

AUGMENTED REALITY IN FASHION RETAIL INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

Undeniably, the fashion industry is one of the most creative industries that is important to any customer segment. Globally, through engaging clients and boosting sales, Virtual Reality is popping into the newest trend in the fashion industry. India, being one of the most populous countries and having an outsized customer base, can use AR in fashion retailing, which is not used by an outsized number of leading fashion retailers and has just begun to reach the country and many customers are still unaware of AR [47].

Methodology: *Various articles and websites were studied to collect the secondary data and analyze the information.*

Purpose: *This paper studies consumer preference, comprehension and acceptability of customers in both e-commerce and physical stores for AR technology. By understanding the knowledge, perception and experience of various consumer segments towards AR, the fashion retail industry will be prepared to know whether the introduction of AR will be sufficiently successful in attracting customers and reciprocally boosting sales or it is not necessary in the current market.*

Findings: *Augmented Reality can be used by the fashion retailing industry because there will be an improvement in customer experience in buying decisions that can attract customers to the store, which will reciprocally increase sales and profit and result in increased entry of customers into the store and improved brand positioning. Consumers find AR settings attractive, impressive and engaging. In order to achieve greater purchasing intention, it is necessary to amplify interactivity with the product in AR because it improves the attractiveness of the products. Young technology-competent consumers are highly willing to use augmented reality for shopping fashion products. In influencing augmented reality acceptance, social influence plays a serious role.*

Keywords: *Fashion industry, Augmented Reality, AR in Fashion Retailing.*

Introduction

Augmented Reality

Augmented Reality is an innovation that uses digitally created and generated images and digital information, such as sounds, video graphics, to overlay the physical world, creating an illusion that interacts and engages users in a virtual world. Augmented reality is a representation of the physical world that is digitally distorted [14]. An assessment by Digi-Capital states that 3.5 billion people will use augmented reality by 2022, representing 44 percent of the world's entire population.[15] In an interview with Vogue, Apple CEO Tim Cook said that Augmented Reality is about to modernize shopping experiences and fashion runways[15] He also said that there is no sector or industry that AR won't touch [15]. INHAABIT Director Jordan Yim said that Augmented Reality technology is completely changing industries and the ability to see fashion products in real time and explained the potential for AR to create a more engaging and interactive retail experience. [15] Greg Jones, Google's director of VR and AR, said that Google's insights indicate that 61 percent of those admitted may prefer shopping in stores that

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provide augmented reality. He also said that in the reconnection of physical and digital retail, Augmented Reality is closer. [15] Significant pandemic-induced alterations in consumer behavior and views, including adoption of immersive technology, were highlighted in a recent research by Futurum Research, which was sponsored by SAS. According to the research, in 2021, 69 percent of those questioned expect to use AR and VR to sample items, and 63 percent choose to use AR and VR to explore faraway areas [3]. According to a Think Mobile survey from April 2020, more than half of smartphone owners use augmented reality applications when shopping, with IBM putting the proportion at 32% [3].

Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality

Augmented reality varies from virtual reality by creating visuals of information that can interact, overlaid on the top of creating a completely artificial environment. Augmented reality creates additions to the reality instead of replacing it in the real world as virtual reality does. [32]

Fashion Retailing

Fashion retailing is a division of trade between suppliers and consumers that serves as a conduit. It is the process of buying manufacturers' garments and selling them to customers. [34] Products related to clothing, beauty and appearance are fashion products. This includes clothes, footwear, sportswear, traditional, formal wear, accessories (tie, eyewear, handbags, hats, coats, gloves, belts, wallets, umbrellas, socks, stockings, etc.), watches, jewelry, luggage, cosmetics, costumes, textiles, etc.

