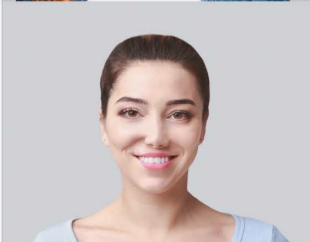
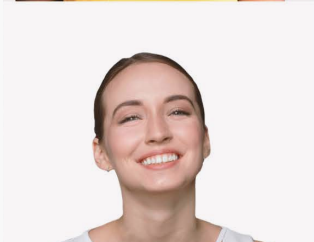
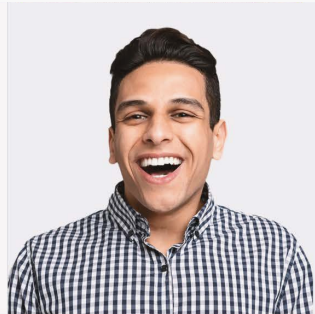
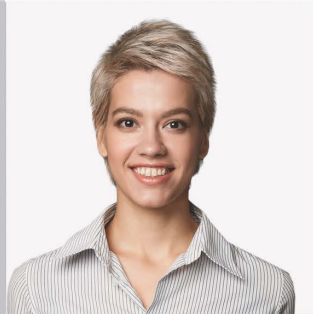
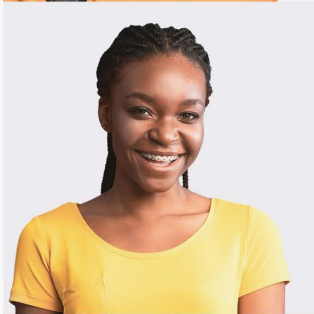


**THE PERSONALIZATION EFFECT SERIES #2**

# How Leading Apparel & Footwear Retailers Choose the Right Personalization Solution





*Retailers know their shoppers crave personalized retail experiences. With so many solutions that claim to offer personalization and yet fall short of expectations, in this guide we share how smart apparel and footwear retailers select the right technology.*

## Introduction

To facilitate customer satisfaction and growth, it's imperative for apparel and footwear retailers to offer a great experience at all touchpoints. This is why it's important for brands to choose the best personalization solution. With all the various technological options available on the market, this

selection can prove to be an arduous task.

In this guide, we aim to expedite the process by sharing the requirements and capabilities to consider which will guide you when selecting the best personalization solution for your business.

## What is a Personalization Solution?

A personalization solution is a combination of everything a retailer needs to offer shoppers an optimal 'human experience' across all channels, decision journeys, and buying stages.

McKinsey<sup>1</sup> attests that personalization will be the prime driver of marketing success - "personalization leaders have found proven ways to drive 5 to 15 percent increases in revenue and 10 to 30 percent increases in

marketing-spend efficiency-predominantly by deploying product recommendations and triggered communications within singular channels."

In contrast, Mckinsey reports that companies that haven't utilized personalization have suffered financial loss, sometimes leading to bankruptcy which should act as a further incentive for retailers to see personalization as an investment to stay ahead of the curve.

# The Factors To Consider When Choosing Your Personalization Solution

## 1. Your solution should provide an accurate personalization recommendation

Global body diversity means that every single human being is unique. According to The Emily Program<sup>2</sup> an affiliate of the University of Minnesota's Medical School, "body size and structure is determined and influenced by a variety of forces... Genetics play an obvious role in physical appearance, as an individual's gene pool influences bone structure, predispositions, and more."

When choosing the right solution, it's advisable for retailers to pick the solution that solves two key problems which are that no two people have the exact body measurements and the lengths shoppers have to go to buy with confidence online.

Ultimately, people are individuals and each person's profile is a composition of many characteristics which include height, weight, age, fitness level, and personal style. So it follows that shoppers have different needs and preferences when it comes to their fit and style choices.

