



From Catwalk to Cart: Ecommerce Insights for Fashion Retailers



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

- ▶ What we've learned from BigCommerce retailers in 2022

FASHION AND APPAREL ECOMMERCE TRENDS

- ▶ How evolving consumer expectations are impacting fashion retailers

THE FUTURE OF FASHION ECOMMERCE IS NOW

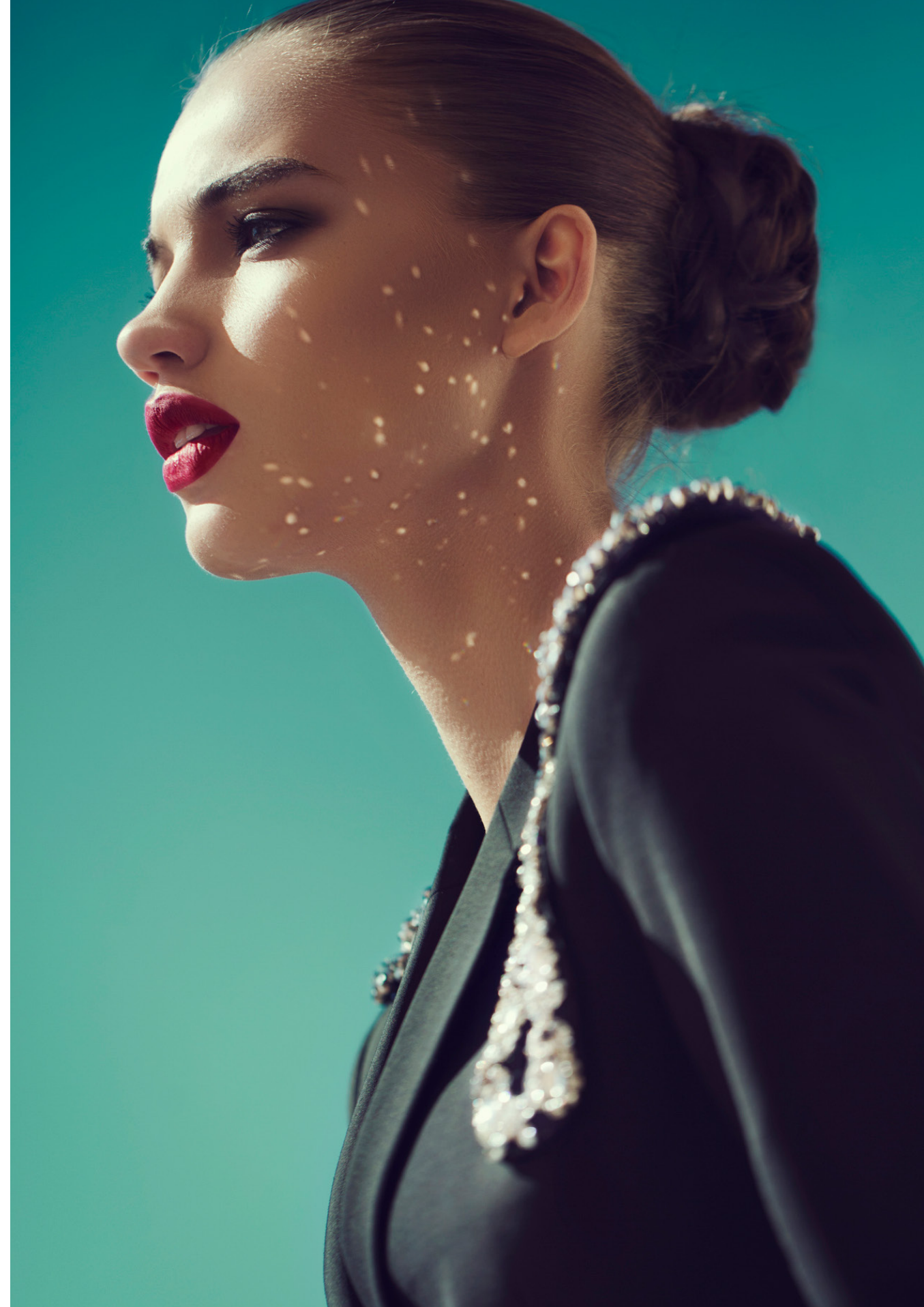
- ▶ New technologies transforming shopping behaviours

FASHION SUCCESS STORIES

- ▶ Real-world examples from leading fashion and apparel brands

THE FINAL WORD

- ▶ Get ready for a new era of fashion and apparel ecommerce



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



WHAT WE'VE LEARNED FROM BIGCOMMERCE RETAILERS IN 2022

*Written by Melissa Dixon,
Director, Content Marketing,
BigCommerce*

As a leading ecommerce platform, BigCommerce has had a front-row seat witnessing how shifting consumer behaviours have impacted the fashion industry — and ecommerce as a whole. Between an ever-evolving pandemic, supply chain struggles and a host of technological advances, retailers have shown incredible resilience, facing the unique challenges of the last several years with grace and style.

