

# STEALING THE SHOW:

2023 DIGITAL  
MARKETING STRATEGIES  
FOR THE FASHION  
INDUSTRY



# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Chapter 1   The Customer Experience Has Changed</b>	<b>5</b>
Digital Transformation = Opportunities to Magnify Margins	6
Selling Direct & Improving Profit Margins	6
Digital Impact Felt Worldwide	7
Regaining Control Over Your Brand	8
<b>Chapter 2   Fashion-Forward Digital Trends</b>	<b>9</b>
Choosing The Right E-commerce Platform	10
Being Mobile First	12
The Turtle is Not Fashionable	13
Give Them A Reason To Care	14
Reducing The Clutter	15
Reduce Navigation & Search Confusion	16
<b>Chapter 3   The Digital Marketing Fashion Funnel</b>	<b>18</b>
Attracting Customers	20
<i>Facebook &amp; Instagram</i>	20
<i>Leveraging Fashion Influencers</i>	21
<i>YouTube and Video</i>	23
<i>Leveraging Amazon</i>	24
<i>Google Ads: Targeting</i>	25
<i>Google Ads: Shopping</i>	26
Nurturing Customers	27
<i>Micro Action Leads to Macro Consideration</i>	27
<i>Calls to Action: K.I.S.S.</i>	29
<i>Reviews Drive Action</i>	31
<i>It's Not Bragging—It's Social Proof</i>	33
Streamlining Purchases	34
<i>Reduce Friction With Free Shipping or "In-Store" Pickup</i>	34
<i>Make Purchasing Simple</i>	36
<i>Upgrade Your Product Images</i>	37
<i>Avoiding "Members Only"</i>	38
<i>"Hidden" Nickels and Dimes</i>	40
<i>Reducing Payment Friction</i>	41
<i>Don't Abandon Abandoned Carts</i>	42
Creating Brand Loyalty	43
<i>Leveraging Cross-sell Opportunities</i>	43
<i>Cut Repetitive Content &amp; Showcase Personalization</i>	45
<i>Nurturing Customers With Automation</i>	47
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>49</b>





**WITH CHANGE  
COMES  
OPPORTUNITY**

The apparel industry is undergoing large-scale changes. From luxury brands to discount stores, the industry is challenged by global economic, political, and technical uncertainty.

Thanks to our digital-first world, shoppers are looking to quench the thirst of immediacy provided by their mobile devices. We want what we want—and we want it now. And who can blame us?

The convenience that was once only granted by brick-and-mortar locations has been eclipsed by a digital ecosystem structured to provide a personalized customer experience across multiple channels.

Many fashion brands are scrambling to understand the best way to take advantage of ecommerce, social media, and other digital opportunities that can help drive growth, regain margins, and make their brands more profitable in this decade, the next, and the next.

### **Giving Your Marketing a Whole New Look**

In this ebook, you'll find a guide filled with resources and tools to help you capitalize on the latest trends and digital marketing strategies. Our goal is to help you transform and grow your fashion brand in this ever-changing digital environment.

As experts in the fashion world, you know (perhaps more than most) how crucial it is to stay on trend at all times—and the same school of thought should apply to your marketing strategy.

While this may seem like yet another change your brand needs to face, keep in mind that with necessary change comes exciting opportunity.

The US apparel market is still the **largest in the world**, and the desire for the latest and greatest in fashion is only going to grow.

In 2016, store-based retailing was valued at approximately **\$292 billion**, and it is projected that the US market will grow to \$390 billion by 2025. Furthermore, in 2018, fashion ecommerce in the US accounted for over **20% of fashion sales**, or over \$100 billion—a number that is projected to swell to over \$146 billion by 2023.

So the question is not is there opportunity? It's which opportunities are you going to capitalize on next?



**1**

# **THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE HAS CHANGED**



Digital retail is our new reality—it is **not an option anymore**. Fashion-forward shoppers post on social media for opinions from their followers, research for price comparisons, and scour the web for reviews—**right from their mobile devices in real time**.

As options, variety, and competition balloon at an unmatched pace, fashion brands must be able to keep up and **adapt to these changes** to stay competitive. This includes clear and up-to-date inventory, wide-ranging purchase options, rapid market delivery, and the ability to offer the new tech-savvy consumer effortless ways to **discover, engage, and connect** with their brands.

### Digital Transformation = Opportunities to Magnify Margins

This digital shift in the apparel industry offers many benefits to brands that were unfathomable 10 years ago. The faster your customers can make buying decisions using technology, **the faster your brand can adjust its strategies to:**

- Increase margins
- Reduce reliance on physical storefronts
- Secure better control over pricing
- Increase control over brand representation
- Improve logistics and inventory management
- Improve personalized communication
- Implement shorter production lines

### Selling Direct & Improving Profit Margins

Fashion brands that once lived and breathed by their physical retail locations—from big box stores to boutiques—are no longer limited. A large number of the brands that National Positions works with **have found great success** by cutting out the “middleman” retailer and selling directly to the end consumers, increasing their margins substantially in the process.

Brands selling in a retail environment can experience many inefficiencies, such as maintaining a sales team to build relationships with suppliers. Most retailers require a **hefty margin** resulting in a **55% to 62%** markup to even be considered. **For instance**, if your designer shoes had a \$150 price tag, this retail funnel will skyrocket that price to somewhere around \$300 to \$320. This is on top of any legal contracts you will likely have to sign so as not to undercut MSRP by selling direct. **Most of these profits can be brought back in-house** by leveraging digital marketing strategies and selling directly to consumers.





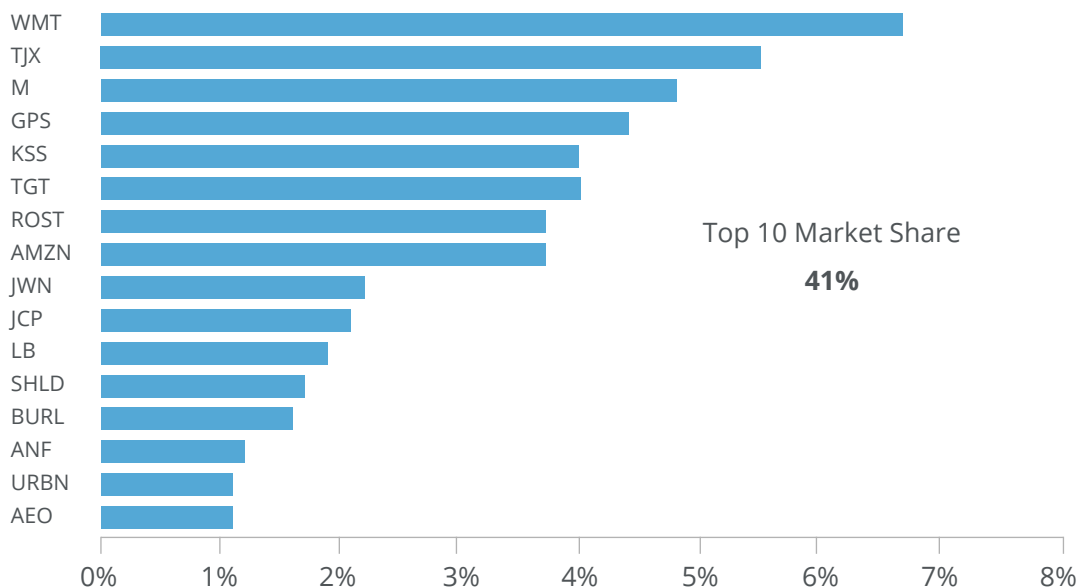
## Digital Impact Felt Worldwide

Physical retail locations have experienced immense pressure from ecommerce. Even (once) well-known brands **have closed shop forever**—The Limited, Mervyns, Sport Chalet, just to name a few. And so many more are on the chopping block. Brands are competing amongst one another for a smaller amount of retail space and retail attention, and the waters continue to rise.

To stay afloat retailers have resorted to squeezing fashion and apparel brands for more margin, leaving the brands producing this year's fashions with less exposure and profit.

**According to Business Insider**, just a handful of “major players” are controlling the majority of the clothing that Americans purchase. These companies include Walmart, TJ Maxx, Macy's, Gap, Kohl's, Target, Ross Stores, Amazon, Nordstrom, and JCPenney.

### The apparel market remains highly fragmented, with a few larger retailers at the top but <2% share among the rest...



Sources: Thomson Reuters, Company data. Morgan Stanley Research



## Regaining Control Over Your Brand

With just 10 companies owning **41% of the clothing market**, many fashion brands are finding it harder to control their vision and creativity. With retailers squarely focused on profits, the producer of these fashion lines (you) are often the ones that get left holding unsold inventory. To make things worse, **retailers can make demands** on fashion brands, including quality, price, and inventory levels, that constantly put fashion brands at a distinct disadvantage.

**However, this digital shift has opened doors and opportunity for fashion brands to regroup and take back control.**

Advances in technology have given us the power to leverage direct-to-consumer models so fashion brands can manufacture smaller batches of inventory to fulfill the market demand fueled by customer tastes. **You have the power to choose** inventory levels that make sense for your brand and your customers rather than being pinned under the stiletto of corporate inventory demands.

