

Survey: AI's Production Impact in Fashion Trails Marketing by 80%

Survey of 250 fashion professionals across 90+ countries finds brands that adopted AI for campaigns still build tech packs and samples by hand

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, UNITED STATES, July 21, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Fashion brands that have transformed their marketing operations with AI are seeing almost none of that transformation reach production, according to a new survey from The F* Word, a company that builds AI workflow software for fashion brands.

The survey of 250 fashion professionals across more than 90 countries, cross-checked against 400,000 data points from twelve months of platform activity, found that marketing and content AI scores 3.8 out of 5 on real business impact, while production and technical AI scores 2.1 out of 5, inside the same brands, on the same teams, in the same working week. The gap is statistically significant at $p < 0.001$.

The report, *The State of AI Fashion: The Production Gap*, points to a sequencing problem rather than resistance to change. AI tools for campaign generation and photo production matured in 2022 and 2023. AI capable of reading a garment sketch and producing a factory-ready technical specification, complete with bill of materials, grading, and construction detail, only reached reliable quality in 2024 and 2025.

Additional findings from the survey:

Technical designers report spending 4 to 16 hours manually building a single tech pack. Where autonomous AI handles the process, a first draft is ready in 8 to 10 minutes, with a fully reviewed and released version completing in 45 to 90 minutes.

Brands using AI-generated specifications report needing an average of one to two sample



State of AI Fashion 2026

rounds per style, down from three to four rounds for brands still working manually.

For a mid-size brand running two collections of 30 styles a year, that reduction is worth an estimated \$108,000 to \$240,000 annually in sampling costs alone.

60% of physical samples produced each season never reach production, representing fabric, labor, and shipping that generates no revenue.

30% of fashion professionals who have not adopted production AI say they do not know which tools exist. Among those who want to try but have not, 60% say they do not know where to start. The survey identifies this as a distribution problem rather than a skepticism problem.

Respondents in the Middle East/North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa together represent 25.5%

“

Marketing figured out AI in eighteen months because the tools arrived early and the work was already iterative. Production is only now getting tools built for it.

”

Nitin Kumar

of the survey sample, a larger share than North America alone, a market the survey's authors say is systematically underrepresented in existing industry research.

Fashion teams use an average of nine separate software tools to manage a single collection from initial brief to factory handoff, with data manually re-entered at nearly every handoff between them.

"Fashion did not have a creativity problem going into this AI cycle, but it had a production execution problem to

complete workflows," said Nitin Kumar, CEO of The F* Word. "Marketing folks figured out AI in eighteen months because the tools arrived early and the work was already iterative. Production is only now getting tools built for it. The brands that move while this is still early-adopter technology will set the operating baseline everyone else spends the next several years trying to match."

The survey was fielded between February 15 and April 30, 2026, with a margin of error of plus or minus 6.2% at 95% confidence on top-line findings. The F* Word has published its full methodology, survey instrument, weighting approach, and stated limitations alongside the report, including a direct disclosure that the company builds and sells production AI software and describes a market it participates in commercially.

The full report, including a page of statistics formatted for direct citation, is available at <https://thefword.ai/state-of-ai-fashion>.



Nitin Kumar
The F* Word
+1 408-915-8627
[email us here](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/928013565>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.