Looking back at the first half of 2022, BigCommerce fashion and apparel merchants across the globe saw a 3% increase in inclusive gross merchandise volume (GMV) compared to H1 2021. Despite the upward trend, BigCommerce merchant GMV across all industries worldwide has grown 6% year-over-year (YoY) by the same measure, indicating that the fashion industry is lagging when compared to the larger ecommerce landscape.

Notably, fashion merchants in Asia-Pacific (APAC) appear to have overcome this lag during the first half of 2022, as GMV was up by 10% from Q1 to Q2, and total orders were up by 13% from Q1 to Q2.



However, average order value (AOV) for fashion retailers was down by 1% YoY from H1 2021 to H1 2022. There are several factors to which APAC fashion's GMV growth can likely be attributed. The emergence of Bangladesh as [a key apparel exporter to the European Union \(EU\)](#), as well as India's growth in exports to the United States, for example. [The Japan Times reports](#) that low-cost, labor-intensive sectors like fashion and apparel have seen significant increase in orders from India by both the U.S. and Europe.

Regardless of the reasons for the current tensions within the market, it's imperative that fashion retailers continue to attract shoppers and retain their customers. As such, we surveyed our BigCommerce fashion merchants to gain perspective and combined it with our proprietary data to provide readers with proven strategies and actionable recommendations.

As always, our goal at BigCommerce is to empower businesses of all sizes, and our hope is that these insights will inspire ecommerce success for fashion retailers.

FASHION AND APPAREL ECOMMERCE TRENDS



SOCIAL COMMERCE

OMNICHANNEL SELLING IS KEY
TO A CONNECTED EXPERIENCE.

HOW EVOLVING CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS ARE IMPACTING FASHION RETAILERS

*Written by Océane Deslandes,
Content Marketing Manager,
BigCommerce*

It should come as no surprise that the fashion and apparel industry is regarded as a trendsetter, both on the runway and online. As we look back, here are some notable ecommerce trends shaping this dynamic industry.

We can all agree on the importance of customer experience, but just how impactful is customer experience in 2022?

In a recent survey of BigCommerce merchants, 44% of respondents prioritised enhancing the customer experience through omnichannel presence, improved customer service and shipping, while 20% pointed to omnichannel selling specifically. Furthermore, 8% of respondents said that click-and-collect was the greatest factor in improving their businesses in 2021.

Social commerce is another essential part of any omnichannel strategy. The evolution has been gradual but apparent to anyone who spends time on social media. The friction in buying and selling through channels like Instagram and TikTok is all but gone.

Interestingly, 48% of our survey respondents cited social media or social commerce as the shopping trend or technology with the greatest impact on their overall business in 2021.

BigCommerce merchant data corroborates this trend. For fashion merchants selling through Instagram, we saw a 741% increase YoY in the total number of orders comparing Q1 2022 with Q1 2021.

What's next for social commerce? Retailers and consumers alike are already benefiting from the emerging live shopping trend. If you want to streamline product discovery and purchases, look no further than Instagram, Facebook and TikTok.

ECOMMERCE INSIGHTS FOR FASHION RETAILERS



Read more about the top social platforms, marketplaces and search engines in APAC and how to connect with them in our [Omnichannel Guide](#).



SUSTAINABILITY

CONSUMERS WANT TO BUY FROM BRANDS THAT HAVE SUSTAINABILITY AT HEART.

A simple look at Google Trends shows that consumers are prioritising sustainability. In fact, search data shows that worldwide interest in the term “sustainable products” has increased over the past five years.

In a recent consumer survey of over 4,000 online shoppers in the US, UK, France, Italy and Australia, commissioned by BigCommerce to Profitwell, the majority of respondents rated sustainability as either very important (32%) or somewhat important (52%) when making a purchasing decision.