2

# **FASHION-FORWARD DIGITAL TRENDS**



Choosing a **direct-to-consumer approach** is a proven and successful way to adapt to the pressures experienced in the traditional wholesale market. And the right digital marketing strategy can help you **counteract the challenges** we have discussed so far. In the rest of this ebook, we provide an **easy-to-follow guide** that will help you take your fashion brand online, showing you opportunities for increased margins, control, and overall brand growth.

### Choosing the Right Ecommerce Platform

The go-to strategy of relying on retail entities to purchase and distribute your product is losing its luster. **As margins get squeezed**, many in the fashion industry are putting more time and resources toward the online initiatives that can help them navigate toward a direct-to-consumer approach.

One of your first steps is choosing an online ecommerce platform. Some of the most popular include **Shopify**, **Magento**, and **WooCommerce**.

While no system is perfect, you need to consider what works best for your brand in the short and long term as you grow. So let's break down some of the highlights of each ecommerce solution:

#### E-Commerce Platform Comparison

Ranked on a 1 - 5 Star Scale

	 <b>shopify</b>	 Magento®	 <b>Woo</b> <b>COMMERCE</b>
Good for Beginners	★★★★★	★	★★★
SEO-Friendly	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
Customization Capabilities	★★	★★★★★	★★★
Development Required	★★	★★★★★	★★★
Core Functionality	★★★	★★★★★	★★
Security	★★★★★	★★★★	★★
3rd Party Ad-Ons	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★
Development Support Community	★★★★	★★★★★	★★
Overall Average Ranking	★★★★★ 3.7	★★★★★ 4.3	★★★★ 2.8



## So, which one's right for you?

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**Just getting started:** For a good mix of form and functionality, Shopify may be your best bet. This solution can help you in the here and now and grow with your brand.

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**You know your stuff:** If you want maximum flexibility with maximum benefits, Magento may be the solution for you. Just know that to benefit from all this solution has to offer, you'll need the technical know-how to make it happen.

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**It just needs to work:** Maybe you don't have a large product line but just a few incredible products. If you just need something that will work but doesn't need a lot of bells and whistles, WooCommerce should get the job done.

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### *Our Recommendation*

At the end of the day, your brand will need to **balance your ecommerce needs** with time and technical capability. You may find it better to begin with one platform and then move to another as you grow.

The best approach is to know all the capabilities you need in your ecommerce retail checkout **first** and then see which options fit the bill the best. Otherwise you may find yourself being impressed with all the features an ecommerce platform has and try to make it “fit” your brand—which may lead to more complications and headaches. **Keep it simple**—know the problems you need to solve and then choose wisely.

## Being Mobile-First

The majority of online traffic now **comes from mobile**, so the mobile user experience can no longer be an afterthought.

Mobile responsiveness has given way to a mobile-first experience that must work flawlessly on any device. Beyond this, remember that **speed matters** especially on mobile. Typically sites that are desktop-first and then “optimized for mobile” are not going to run as quickly as a mobile-first experience—so as a fashion brand, you want to keep in mind **the ease of use from a mobile device**.

This should be a top priority. Images, buttons, videos, checkout—everything needs to be simple and eye-catching.



### Getting Serious About Mobile Impact

**0.05 seconds**

It takes about 50 milliseconds (that's 0.05 seconds) for users to form an opinion about your website—whether they like it or not and whether they'll stay or leave.

**65%**

As of Q4 2019, mobile devices held a 65% share of all retail website visits.

**88%**

88% of online consumers are less likely to return to a site after a bad experience.

**46%**

Mobile ecommerce purchases accounted for 46% of total retail revenues.

**60%**

Nearly 60% of customers will not recommend a brand with a poorly designed mobile website.

**90%**

Approximately 90% of customer complaints on mobile websites surround display and navigation issues.

Sources: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01449290500330448>, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/568684/e-commerce-website-visit-and-orders-by-device/>, <https://www.invisionapp.com/inside-design/statistics-on-user-experience/>, <https://www.superoffice.com/blog/customer-experience-statistics/>

### Our Recommendation

When updating (or building) your website, do so with a **mobile-first mindset**. These days we are far more likely to discover on mobile and then perhaps look again on a desktop or a laptop.

Considering the volume of fashion-based content online, the mobile user is far more likely to be looking for quick answers or ideas on the go. So make sure your fashion images and purchase options **are clear and simple on mobile devices** to take advantage of this shifting attention.

## The Turtle Is Not Fashionable

When it comes to speed, there's **nothing fashionable about a slow-loading** site or a slow-moving user experience. When you click something on a mobile device (or any device for that matter), you expect an instant response. **If your site lags**, you might as well wave the white flag.

As we mentioned earlier, judgements about your site are made in milliseconds. Slow site loading, images that load slowly or not at all, click latency—all of these things are **roadblocks**, slowing down the shopper and taking you out of the race completely.

### Slow and Steady...Doesn't Win This Race

**39%**

39% of people will stop engaging with a website if images won't load or take too long to load.

**47%**

47% of users expect an average website to load in 2 seconds or less.

**2.6 billion**

Slow-loading websites cost retailers \$2.6 billion in lost sales each year.

**2.6 seconds**

It takes 2.6 seconds for a user's eyes to land on the area of a website that most influences their first impression.

**88%**

88% of consumers who search for a type of business on a mobile device call or go to that business within 24 hours.

Sources  
<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/compelling-stats-website-design-optimization-list>  
<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/281986>  
<https://www.invisionapp.com/inside-design/statistics-on-user-experience/>  
<https://conversionxl.com/blog/first-impressions-matter-the-importance-of-great-visual-design/>  
<https://www.nectafy.com/blog/mobile-marketing-trends-mash-up>

### Our Recommendation

Use Google's [PageSpeed Insights](#) to get an idea as to your site speed on desktop and mobile devices. One of the biggest areas that slow your load time is the imagery and videos on your site. Try using compression tools, such as the WordPress plugins [EWWW Image Optimizer](#) or [Smush](#), to reduce or compress image files to improve load speeds.

Be sure as you continue adding site elements (such as additional functionality or plugins) that they **do not negatively impact** your load speeds. Test everything in a staging environment **prior** to taking your updates live.



## Give Them a Reason to Care

You know that **“About Us”** page on your site that you think no one looks at? Guess what? They do. Fashion-forward shoppers like to feel a connection to the brands they wear. They want to know that what they wear—and who they purchase it from—are aligned with who they are as an individual. Are your products made in the US? Do you only use vegan leather? Do you donate a portion of sales to a charity or cause? These details—**now more than ever**—matter.

So your “About Us” should really be thought of as a **“This Is Why You Should Care”** page. Show people what you care about and the **values you stand for**. You may have started the brand 10 years ago in your living room (and that might be a great story), but the fact that you were inspired by Eastern culture and only source fabric from sustainable suppliers is what matters to the consumer. **Don’t be generic**—be real—give your customers a reason to care and to be part of your overarching mission. Now your customers become your **advocates**.

### Care, Share, Care, and Repeat



Focus on your buyer persona and the value they get by engaging with your brand.



Provide testimonials, reviews, and other social proof that showcase your value.



Make your “About Us” page visually appealing with photos and interactive with videos.



Show your brand's personality while outlining its values and mission.



Share your “aha!” moment and how this led to filling a need or solving a problem for your customers.

### Our Recommendation

**Keep it simple and start with the basics.** Know why you do what you do—understand your core mission and the greater impact you want to make on people’s lives. Once you know this you can begin filling in the how.

Strive to keep each area **concise and summarize** with key takeaways in a list format. This helps you cater to both audiences: *the ones who want to dig deep* (perhaps on a desktop device) and those who prefer to skim your content on a mobile device. When you think you are done, refer back to your core list and cut any extra “fluff” to keep things **streamlined and to the point**.

## Reducing the Clutter

While trying to **hook** your customers' attention, it is important to **not overwhelm them**. Remember to always keep your most important information "above the fold." The trick? Accomplishing this without cluttering the top of your page.

Having your most important and timely offer above the fold is **crucial**, but this section should also persuade visitors to continue down the page to see what else you have to offer. So find a balance when working above the fold—use your **most striking imagery** and featured promotions, but make sure this section has room to breathe and lays the groundwork for everything else your site has to offer.

### Keep Attention & Keep It Clean

**73%**

A Google study showed that ads appearing above the fold had a 73% visibility.

**57%**

57% of page-viewing time is spent above the fold.

**65%**

65% of the time is spent on the top 40% of the page.

**74%**

74% of the viewing time is spent in the first two screen-scrolls.

**64%**

64% want to see a brand's contact information on the homepage.

Sources  
<https://www.mobili Spoon.net/2019/05/fold-still-things-in-todays-scrolling.html>  
<https://www.ngroup.com/articles/scrolling-and-attention/>  
<https://www.quicksprout.com/above-the-fold/>

### Our Recommendation

When designing your site and planning out your above-the-fold content, **ask yourself** two simple questions: is this **valuable**, and is this **actionable**?

