted to do for a career so I wrote a CV and handed it out at Designer Outlet in York but to the brands that I was interested in -Fred Perry, Ralph Lauren and Paul Smith.

"I got a message on Instagram in the meantime that said I fitted the bill for a new online TV show, covering culture, fashion and general life in

"Eventually, I got a phone call asking me to go down to London for the weekend. I thought the message was fake to start with but after asking more questions, it all seemed legitimate.

"Just as I was checking into my hotel, I got a call from Paul Smith at Designer Outlet offering me a job, starting on the Monday.

"I was happy with that and I wasn't even going to bother going to the interview as it was a stable job for me, close to home.

"My friend said I should go still and it went really well. I made it down to the last 400 people and the producers were looking for four lads to

"They were supposed to be narrowing it down



by looking at different groups but we walked in together and the producers said they liked our chemistry and wanted to see how it worked.

"It went from there and, to this day, it's never been confirmed that we've got the job, it's always been a trial period!"

Alongside Danny in the audition were Elias Riadi, Shaquille Keith and Dexter Black and the foursome would go on to create PAQ, a YouTube channel that produced 140 videos, each getting hundreds of thousands of views

The majority of the videos saw the lads take on a variety of fashion-related challenges such as buying full outfits for £50 in just an hour as well as creating pop-up shops in partnership with various

anny said it was only when he saw the crowds of fans lining, and even closing off some of the London streets the pop-up shops were based on that he realised just how big PAQ had become.

"Shaquille came up with Fire Fits for £50." said Danny of the early days of PAO. "We each had £50 and were challenged to buy a full outfit in around an hour and then all judged each other in a Come Dine With Me style.

"It was fantastic and as the team was a new. grassroots company, people were interested in us.

"We were getting promoted everywhere. It was a real, full-on production, not just a run of the mill

"Within the first 10 episodes, we got a cult following and people started to know our personalities "In episode 10 we had a pop-up store near

Oxford Street and designed our own t-shirts and

whoever sold out first was the winner. "We'd only ever seen the numbers of people viewing the show on a screen but to see the queues two hours before the store opened was unbelievable

thousands of people came to and we shut down a products and allowing independents to get them

"It was based next-door to the BBC and staff were coming out to ask what was going on.

"That was in collaboration with Mind and different brands donated over £100,000 worth of which was a huge honour. gifts - everything from clothes to an X-box for a

"We also did a Ditch the Label pop-up shop, in following night. collaboration with Lynx, and Dele Alli (Tottenham Hotspur and England footballer) stopped by for a to speak to me, which I couldn't believe.

"We were selling t-shirts, jumpers and hoodies for no more than £40 and there was everything and said 'She's here'. from Primark to Prada, but without the labels in, so nobody knew what they were getting."

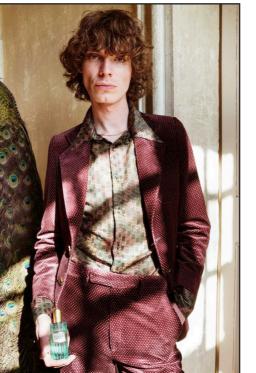
anny's high-profile in the fashion for him and interviews with some big

His modelling career presented further openings, none more so than when he was chosen to part of a town. Stella McCartney show.

And an invitation to one of Ms McCartney's after-parties saw Danny come face-to-face with one of the world's biggest pop stars.

"I've met lots of celebrities including Neymar, who was at a party and holding a meet and greet in his hotel room," said Danny.

"Lewis Hamilton is a lovely guy. He's a pioneer of sustainable fashion and because of him, factories



The model has over 230,000 Instagram

is real!'. We also did a Christmas pop-up which ones, forcing the larger brands to use sustainable

"Stella McCartney was also cool. We were invited to one of her after-parties during her fashion week and I was also dressed by her label,

"I didn't get chance to see her at the afterparty but I went with a friend to another party the

"I saw Stella and waved at her and she came over

"We chatted for 10 or 15 minutes in the middle of the party and then she looked over my shoulder

"I turned around and there was Madonna So me and my friend were stood there awkwardly with Stella McCartney and Madonna."

industry led to increased opportunities he COVID-19 pandemic brought PAQ to a premature end in March and that was one of the reasons why Danny recently decided to move back to his home

> Still working alongside some of the people behind PAQ, Danny's current focus is on creating fresh content for the brands he's working with.

And with the world on his doorstep in the Capital of the Wolds, he's looking forward to discovering where the future takes him.

"Currently, I'm still working with the team behind PAQ on brand deals," said Danny. "We're focusing on making some really cool content. "We've always had a good relationship with

Clarks, so they're happy with whatever we do. "We're working with Woolrich too and they sent

out 20 disposable cameras for us to create stills. "We decided to ramp it up and two of the lads from London came up to East Yorkshire and we created a video as well as the photos.

"We did a story for Clarks that was a biopic of The Priory clothes shop in Bridlington and its impact, whilst for Woolrich, we went around Flamborough Head, North Landing and the Moors, whilst taking all the photos.

"It's about taking an idea and thinking outside the box. We know this isn't going to last forever so we go for everything full-on.

"I'm loving being back in Driffield. For the last three weeks I've stopped smoking and drinking and I wished I'd done it three years ago.

"It's nice to be living among fresh air up here as well as still being able to work. When I was doing PAQ, I was always nagging the boys to come and film up here, and they always accused me of not wanting to travel.

"But as soon as they came up here last week, they could see that there's everything on our doorstep towns, cities and beaches.

"There are still lots I want to do in the future, so I'll see where it takes me."





Dan with global football stars Dele Alli and Nevmar



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Dan with one of the world's biggest sporting stars, Lewis Hamilton.