It’s even more important for Gen Z, as only 8.5% of respondents in this group stated that they were indifferent about sustainability, whereas 27% of Baby Boomers were indifferent.

With this data in mind, today’s fashion brands will need to invest in sustainability and highlight their efforts throughout their ecommerce website and marketing in order to attract and convert consumers, especially those in a younger demographic.

Read our [Global Consumer Report: Current and Future Shopping Trends](#) for more insight on the behaviour trends that could impact your business.



The next most common response to our survey question regarding the greatest impact on the overall business in 2021 — excluding uncategorised responses — was “offering alternative payment methods.” This includes methods such as Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL), cryptocurrency and digital wallets.

Significantly, 25% of survey respondents said offering flexibility in payments proved most impactful to their businesses. This makes sense considering the rise in consumers who are using alternative payment methods. In a 2021 survey BigCommerce conducted with PayPal of consumers in the US, UK and Australia, we found that 35.2% of respondents stated that digital wallets are their preferred payment method for online purchases. That number is even higher for UK-specific consumers at 45.8%.

Additionally, in a more recent global survey BigCommerce conducted this year when we asked consumers which payment methods they’ve used when shopping online, 16% said they’ve used BNPL. Of those who have used it, the majority were in the US (36%), UK (26%) and Australia (30%). Interestingly, consumers in Italy and France were less likely to report using BNPL.

The takeaway is clear: giving potential buyers more payment options yields positive results for ecommerce retail sales.

Not yet online and sure where to begin?

Discover [how to start an online clothing store](#).



GIVE TO YOUR CUSTOMERS MORE PURCHASING POWER

By offering Pay in 4¹, you can help customers buy what they need, when they need it.

Customers pay over time without interest, late fees or complicated applications. PayPal Pay in 4 is included in your PayPal Checkout rate and is a powerful tool that can help your business grow. Businesses with Pay Later messaging on their site saw Pay in 4 AOVs 39% higher than standard PayPal transactions². Turn browsers into buyers by giving customers flexible repayments on their purchases with Pay in 4.

¹PayPal Pay in 4 is provided by PayPal Credit Pty Ltd (ACN 600 629 258), subject to merchant eligibility criteria and your usual transaction fees and charges.

²Analysis of PayPal internal data from October 2021 through February 2022, results include Pay in 4 (AU).

THE FUTURE OF FASHION ECOMMERCE IS NOW

NEW TECHNOLOGIES TRANSFORMING SHOPPING BEHAVIOURS

*Written by Pablo Gallaga,
Senior Manager, Content Marketing,
BigCommerce*

The fashion industry stands to benefit most from adopting emerging technologies. The challenges of matching customers to the right product from the comfort of their own homes and offering frictionless checkout experiences are now largely met.

Some areas that are ripe for getting ahead of the curve are user experience (UX), augmented reality (AR), Metaverse retail experiences and artificial intelligence (AI).

01 OPTIMISE THE USER EXPERIENCE.

Responsiveness to the way customers are interacting with fashion shops is key to growing and remaining competitive.

BigCommerce spoke with global fashion brand Natori about the importance of staying the course on the front-end journey if you hope to arrive at the right user experience. They cited their collaboration with BigCommerce partner Groove Commerce in their success.

Natori's president, Ken Natori, gave his insight on the importance of that front-end experience: "Our website is a critical component of how our customers discover and experience the Natori family of brands and products. The team at Groove was crucial in helping us design an elevated user experience that will help us digitally connect with consumers. We are very proud to showcase the widest assortment of Natori-designed products anywhere in the world."

Arriving here required striking a balance between form and function. Ethan Giffin, founder and CEO of Groove explained, "For a brand like Natori, site design and functionality carry equal weight. Our goal was to bring their brand to life by creating a shopping experience that effectively combines merchandising best practices with Natori's unique story.

**"THE NEW WEBSITE
IMMERSES THE SHOPPER
IN AN AESTHETICALLY
INDULGENT EXPERIENCE
WHILE STILL ALLOWING
FOR NATURAL DISCOVERY
AND FASTER BROWSING."**

*Ethan Giffin, Founder
and CEO of Groove*





02

THE FLEXIBILITY OF
HEADLESS COMMERCE.

“FRONT-END FREEDOM

IS WHAT HEADLESS

IS ALL ABOUT.”

