



10 Digital Commerce Trends from the Fashion and Apparel, 2020 Report

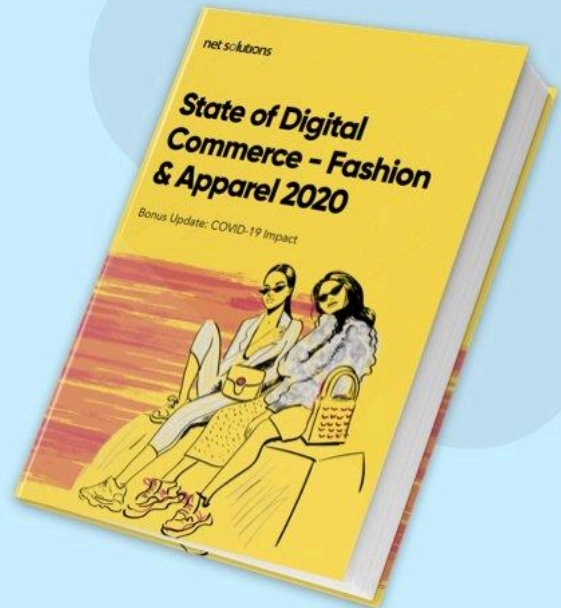


For fashion which is supposed to keep changing every season, this season has rather been an unfashionable one. Just like most businesses out there, the digital commerce industry- fashion & apparel, in particular, is battling the consequences of the pandemic. Retailers have expressed concerns over being able to find their feet in the exhausted economy and competitive market. Existing strategies have been revoked, marketing is being reevaluated, and brands are trying hard to make digital work.

State of Digital Commerce - Fashion & Apparel 2020

Bonus Update: COVID-19 Impact

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The State of eCommerce — Fashion & Apparel, 2020 Report features insights from several entrepreneurs in the world of retail to assess the dynamic industry with respect to customer experience, digitization, and brand promotion. The key findings and insights reveal how important and urgent it is to give attention to the innovations in the digital eCommerce world. Success in the coming months and years is going to be certainly measured by a brand's potential to transform itself digitally.

The Top 10 Digital Commerce Trends

Apart from the economic downside, ever-evolving customer behavior is a crucial aspect to solve for retailers. In such circumstances, the following trends can help a brand capture opportunities, live up to customer expectations, and hence find its place in the market.

Notable Trends from the Net Solutions' Fashion and Apparel Report, 2020



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1. The Rise in eCommerce Sales

It has been a sustained growth for the [digital commerce](#) industry all these years, but as the competition gets fierce and the situation worse, the industry has been reeling under tremendous pressure. Nevertheless, the growth is here to stay as a large number of shoppers have been switching to the internet for their needs and indulgences. In fact, contrary to the

ongoing predictions, the [Fashion and Apparel Report](#) reveals that a large number of retailers are looking forward to a rise in [eCommerce sales post the COVID-19 crisis](#).

Great sales are the primary determinant of success for an eCommerce business, but customer success cannot take a backseat — they are interdependent. Well aware of this, the industry has been focussing heavily on fortifying the customer relationship with the help of technology and innovation to increase sales.

The scope of leveraging tools to attract visitors and, in turn, boost sales is huge. From personalization and artificial intelligence to [shoppable videos](#) and automation, some of the biggest players in the industry have already shown how it's done.

