Productsup

Fashion Feed Management Guide

Fire up your fashion feeds!

Contents

At the end of 2022, the global apparel market was worth around 1.53* trillion US dollars. The Experts predict this figure will be around 1.7* trillion US dollars by the end of 2023, despite the economic slowdown. That will be the equivalent of every human on the planet spending around $200 on clothes this year. With digitization continuing apace and omnichannel and hybrid shopping options becoming more common, the battle for a share of this 1.7 trillion dollar market will be fought out online.

Managing product catalogs and product data is not unique to the fashion industry, and fashion brands face many of the same challenges affecting all businesses managing large amounts of SKUs. Because fashion is one of the most important growth categories on social commerce channels for Millenials and Gen Z, future success in fashion will require industry-specific omnichannel marketing strategies that target these demographics with the kind of shopping experiences they expect.

This guide will discuss where brands and retailers can find opportunities and how they can avoid some of the pitfalls affecting business outcomes across the fashion retail industry.

*All figures can be found on Statista

6 tech-based opportunities for fashion brands

Automation

AI and machine learning systems can aggregate, merge, and organize hundreds of thousands of SKUs into complete and channel-ready files within minutes. Feed processing automation saves you time and precious resources by eliminating nearly all labor-intensive manual tasks.
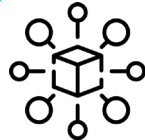
Centralization

Centralize all of your product data feed management into intuitive dashboards to enable consistent brand messaging and tone across all touchpoints, channels, and markets. Managing product data from one platform gives you total control over your product catalogs.

Accuracy

Export perfect product descriptions, images, videos, and information that match each channel's requirements and recommendations every time. A comprehensive product-to-consumer (P2C) platform will automatically check all feeds for accuracy and consistency before exporting or updating data to a channel.

Avoid stockouts

Use order synchronization to make selling "out of stock" items a thing of the past. No more costly penalties or negative consumer ratings because of availability. Synchronize your sales channels and schedule multiple file updates to channels and ensure your stock level information is always up to date.

Lower return rates

A high percentage of returns are triggered by inaccurate or incomplete product data, including missing images, sizes, or simply the wrong data. Ensure your product data is always accurate, complete, and meets all channel requirements.
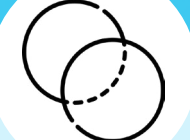
Transparency

Sustainability in fashion is becoming increasingly important for Millennial and Gen Z shoppers. P2C platforms give fashion retailers a high level of transparency into their products' ecosystems – from the manufacturer/designers to the end consumers.

Turn retail pain points into a competitive advantage

The same pain points causing headaches to everyone managing or working with product data can be transformed into opportunities, giving you the edge over your competitors.

The latest product-to-consumer technologies make it possible to centralize and manage all aspects of the product information value chains from a single source of truth. Feed management is no longer about matching and meeting requirements, brands must now consider how they can enrich data and monitor the performance of their product data on all channels.

Here are six challenges for fashion brands and the transformative solutions to overcome them.

Tighten your belt and grow at the same time

> "Combating product anarchy means learning and understanding each channel's requirements and workflows. Anything good takes some time to build, but Productsup's wide range of rules, tools, and features cover anything you need while growing your advertising efforts."
>
> Victor Borie, Global eCommerce Director
>
> **Read case study**

Strong economic headwinds mean that fashion retailers hoping to weather the approaching storm must consider consolidating, optimizing, and streamlining their product data management operations.

For many apparel retailers, difficult economic times can signal them to revise growth strategies and implement certain mechanisms to limit the impact that reduced consumer spending could have on their turnover.

But "tightening belts" doesn't have to mean terminating growth strategies or even considering drastic measures such as layoffs. With smart feed management – implementing AI-based feed management solutions – product data managers and their teams can reduce their manual feed management tasks to almost nothing.

By simply creating automated aggregation and merging of feeds and then visualizing that data on centralized, easy-to-manage dashboards, an organization can save countless wasted hours by getting rid of Excel sheets, FTP requests, data fact-checking, and manual inventory updates.

Burning resources? Centralize your product marketing

> "Commerce complexity was pretty much my life before I worked with Productsup. Now I'm 100% in control and have everything I need to do a great job at my fingertips. When I go on vacation, it's always an easy handover."
>
> Zachary A. Martz, Director of Enterprise Project Management
>
> **Read case study**

EILEEN FISHER

Over the past few years, the explosion in online fashion items has created many new challenges for fashion retailers and D2C apparel sellers. While there have never been as many opportunities to find new customers, there have also never been so many digital hurdles preventing businesses from getting the right products to consumers where and when they want to buy.

