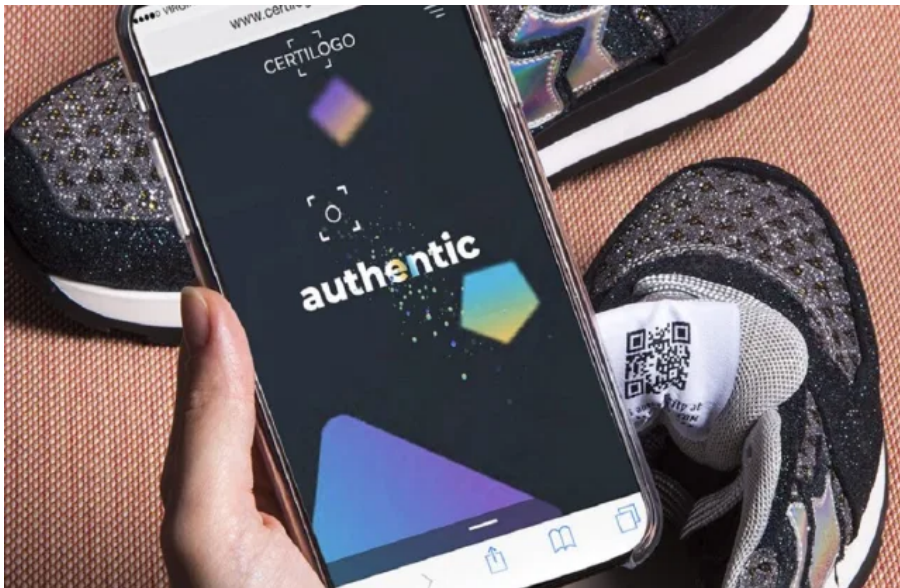


Italian Fashion Sector Shows Digital Thirst and Readiness, New Study Says

Despite the havoc wrought by the pandemic, 55 percent of interviewed companies will increase their digital investments by at least 10 percent.

By [Martino Carrera](#) on December 2, 2020



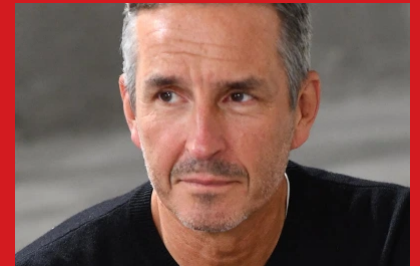
📷 The smart tagging technology by Certilogo applied to a pair of sneakers. Courtesy of Certilogo.

MILAN — As one of the country's key industries, which generated 97.9 billion euros in 2019, the Italian fashion sector is by its own nature forced to adapt and align to trends, not only when it comes to product design, but also from an industrial standpoint.

SDA Bocconi University is to release later this month the results of a survey it conducted in partnership with [Certilogo](#), the Milan-based company that provides fashion and luxury

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businesses with smart solutions, and BeSight, which offers its high-tech expertise to fashion companies, with the patronage of Confindustria Moda.

The study shows the Italian fashion sector's resilience amid a second wave of the pandemic, proving that overall the industry is equipped to face a new industrial revolution spurred by a pandemic-induced digital acceleration.

According to the study, the sector is ready to embrace the technological and digital transformation required to survive, especially in terms of processes and business models. However, the industry still lags when it comes to softer skills, including the implementation of a companywide digital culture, a trial-and-error approach and cross-functional team working — all seen as instrumental in enhancing its digital capability.

Out of the 101 companies interviewed between September and October — including prominent names such as Prada, Giorgio Armani, Moncler, Gucci and Max Mara in addition to a roster of wholesale and retail brands, sports brands, suppliers and service providers — 55 percent said their investments in new ICT, or information and communication technologies, and digital assets are to grow by at least 10 percent with the aim of improving the customer experience, e-commerce operations and enhancing their data-gathering capabilities.



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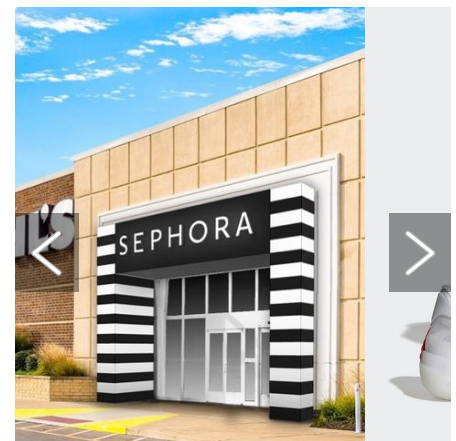
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Paolo Pasini, associate professor of practice, information systems and IT and digital management at SDA Bocconi, who spearheaded the study, pointed to a start-up mind-set that's infiltrating the day-to-day operations of established companies, noting one good sign is that they're overall adopting a customer-centric business model.



Those ICT and digital investments are seen as pivotal in differentiating each company and help it staff new digital channels, harvest internal and external data, as well as enhance and speed up core business processes. Despite the havoc wrought by the pandemic, cost-cutting is seen as a less crucial objective to target via digital acceleration.

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Other developments that ranked high in the survey included smart tags and wearable technologies. The former in particular are gaining steam as they can improve the customer journey by providing information and access to online-only content. About 36 percent of interviewed companies already boast consumer-facing smart-tagging technologies to help validate the authenticity of purchased products — a reason for their employment in 63 percent of cases.

Rossella Munafò, chief marketing officer at Certilogo, said this is increasingly crucial as “the online channels represent a never-never land for counterfeiters that have easier access to distributing platforms for their fake goods.” She also stressed that during and in the aftermath of the pandemic, preserving a brand’s integrity is essential to thrive.

PUBBLICITÀ



The survey revealed companies leveraging smart tags are those that have been putting customers at the center of their initiatives. Eighty-three percent of them believe smart tags can help improve their e-commerce platforms, innovate the customer experience and help with sustainability-related initiatives, while companies that have yet to embrace the [tech-](#)



[nology](#) are convinced that they can serve as a means to collect data on their audience, in addition to providing a traceability system.

On the other hand, blockchain, robotics and 3-D printing are less developed fields among Italian fashion companies. In particular, 77 percent of the interviewed businesses had not yet adopted a blockchain project and 83 percent of them said it is little to not likely they will do so for the foreseeable future. Pasini ascribed this delay to the technological underdevelopment of the fashion and luxury industry on these specific technologies.

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