Review of Literature

- The study [1] states that AR dominates the presentation of products that are Internet-based by providing greater interaction. Interactivity with the product in AR should be amplified in order to achieve greater purchasing intent, because it improves the attractiveness of the products. In order to greatly enhance the marketing strategy, augmented reality is taken into account.
- The study [2] shows that young technology-competent consumers are highly willing to use the service shop for augmented reality. In order to tap into the potential, marketers have to identify areas with clear added value supported by augmented reality features. Augmented reality's successful implementation and the acceptance of augmented reality still depends on for the technical development and improvement.
- The study [5] concludes that AR influences buyers to take into account a larger number of products while also narrowing down the client's selection set. In addition, AR is considered as pleasant and fun experience by the buyers as they enjoy using it.
- The study [6] signifies that augmented reality allows customers to make appeal purchase decisions by providing them with the necessary information, particularly on appeal measurements and looks, while making an online purchase, even though physical try - on plays a key role in making an appeal purchase decision. Augmented reality is often used by distributors to increase customer interest in their products.
- The study [8] found that there is robust success in augmented reality and it will be continued. In fashion retail stores, augmented reality has the prospect of being developed for others
- The study [10] reveals that the virtual fitting room, based on augmented reality, attracts clients and increases attitudes towards adoption. Fashion companies must promote and adopt AR-based virtual fitting rooms to strengthen customers even if augmented reality characteristics are not able to provide enhanced experiences during the current phase.
- The study [11] denotes that virtual reality and augmented reality have made quite a big impact on a variety of marketing activities. Large corporations are continuing to make huge investments in Augmented reality and virtual reality mass-market applications, while start-ups are developing a variety of innovations, demonstrating the potential for Augmented reality and virtual reality to become a fundamental part of marketing.
- The study [13] indicates that by making both the procedure and the operation of the gadgets easier, increased brand value can be achieved by helping customers to make a clear decision on purchasing a product. Consumers find AR settings to be appealing, impressive and engaging.
- The study [16] denotes that, Because of the growing interest in Augmented Reality, it is now being employed in marketing techniques and is referred to as Augmented Reality Marketing.

- The study [17] indicates that the function of visualizing product information is carried out through mobile Augmented reality, which is a powerful technology nowadays. When compared to traditional techniques of exhibiting products, the impact of mobile Augmented reality as a tool is broader and greater in shaping customer experiences.
- The study [18] indicates that Augmented reality has the capacity to invade a customer's mind and imprint a product's image in it, allowing the product to be remembered easily. In terms of information delivery, augmented reality advertising outperforms traditional methods. In addition to greater product and brand expertise, augmented reality is more successful in marketing and attracting customer attention.
- The study [19] states that Fashion businesses benefit from Augmented Reality integration in addition to offering a more engaging experience for customers. As it focuses on consumer service control, Augmented Reality is more impactful while utilized as a marketing approach rather than a sales approach.
- The study [21] reveals that retailers use Augmented Reality experiential marketing in the form of Augmented Reality applications to exhibit and inform customers about the features and benefits of their items in greater detail, as the products can be tried in the comfort of the customer's home. It can also assist customers in reaching a buying choice by removing any uncertainties or misunderstandings they may have regarding the products.
- The study [23] states that there is a continuing demand from customers for new innovations to keep them engaged and entertained, as customers are now more knowledgeable than ever about technology.
- The study [25] shows that the increased interest in augmented reality in retailing among researchers and practitioners will continue. Augmented reality provides several opportunities for distributors to strengthen the shop experience for customers to communicate with the products. Augmented reality increases the involvement of consumers and the willingness to shop for them.
- The study [48] indicates that even though technologies are being employed, there is awareness of them, even beyond the initial excitement. Augmented reality is also one of those technologies that is underappreciated, as it has a better capacity for connecting the digital and physical worlds, resulting in benefits for both customers and businesses.
- The study [51] stated that although it is slow and it continues to affect e-shopping, there is a certain advancement in AR technology. E-Commerce stores selling clothing will have an infusion of the latest technologies that will strengthen their platform's efficiency and sales improvements.

Objectives of the Study

- To analyse the importance and hurdles of Augmented Reality technology
- To determine if Augmented Reality technology will be successful in Fashion Retail.
- To analyse the customer's experience and perception towards Augmented Reality

Methodology of the Study

The secondary data is sourced from various journals and websites and studied in detail.