Online stores are popping up daily, with an estimated 12–24 million live ecommerce sites online now. This growth means more brands competing for customers and there's a real threat of market saturation affecting established brands. As a result, digital advertising is more costly than ever before. Moreover, for their part, consumers have become more discerning, fickle, and demanding in regard to their shopping experiences.

Centralization of all your product data tasks and product marketing on easy-to-use dashboards in solutions like Advertising PX, hands you control over all of your SKUs and the destinations where they will be sold or resold. It also reduces the time your teams spend working on data sheets, synching multiple file formats, or making FTP requests. The time and resources saved can be reinvested in consolidating your market position or even identifying lucrative growth opportunities on new channels or markets.

Build your brand, save on advertising

> "I'd recommend the Productsup platform to all companies merging large amounts of data. If you want to do product marketing or product-based marketing, you will definitely be happy with Productsup."
>
> Roman Iciksons, Team Lead Performance Marketing
>
> **Read case study**

Trust is the main currency of the future of ecommerce. Brands must be transparent, authentic, and readily available to their customers, especially for consumers shopping on social media channels. Telling your brand story and what you stand for while creating consistent end-to-end customer experiences is one of the greatest challenges facing omnichannel and ecommerce fashion retailers today.

Remember, building your brand is about more than just satisfying current customers. In social commerce, brand-building will reduce your advertising spend as customers share or comment on your brand. Brand consistency in your messaging is both key to unlocking customer lifetime value as well as winning new customers. Uniformity on all channels requires smart technology to showcase your brand in its best light whenever your potential customers are browsing for ideas or are about to make a purchase.

Build standout brand experiences telling your unique story by implementing technologies that enable smart rules management of all your SKUs. A platform that enables you to apply or remove attributes or to norm all descriptions in bulk can save teams hours and hours of unnecessary manual work.

Penalties and negative reviews? Make stockouts history

Synching order data across all channels has become an industry, with many piecemeal software solutions claiming to solve this dilemma. More often than not, however, sellers, suppliers, and vendors rely on the API from the websites, marketplaces, or channels to trigger for feed updates.

Centralized order synchronization with account-wide scheduling options dramatically reduces the risk of stockouts severely damaging a brand's reputation through negative ratings, bad feedback, or even financial penalties.

Smart P2C platforms let you schedule as many daily feed updates as the feed target API or internal systems (e.g., shop system, ERP, PIM) permit.

By eliminating the risk of selling items that are out of stock or displaying items that can no longer be sold, order synchronization is an easy-to-implement tool to enhance your brand's reputation.

Better product information means fewer returns

> "Thanks to the Productsup P2C Platform, we can streamline and perfectly control our product data, delivering top-notch shopping experiences to our customers."
>
> Slaven Karadaliev, Senior Process Manager Global E-Commerce
>
> **Learn more**

Shopify's 2022 fashion report revealed that online fashion retailers in 2021 were experiencing anywhere between 11% - 50% returns – on avg. 30%! Shopify went as far as to say that high return rates were a significant threat to business growth as the costs and logistics involved are expensive and eat up resources.

Although an item's sizing or fit are the primary causes of returns, inaccurate or incomplete product information or inferior product representations in images are common reasons for returns. And this doesn't consider the effects inaccurate item descriptions can have on a brand's image. If trust is one of the most important commodities in online shopping, poor product information is one of the most common ways to damage that trust.

Providing accurate product information all the time and on all channels won't prevent consumers from returning items. But by simply providing accurate descriptions, titles, sizes, and images or videos showcasing the item, you could reduce your return rates. It's a simple feed management solution that doesn't require rethinking your logistics or shipping policies or redesigning entire product lines.

With so many channels, formats, and requirements, telling a consistent story has become a difficult task. Build standout brand experiences that tell your unique story by implementing technologies that enable you to apply smart rules to all your SKUs on all your channel export feeds in bulk.

Consumers want transparency, sustainable fashion is booming

> "Our goal is to make fashion more sustainable by helping people sell and buy second-hand luxury items online. This centralized approach allows us to stay organized and ensure that the customer buying experience is consistent."
>
> Jules Burguieres, Marketing Science Project Manager
>
> **Read case study**

Digitization and mobile shopping have given consumers millions of options when they want to shop. In a matter of seconds, consumers switch between multiple sites, view several products, and then make purchasing decisions. So what do these consumers want?

Apart from the obvious demographic segmentation relevant for targeting, all reports on changing consumer behavior over the past years point toward two critical factors: excellent shopping experiences and transparency on a brand's sustainability credentials.

