

In Focus: Market Insights

TECHNOLOGY

How Perfitly Is Re-creating The Fitting Room

- With 97 percent accuracy in Perfitly avatars, actual garment details are e-manufactured.

BY KALEY ROSHITSH

Blending augmented reality, virtual reality and artificial intelligence, Perfitly wants to make the perfect fit a reality – virtually.

The apparel industry isn't contesting the value of brick-and-mortar for the customer experience. As Dave Sharma, cofounder and chief executive officer of Perfitly, agreed: "The most accurate try on is still the physical fitting room."

To mimic this experience, Perfitly, the AR- and VR-based cloud platform developed for e-commerce, uses a brand's tech packs to digitally manufacture each product. The end result is "smart 3-D e-garments" within a virtual fitting room setting, for a customer avatar that is completely portable, meaning shopping across channels and retailers is seamless.

With 97 percent accuracy attained through Perfitly avatars, actual garment details – including fabric drape, texture and size – are captured exactly as the manufacturer intended, on the customer's avatar. The platform also operates in store, giving customers not wanting to undress the ability to see a display with their avatar.

There are some 280,000 points in one 3-D rendering of an avatar, and the Perfitly platform aims to rival past methods of automated size recommendations.

Procuring size recommendation in likeness to that of paper dolls, or "paper-dolling," as Sharma compares, is a method that lacks garment visualization.

Dedicating three years to development before bringing on any brand partners, Perfitly is now deployed with six brands. Partnering with New York-based men's wear brand, Descendant of Thieves and others, Perfitly aims to provide proper fit and visualization, on a completely cloud-based software.

"The accuracy that this [Perfitly] creates means reduction in returns and increased conversion," Sharma said.

Data from their current retail partners reveals returns have reduced, on average, to 10 percent, down from 28 percent, and conversion has increased to 7.2 percent, up from 4 percent.

Sharma believes virtually creating every step of the try on journey is "how online shopping will be done in the next decade."



Perfitly avatars reveal 97 percent accuracy.

Morphew photographs by Kaley Roshitsh; Perfitly by Shutterstock/mentatdgt

APPAREL

The Retro Revival: Morphew Vintage Transforms the Old

- Like the treasured pieces in Morphew's archive, fashion and retail's transformation may increasingly be gleaming with secondhand re-inspirations.

BY KALEY ROSHITSH

"Some would say this is sacrilege," said Jason Lyon, co-owner of Manhattan-based Morphew vintage boutique, from behind an original lace Edwardian dress dating back to 1905 that he cut up and reconfigured into a new design.

Few would detect this exact ivory lace dress, garnished with antique pearl buttons currently fitting a size 8 woman, was originally made to fit a size 2 woman. But that's because fewer lack the skilled hand to source, match and insert 100-year-old lace panels to increase not only waist – but also wearability.

This is one aspect of Bridgette Morphew and Lyon's New York-based vintage brand, Morphew. For Morphew and Lyon, luxury vintage or rather "A-listers and people with A-list taste" are their bailiwick, but so is modernization with integrity.

"We're not here to change fashion history," Lyon continued. In their modernization of vintage pieces, Morphew steers clear of anything with labels or designer originals.

Morphew's Manhattan and Los Angeles showrooms – hosted at The Residency Experience, a curated project – are by appointment only and date back to the Victorian era. Their unofficial brand story began in 2000 when the two met at an art show in their home state of Florida.

Picking vintage pieces by hand, everyone from John Galliano to Yves Saint Laurent to Issey Miyake has real estate among the full racks.

While their selection has serviced those as recently as Nick Jonas in the Jonas Brothers' new single "Sucker," who dons a silk print Versace shirt, it's in upcycling and designing their own collections that Morphew finds differentiation among luxury vintage sellers and puts a priority on the customer.

Lyon, with sleeves rolled at his elbows, points to new hemlines and traces a finger over the Victorian-era clasp on a Lemaire shawl. "Our customer wants the best," he said.

It may be true, as Morphew claims to "spare no expense" when matching notions to the pieces they salvage.

Selling their namesake designs to brands such as Fred Segal, Trina Turk and Koibird in London, at selected retail locations, Morphew carves an interesting niche in the market. Like captains of the ship, Morphew and Lyon navigate with vision, rescuing pieces with potential in an ever vast sea of vintage resale. Appropriately, the sewing workshop overlooks the lower level of their Manhattan showroom.

Where just five years ago, few players existed on the map, now resale has



Cofounders of Morphew Vintage, Bridgette Morphew and Jason Lyon.



Whiting & Davis bags, once damaged, are deconstructed and given new life.



Storage for vintage garments, notions and findings.



Lyon cradles the edge of an upcycled gown.

swelled, vintage shows are overcrowded and everyone can potentially go thrifting and turn a profit if they strike gold – which to Lyon's mention, nothing attracts interest better than Nineties Galliano.

Crediting a resurgence of sustainability and consumer-driven demand for storytelling and quality in their clothing, Morphew believes more sellers will continue entering the market.

But to gain visibility for vintage and "the most beautiful things on Earth," Morphew also lists pieces on marketplace web sites such as Istdibs and Vestiaire Collective, which connect vintage or antique dealers with shoppers worldwide. The listing of Morphew's designs on Istdibs even aided Koibird London, the boutique offering exotic travel-inspired clothing sourced worldwide. One piece acted as a gateway to a full-fledged collaboration.

When probed on their presences at Coterie and popular vintage shows, Morphew added: "We're a brand, not just a vintage dealer."

To create a stand-alone brand and tell stories with their pieces, Morphew enlists the usual social media platforms, as many retailers are accustomed. Instagram served as top choice to showcase the silken prints of Gianni

Versace in their "Miami Years" Art Basel pop-up shop, saturating the feed in more ways than one.

In spite of social media bringing the retailer closer to their customer, Morphew and Lyon believe retailers and department stores are still finding their footing with storytelling in physical retail. Through tags of origin – which cite design labs as with & Other Stories or independent makers, similar to West Elm's maker studio – and secondhand assortments, brands are using the nostalgia to appear fresher.

In their third year partnering with Morphew, Trina Turk's flagship store in Palm Springs, Calif., will "draw them [customers] in with the vintage." Similarly, Fred Segal stores on Melrose and in Malibu source vintage pieces from Morphew, while Koibird's 20-piece collection was all newly redesigned and "one-of-kind."

In the corner, some \$10,000 worth of Whiting & Davis handbags, defective and acquired in bulk from a department store, sit in pieces atop a table ready to be transformed into a slinky evening gown.

Like the treasured pieces in Morphew's archive, fashion and retail's transformation may increasingly be gleaming with secondhand re-inspirations.