*Mark Howes, Vice President of
Sales for EMEA at BigCommerce*

Part of offering a strong user experience is staying agile. [Headless commerce](#), or the decoupling of a store's frontend design from its ecommerce backend, affords a merchant exactly that. Mark Howes, Vice President of Sales for EMEA at BigCommerce explains it this way.

“Traditional systems have worked well for years now, but the tech and the customer landscape has evolved rapidly. Businesses need to take a new approach to content management. This is where headless comes in.

Headless commerce is focused on being able to evolve your offering at speed and give customers the opportunity to interact with your brand in the ways that they choose.”

If there were any doubt where a fashion brand's priorities should be when it comes to providing a flexible user experience, Howes dispels it: “Front-end freedom is what this is all about.”

Listen to our podcast [‘What Headless Commerce Really Means for Your Business’](#) to discover more about the potential of headless.



03

AUGMENT THE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE.

The augmented reality market is estimated to reach \$78 billion by 2028. A large driver of this predicted growth is the adoption of AR by both online and brick-and-mortar retailers to improve upon the shopping experience.

Visualising various styles and colours of a garment or accessory without actually manually swapping them out used to be the stuff of science fiction, but it will now define the ecommerce retail experience for the discerning consumer.

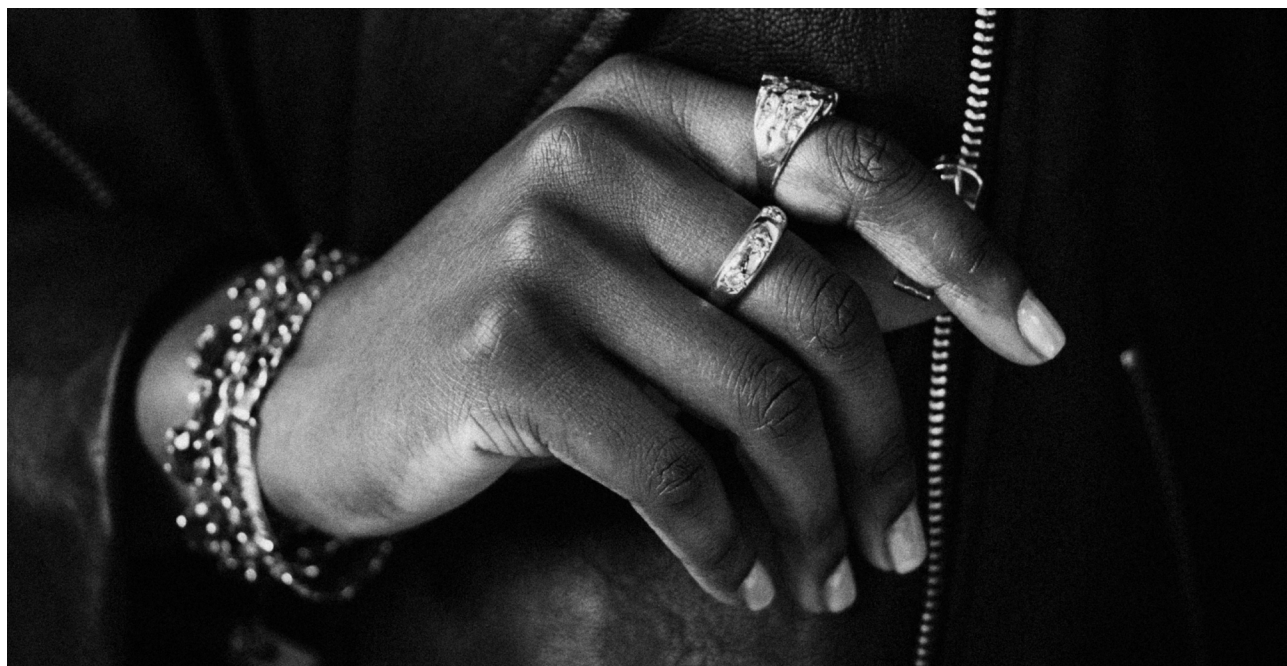
Similarly, being able to interact with 3D, high-definition representations of products in real-time will give shoppers confidence in pulling the trigger on purchases of products that are currently still met with hesitation. Shoppers want to examine craftsmanship and spatial attributes in person. Now they will be able to do this from their mobile devices and AR headsets.

