

Call For Papers - Re-Imagining Global Fashion Business

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Topic: Innovations In Fashion Technology And Digital| Pros And Cons |

Biography

Speaker is Ileana Rivera who is a student at New York City College Of Technology majoring in Business And Technology Of Fashion. I am a senior and when I graduate I hope to get a job in the fashion marketing industry, as I received my AA in fashion marketing as well. I worked to expand my experience in the fashion world by working in a fashion retail environment and attending fashion classes at L.i.m and F.i.t college over the summers. I am 22 years of age, my birthday is january 16 ,1998.



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Abstract: This research paper is about how the fashion industry will become if digitalization takes over, new innovations and digital technologies in the fashion industry. Digitization is slowly taking over and there's some good advantages to the supply chains, manufacturers and brands if digitalization and technology is taking over and changing the modern ways the fashion industry used to work. There's also some concerning questions as to why we should have digitization and how it's not worth it because people like doing things the modern old way. Should People in the fashion industry adapt to this change? Company adoption can be seen as a pro and a con while there's concerns over creativity, and human touch not existing anymore. Since covid-19 there's no other way to not follow a digitization environment in the workforce, especially with social media advantages with brands that can access various high speed digital communication channels. Fashion is a process that has been influencing on people's level by affecting one's behavior, fashion represents social phenomena while having an impact on people simultaneously.

Technology and digital are now entering the fashion industry, there are some good and concerning questions that arise. The story goes as far as digital technology in the fashion industry will have long term efficiency and will eventually generate long term value , that's controlled by automated and standardized mechanics in the workforce. The advantages of technology and digitalization in the fashion industry that people are talking about are how big social media is right now, and how it's influential. Social media right now is the most popular way to target your fashion brand to get customers' attention. Since social media and the digital world are approaching, this means the creators, the designers, the innovators have to get on the bandwagon and know about the latest technologies to have production, marketing, and good manufacturing run smoothly.

“ As one of the biggest industries in the world, generating an estimated \$664 billion in revenue as of 2020' (kochar, 2020), new innovations and digital technologies are entering the stores. For example, Artificial intelligence (AI) is a big technological factor in the fashion industry. Artificial intelligence is in stores to help customers' shopping experience unforgettable. Touch Screens monitors are being used for product suggestions to the customers. This also helps with inventory tracking, digital/printing technology makes the manufacturing process faster from jewelry, shoes, and clothes using 3D printers. Augmented reality (AR) is a highly interactive experience where fashion shoppers can visualize their outfits in reality and realize the details in the clothing designs. Blockchain technology is another improved innovative source of helping the fashion industry improve efficiently (kochar ,2020) A lot of consumers want to know the carbon footprint of their favorite fashion brands and if their fabric of choice is of good quality, this blockchain tactic gives a reason for customers to remain loyal to their brand and have the

satisfaction of economic value along (the supply chain) for the customers shopping brand.

Internet of things (IOT) establishes a connection, communication, and exchange of information, this technology allows fabrics to change their color with temperature giving customers a new fashionable high-level experience. Last but not least, collaborative tools allow customers to choose fabrics, design patterns for custom creations. Brands are bringing sustainable fashion where customers curate their style.

The concerning question is as follows, is digitization the savior of the fashion industry? And if so, why hasn't fashion gone digital sooner, why now?. The question “is digitization the savior of the fashion industry ?” arises some excellent viewpoints as to why it can be a savior and why it could not be. This is seen as an opportunity and a threat and the history of the problem relies on competitors and businesses that are following the traditional way of doing things. Some threats are losing creativity, loss of human touch, safety, and worrying about job security once things change. Some opportunities and positive outlook on technology and data entering the fashion industry are time management, span time, cost of savings, removing textile waste (sustainability gains), water use, dyeing, and carbon emissions. Although there are some threats and opportunities when it comes to the innovative technology in the fashion industry , there are more opportunities than threats, especially with everything that’s happening in 2020 now with this pandemic , things are going more digitally.

Previously stated before the threats are the concerning problems, for example, job losses in the fashion industry occur, the jobs that were popular and in trend are not so popular now. For example, trend forecasting job positions are going downhill, to go back in time the traditional way of trend forecasting was through human-based process tracking that gives brand direction

for developing relevancy to products. Now there's (AI) predictions tools for trend forecasting, also known as intelligent forecasting, at first buyers and forecasters would attend shows and make notes on what the designer's trends are, for example, color, fabric choice, patterns, and silhouettes, then make trend reports. Now trend forecasting can be predicted by simply looking at Instagram, fashion blogs, and reading magazines instead of physically going to fashion shows. Brands can easily have access to data that contribute to planning approach styles and quantities. There are virtual events now since Covid-19 and e-commerce platforms let sellers continue with their shopping using streaming videos in 2020. (Ghai & Follow, 2019).

We should be concerned with the innovation in fashion technology and digital because stated by (Roberts-Islam, 2020) Remo Gettini (who is a serial innovator who is ex-Dreamworks, and DWA NOVA, and now the CTO of the human-centric app-based community of 16 million buyers and sellers of fashion, Depop) in the article, he states digital would lack access to human-centric technologies, concerns over how would you express the value of a specific piece like a Burberry scarf in 3D? Making a point that the experience is not the same. The people that are affected in this is everyone who's participating in the evolution of fashion trends, such as fashion designers, customers, employers in this industry. Digital design is right out of engineering and based on CAM solutions which aren't creative or intuitive that can empower designers he states. As I agree, problems arise, that these technically driven forces don't show for product creation and creativity when it comes to designing. Remo believes fashion needs a platform that can plug creative design into the supply chain without designers having to change the way they work. He believes designers need to articulate and showcase in-person, versus showcasing their manual design and illustrations with a mouse and keyboard.