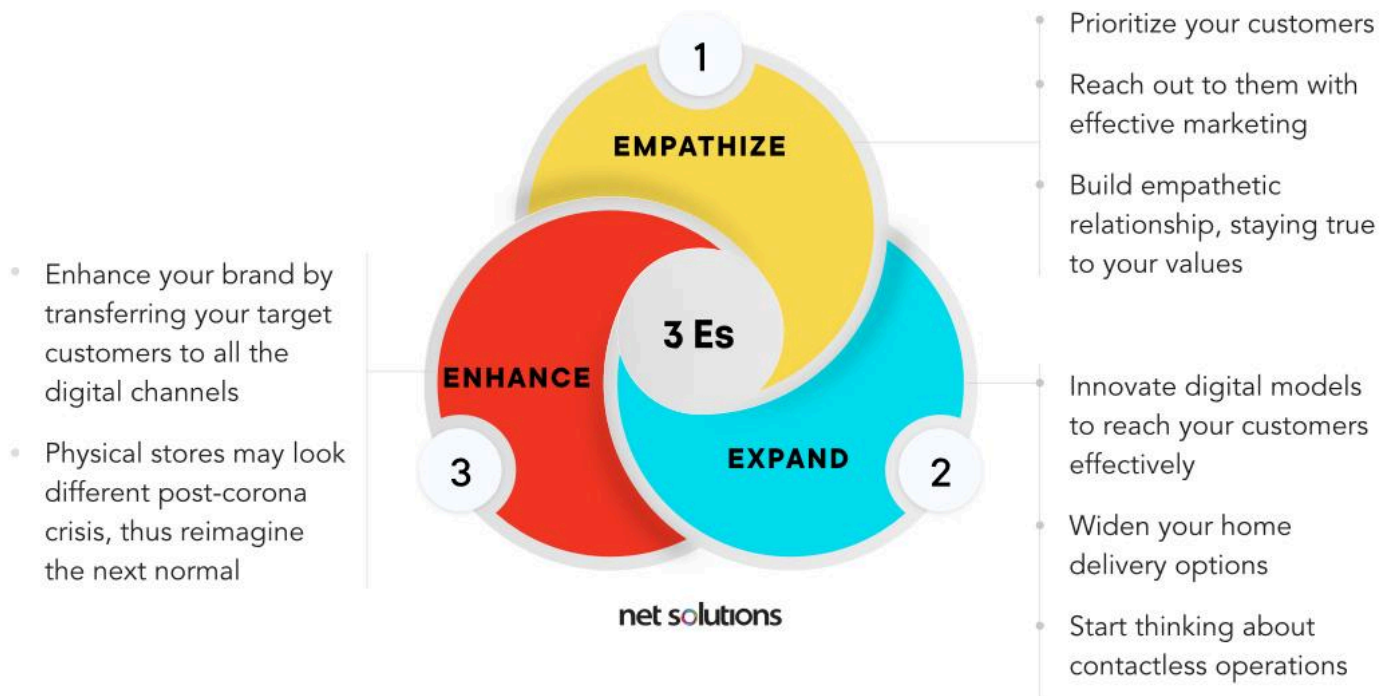
2. Changing Consumer Behavior

In today's times, consumers probably evolve faster than they shop. And for retailers, keeping up with their ever-changing outlooks is a continuous endeavor. The fundamental shift in consumer behavior is the preference of offline shopping over online. Within the online shopping space, there is a constant progression that businesses are adopting, ensuring a loyal customer relationship.

To stay abreast of consumer behavior, every business touchpoint should be able to shed light on the decision-making process of the buyer. Businesses should also keep a close check on their visitors and arrive at decisions based on factors related to their personal as well as environmental characteristics. From brand perception to the way it is being promoted, and even the ease of buying that product on a particular website can all influence the consumer behavior.

To drive the customer's needs and responsiveness, Net Solutions has introduced its **3Es Customer-Centric Framework**, discussed in detail in the [Digital Commerce Report](#).

Net Solutions' 3Es Customer-Centric Framework

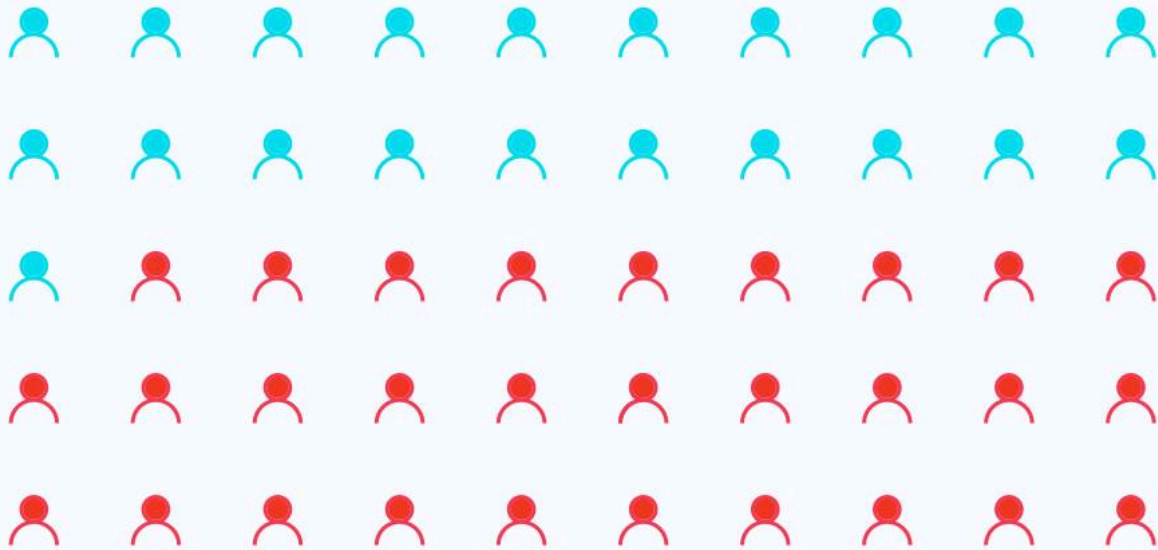


3. Personalization

[Personalization](#) is the buzzword in the digital eCommerce industry right now, and it is likely to stay relevant post the corona crisis too, considering businesses will want to try harder to retain their existing customers and add several more.