With the **above-the-fold real estate** being both valuable and minuscule, if you can't immediately answer yes to "Is this valuable?"—you should either cut it or rework it. Valuable content is relevant to your customers' needs. It gets their attention by being to the point.

So if the content is valuable, it now needs to be actionable. **Actions may include** a question, a button, or even an enticement to continue down the page. The action will be inspired from your content above the fold, so this part of your website should be concise, valuable, and actionable.

## Reduce Navigation & Search Confusion

If you have a variety of fashion products and accessories, **have you made it simple for** customers to find them, select their favorites, and complete their purchase? Can users easily filter their search by color, size, or price point? This type of segmentation can **benefit both you and the customer**.



**For example**, every sneaker on your site may not be available in every color and size, so giving customers the ability to select a style, brand, color, and size will give them options faster and reduce buyer **friction**.

As a company, you can also take advantage of this by **providing pre-filtered results** based on previous visits to further personalize the shopping experience for your customers. The more you know about a shopper's previous visits, the **better you can cater** to their needs in the future.

If filters don't seem like quite enough due to the large number of products you have to offer, consider adding a search bar. After all, if your customer just wants to search for "men's shirts," it's more valuable to **give them this option** than to force them down a navigation rabbit hole.

Make sure that you **properly tag and categorize** your product line so even general searches will produce results. Having a product called "The Hipster Winter Cap" is cool, but it doesn't show up when someone searches for "hats." This is a lost opportunity. Having memorable product names is fun—**but making sales** because people can find your product is even more fun.





## Minimize Search & Keep It Simple

**50%**

50% of users go directly to the search bar as soon as they arrive on a website.

**86%**

86% of users want an overview of your products as soon as they land on your homepage.

**70%**

70% of ecommerce sites only use product categories as the main product navigation.

**70%**

70% of mobile users, when landing on your homepage, will do a “scroll & scan” of the homepage contents quickly to determine if you are a match for their needs.

**70%**

70% of desktop ecommerce search tools are unable to return relevant results for product-type synonyms.

### Sources

<https://www.smashingmagazine.com/2016/07/ten-requirements-for-making-home-page-carousels-work-for-end-users/> | <https://www.invespcro.com/blog/a-step-by-step-guide-to-turn-your-homepage-into-high-conversion-machine/> | <https://baymard.com/blog/main-navigation-product-categories> | <https://www.cludo.com/blog/search-vs-navigate-people-behave-websites-search-navigate/> | <https://www.bigcommerce.com/blog/ecommerce-site-search/>

### Our Recommendation

Put yourself in the shoes of your customer. What do they want to know? What is valuable to them? And can this **information be accessed easily**? As a fashion ecommerce brand, **accessibility** is going to be different than for other types of websites.

Depending on the number of products you offer, each individual **product journey** will need to be just as streamlined as every other product on your site. Remember, what might seem obvious to you in your site navigation and discovery may not be obvious for a first-time user.

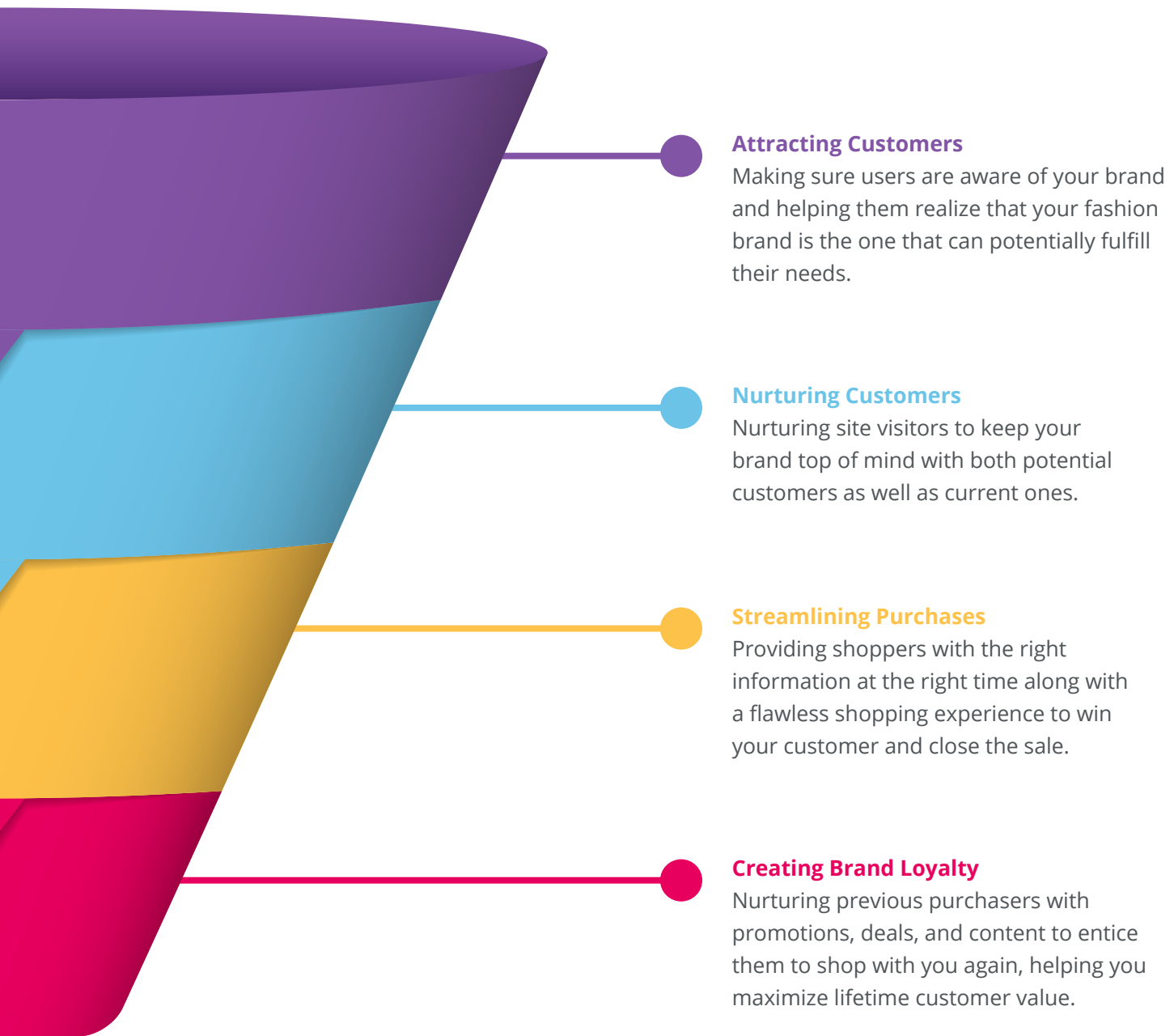
Be sure to **beta test your navigation** and checkout process with team members who are not related to the design process. This will help you determine if any site use is “non-intuitive.” If you have a product **search functionality**, make sure word variations like “shirt” and “shirts” will both yield intended search results. In short—test, get feedback, and test again before you take your ecommerce fashion site live.

**3**

# **THE DIGITAL MARKETING FASHION FUNNEL**



In this section we discuss how you can attract new site visitors, convert them into customers, and then secure them as loyal advocates of your brand. We will simplify this process of understanding and utilizing the digital marketing buying funnel by breaking it up into four stages:



## Attracting Customers

Luckily when it comes to fashion and apparel there is **no shortage of digital marketing strategies** and tactics that can help generate awareness. Let's start with social impact.

### Facebook & Instagram

The direct impact of social media on the fashion industry **cannot be overlooked**. In fact, social platforms like Instagram can account for nearly every stage of the buyer journey—in some form or another—from awareness and consideration, all the way down to purchasing and repeat purchasing.

Recent history has shown that **even luxury brands** that once thought Instagram would tarnish or cheapen their image have embraced social as a more direct way of connecting and selling to their core clientele. In fact, luxury fashion brands advertising on digital has **increased dramatically—reaching into the billions as of 2018**—and still this only accounts for a fraction of total ad budgets.

### Social Media & Social Commerce Opportunity

**78%**

After following a brand on social media, 78% will visit the brand's physical location and 87% will visit the brand's website.

**54%**

54% use social media to research products and services.

**74%**

74% of users use Facebook every day.

**96%**

96% of Facebook users access their profiles on mobile devices.

**\$1.72**

\$1.72 is the average cost per click (CPC) on Facebook.

Sources  
<https://www.impactbnd.com/blog/social-media-statistics>  
<https://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/23865/13-mind-bending-social-media-marketing-statistics.aspx>  
<https://blog.hootsuite.com/facebook-statistics/>  
<https://www.businessofapps.com/data/facebook-statistics/>  
<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/facebook-advertising-cost/>

### Our Recommendation

Start **building** your audiences and **testing** social media campaigns with your biggest sellers, seasonal product lines, or short-lived promotions. The most **impactful approach** for your social campaigns is “always be testing.” Test different audiences, messaging, creatives like images and videos, geographic locations, etc.