BigCommerce interviewed augmented reality product configurator [ThreeKit's](#) VP of Marketing and Alliances,

Marc Uible, for the [Make It Big Podcast](#) to hear an expert perspective on how and why fashion merchants should adopt this trend. Uribe had this advice:

“WE ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO START. START WITH ONE PRODUCT. EXPERIENCE IT. YOU WILL SEE AN ROI BECAUSE PEOPLE LOVE THIS EXPERIENCE... AND THEN YOU CAN EXPAND.”

We recommend starting small and testing certain items to learn what truly engages your audience before investing too much time and resources into AR. In general, this is a great option to try new technologies you don't have experience with yet.



04

ENTER THE METAVERSE.

The Metaverse is the virtual reality network for real-time social and retail experiences that has dominated technology news cycles for the last year. But, are you aware that the Metaverse promises to change our very existence forever by marrying our insatiable hunger for information with the ability to experience it in a tactile, immersive way?

On the shopper's side, referring back to our consumer survey, we found that consumers were about evenly split between willing (46%) and not willing (52%) to shop in the Metaverse. We also discovered that consumers in Australia (52%) are the most willing to shop on the Metaverse, and those in France were the least willing (35%).

So while the Metaverse has the potential to transform and disrupt, it's still extremely early in its actual development. Still, many major fashion brands are jumping on the Metaverse bandwagon like [Nike](#) or [Hermes and Gucci which have already invested in non-fungible tokens](#) (NFTs) to generate interest in the Metaverse retail future.

ECOMMERCE INSIGHTS FOR FASHION RETAILERS

05

SOLVE CUSTOMER PAIN POINTS WITH AI.

BigCommerce has seen this [trend for some time](#). There are a number of ways that artificial intelligence can impact ecommerce. The majority of them result in optimised and automated workflows for the merchant and seamless experiences for the customer.

For example, online retailers seeking ways to curb returns have begun [implementing artificial intelligence solutions](#) to stop that bleeding from their bottom lines.

FASHION SUCCESS STORIES

REAL-WORLD EXAMPLES FROM LEADING FASHION AND APPAREL BRANDS

*Written by Shelley Kilpatrick,
Manager, Content Marketing,
BigCommerce*

We've reviewed the latest ecommerce trends and discussed the technologies that will power the future of fashion customer experience — but how are fashion brands putting these into practice? Let's take a look at these BigCommerce brands to find out.

LA PERLA

**CHOOSE THE RIGHT PARTNERS
TO ENSURE YOU EXCEED
CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS.**

[La Perla](#), an Italian luxury brand of lingerie, sleepwear and swimwear, started with Ada Masotti, a talented woman who created her first atelier of corsetry in 1954. Since then, La Perla has become a global leader in the luxury fashion market, combining design and creativity to innovate throughout every decade while always adapting to its customers various shapes, tastes and needs.

So, unsurprisingly, when the brand re-launched on BigCommerce in 2020, it surrounded itself with multiple partners to elevate the customer experience on its online stores. One notable example is [Like Digital & Partners](#).

The agency managed the full re-platforming using MACH technologies (Microservices, API-first, Cloud-native, and Headless) — which helped to deliver a long-term omnichannel commerce strategy across Europe, the Middle East, the US and Asia that's mobile-first and user-focused.

Another example that showcases how La Perla creates cutting-edge online experience is its [Fitting Lab](#). By walking through step-by-step instructions, complete with images and short videos, customers can determine their perfect fit. Not only does the Fitting Lab help customers find the right product, but it can also help to reduce the number of returns.

Like Digital & Partners isn't the only partner that La Perla has to help them. In fact, the company has taken advantage of multiple app and technology partners that integrate with the BigCommerce platform:

- ▲ [Attraqt](#) to improve the navigation and filtering experience
- ▲ [Shogun](#) to build creative content pages
- ▲ [Klarna](#) to offer alternative payment plans
- ▲ [Quantum Metric](#) to analyse metrics for continuous product design optimisation
- ▲ [Flashtalking](#), Google Remarketing, Pinterest, Facebook and Rakuten to advertise and sell across channels
- ▲ [Global-e](#) to expand internationally and create localised ecommerce experiences



NATORI

**FOCUS ON FRONT-END
EXPERIENCE AND
BRAND LOYALTY.**



Josie Natori, founder and CEO of [The Natori Company](#), literally took her business from the ground up when she began designing her own line of lingerie from her living room floor more than 40 years ago.