Discussion and Findings

Augmented Reality can be used by the fashion retailing industry because there will be an improvement in customer experience in buying decisions that can attract customers to the store, which will reciprocally increase sales and profit and result in increased entry of customers into the store, improved brand positioning that will benefit from maximum sales and increased brand positioning [31] The customer's perception of augmented reality being easy to use is caused by augmented reality interactivity [28]. In order to improve communication and contentment, components of augmented reality search as procedure and coexistence feeling of possession can be developed by online retailers to increase the use of augmented reality experience. [30] As they seem to enhance the sensory richness of the experience, AR apps should be considered as a potentially valuable tool for creating effective interactions with consumers. [37] Consumers find AR settings attractive, impressive and engaging. Retailers must be aware of the fact that if there is no guidance provided, customers may become confused by the inconvenience caused by following the instructions. The features do not seem convenient or attractive enough in fashion retailing to

attract customer interest, especially customers who are resistant to change in accordance with two recent trends. [13] Integrating the mobile shopping application with the augmented reality can make an excellent difference and change the game by eliminating the problem of the lack of a more detailed and visual representation of the products in the current mobile shopping application and by combining augmented reality technology in mobile shopping, shoppers will have a more enhanced shopping experience. Before buying, it can allow shoppers to understand more and even try the goods. [41]. Providing the customer with properly fitting clothes may be a top business priority in the garment industry. [54] In order to achieve greater purchasing intention, it is necessary to amplify interactivity with the product in AR because it improves the attractiveness of the products. In order to greatly enhance the marketing strategy, augmented reality is taken into account. [1]. Young technology-competent consumers are highly willing to use the service shop for augmented reality. [2] In order to tap into the potential, marketers have to identify areas with clear added value supported by augmented reality features. [2] Augmented reality is considered to be of great benefit to consumers in sectors such as academia, medical and tourism [26] The way to invest in the best virtual fitting room is to find out what kind of automation is captivating and practical for their target customers by psychology and to find out how to make money from them to improve brand performance. [27]. In influencing augmented reality acceptance, social influence plays a serious role. To integrate social, local and mobile concepts, retailers need to carry out a good range of activities. [29]

Augmented Reality in Fashion Retail

Consumers are continuing to demand new technologies to keep them interested and amused, as consumers today have more technical awareness than ever before. [23] The clothing industry uses AR fitting rooms to a greater extent compared to other sectors. [27] Augmented Reality has considerable effects if introduced in fashion retail stores in India [8] An evaluation by Digi-Capital states that by 2022, 3.5 billion people might be using augmented reality which represents to 44 percentage of the entire population of the world.[15]

Importance of Augmented Reality in Fashion Retail

AR influences buyers to take into account a greater number of items and helps to make the right choice by having the details defined and ultimately narrowing down the buyer's selection set and also makes the consumer try products that they usually don't. [5] [6] The relationship with the store is discovered to be practical and pleasant to use and reciprocally build an increased brand image, value, awareness, positioning, exposure, knowledge, loyalty and desire to shop for. [13] [18] [19] [20] [22] [25] [31] [44] [49] [50] [54]. Retailers have multiple opportunities and conveniences to enhance the shopping experience by using Augmented Reality for customers to interact with the merchandise [25] Augmented Reality fitting rooms allow companies to provide buyers in both online and offline stores with an efficient and peaceful experience. [27] AR transforms the retail experience by adding flexibility and convenience to the shopping process. [29] Augmented Reality has an enduring impression of the client's decision-making process and Augmented Reality's effectiveness is present within the decision-making process of the customer. There is a probability of the replacement of traditional fitting methods using Augmented Reality. [31] Mobile technologies enrich the shopping experience of customers and also benefit retailers by obtaining customer data that is really useful for improving the targeting of customers. [38] Enhanced emotional response creates greater buying intention for those experiencing increase [39] [40]. In Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality Technology, there is a stable improvement which strengthens e-commerce. [46]. E-Commerce enabled by Augmented Reality helps customers to increase buying efficiency and satisfaction. [49] AR dominates the presentation of products based on the internet by providing greater interaction. [1] Fashion businesses benefit from Augmented Reality integration in addition to offering a more engaging experience for customers [19].