Fashion, perhaps more than any other niche, **needs to be seen in action** to truly grasp its value. So use the best visuals you can, and make sure you give appropriate time for testing and campaign optimization to garner the best long-term results.



## Leveraging Fashion Influencers

The social influencer is **changing the way** that brands market their products. When an influencer features a product on their Instagram feed, their **followers** can see this as a recommendation, which is as powerful (or more powerful) than reading a positive fashion review. **Why?** People like to hear what their peers think, and what the people they can relate to are using, wearing, and loving right now. **A first-hand account of an influencer's experience** with a piece of clothing, a pair of heels, or the most comfortable hoodie around can do wonders **for brand awareness**.



If you're thinking your **marketing budget isn't big enough** to work with influencers right now—**think again**. This leveraging of influencer reach is not limited to those with 10 million followers. If you can't afford a collaboration with a **macro-influencer** right now, then start small by working with a **nano- or micro-influencer** with a smaller overall reach—but with an audience that is loyal, trusting, and ready to buy.



When it comes to fashion there *are plenty of influencers to go around*—and you are more likely than not to find one (or several) in your particular niche who is open to collaborating within your budget range.

But there's one thing to always **keep in mind** when working with an influencer. While your goal may be to move product, the influencer's goal is to represent and advocate for your brand. You've trusted them to do this and **they'll know the best way** to represent you to their particular audience. That's why their audience loves them! Working with an influencer is a partnership—and you must give the influencer the room and **creative freedom** to do what they do best.

## Why Micro-Influencers Are Fashionable

**77%**

77% of micro-influencers (MI) prefer Instagram.

**47%**

47% of MI spend more than five hours a day on social media.

**33%**

33% of MI spend 3-5 hours a day on social media.

**84%**

84% of MI recommend a product or service at least once per week.

**700%**

MI engage at a rate 700% higher than larger influencers.

Sources

<https://influencermarketinghub.com/influencer-marketing-statistics/> | <https://socialbook.io/blog/here-is-what-the-2018-states-tells-you-about-2019-influencer-marketing-trend/>  
<https://www.mobilemarketer.com/press-release/20181009-study-micro-influencers-generate-7x-more-engagement-on-instagram-than-infl-1/>

### Our Recommendation

When it comes to working with influencers, **two of the biggest considerations** include choosing your influencer carefully and being sure you have KPIs that are **trackable**. In choosing your influencer, finding the right match for your brand is the number one concern. With the goal being to **tap into an influencer's audience**, you want to be sure this is an audience that will value your products. After all, it is better to have an influencer that **aligns** with your brand with 80,000 followers than one with 2,000,000 followers that **does not align** with your brand.

Performance indicators are also needed (beyond hard sales numbers). Did you have an increase in site traffic? Were **more** subscriber forms filled out? Did you have an influencer-specific URL ([www.yoursite.com/influencer](http://www.yoursite.com/influencer)) that saw a **spike** in traffic? Tracking these **performance indicators** will give you a better idea of the impact your influencer campaign is having.

## YouTube & Video

Little else can make an impact the way video can. **Video breathes life into fashion** and speaks louder than almost any still modeling image can—and when it comes to driving awareness, this is invaluable.

In addition to having fantastic videos on your website, you can leverage YouTube advertising with video ads. This can give you the distinct advantage of not only showing your latest fashions to a **highly targeted audience**, but also to a highly engaged one.

Always keep in mind that you want to **invest your time and budget** where you are going to have the greatest impact and return. With the ability to target specific channels, creators, and even videos via YouTube ads, you have much more control over which audience you are **delivering your message** to at any given time. This, along with the relatively low cost (currently) of advertising on YouTube, means you can stretch your ad dollars further—**faster**.

### YouTube Captures & Holds Attention

**70%**

70% of YouTube views come from mobile devices.



In 2019, YouTube launched a fashion-specific vertical called YouTube.com/Fashion.

**40 min**

The average user spends 40 minutes consuming YouTube content per day.

**96%**

96% of 18- to 24-year-old American internet users use YouTube.

**169 billion**

Beauty videos alone garnered over 169 billion views in 2018.

Sources  
<https://www.businessofapps.com/data/youtube-statistics/> | <https://www.brandwatch.com/blog/youtube-stats/> | <https://www.statista.com/statistics/296227/us-youtube-reach-age-gender/>  
<https://techcrunch.com/2019/09/05/youtube-launches-a-dedicated-fashion-vertical/>

### Our Recommendation

**Test YouTube campaigns** alongside your current Google Ads campaigns with 5-, 15-, and 30-second video creatives. To create videos, you can start simple using platforms like **Animoto** or **InVideo** that allow you to upload images and videos **taken with your mobile device**. Be sure to target appropriately to make sure your ad is being seen on the right types of videos and channels—and by the **right people**. Finally, test ad placement options such as pre-roll and mid-roll to understand what has a bigger impact. **Which types of ads** are driving more action from your audience?

And don't forget to include a **call to action** for your viewers such as your phone number or the URL of your site. For branding purposes, include your logo and consider a promo code to entice viewers to **make a purchase** in a timely fashion.

## Leveraging Amazon

There is no denying the **ecommerce** (very well dressed) elephant in the room—aka **Amazon**. Having launched over 100 private label fashion brands over the past few years, there is no getting around Amazon’s **increased focus** on the fashion industry—so use this **to your advantage**. Amazon is not going anywhere anytime soon, and you have an opportunity to use their platform to drive greater awareness **to your brand**.

By offering your products on Amazon and launching sponsored ads to your products, you have a chance to drive awareness and benefit from **additional sales revenues**. Keep in mind that getting your Amazon store up and running can take some time. Make sure to sign up to be an **Amazon Seller** and—to reduce hassle—set up **fulfillment by Amazon (FBA)**.

### Amazon Can Be a Jungle

**9.47%**

The average conversion rate is 9.47%.

**32.42%**

The average advertising cost per sale is 32.42%—that is, advertisers spend about \$0.32 for every \$1.00 of sales.

**103,990**

The average number of ad impressions per day is 103,990. (This is the number of people seeing a sponsored ad, regardless of clicking.)

**374**

An estimated 374 of the average daily ad impressions lead to an ad click.

**71%**

In 2018, sponsored products saw an average sales increase of 71%, while sponsored brands sales increased by 131%.



Sources  
<https://www.adbadger.com/blog/amazon-advertising-stats/>  
<https://www.adbadger.com/blog/amazon-advertising-stats/#ACOS>  
<http://exclusive.multibriefs.com/content/what-you-need-to-know-about-amazons-growing-ad-business/marketing>

### Our Recommendation

Using Amazon has **two benefits**. First, it gives you another way to sell your products in a place where there is a **huge amount of built-in traffic**. Because so many shoppers already have Amazon accounts and are accustomed to purchasing from the platform, **buyer friction is already reduced** due to the built-in trust factor. Customers have *already placed their confidence in Amazon*.

**The second benefit** is the promotional opportunities Amazon provides in order to drive attention and purchasing power to your brand. You may ultimately want customers to **buy direct from your site**, but in the meantime, work with Amazon to build your brand awareness and loyalty—rather than fighting against it.



## Google Ads: Targeting

There are few ad platforms that **pack as much power** as Google Ads. With the robust advertising options and the ability to target your specific, high-intent shoppers at the right time, you can help your prospects take **notice of your brand** when they're considering their next fashion purchase.

By now, you should know **who** your key customer is, so when it comes to Google Ads, invest time in reviewing all your options to make your ad targeting **as tight as possible**. The **better** you are with your **targeting** (*demographics, geographies, interests, etc.*) the further you can stretch your ad dollar and **reduce ad waste**. Filtering out those extraneous audiences in your ad targeting will only do you good.

**For example**, if your product line is focused on heavy winter clothing, it would be better to have your ads showing up in **colder winter** climates like Denver as opposed to eternal **summer** climates like Los Angeles.

### Google Ads - Performance Through Targeting

**\$0.69**

The average cost per click (CPC) for fashion and apparel is only about \$0.69, with a conversion rate of almost 3%.

**41%**

41% of clicks go to the top 3 paid ads on the search results page.

**63%**

63% of people said they'd click on a Google ad.

**50%**

PPC visitors are 50% more likely to purchase something than organic visitors.

**300%**

Display advertising has been shown to increase traffic to websites by up to 300%.