Her son, Ken Natori joined the family business in 2007 and worked his way up the ranks to become its president. Under his leadership the company built a booming direct-to-consumer business and ecommerce led the way.

Selling online since 2008, Ken Natori realised after eight years that they needed a platform that had more out-of-the box capabilities to give the company the ability to scale at will.

“The Natori ecommerce team is pretty small. So we definitely needed a platform that would make it easy for us to maintain the site in an efficient way. And

BigCommerce has definitely helped with that,” said Mariah Hager, Ecommerce and Social Media Manager at The Natori Company.

As explained in the precedent pages, the brand used the versatility of the platform to focus on their front-end experience. They plugged and played with the multiple apps available to stay connected with their customers across channels.

“Having access to BigCommerce’s open APIs, its app marketplace with partners and solutions to fit almost every need, our script manager functionality, and certainly omnichannel expansion are things that make the platform a major asset to Natori’s success,” said Colin Talbot, Ecommerce and Digital Marketing Specialist at the Natori Company.

Looking ahead, Natori focus is on building brand loyalty, keeping a close eye on the market innovation that will serve their customers:

“WE’RE ALWAYS TRYING TO INNOVATE AND DO OUR BEST TO STAY A STEP AHEAD OF THE GAME. WE’D RATHER BE SMALLER, MORE CONSISTENT AND MAKE SURE WE’RE MAINTAINING BRAND LOYALTY RATHER THAN BEING A BIGGER COMPANY JUST FOR THE SAKE OF GROWTH AND TO BE BIGGER.”

Ken Natori, President at The Natori Company



HIGHLIGHTED APPLICATIONS:

- ▲ Merchandising: [Searchspring](#)
- ▲ Email Marketing: [Klaviyo](#)
- ▲ Product Reviews: [Yotpo](#)
- ▲ Loyalty and Referrals: [Yotpo](#)
- ▲ Shipping & Fulfillment: [Global-e](#)
- ▲ Commerce Support: [Zendesk](#)

ECOMMERCE INSIGHTS FOR FASHION RETAILERS

[Read the full story.](#)



THE UPSIDE

FIND A PLATFORM THAT OFFERS FLEXIBILITY AND EXTENSIBILITY TO SUPPORT COMPANY GROWTH.

THE UPSIDE began its ecommerce journey on Magento 2, but as time went on, the company noticed an increase in the cost to maintain the platform across version changes, security patches and bugs that arose from development changes.

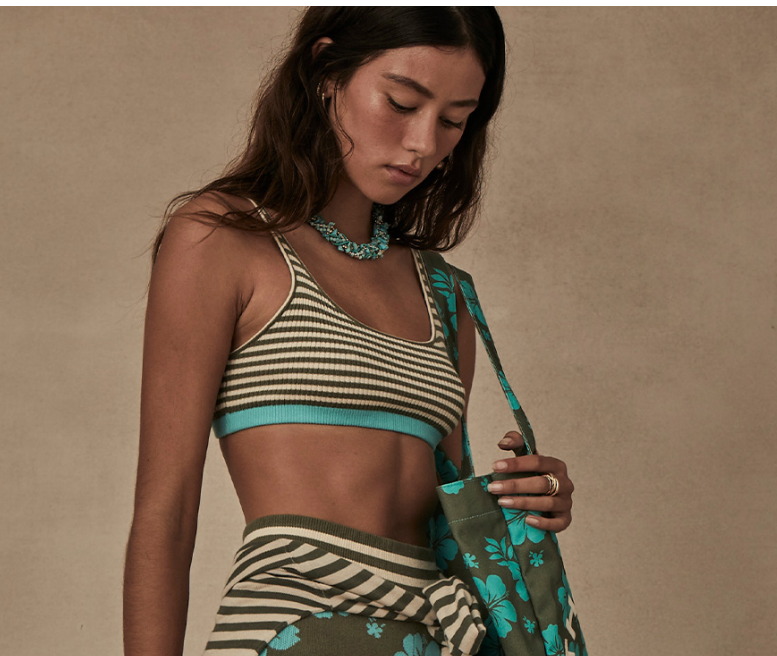
“We were finding that the vast majority of our agency development retainers were being consumed by simply keeping the lights on, which left very little room to progress the site in terms of improvements as well as keeping up with the changing requirements born of a growing business,” said Jesse Chan, Operations Manager for THE UPSIDE.