Great shopping experiences are built on honest communication, truthful representation of the items, and a compelling brand story. Younger generations all list sustainability credentials as an important factor influencing their purchasing decisions. It's simply no longer enough for brands to churn out fast fashion items and ignore what this is costing the planet for the people who work on the garments or shoes. Customers are demanding accountability and transparency so they can make informed purchasing decisions.

Fashionistas are also opening up more and more to resale fashion – both branded luxury items and good old second-hand apparel. By the end of 2026, Shopify estimates the global resale market will be worth $216 billion.

Targeting these consumer expectations requires increasing product and service personalization on the channels where you sell. When consumers feel heard and that they aren't dealing with another generic retailing giant, you can increase the potential for customer retention and brand identification.

Creating excellent shopping experiences fed by high-quality, tailored content that offers transparency on the brand's product life cycles and sustainability credentials should be the current long-term strategy of every major brand looking to secure future success.
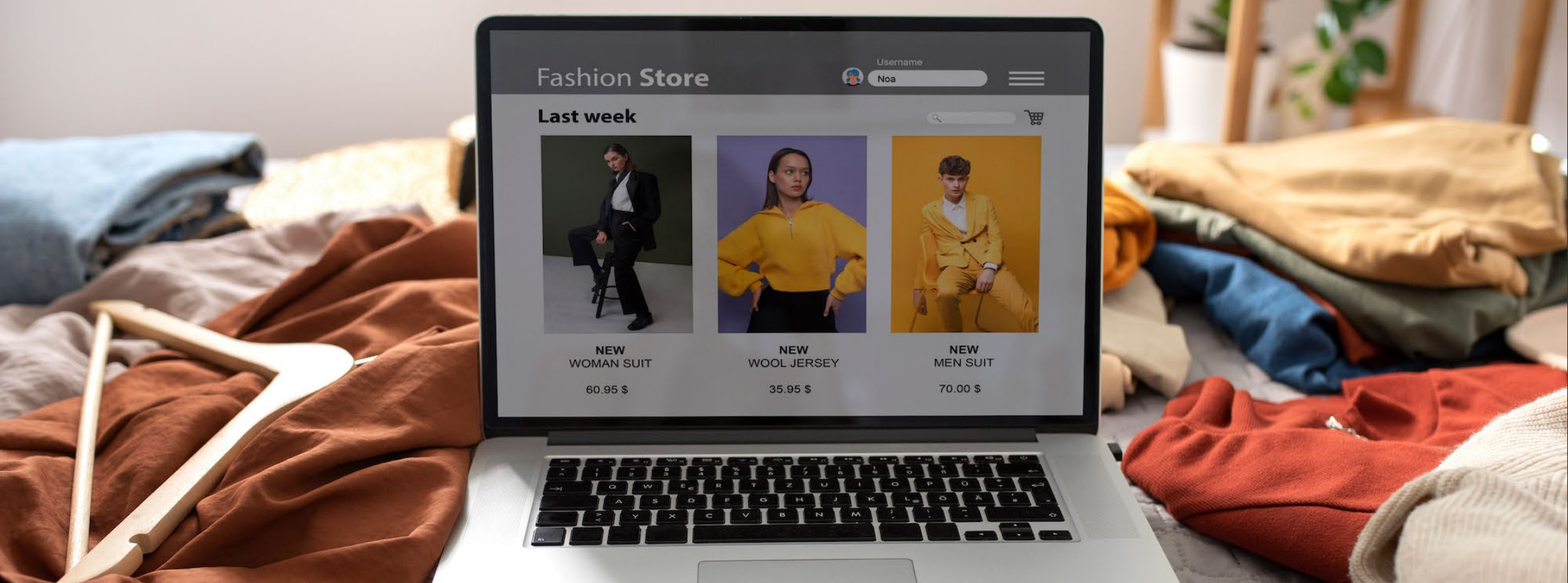
Discover product-to-consumer feed management solutions

Digital complexity generates unsustainable amounts of manual tasks for teams working with product data or managing product catalogs. The only long-term solution to overcome this complexity and grow is to use tech solutions that harness the power AI and machine-learning systems to automate nearly all labor-intensive product data tasks.

P2C platforms also come with comprehensive product marketing tools, so your product marketing campaigns can be managed end-to-end on centralized dashboards.

The advent of P2C technologies means that fashion companies no longer need to use IT resources to launch new product ranges, seasonal sales events, or explore potential on new channels.

With all current signs indicating that fashion retail is growing again in 2023, brands & retailers must find ways to unlock more opportunities from this trillion-dollar apparel global market.

Feed Management Solution

Talk to us!

Productsup

Empowering commerce

Get in touch today!

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