Sources  
<https://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2019/04/01/shopping-ads-benchmarks>

## Our Recommendation

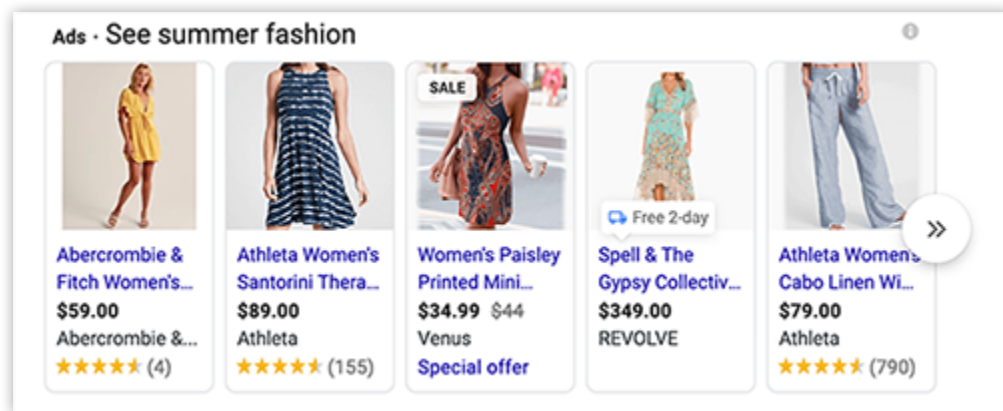
When targeting is set up for your campaigns, **leverage automated bidding** tools to take advantage of the data collected by your **Google Ads campaigns**. After all, targeting is not the only important factor here—you also need the ability to optimize your ads quickly.

If your ads are performing better on **mobile** or on **weekends**, automated bidding by Google can adapt your campaigns to take advantage of these performance actions taken by those searching. Be sure (as a standard) that your brand is **testing various audiences** to get a true read on what is having an impact and what is not.

## Google Ads: Shopping

Another powerful tool Google has in their bag of tricks is **Google Shopping ads**. With Google Shopping you can not only **enhance the targeting** previously discussed but also **get more granular** with your ad personalization, thanks to features like *Customer Match*, *Image Search Shopping ads*, and *Showcase Shopping ads*.

**The biggest benefit** Google Shopping ads offer your fashion brand is the *ability to put your products* front and center **visually** rather than just **using text**.



### Google Shopping Ads - Doubling Down on Discovery

**76.4%**

Google Shopping ads now drive 76.4% of retail search ad spend.

**85.3%**

Google Shopping campaign ads win 85.3% of all Google Ads clicks.

**\$0.69**

The Average CPC for a Google Shopping ad in fashion is \$0.69.

**2.7%**

The average conversion rate for fashion Google Shopping ads is 2.7%.

**40%**

Over 40% of Google Shopping ad clicks are on mobile devices.



Sources  
<https://www.fierceretail.com/digital/retailers-put-80-search-ad-spend-into-google-shopping> | <https://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2019/04/01/shopping-ads-benchmarks>  
<https://searchengineland.com/report-shopping-ads-are-eating-text-ads-accounted-for-60-of-clicks-on-google-33-on-bing-in-q1-297273>

### Our Recommendation

In the fashion industry we know the value that a **quality visual** can have. We also know the value of high search results rankings. You want to *represent your products* in the best way possible and continue to move customers **through the funnel** from discovery phase to the purchase phase. One great tactic for satisfying both needs is to leverage Google Shopping ads.

Prior to launching and testing these campaigns be sure that your products align with Google's **Shopping ads policies** and that your Google **Merchant Center Account** is set up accordingly.

## Nurturing Customers

Once you are on the customer's **radar**, you enter this "consideration limbo" stage where a customer is going to decide to go with you or a competitor. **At this stage**, a customer will weigh which options, brands, and styles are going to best **meet their needs**—and as you know, they have plenty of ecommerce retailers to choose from. Ongoing **awareness** activities as well as the content on your site are both key when it comes to positively impacting both the emotional and logical decision-making process of the shopper.



At the **center of consideration** (from a marketing standpoint), we are focusing on search engine optimization (**SEO**), ongoing brand awareness, and brand recall. There are **lots of threads** that can be pulled, so let's check out some tactics you should consider to keep everything from **unraveling**.

### Micro Action Leads to Macro Consideration

First, a reality check. The **majority of customers—over 92%**—that are coming to your site (the first time) are likely not going to buy anything—yet. Like window shopping or browsing the retail racks, customers are getting a **feel for your brand** and what you have to offer. It may be a sobering reality, but while seeing traffic without corresponding purchase actions **can be frustrating**, it is important to keep everything in perspective. **Enter...the micro conversion.**

**Micro conversions** are the little preemptive actions that a customer makes that show initial interest—even if a **purchase** has not been made. *Signing up for promotional offers, subscribing to your blog, filling out a discount code form, etc.*—all of these **micro conversions can be tracked and leveraged** to help the customer make the choice to **move forward** with your brand during the consideration phase. So make sure to give your visitors ways to **engage** with your brand, even without a purchase. It may be a micro action, but it can **lead to purchase** action in the near future.

## Micro Conversions That Matter!



### Signing up for emails/newsletters

If you are seeing a steady rate of signups for the latest your brand has to offer, this is a sign you are succeeding at making that connection that may lead to conversion sooner rather than later.



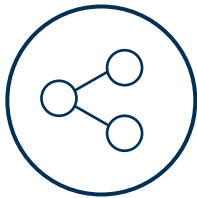
### Ecommerce pre-checkout steps

Viewing product pages, viewing product variations, checking out recommended products, and/or adding products to cart are fantastic signs that you are moving closer to conversion.



### Viewing product videos

We don't watch videos for things we are not interested in, so if you are seeing an influx of your site videos being viewed, you are striking a chord with your audience. Don't forget to add a great call to action!



### Content sharing on social media platforms

Not only does sharing = interest, but this also means that your audience is excited enough to tell their connections about it! And peer to peer is one of the best forms of marketing.



### Downloading product sheets or fashion guides

Users who are actively seeking out information from your brand can indicate a much closer connection with a customer who is more likely to convert and keep coming back for more.

## Our Recommendation

When it comes to the **micro conversions that matter most** to your fashion brand, it is important to take into account both their *opportunity and effectiveness*. Are *product pages with video clips* of your fashion products **outselling** other products? Is 65% of your current client base **subscribed** to promotional newsletters? When you find common threads, look at weaving these threads into other products or site pages.

If you have no tracking of this sort (currently) available, this should be your **starting point for implementation**—to give your brand a benchmark to work from. Marketing automation systems, live chat, or base lead tracking can give you a head start toward understanding your **most valuable** micro conversions.



## Calls to Action: K.I.S.S.

Fashion brands are in a **never-ending** runway show, looking for creative ways to **stand out** from the rest. This can spill over into the brand's ecommerce experience. In an effort to make your **site unique**, you may have different icons, use certain language, or insert **calls to action (CTA)** in locations that *might confuse* the purchaser. When it comes to CTAs like "Add to Cart" or "Buy Now," it is important to **keep it simple (K.I.S.S.)**. What about that second "S"? Well, we prefer "successful."

In a world where there is **more purchasing done online** than ever before, customers are used to the process of buying online, so why add any confusion?

You might think that shoppers are savvy enough to know that **clicking the image** will take them to another page with more information, but you'd be wrong. Only **after** you get them to the page with product information and additional images can you *expect to see shoppers* clicking that glorious "Add to Cart" button with any regularity.



### Calls to Action Matter

**70%**

70% of small business websites lack a call to action (CTA) on their homepage.

**70%**

70% of businesses don't have CTAs on their website...at all.

**94%**

94% of websites use verbs such as "try," "become," or "join" in their CTAs.

**200%**

"Personalized" CTAs convert over 200% better than "default" CTAs (i.e., "Let's Get Started!" vs. "Submit").

**90%**

90% of visitors who read your headline copy will also read your site CTAs.

Sources  
<https://www.business2community.com/online-marketing/the-no-brainers-guide-to-call-to-actions-02127152>  
<https://optimmonster.com/how-to-create-the-perfect-call-to-action/>  
<https://copyandcheck.com/call-to-action/>  
<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/personalized-calls-to-action-convert-better-data>  
<https://www.protocol80.com/blog/2019-cta-statistics>

### Our Recommendation

Keep calls to action **straight forward** every time. One crucial spot for CTAs is **under the featured thumbnail images** of your products. Every single product. You may have an amazing gallery of products to offer—**with striking images**—but if users *don't know they can interact* with what they are seeing, you may have a problem.



The addition of a “See This Style” or “Add to Cart” button under each featured fashion **can reduce possible confusion** and give the customer a clear action they can take. Also, remember that CTAs **don't** need to be confined to just a button on your website. You can **add CTA phrases** to the end of product descriptions, the end of your videos, etc.

While adding CTAs everywhere **might seem** like overkill—remember, most customers will not see ALL your content, they will *just see a sliver of it*. So if they are more likely to check out a handful of your items, adding a little “Pair this coat with these boots and get 20% off at checkout” call to action here and there **can't hurt**.

## Reviews Drive Action

Love them or hate them, reviews are **powerful**.

For most of us shopping online, reading *reviews is a must* along our journey. The feedback and information we learn when doing this can *tip us* from **consideration to purchase**. Reviews are often **valuable enough** to persuade us to overlook a higher price if the reviews are **favorable**. Nevertheless, some brands will opt to forgo or disable reviews on product pages due to a design consideration or **fear** of getting a *bad review*.

**The reality** is that *hiding* public feedback (reviews) can stir *doubt in the mind* of the shopper of whether or not your button-up, crossbody bag, or leather jacket is going to best suit their needs. **The last thing** you want to do when a customer is in the consideration phase is **cause friction** or doubt. Your products—*your* solutions—are the best, and prospects need to hear that (and read that) from **previous purchasers**.

