

Couture with a conscience - How technology is driving sustainability in Fashion

Brands no longer have to choose between profits or ethics. Advancements in cloud-based tech are providing opportunities to achieve sustainable business success

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, April 29, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- According to McKinsey & Company, "sustainability" is both a challenge and a significant opportunity for the fashion industry in the coming years. Interestingly, it is customers with their collective ethical conscience who are driving sustainable transformation in the fashion industry. What today's savvy shoppers also realise is simply labelling a garment with the word "sustainable" is not enough. True sustainability goes far beyond the fabric itself.

Profit or ethics?

Fashion is a highly competitive industry, making a profit comes with additional challenges such as; lost sales from unexpected stock-outs; high inventory and storage costs from an unplanned overstock. Fashion brands and wholesalers must identify demand patterns, cater for supply chain management, plan and schedule accurately.

While today's younger generations are willing to pay more for fashion that has the least negative impact on the environment, the question still remains: how does the fashion industry achieve all-round efficiencies and profitability in a way that appeals to the growing number of fashion-conscious consumers with a conscience?

3 ways to create a [sustainable fashion](#) eco-system

The latest all-in-one business management solutions are designed to meet the specific challenges of the fashion industry. Through automation, they build sustainability – less paper, less water, less waste – while increasing efficiencies, customer loyalty and profitability. In addition, the visibility provided by technology enables organisations to collaborate more easily with partners and supply chains to create sustainable, circular business models. Here's how technology can be applied to three critical areas to create a commercially attractive and sustainable fashion eco-system:

1. **Manufacturing** – after completing the designs, the next stage is to cost and produce the garments. Pricing follows the usual business model of target price versus expected profit split into labour, materials, duty, freight and insurance. Inaccuracies can lead to fabric wastage along with unnecessary or expensive journeys that negatively impact the environment. What prices don't reflect are labour-intensive activities such as tanning, dyeing and laundering in unhealthy conditions and this is where brands have a duty to ensure their suppliers and factories share ethical processes. What the latest software solutions can do is effortlessly track the cost of garments by size, quantity, fabric, manufacturing process and delivery fees, to give companies greater control over their operations with faster decision-making and effective cost management.

With the ability to capture and analyse copious amounts of data, today's technology quickly identifies extraneous garments such as unsold seasonal store or outlet items that can then be put back into the manufacturing supply chain, a vital step forward that vastly reduces raw materials production and the global carbon footprint.

2. **Logistics and fulfilment** - a major area of concern for fashion companies is their lack of visibility over stock movement especially if there are multiple warehouse locations and a variety of omni-channel processes involved. Through automation, organisations are able to gain tighter control over their end-to-end logistics and fulfilment processes. They should also expect to yield

tangible improvements of at least 30% in stock control, better planning and increased accuracies.

3. Stock management – is particularly difficult when stock is stored and controlled within various fashion brands' warehouses as opposed to a third-party logistics (3PL) organisation. Stock counts are frequently inaccurate, incorrect items are despatched, overstocking and increased transport costs are common simply because there is neither the visibility to see where stock is held nor the ability to calculate the most cost-and-time-effective delivery methods. By providing a complete, single view of all stock management activities, intelligent software solutions are proven to realise time and cost savings of at least 25%. What is more, powerful integration capabilities link stock management systems seamlessly with other critical business applications to provide better cash control, increased profitability, improved warehouse, 3PL and supplier performance while reducing overall carbon footprint and enriching customer relationships.

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