Personalizing homepages, displaying products based on the consumer's shopping habits, and showing them their recently viewed items are some ways of offering customization on websites. Many fashion websites have been extensively using personalization to make the user's feed more creative and convenient.

58% of online sellers find it difficult to sell to their existing customers.



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Recommending products based on customer behavior is also a great way to keep engagement high. An effective personalization approach should be backed with relevant data that helps the business know and understand what customers prefer and what they consider irrelevant. With the right data in place, it may not be very difficult to make your customer feel special after all.

4. Instagram Marketing

Instagram has emerged to be among the most favorite digital destinations of the millennials, and for all the industries targeting them, the Gram is the place to be. The channel offers many creative ways to promote and market a brand in the form of posts, stories, and even through influencers.

Since pictures do the talking on Instagram, it is a great medium for brands to enhance their visibility, experiment more, and display their products creatively. One of the ways to leverage Instagram is by making people directly land on the cart page by offering a Shop Now option on the post.

Several brands also make it a point to interact with their followers and share the relevant information about their products. Especially in these times, when the world is leaning on digital, Instagram is the best channel for any digital eCommerce business to build stronger relationships through content marketing and ensure continued brand recall.

Read the [Net Solutions' Digital Commerce Report](#) to find out how brands are using Instagram Marketing amid COVID-19 pandemic to bolster their relationship with their target audience.

5. Speed to Market

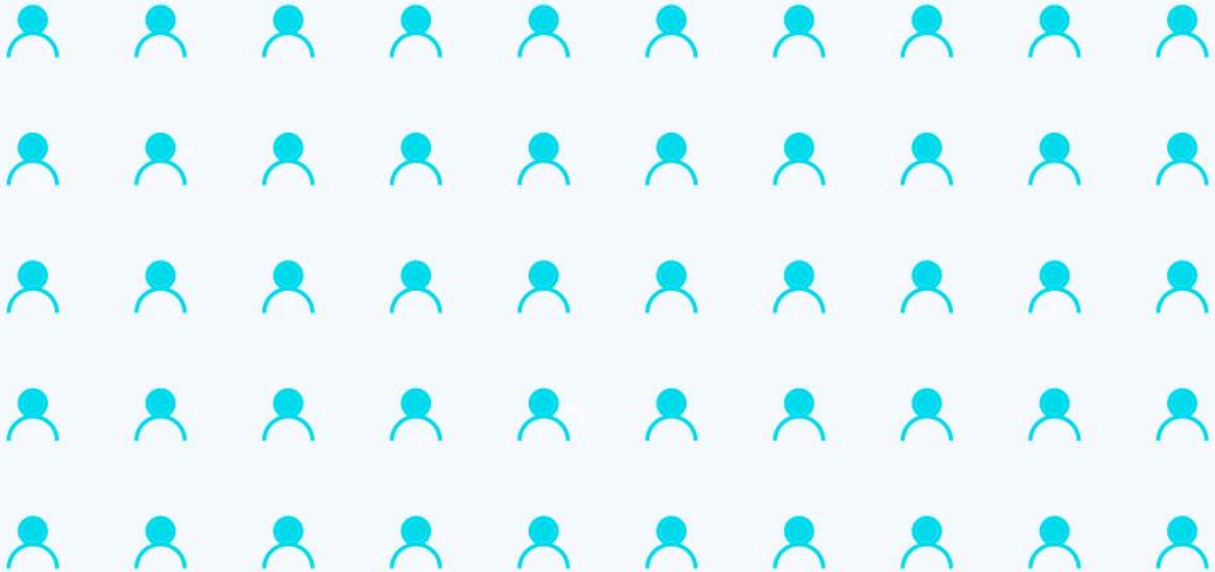
eCommerce businesses often try to offer something new to their customers very frequently. This can be a combination of adding new features, offering a new product range, or even a new [shopping experience](#) on the website. However, for a competitive edge, it is essential to react quickly to market changes and speed up product releases. Earlier the release better is the value for the product.