The decision was made to migrate to a platform that would not limit the brand, but offer greater flexibility and extensibility in terms of supporting the company’s growth. “It wasn’t a difficult decision,” said Chan. “We liked the idea that there was greater native functionality on BigCommerce. The user-friendly nature of the content management system empowers our team to do more themselves. And the use of some of BigCommerce’s out-of-the-box solutions meant we could launch quickly and recognise the benefits of a better experience and increased conversions much sooner,” said Sutherland.

“THE BENEFIT OF BEING ON BIGCOMMERCE IS THAT THESE INTEGRATIONS ARE ALL FAIRLY STRAIGHTFORWARD. WHEREAS ON OTHER PLATFORMS, THERE’D TYPICALLY BE A LOT MORE HEAVY LIFTING INVOLVED. BIGCOMMERCE HAS JUST BEEN REALLY STRAIGHTFORWARD, AND IT’S FANTASTIC.”

Highlighted applications:

- ▲ Online Search: Searchspring
- ▲ Onsite Personalisation: Searchspring
- ▲ Customer Relationship Management: Klaviyo
- ▲ Technical Features
 - Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP):
 - Apparel21 (AP21)
 - Order Management System (OMS):
 - Product Information Management (PIM)
 - Enterprise Service Bus (ESB) / Middleware
 - CDP (customer data platform)
 - Zimble
 - Lexer





THE FINAL WORD

GET READY FOR A NEW ERA OF FASHION AND APPAREL ECOMMERCE

Written by Océane Deslandes,
Content Marketing Manager,
BigCommerce

After taking stock of our BigCommerce data and merchant sentiment, we can confidently say that fashion and apparel merchants are taking well to the trends that are sweeping ecommerce retail.

Social commerce and omnichannel selling remain a definitive focal point for the fashion industry, while user experience and flexible payment types are paramount among consumer needs for 2022.

Looking ahead, we see AI, AR and Metaverse retail experiences looming as the next challenges for merchants looking to stay ahead of the curve.

Meghan Stabler, BigCommerce Senior Vice President of Global Product Marketing, sees a continuation of the technology trends outlined above:

“TO REALLY STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD AND STAY RELEVANT, THAT MEANS STAYING ON TOP OF THE LATEST CAPABILITIES AND REMAINING AGILE. FRANKLY, THE NEW TRENDS — AUGMENTED REALITY, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE — WILL EVENTUALLY BECOME THE OLD TRENDS AS MORE RETAILERS ADOPT THEM TO ATTRACT AND CONVERT SHOPPERS WHERE THEY ARE.”

|| **ECOMMERCE INSIGHTS FOR FASHION RETAILERS** ||

The ecommerce landscape is constantly evolving, and we may see exciting new trends emerge at any time. But by remaining agile, fashion and apparel retailers are uniquely positioned to capitalise on anything thrown their way

Are you ready to experience fashion ecommerce for a new era?

ABOUT PAYPAL

PayPal has remained at the forefront of the digital payment revolution for more than 20 years. By leveraging technology and strategic partnerships to make financial services and commerce more convenient, affordable, and secure, the PayPal platform is empowering more than 435 million consumers and merchants in more than 200 markets to join and thrive in the global economy. In 2022 we processed 22 billion transactions globally with a value of US \$1.36 trillion. This is more than 40 thousand transactions, worth \$2.5 million, per minute.

PayPal has been operating in Australia since 2005, enabling transactions, online and offline, for Australian businesses, from sole proprietors, small and medium businesses through to established large merchants, while protecting the personal financial information of our more than 9 million active user accounts. PayPal is passionate about innovation in payments and is excited about the myriad of benefits that can be delivered to Australian customers and the economy more broadly.

The PayPal platform, including the PayPal digital wallet, PayPal Credit, including Pay in 4 (buy now pay later) and PayPal Working Capital (merchant loans), Braintree (payment platform), and Hyperwallet (payout platform) enables Australian customers and merchants to receive money in more than 100 currencies, withdraw funds in 56 currencies and hold balances in their PayPal accounts in 25 currencies.



MORE FREEDOM.
MORE SALES.
LESS FRICTION.
THAT'S BIGCOMMERCE.



[Request a demo](#) to discuss your business with our experts.



BIGCOMMERCE.COM.AU