At the end of the day, online reviews can be **as powerful as word-of-mouth recommendations** from a friend or family member. So openly sharing reviews *shows transparency* and fuels trust. Just know that reviews are an *all-or-nothing game*. They need to be available for **all products** or none of them.



The moment you start getting selective with what products will feature reviews is the moment that you may **plant a seed of doubt** in the mind of the customer. “Why can I see a bunch of great reviews on this jacket but no reviews for these pants?” Being selective shows favoritism, and **favoritism** can *diminish* trust. If you believe in your brand and your products, trust that positive 5-star reviews will soon follow.

## The Real Impact of Reviews

**70%**

Over 70% of customers read reviews before taking a purchase action.

**60%**

Nearly 60% of all shoppers post reviews on Amazon.

**90%**

Nearly 90% of millennials trust online reviews as much as recommendations from family and/or friends.

**400%**

Displaying a positive review next to a higher priced product can increase conversion by nearly 400%.

**70%**

70% of customers need to see at least four reviews before trusting a business.

Sources  
<https://hostingtribunal.com/blog/online-review-statistics/#gref> | <https://learn.g2.com/customer-reviews-statistics>  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelfertik/2019/02/14/how-to-get-millennials-to-trust-and-respond-to-your-advertising/#20fc40966c81>



### Our Recommendation

Start implementing **review-gathering automation** campaigns to reduce the manual workload associated with this process. This can be achieved via your marketing automation platform or a *dedicated reviews* automation platform like ReviewInc.

The **prime time to ask** for a product review is as close to the delivery date as possible, without rushing the customer—that is, *giving them a chance* to try on the item first. If you *wait three months*, the **window** for this review has likely **closed**. Also, be sure that these reviews are being *leveraged* where they will make the *biggest impact*, like on your website, Amazon, Google, etc.



## It's Not Bragging—It's Social Proof

If your brand is the showroom, social proof is the **runway** in full view **under the spotlights**. Social proof might include **reviews**, **testimonials** from past customers, or an *endorsement from a celebrity or influencer*. Leveraging and featuring this *user-generated content (UGC)* on your product pages or even your “About Us” page can help foster **credibility and trust** to an even greater level. Even something as simple as a Tweet about your product or a Facebook comment about fast shipping can be **repurposed** into fantastic social proof.

Featuring the thoughts and experiences of current or past customers shows that people **believe enough** in your *brand, mission, and fashion line* to **publicly** endorse them. Once your brand becomes part of the greater social conversation, this helps supercharge interest, trust, and (often) that final **buying decision**. If even one great piece of social proof provides the comfort needed for a customer to go ahead and *click that buy button*—it will be well worth it.

### Social Proof to Collect and Feature



Customer testimonials and reviews



Case studies and success stats



Public credentials and certifications



Media and PR coverage



Social media shares and/or followers

## Our Recommendation

Something to remember about social proof is that it is the **responsibility of your brand** to feature it wherever it will **bring the most value**. Unlike a review on Yelp or Google that may be discovered, actively featuring social proof can be a fantastic marketing tool. Social proof in videos and case studies as well as on homepages and product pages are a fast track to *connecting with new customers* and building **trust**.

A perfect example is showing where your brand has been **featured in fashion publications** and on their respective websites. If you have been featured in *GQ*, *Vogue*, or *Elle*, featuring snippet quotes alongside these recognizable names prominently on your homepage will be far **more valuable** than only having them on your “About Us” or “Media” pages. So serve up this social proof **on a platter**—don't count on (or make) customers find them on their own.

## Streamlining Purchases

All your efforts are about to **pay off**. You have *invested time*, *captured attention*, and have *made consideration* easy. Now it's time to lock down that customer you've been nurturing and turn them into a loyal brand advocate. But first—the shopping cart needs to **cross the finish line**. Even when it comes to something (seemingly) as straightforward as **making a purchase** there are still aspects to review and **streamline** if necessary.

Consider a time you were at a retail store. You made your selections and when you were ready to pay, there was a huge line or the credit card machine was offline. **So you left out of frustration**. This is a situation that has happened to all of us, and if you are not careful, the same feeling of frustration can pop up when someone is trying to *complete* a purchase from your site. It's time to make the final **purchase process flawless** so your customers can shop, drop (in their cart), and get on with their day in style.



## Reduce Friction With Free Shipping or In-Store Pickup

Offering *free shipping* or the option to pick up in-store can **make or break** a purchasing decision. Much of the appeal with *Amazon Prime* is their free 2-day shipping option, so if you are able to offer something similar up front—**do it**.

While it may seem like a nice perk to offer your customers **upon checkout**, offering “*Free delivery on orders over \$25*” or the option to “*Get it today at a retail location*” **right up front** will entice shoppers to move forward with their **purchase**. Promote your offer on main pages, product pages, and especially near your “Buy Now” buttons or **calls to action**.

We all know that **shipping charges** may encourage a purchase or dissuade someone from following through, but attempting to **“hide”** a shipping cost and then springing this on the customer just before the purchase will make you far more likely to *lose this customer—forever*. Hidden costs will **chip away** at the trust you have built. Being up front or featuring ways around additional costs (*minimum order sizes or in-store pickup*) will **serve you much better** in the short term and in the long run.



### Streamlining Purchase Access Matters

**75%**

Nearly 75% of consumers expect free shipping, for baby boomers this number goes up to 88%.

**55%**

Almost 55% of consumers under the age of 25 consider same-day shipping as the #1 purchase driver.

**67%**

67% of US shoppers have used “in-store pickup” purchase options.

**85%**

85% of “in-store pickup” shoppers make additional purchases in store upon pickup.

**65%**

65% of “in-store pickup” shoppers do so to avoid shipping costs.

Sources  
<https://nrf.com/media-center/press-releases/nrf-study-says-more-online-shoppers-want-free-shipping> | <https://www.vox.com/2015/9/17/11618652/if-you-dont-offer-same-day-shipping-youre-pissing-off-56-percent-of>  
<https://kibocommerce.com/press-events/consumer-trends-shoppers-buy-online-pickup-in-store/> | <https://www.businessinsider.com/us-consumers-use-buy-online-pickup-in-store-2019-2>  
<https://smiota.com/resources/bopis-is-growing-and-so-is-its-potential/>

### Our Recommendation

For a great user experience, make sure **you display shipping costs and options**—as well as shipping-based *promotions or in-store pickup options*—transparently on product pages. Again, it is not always the cost but rather the **perceived hiding of these costs** that can cause users to **“bounce”** from your site or **abandon** their shopping cart.

You can also **promote these options** to those that have *abandoned* their cart. If you can remind a customer that “picking up in-store” will eliminate shipping costs, it might be enough to **save the sale**. If you are not yet selling on Amazon, this may also be an option to save you time as well as shipping costs that would otherwise be *passed on to your customers*.

## Make Purchasing Simple

While this should go without saying, the **ability to add items** to your ecommerce cart and *check out effortlessly* need to be a **priority**. Every action your visitors need to take to *complete their purchase* needs to happen above the fold with clear and **deliberate** CTAs.

If a user **likes** what you have to offer **but** needs to scroll or search for checkout options, you have a design issue that **needs to be addressed**. Make sure that purchase options are present on every product page above the fold and that the user experience is **simple** from first click to final purchase.



### Simplifying to Supercharge Sales

**30%**

Cumbersome or lengthy checkouts account for nearly 30% of cart abandonments.

**20%**

A “disconnected design” in checkouts account for nearly 20% of cart abandonments.

**70%**

Higher than expected additional costs and slow delivery at checkout account for nearly 70% of cart abandonments.

**24%**

Complicated navigation accounts for up to 24% of cart abandonments.

**50%**

Nearly 50% of CTAs take longer than 3 seconds to find.

#### Sources

<https://sleeknote.com/blog/cart-abandonment-statistics> | <https://baymard.com/lists/cart-abandonment-rate>  
<https://99firms.com/blog/shopping-cart-abandonment-stats/#gref> | <https://dsim.in/blog/2017/07/21/113-cta-stats-to-quantify-its-power-for-brands/>

### Our Recommendation

Keep your checkout **simple, fast, and secure**. If your customer is *ready* to check out, your job is to make this process as **painless** as possible. There should never be a question in the mind of your customer containing the words what, why, or how. “What do I do now? How do I find my cart? Why is that the price?” Any questions like these need to be **eliminated**.

So get rid of any **roadblocks** in your purchase process. Carry the **fantastic user experience** that has helped the customer get this far to checkout. Think of it this way: make it feel like a *slide not a staircase*.

## Upgrade Your Product Images

In fashion and apparel your **imagery speaks louder** than anything else. Your products are **literally made** to make the customer *feel more confident*, and your images and visuals need to help them envision this confidence at **first glance**. The great part is you don't need to have the latest DSLR to take amazing photos. From Apple to Samsung—and all the brands in between—*smartphones can take **amazing pictures*** of your product line. However, if you do have a high-quality camera, lighting, sets, and all the other bells and whistles, this is fantastic—and you should take **full advantage** of them.