Your solution needs to be able to take into consideration how each user is different not just in body measurements and size, but how people's measurements differ across countries, and how each shopper has personal preferences and needs. Retailers should invest in an algorithm-driven solution that is able to account for the aggregate of these different user factors inputs to give immediate and accurate personalized recommendations.



## 2. Your solution should comply with security and data protection regulations

Personalization solutions require many data points on each consumer's inputs and shopping behavior. Collecting and using this data has its benefits to the consumer but opens consumers to privacy concerns. Reuters<sup>3</sup> reported that "more than seven in 10 respondents to a survey of almost 10,000 people in nine countries said they were worried about how tech firms collected and used their personal data". There was

also a demand for increased governmental regulation to protect data privacy.

The region in which a retailer operates is governed by security and data protection regulations that pertain to that area. It stands to reason that companies that are at the forefront of personalization innovation need to be proactive in ensuring their customers' privacy is protected at all costs.

For instance, non-compliance with data security regulations can lead to negative financial impact on a retailer which includes getting sued or regulatory fines.

It's important for a personalized solution to comply with security and data protection rules because taking the time, effort, and money to protect the data supplied by users shows good faith and helps to create and build trust between the customer and retailer.

It shows that the company is willing to operate within the necessary legal framework to ensure that users' data is not abused (e.g. sold to competitors) and is treated with care and respect.



### 3. Your solution's product features should enhance user experience and have a direct KPI impact

According to this study by [Forrester Research](#)<sup>4</sup>, better design increases conversion rate by 200% and better UX (User Experience) can boost that rate by 400%. This article by [Forbes](#)<sup>5</sup> shares that every dollar invested in improving UX brings \$100 in return. Numbers don't lie. So how do we actually build products with great UX that have a direct impact on such KPIs?

To answer this question, first we need to understand that enhancing user experience is not a one-time event, but rather an outcome of an "iterative" process. Enhancing user experience is a process that starts with the product discovery and continues throughout the development and before and after delivery. This process should include user and

market research, ideation, design and prototyping, user testing, and validation.

It is of paramount importance to remember that the impact of all such incremental UX improvements must be measured against the product KPIs or else you might end up with an aesthetically pleasing product or feature that does not contribute to any business goals of your company.