Hurdles being Faced by Augmented Reality in Fashion Retail

Since AR continues to be new in this sector in India, AR and VR technologies have an impact on data privacy and security [8] [46]. Augmented reality is considered to be at the starting point and needs to be improved to impress the customers and be employed. [47] We are at the beginning of an evolution in which AR is included because of its ability to enhance user interaction rather than technology. Consumers are worried about their device costs, such as virtual reality headsets and high-powered v-commerce computers [9]. For retailers and business-oriented research, augmented reality remains within the initial stage and an excellent scope for development in the present [25]. The implementation problems caused by AR and VR are the need for hardware, dedicated cabin, environment, lower cost and higher efficiency of hardware and technology recruitment, lack of innovative and distinctive content according to content. [41]

Opportunities of Augmented Reality in Fashion Retail

In the field of lifestyle and computer operations, augmented reality and virtual reality technologies have a higher chance of becoming successful. [41] When AR's full capability is used, the way it operates will be improved globally. [42] The e-commerce experience of customers will be altered using augmented reality through marketing activities for products that are physical-related. In the future, physique-related products are expected to use AR to transform the online shopping experience of a consumer.[30] In the future of gaming, medicine, real estate, army, leisure, telecasts and broadcasts, Augmented reality and virtual reality will play a major role. [41] [26] Even though it is slow and it continues to affect e-shopping, there is a certain advancement in AR technology. E-Commerce stores selling clothing will have an infusion of the latest technologies that will strengthen their platform's efficiency and sales improvements. [51] The virtual fitting room, based on augmented reality, attracts clients and increases attitudes towards adoption. [10] There'll be a continuation of increased interest in augmented reality in retailing among researchers and practitioners [25]

Factors Influencing Customers Adoption towards Augmented Reality

AR dominates the presentation of products that are Internet-based by providing greater interaction [1]. Augmented reality also makes it easier for buyers to decide by eliminating confusion over choice by offering trust in choice and narrowing down the alternatives. In addition, AR is considered as pleasant and fun experience by the buyers as they enjoy using it. [5] [6][31]. The virtual fitting room, based on augmented reality, attracts clients and increases attitudes towards adoption [10]. Interactive augmented reality functions achieve improved experience of consumer shopping experiences, mainly within the computerized imagery space. Interactive augmented reality functions achieve improved experience of consumer shopping experiences, mainly within the computerized imagery space [12]. When compared to traditional techniques of exhibiting products, the impact of mobile Augmented reality as a tool is broader and greater in shaping customer experiences [17]. Augmented reality has the capacity to invade a customer's mind and imprint a product's image in it, allowing the product to be remembered easily [18]. Enhanced gratification with the usage of application and intention of using it again can be attained by commitment to the brand by AR [28]. By adding flexibility and convenience to the shopping process, the retail experience is transformed by augmented reality [29]. The relationship experience of the consumer is positively affected by the procedure, the coexisting feeling of possession and the use of the functional attempt of augmented reality [30]. The customer's shopping experience is enriched by mobile technologies, and retailers also benefit from obtaining customer data that is really useful for improving customer targeting [38].E-Commerce enabled by Augmented Reality helps in increasing the satisfaction of the customers [49]. Virtual fitting rooms eliminate the greatest disadvantages of e-commerce, offering advantages of improved sales and lower product returns by customer [54].

Conclusion

This paper presented a comprehensive review of the literature to evaluate the role and performance of Augmented reality in fashion retail purchase making process-0oo0. The findings of the review show that customers believe that augmented reality improves comfort and simplicity of use during the buying process. Augmented reality clears up any ambiguity and simplifies decision-making. Fashion retailers must understand the value of augmented reality and put it to good use, since it is a tremendously strong tool nowadays. Augmented reality has a major role to play in improving the consumer experience when it comes to making purchasing decisions, which may help the shop attract more customers. Augmented reality also makes customers try out products while using Augmented Reality, which the usually don't even considered while making a purchase, which is a great benefit to fashion retailers. When customers utilize augmented reality to try out a product, their willingness to shop increases. In marketing and research, augmented reality is widely employed. Augmented reality is considered to be at the starting point and needs to be improved to impress the customers and be employed. Even if it is still in its early stages, augmented reality has an impact on e-commerce buying. The implementation problems caused by AR and VR are the need for hardware, dedicated cabin, environment, lower cost and higher efficiency of hardware and technology recruitment, lack of innovative and distinctive content according to content.

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