Physical stores are affected previously stated before like brick and mortar due to the rise of online shopping ,more sales are happening online virtually and digitally (Hämmerle et al., 2020). In (Gonzalo et al., 2020) it is proven consumers are spending more time online since covid-19. Statistics are as follows, 35% of consumers browse for fashion inspiration in online shops at least once per week. 22% of consumers said they will browse for inspiration online more often and 10% of consumers think brands should not promote their interest at this time during covid. Speaking as a consumer, I can agree that my inspirations, ideas come from looking at my phone while looking at social media platforms.

Digital is affecting automotive services, industries like physical offering production industries. The original traditional fashion companies like the gap, h&m, guess and abercrombie & fitch were slowly not adapting to the new digital shift. In these stores they experienced a decline in their lines of 2017, for example, h&m had a 4% decline in sales in their fourth fiscal quarter in 2017. These stores declining in sales is due to their lack of digital adaptation due to the lack of shift from offline to online sales. A lot of brands are being affected by digital technology in the fashion industry now, especially since Covid-19. covid is forcing brands to engage and get used to innovative technology by learning how to create virtual clothing, virtual showrooms, and virtual catwalks. The crisis /pandemic is preventing physical contact between manufacturers and buyers (Ventures , 2019).

Due to the innovation in fashion technology and digital opportunities in the industry, the rise of cost savings and also advantages of removing textile waste (suitability gains) , water use,

dyeing, and carbon emissions are to die down. There can be a lot of costly factors if we don't start going digital, digital transformation can be necessary and not a choice at this point. The rising cost of raw materials, financial and carbon cost of manual garment sampling, and shipping back and forth from manufacturer to different countries/places like China, Europe, Asia, and the U.S. The main idea and question here is, how can fashion progress in a manner that is sustainable, ethical, and profitable without digitalization?. Digitalization would have long term efficiency and it will eventually generate long term value, digital workflows are standardized and automated rather than people.

Because of this force on digitization in the fashion industry, this has happened where a lot of brands feel as if when their product launches, the brand as a whole needs to keep up with social media trends. The feeling as if it's the only way to meet global consumer demand for digitization. Now some concerning questions arise like, how can the fashion industry progress in a manner that's ethical, profitable without digitalization, or the force to feel as if digitalization is needed for your brand to be successful. Remo Gettin states "digital would lack access to human-centric technologies", and feel as if digitalization would kill brands. He also expresses 3D design was originally made with the idea of engineering and CAM solutions which he expresses aren't creative or intuitive and wouldn't motivate and empower designers.

If we don't solve the overpower of digitization and dye it down a bit in the fashion industry, fashion wouldn't have a platform that plugs creative design into the supply chain. without designers having to change the way they work and lack of creativity will happen often, there will also be less physical contact between manufacturer and designers. Designers not only will experience high expectations to adapt to this digital working life, but consumers as well will want higher expectations from them to have developed more creativity when it comes to

marketing their brand online. Consumers will also expect to have easy fast insight on discounts on a lot of things.

Possible solutions that will be able to work if digitization is taking over is profit, fast manufacturing, working smart, and not hard because a lot of companies/ brands will have a big advantage. For the fashion industry to thrive in the next decade they need to go digital, even investors questioned this. It will change how fashion businesses operate in the workforce which would work as an advantage. What will work and improve is the mobile e-commerce websites, consumers will gain more access to promo codes, discounts/coupons, payment through digital wallets, and the comfort of knowing you can do all this at home. Much fashion companies would depend on their digital and analytical capabilities .Since Covid-19 physical stores were closed in the beginning versus the apparel fashion and luxury companies that are in the digital know are safe. Digitalization helps predict and manage inventory to create a strong supply chain and that's one advantage that can work. Even before Covid-19 companies that were digitally mature performed better than their competitors that never built robust digital capabilities. Companies can have on-site conversations, launch, and optimize targeted markdowns and promotions to wind down forecasted stock excess (Tuman, 2020).

Product development and support functions play a role in digital and analytics. For example, digital collection developing and managing, end to end digitalized product managing(including design, virtual sampling, and product visibility). Covid 19 crisis has improved the digitalization of product development, sort of like a blessing in disguise. The digitalization for product development has proved to be a competitive advantage. Technical enables play a key

role in powering digital and analytics growth in the fashion business and forces people to adopt newer ways to prevent themselves from becoming irrelevant.

What wouldn't work in the work field if there wasn't digitalization and new upcoming technologies in the fashion industry would be not pushing workers to learn and or even improve upcoming new unique projects. Company adoption should be important in the work field especially the fashion field since everything is always changing. There can be some challenges that companies faced while implementing innovations in their company. Familiarization with new software is not an overnight thing, letting employees take time to familiarize themselves with it will be the best way to retain and learn information for the company is what's best. Thinking that you would find one tool that would solve all your problems at work will not work in the digitized field. The fashion industry workflow consists of many vendors and manufacturers specialization in different areas (Christina et al., 2020), so catering to specific needs is necessary . Embracing advanced innovations in the work field wouldn't be necessary if there wasn't any digitization in the fashion industry.

To gather up all this information we can say that technology is still going to take over the fashion industry even if there's questions from insiders, as to why technology is being innovative. So there are more opportunities than threats since technology is changing the way we experience fashion and allows designers limited possibilities. As technology flows into the fashion system/industry and gains popularity ,there will become a parallel trend of real experiences in the fashion with sensory, feeling and emotions , where now in a world that everything is connected to tech and it won't go away any time soon.

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