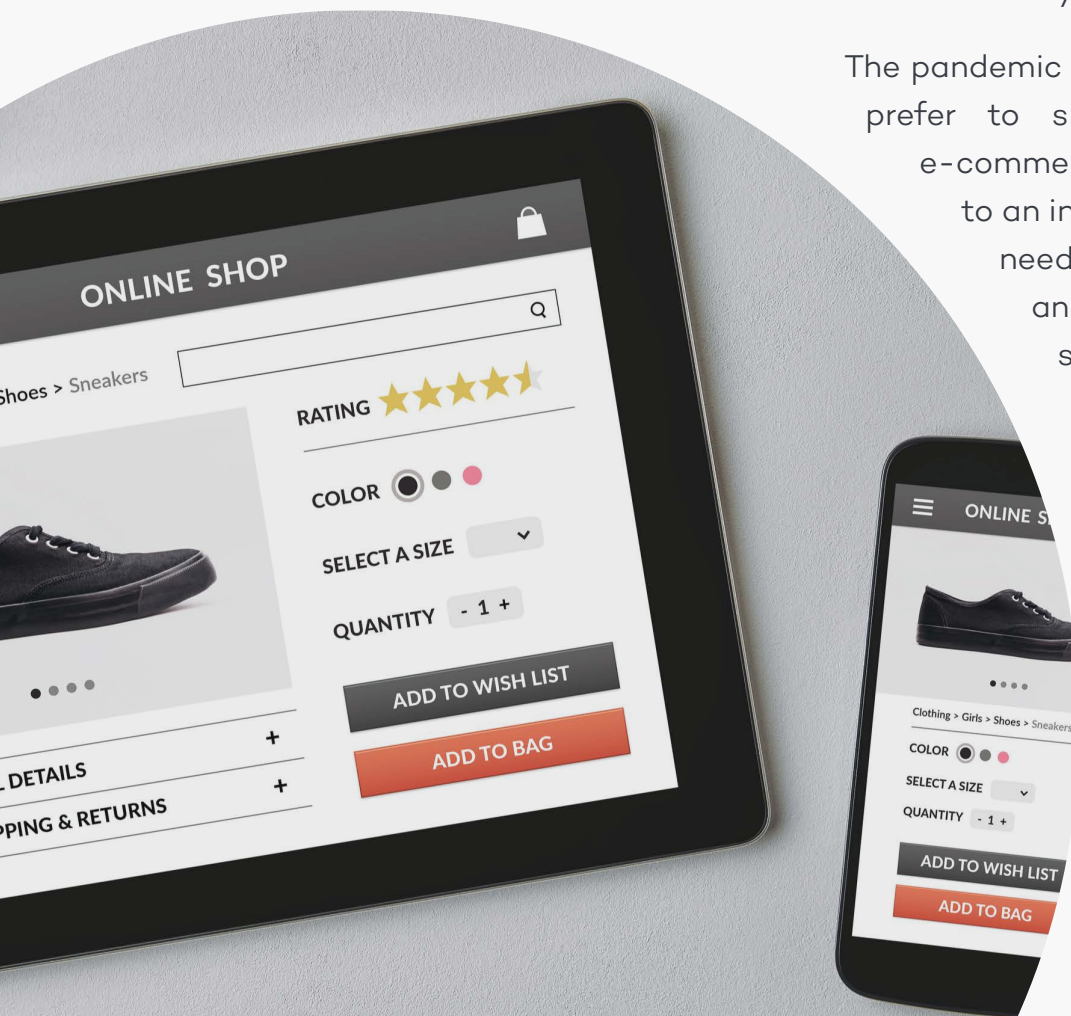
## 4. Your solution should offer a multichannel experience

Today's consumer expects a curated shopping experience that is seamless from one device to another and can be incorporated on the go.

There has been an evolution that has shifted to an e-commerce centric retail environment. Retailers desire a strong omnichannel strategy to evolve with the consumers as many transition

from primarily in-store shoppers to predominantly online shoppers. Brands need to provide a multichannel retail experience that connects and extends the shoppers' experience from the e-commerce site, native app, in-store, and any other touchpoint. Such a connection makes the customer's experience indistinguishable across all channels, giving shoppers the option to utilize multiple channels simultaneously.

The pandemic has changed how shoppers prefer to shop - opting more for e-commerce shopping as opposed to an in-store experience. Retailers need to adjust to these changes and utilize a personalized solution that provides an adequate substitute to the assistance provided by store associates to ensure shoppers can still have their needs met efficiently.



