



Fashion industry moves from physical to virtual mock shops

May 3rd, 2011 vrSoftware announced that its market leading “Visual Retailing” software is now licensed to 186 major retail chains and brands (e.g. Adidas, American Clothing, M&S Mode, Madura Garments, Crocs, sOliver, Kaufhof, Peek & Cloppenberg, Perry Ellis, Nike, Rockport, Macys, Bench, Target Pty., Asics, Umbro, Nike, Reebok, etc.) and several Fashion Industry trends are now apparent.

“For 10 years ‘Visual Retailing’ has been an embryonic market for the retail industry but now adoption of these software tools is rapidly accelerating,” said Colin Liversedge, CEO/MD vrSoftware. “This market growth is driven by the productivity boosting needs of a Fashion industry dealing with the economic recession and its own changing trends:

- The power of Visual Merchandising (VM) has been clearly demonstrated by Mary Portas on her “Mary Queen of Shops” programme (BBC TV and YouTube). Each programme shows how refining the merchandise range and improving shop floor presentation drives sales and makes for successful retailing.
- Numerically VM has been proven to increase walk in shopper to customer sales conversion ratio ranges from a lowly 5% up to a high of 47% in the UK with the average running at 20%. Good shopfloor sales merchandising can double the average sales conversion ratio, i.e. up to 40%.
- The increase in the number of retail ‘seasons’ – what used to be 2-4 retail ‘seasons’ per year is often now 8-12 depending upon the fashionability of the store. Each season needs new product ranges, marketing campaigns and shop floor execution in ever shorter time windows.”

Colin explained, “as a result Brands and Retailers are switching from manual processes, such as building and photographing physical mock shops to visualization via virtual mock shops built in a computer, often without having sufficient physical samples to dress a physical mock shop. Switching to virtual mock shop modeling is driving down the costs associated with the physical mock shop, (rent, labour, photography, manually creating store directives etc.) and driving up sales through better visual merchandising which improves shopper conversion rates.

For example, M&S Mode implemented vrSoftware Mockshop, vrSoftware Sampleroom and iShopShape’s StyleShoots products in September 2010 to streamline key processes, including visual merchandising (VM), product range visualization, and product photography.

Headquartered in Amsterdam, M&S Mode specializes in on-trend womenswear in a wide range of sizes and has around 450 stores in the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Germany and Spain. The workload involved in producing garment shots and store layouts was increasing rapidly – especially with shop presentations changing every week.

M&S Mode is already benefiting from the significant time and cost savings - Mockshop is streamlining shop presentation processes, Sampleroom is used for decision support and storyboarding for range visualization, and StyleShoots for the product photos for use in Mockshop and Sampleroom.

“These Visual Retailing products are certainly making our jobs easier as well as saving us time, our business processes are rapidly moving from physical to virtual mock shops,” says Marit Zijderlaan, visual merchandising specialist at M&S Mode.

“Mockshop produces clear and highly professional shop layouts that are really easy for our shop sales staff to follow – and that gives M&S Mode a unified brand image in all our retail outlets throughout Europe. StyleShoots® is a big improvement on our previous photo process, because it’s an-all-in-one solution with hardware and software that lets us produce better-quality shots in much less time.”

For further information please contact Metiri Mensus Pty Limited on +61 2 88203600 or visit our website www.metirimensus.com/visual_merchandising.html



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Metiri Mensus Pty Limited

Suite 107, Level 1, 30 Cowper Street, Parramatta NSW 2150 Australia

Phone: +61 2 8820 3600 | www.metirimensus.com