Not only do quality images **promote your product** but also your **brand**. So stage your pictures with care and make sure you are putting your best foot forward—that next check out *may just depend on it*.

### Why Your Visuals Are Gold

**75%**

75% of online shoppers rely on product photos when deciding on a potential purchase.

**22%**

22% of returns occur because the product looks different than presented in product images (online vs. in person).

**40%**

Good visual content is 40% more likely to get shared on your social accounts.

**78%**

78% of online shoppers want photographs to bring products to life (e.g., clothing and accessories being worn as opposed to on a hanger).

**50%**

50% of online shoppers say large, high-quality product images are more important than product information, descriptions, or even reviews.

Sources  
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[https://www.meero.com/en/news/e\\_commerce/511/How-Great-Product-Photographs-Influence-E-Commerce-Websites-Conversions](https://www.meero.com/en/news/e_commerce/511/How-Great-Product-Photographs-Influence-E-Commerce-Websites-Conversions)

## Our Recommendation

Depending on your image needs, you **don't need** to spend thousands of dollars to get professional product images. One of the great things about **fashion products** is they are (usually) made to be worn, rather than sitting against a backdrop. So use *natural sunlight* and your phone to take some quality, stunning images outdoors in **popular local locations**.

Another way to get some great images and build some **social credibility** is to run a hashtag contest on Instagram to **collect and repurpose** *user-generated content* from your customers. Feature the best images on your product pages and use other images for advertising campaigns on **Google Shopping** or **social platforms**.



## Avoiding “Members Only”

Picture this: **You’re in a store** and you finally find that perfect pair of shoes. *You walk up to the register*, but **before** you’re able to pay for them, an associate says, “*I’m sorry but you are not a member here. Fill out this information and then we will allow you to buy those shoes.*” What would you do?

You would **likely** put those shoes down, **walk out** empty-handed, *head across the street* to a **competitor**, and buy the same shoes without any fuss, right? So when it comes to your ecommerce storefront, **why would you risk** this situation happening with one of your online customers?



Well, this **exact situation** occurs every day as people try to shop online only to be turned away. If users are not registered in the system, they **cannot** make a purchase. So what’s the solution? **Provide a guest-checkout option.** When you have a first-time customer, you want to give them a great experience, not a headache. While acquiring customer information may be good for you as a company, it can **hamper the experience** of a new customer and therefore impact revenues.

**Guests** should be *welcomed* at every turn, and while you *may incentivize* them to become a member for *future discounts* or ease of checkout, don’t make it a requirement. Consider offering this option during final checkout: “*Would you like us to keep your info on file for future purchases?*” Become a member and get **free shipping** on your order!” Give them the option to **opt in or opt out** and throw in a little bonus to sweeten the offer.



## Let Everyone “Be Your Guest”

**14%**

14% of shoppers abandon their cart due to not having a guest-checkout option.

**23%**

23% of shoppers will abandon a purchase if they are forced to make an account.



The conversion rates for member vs. guest checkout (on average) are nearly identical.

**53%**

53% of mobile shoppers use guest checkout.

**34%**

34% of retail sites do not offer guest checkout.

Sources  
<https://www.invespcro.com/blog/shopping-cart-abandonment-rate-statistics-infographic/> | <https://conversionciences.com/guest-checkout-tactics-to-grow-ecommerce-sales-with-examples-and-ideas/>  
<https://www.xsellco.com/resources/mobile-e-commerce-optimization/> | <https://www.moovweb.com/the-truth-about-guest-checkout/>

### Our Recommendation

Don't **force** your customers to create an account just for the *pleasure of doing business* with you. While it is a great move to provide a *members-only option* (for members-only promotions and discounts), it is not going to be **everyone's cup of tea** on their first visit.

Consider your guest checkout as an opportunity to *build trust* and to launch *nurturing campaigns* to these customers that could later **convert** them into **members**. Like walking into a restaurant and *being turned away* because you do not have a reservation, the likelihood of returning drops **like a rock**. Roll out the *digital red carpet* for all your customers because everyone should be welcome to purchase in whatever way **suits them the best**. After all, your main goal is to secure that sale—*don't jeopardize* that over the possibility of securing another membership. You will likely end up losing both.

## Hidden Nickels and Dimes

Have you ever been ready to make a purchase and ***right before you clicked*** that “Buy Now” button you were **blindsided** with an avalanche of *fees or additional costs*? Extra taxes, shipping, and “convenience” fees (convenient for you maybe...), can **turn off your customer** from both their first and future purchases. Remember that for the customer to get to this critical purchase moment, they have spent their time *searching, researching, and weighing* their options. They have already invested their time—**don’t make them invest** even more money.

Building in hidden fees can feel like a *bait and switch*. **Trust will be broken** and the opportunity will be lost. If these additional costs cannot be avoided, make sure that this is laid out at the **product listing level** to lessen the shock of the final bill. If there is a way to avoid a fee, like “Spend at least \$25 for free shipping,” **make sure** this is outlined as well. While shoppers may **hate** fees, they do **love** finding a way to avoid them, and if spending another \$5 will help them avoid a \$12 shipping charge—then this is a **good tradeoff**.

### An Abandoned Cart Comes in Many Forms

**22%**

22% of shoppers abandon their shopping carts when shipping information was not clearly displayed.

**60%**

60% of users abandoned a purchase due to hidden costs being too high.

**70%**

In 2019, nearly 70% of shopping carts were left abandoned.

**30%**

Over 30% of shoppers abandoned their cart because they were forced to create an account

**70%**

70% of shoppers abandon their shopping carts because of long or cumbersome checkouts, cost calculation errors, and not trusting a site with personal information.



Sources  
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### Our Recommendation

Be transparent on every product page. **Any costs** that could be perceived as “*hidden*” should be **clearly** displayed. Again, sometimes costs like shipping are simply unavoidable, so being up front about them can actually help you **build trust earlier** in the process.

**Additionally**, be sure to feature ways, if any, to *avoid these fees* in a prominent place. This is often seen on a **checkout page** that features a shipping cost with *a line crossing it out* with a message reading “Add another product to your cart for free shipping.” While the transaction itself may increase a bit, *customers see these options* to eliminate added **costs as a gift**. So *streamline and automate* to reduce costs, **be transparent** about any added pricing, and give your customers a way to *eliminate* additional costs.

## Reducing Payment Friction

There was a time when the **only payment option** for an online purchase was the *tried-and-true* credit card. However, the invention of *alternative payment methods* such as **Apple Pay**, **Google Pay**, and even **PayPal** have given customers more *personal and secure ways* to complete their online purchases.

This added **convenience** of allowing users to tap into their **e-wallets to pay** for online purchases can reduce friction. They no longer have to stop what they're doing to dig out that physical credit card. This is especially important when it *comes to mobile*, as nearly **35% of online purchases** are completed on mobile devices. In fact, up to **50% of online purchases** are **lost** due to **limited payment options** and a lack of trust that their information will remain protected.

### More Than One Way to Pay

**90%**

PayPal users convert at rates nearly 90% higher than those using other payment options.

**50%**

Over 50% of the US population has used Apple Pay on their mobile device in the past 12 months.

**50%**

About 50% of customers will end their transaction if their preferred payment method is not available during checkout.

**80%**

E-wallet purchases are expected to reach over 500 billion by 2020—an 80% overall increase from 2016.

Sources  
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<https://www.business2community.com/mobile-apps/5-mobile-trends-changing-the-future-of-payments-02220285>

## Our Recommendation

Make sure your ecommerce platform **supports multiple** types of payment options beyond the standard credit card, such as **mobile** payment options, **direct** bank transfers, or **e-wallet** payment provider options. While it is completely understandable to perhaps not provide certain types of credit cards (e.g., Discover is a popular “we don’t accept that” option), *limiting* your customers to a **single type** of card or option can actually reduce trust.

Offering multiple payment methods not only **reduces buyer friction**, but seeing multiple options also gives customers a sense of comfort that their transaction will be **safer and more secure**.



## Don't Abandon Abandoned Carts

The abandoned cart has forever been the thorn in the side of the **ecommerce fashion industry**. When your customer has a *sudden change of heart* due to pre-buyer's remorse, has a friction point come into focus, or gets distracted, they can **leave their shopping cart** alone and abandoned. However, more and more online retailers are turning these lonely shopping carts into an **opportunity**.

By implementing *retargeting strategies*, fashion brands are successfully bringing customers back to their abandoned purchases with strategic messaging. In many cases, **returning customers** have been shown to complete their purchases within the first **12 hours 72% of the time**. A little effort can go a long way when it comes to staying top of mind and adding to your brand's bottom line.

### Abandoned Carts Tell a Story

**70%**

Shopping cart abandonment rates are nearly 70% across industries.

**80%**

Worldwide cart abandonment rates hover close to 80% on mobile devices, while desktops are around 73%.

**68%**

The shopping cart abandonment rates for fashion brands average around 68%.

**40%**

Over 40% of cart abandonment reminder emails are opened.

