

# A CONTINUOUS LEAN.



## THE CENTURY OLD HANDSHAKE DEAL BETWEEN LEVI'S AND CONE MILLS.

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The details of the gentleman's agreement between Cone Mills and Levi Strauss to exclusively manufacture Levi's Shrink-to-Fit denim — [The Golden Handshake](#) as it became known— could almost qualify as fiction. It's hard to believe that a deal like it could even happen, let alone stand for over a century with no formal contract in place. It's a testament to these two storied American companies and their shared mission. When you consider that both Levi's and Cone continue to be so revered in the marketplace today, it's obvious that this is a special partnership that's worth highlighting and celebrating with [special Levi's product](#).

It's a fascinating place and an unbelievable story. Both Dustin and myself wanted to go down to Cone if only to see how Shrink-to-fit Levis come to life. (It should also be pointed out that Levi's is a client of my agency Paul + Williams, but they didn't pay for this production or story — I did it on my own because I loved this partnership.) We left the Cone White Oak plant feeling mesmerized by the people and the place. We walked away with a newfound appreciation for both the resilience of Cone Mills, and a regard for Levi's with all of its history and tradition.

A few months ago I travelled to Greensboro, North Carolina with the talented filmmaker [Dustin Cohen](#) to see Cone's famous denim mill for the first time. We went specifically for Dustin to make the above film capturing the amazing scenes at Cone and to celebrate the historic Golden Handshake deal it made so long ago with Levi's. A deal that still stands to this day.