Once a product is released, the audience needs to be introduced to it through digital partnerships and promotions. Influencer marketing, for instance, is a strong progression towards a faster and higher reach. Being able to quickly build relevant products and also promote them equally fast through the relevant channels can go a long way in boosting the brand's prominence and sales.

6. Uncertain Business Environment

There can't be an issue more pressing than this one for the digital eCommerce businesses today. The market has always been dynamic in terms of the geopolitical context and economic oscillations, but with the pandemic, things have taken a turn for the worse. Businesses all this while have been using [data and analytics](#) to predict the market and design their strategies but not anymore. The current situation calls for a new approach altogether, discussed thoroughly in our [Digital Commerce Report](#).

100% of the businesses are exposed to more uncertainty today than in previous years.



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Entrepreneurs must work towards analyzing the forces that are shaping the industry and craft their strategies accordingly. It is equally important to prioritize those approaches that can rather be controlled and use them tactically to keep the business moving. Drafting digital plans can help businesses establish a stronger online presence, reach out to a wider audience, and eventually sail through what has arguably been the most unpredictable business environment in recent times.

7. Digital Tools/Platforms

Custom digital experiences are at the heart of eCommerce businesses today, and [digital platforms](#)/tools help create those experiences. These platforms come with a multitude of features that eventually elevate customer interaction on the website. By deploying them, businesses can be certain of making headway towards [Digital Transformation](#).

Digital tools are being largely used across all touchpoints, including emails, chatbots, websites, social media channels, and even in-person interactions to offer a frictionless experience.

Moreover, being a one-stop solution, they assimilate several technologies on a single platform and make it easy to manage the website. With the ability to collate customer data, [user experience](#), and business-oriented data in one place, digital tools/platforms have proven to completely change the way businesses function.

8. Seamless Checkout Experience

The last steps are often said to be slow and difficult but not for the customers of an [eCommerce website](#). A seamless checkout experience can be a game-changer that can revitalize customer retention and loyalty. For many users, abandoning checkout is easier than going through a long and complicated process. It is therefore of prime importance to ensure that the last and most important step of a buyer's journey is an effortless one. Businesses must alter their [eCommerce checkout](#) pages to help the buyer navigate faster and easier. Some of the techniques can include a single-page checkout, multiple [payment gateway options](#), and the choice of proceeding without having to necessarily register. An extensive inventory will have to be backed by a seamless buying process to stand out from the enormous competition within the eCommerce space.

9. Direct-To-Consumer Sales

Ownership has become a huge part of the eCommerce landscape today — ownership of the brand, its communication, and its reputation. No wonder then that a huge number of companies are starting to directly sell to their consumers while evading any retailer or middleman. To add to this the digital space had made it easier for the producers to reach out to their customers directly and exercise greater control over its sales.

For the consumers, the bargain isn't bad either since they are offered exceptional service and exclusive deals by the brand. Additionally, when a product is sold directly, the brand gives more attention to creating an experience around the process and journey — something that today's consumers are in continuous search of.

10. Multi-Channel Customer Service

Even while many businesses rely on their websites and apps to market and sell products, they cannot ignore the scope that lies in engaging various other channels to establish strong communication and presence. Customers have started increasingly communicating with brands through multiple channels and using various touchpoints during their shopping journey. For retailers, this means disseminating information through multiple sources of communication. Customers are often wary of instances such as having to repeat themselves to resolve an issue, waiting incessantly for an executive to reach out or being subjected to automated lines

for long – all of this hampers the customer service. Alternatively, a multiple-channel service which is a combination of emails, chats, calls, etc allow users to reach out quicker and expect the issue to get resolved sooner.

Conclusion

The worst implications of the current situation might seem to be passing by, but the next few months will continue to revolve around crisis-management and pose several challenges before the [Digital Commerce Industry](#). Nevertheless, technological innovations can significantly help combat the problem and march towards a revival strategy.

Thanks to digital transformation, the fashion and apparel industry has a fair chance to bounce back and thrive. The ten trends listed above point towards the importance of embracing the prospects that the digital world offers. Retailers need to pull around and reimagine their business while leveraging the market trends that the Fashion and Apparel, 2020 Report highlights. After [COVID-19](#), businesses and customers are likely to operate in a new reality, and like Bill Cunningham once said, 'fashion is the armor to survive the reality of everyday life.'

Source - <https://www.netsolutions.com/insights/top-digital-commerce-trends/>