**35%**

An improved ecommerce checkout experience can increase conversion by over 35%.

Sources  
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## Our Recommendation

Build an abandoned cart strategy all its own because—**guess what**—shopping cart abandonments are going to happen. So how should you go about building a strategy?

Well, there are a number of ways to **nurture** the customer back to complete a purchase: a **pop-up** box reminding customers their cart is waiting for them, an **automated** email, a **chat box** asking if they need check-out assistance, or you can even remarket directly to customers who have abandoned their cart. In short, these **abandoned carts** (while disappointing at first) present an **opportunity**.

## Creating Brand Loyalty

After spending the hard-earned effort to *attract **attention** and **convert*** that attention into paying customers, the last thing you should be thinking is that the game is over. In reality, the **game has just begun**. Once you have succeeded in gaining that new customer, your focus needs to shift to retaining this relationship to extend the value of it. For most fashion brands, these are the golden keys to success: building **loyalty**, creating brand **advocates**, and maximizing your customer **lifetime value**.

Is there a one-size-fits-all strategy? **Absolutely not**. But are there tactics and strategies that you can mold to fit your brand? **Absolutely**. After all, it is *going to take far less effort* (and money) to **retain and extend the value** of current customers than to continuously acquire new ones. So let's break down some of the ways you can take advantage of your newfound customer wealth and set your fashion brand up for *next-level* success!

### Leveraging Cross-Sell Opportunities

As the old saying goes, "You don't know what you don't know." That's where **cross-selling** comes into play. It lets you *give your customer an **opportunity*** to upgrade their fashion purchase with an **add-on** they may have never known they wanted or needed. What is an upgraded iPhone without a shiny new case? Or a new pair of slacks without that perfect belt? There may be **no better time to offer** a fantastic complementary product or accessory than when your customer is already in purchase mode.



Amazon has **mastered this strategy** with their "People who bought X also purchased Y" feature. When a shopper is ready to make a purchase they are likely laser-focused on the product they want, but by **adding cross-selling** suggestions, you can educate the customer (without asking them to do any extra work) and increase checkout revenues at the same time.

## Cross-Selling to Enhance Opportunity

**10-30%**

Upsells and cross-sells account for an average of 10-30% of ecommerce revenues.

**25%**

Studies show that upsells should not exceed 25% of the core product price.

**50%**

Cross-sells should not exceed 50% of the original item's purchase price.

**35%**

Amazon claims that 35% of sales come from cross-selling.

**70%**

It is nearly 70% less expensive to cross-sell and upsell to existing customers as opposed to selling to new customers.

### Sources

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<https://www.bitcatcha.com/blog/how-to-increase-your-sales-by-30-with-clever-upselling/> | <https://blog.hubspot.com/service/cross-selling>

### Our Recommendation

*Approach* cross-selling and upselling as a **helpful suggestion** as opposed to a pushy sales tactic. When implementing this functionality, make sure that your additional purchase opportunities *make sense* from the **perspective of a shopper** and that the suggested products complement one another. Making product suggestions that are disconnected, such as a women's dress when someone's purchasing a men's hat, might actually annoy the shopper and can work against you.

**Statistically**, upselling has been shown to be **20 times more effective** than cross-selling. So make sure that your *upselling programmatically* accounts for the tastes and selected products of each and every customer. Beyond using this strategy at checkout, consider implementing cross-selling with **marketing automation** as an additional opportunity to *extend lifetime value*.

## Cut Repetitive Content & Showcase Personalization

We are in a golden age of **personalized experiences** and content—and it is no longer a “nice” thing to offer, ***it is a must***. Shoppers spend a lot of time researching their purchases and pinpointing that perfect polka dot dress, suit jacket, or mother-in-law gift. So your **content** *needs to make their job easier—not harder*. If the general messaging about your apparel brand is not the same across your website, advertising, social media, emails, etc., customers are not as likely to feel “**connected**” to your brand in any personal way.

**A simple example** is sending *nurture emails* to a recent customer. Just following up with an “It’s a great time to shop with us” email—*devoid of any personalization*—**can feel empty** and is more likely to turn someone off than inspire them to make a future purchase.



**Why?** Customers want to feel a *connection to the brands* they purchased from rather than just feeling like another shopper. **Personalizing** this email can make all the difference. **Compare the first email with** *"Hi Jill! We hope your recent purchase of our Fall Harvest Cardigan is keeping you warm as October weather starts rolling in! We have a **Fall Harvest Promotion** coming up next week on our line of fashionable fall accessories that would go great with your recent purchase. Don't forget to use code **Harvest** at checkout to get an additional 20% off. Stay warm and we look forward to seeing you next week!"*

**Be personal** and treat your customers like family—every time. Consider applying this same personalization concept with targeted site pages, landing pages, digital advertising, social content, and *remarketing campaigns*.



## Getting Personal Gets Results

**72%**

72% of customers only engage with marketing messages that are personalized to their interests.

**80%**

80% of frequent shoppers claim to only shop with brands that provide personalized experiences.

**70%**

70% of millennials have reported being frustrated by irrelevant or non-personalized marketing emails.

**63%**

63% of customers stop purchasing from a brand with poorly executed personalization.

**90%**

90% of customers are more likely to shop with brands that offer personalized and relevant promotional offers or recommendations.

Source: <https://smarterhq.com/blog/personalization-statistics-roundup>

### *Our Recommendation*

Realize that the ability to personalize the customer experience at a **granular level** is actually closer than you think. *Digital advertising **platforms*** such as Google Ads and Facebook already possess the capabilities to leverage customer data (or visitor data) to help you serve up **more personalized campaigns** to interested parties. Automation platforms have the ability to **dynamically** place content and product promotions in personalized emails to better nurture your customers at their level. Even **live chat** on websites can recognize when a previous site visitor has returned, and in turn, provide more personalized chat messages.

*Personalized, contextual marketing messaging* (across the board) matters. So when “connecting with a brand” is on the **mind of most consumers**, doing away with static content—and getting personal (but not too personal)—puts you on the fast track to achieving that **connection**.

## Nurturing Customers With Automation

The stitch we are going to sew that pertains to *awareness, consideration, purchasing, and lifetime value* is **marketing automation**.

Keeping track of every stop along the **customer journey** and making the most of every opportunity *takes considerable time and effort*. In order to grow and **leverage these opportunities**, marketing automation can be your greatest asset.

**Following up** with interested shoppers, past customers and abandoned carts, providing promotions, presenting new seasonal lines, and gauging customer satisfaction **are all examples** of the wonders of marketing automation—and the help **doesn't** stop there.

As an ongoing strategy for **building loyalty** and extending lifetime value, marketing automation gives you a *programmatically* way to nurture sales opportunities more effectively. Consider the following scenarios for a shopper:

- Subscribes for your promotional updates
- Abandons a shopping cart
- Makes a purchase
- Adds a product during the cross-sell phase of checkout
- Fills out a landing page form
- Leaves a review
- Order is delayed

**For each** of these situations (and many more), you can create a **dedicated** marketing automation strategy. Marketing automation is **not about** replacing the human factor, it is about streamlining **repetitive processes** that will eat up your team's valuable time.



## Automating Your Way to Success

**15%**

Marketing automation has been shown to increase productivity by nearly 15%.

**80%**

80% of marketing automation users showed increased lead volumes.

**77%**

77% of marketing automation users showed an increase in conversion rates.

**74%**

74% of marketing automation users do so for the time-savings benefit.

**50%**

Lead nurturing with marketing automation has been shown to drive 50% greater sales at a 33% lower cost.

Sources  
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### *Our Recommendation*

Confirmations, follow-ups, internal team notifications, chat sessions, and beyond *can all be streamlined* using **marketing automation** in some form or another. In order to **nurture** and extend the **lifetime value** of your customer base—so you can focus your time and effort on *bigger growth goals*—proper automation systems should be implemented.

Remember that marketing automation **goes beyond email** (as many marketers use the terms interchangeably). Rather, think of marketing automation as an overarching tool allowing you to **execute automated strategies**. Consider all the touchpoints such as *confirmations, reminders, follow-ups*, etc. that are manually **time-consuming** yet necessary. This will give you a checklist of tasks that you need your automation system to fulfill. Then you can find the **best tool** (or team) for the job.

# CONCLUSION

Trends and tastes change and evolve in the fashion industry—often faster than many of us would like—and the same goes for the wonderful world of marketing.

It is how quickly we adapt to these changes that matters. As the world (and your customers) embrace a practically frictionless experience between digital commerce and physical products, we too must be malleable and work smarter to capture (and keep) their attention.

With challenge comes opportunity. And while fashion brands are being significantly impacted by a shrinking physical retail marketplace and disrupted supply chains, digital marketing offers countless opportunities for brands to increase margins, take back brand control, and maximize profits.

National Positions is fueling change in the fashion industry, having helped fashion brands of all sizes effectively adopt these transformative strategies online. We look forward to fueling growth for your fashion brand as well. The only question is—are you ready to accept, embrace, and make this digital world work for you? If you are ready, so are we.



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