## 5. Your solution should offer a personalized search experience

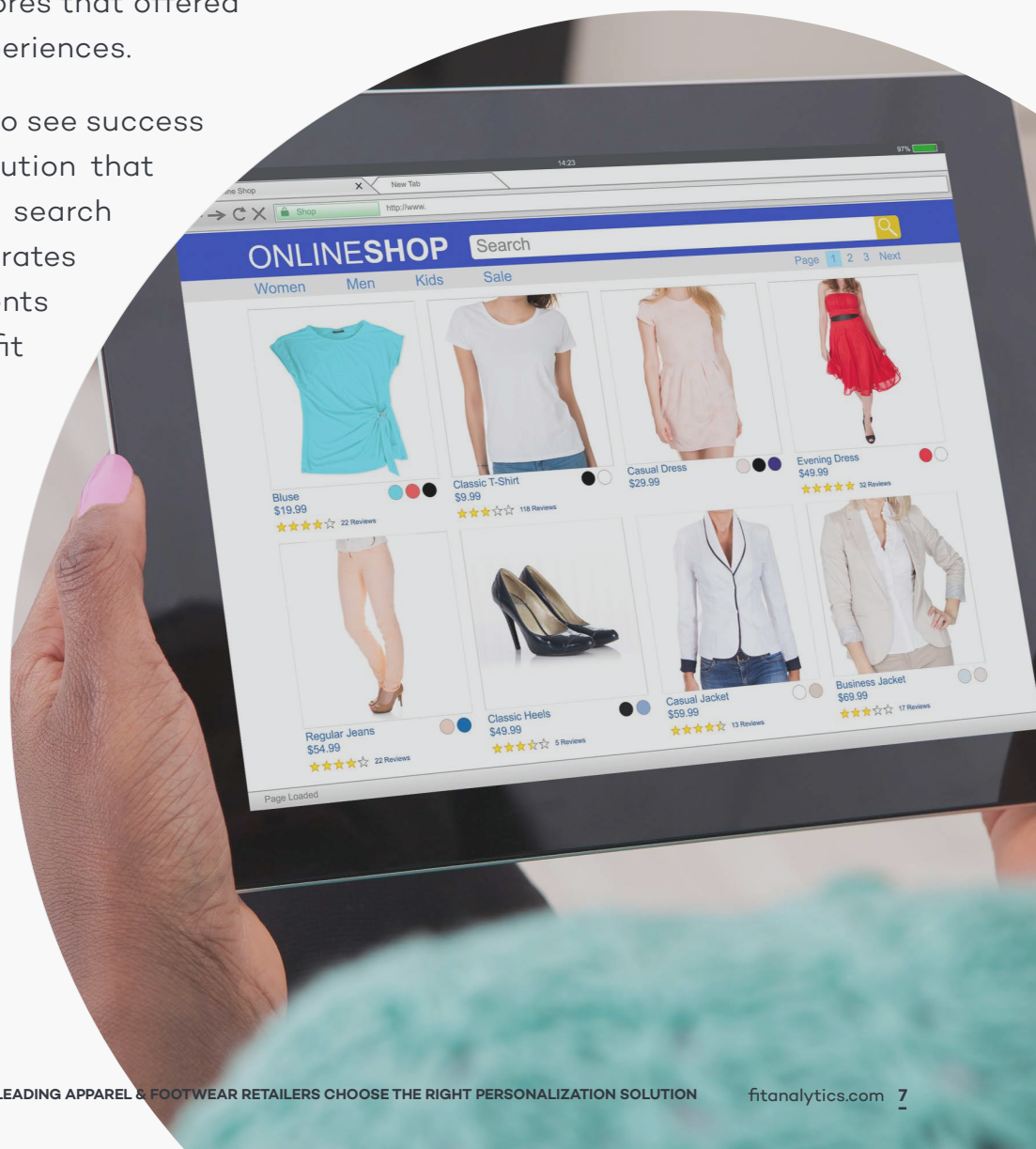
Sailthru<sup>6</sup> performed a survey that involved 100 retail brands being ranked on how well they used data to personalize and connect the customer experience across various touchpoints. The results reflected that customers scored retailers with higher points when they used personalization with individual customer needs in mind. Furthermore, the report showed that customers were more likely to return to shop with stores that offered engaging and unique experiences.

Retailers are more likely to see success when they opt for a solution that offers a personalized search experience that incorporates the important components of selecting apparel - fit and style.

An individual-focused search experience incorporates a user's fit and style preferences and steers shoppers towards items that are tailored to suit them. This in turn fosters a better and

more pleasing shopping experience which the user is likely to want to repeat.

Such an experience builds trust between the customer and brand enabling browsers to convert to buyers. These buyers are more willing to come back to shop on sites that cater and satisfy their needs, which then reduces the likelihood of them making returns.



## 6. Your solution should offer seamless integration and give full-service support

A well-thought-out personalization software is built with easy integration at its core. Retailers are likely to be drawn to platforms that don't demand an arduous implementation process. It follows that they will prioritize solution providers where full support is given because this reduces the workload on their IT team and ensures that ongoing optimizations of

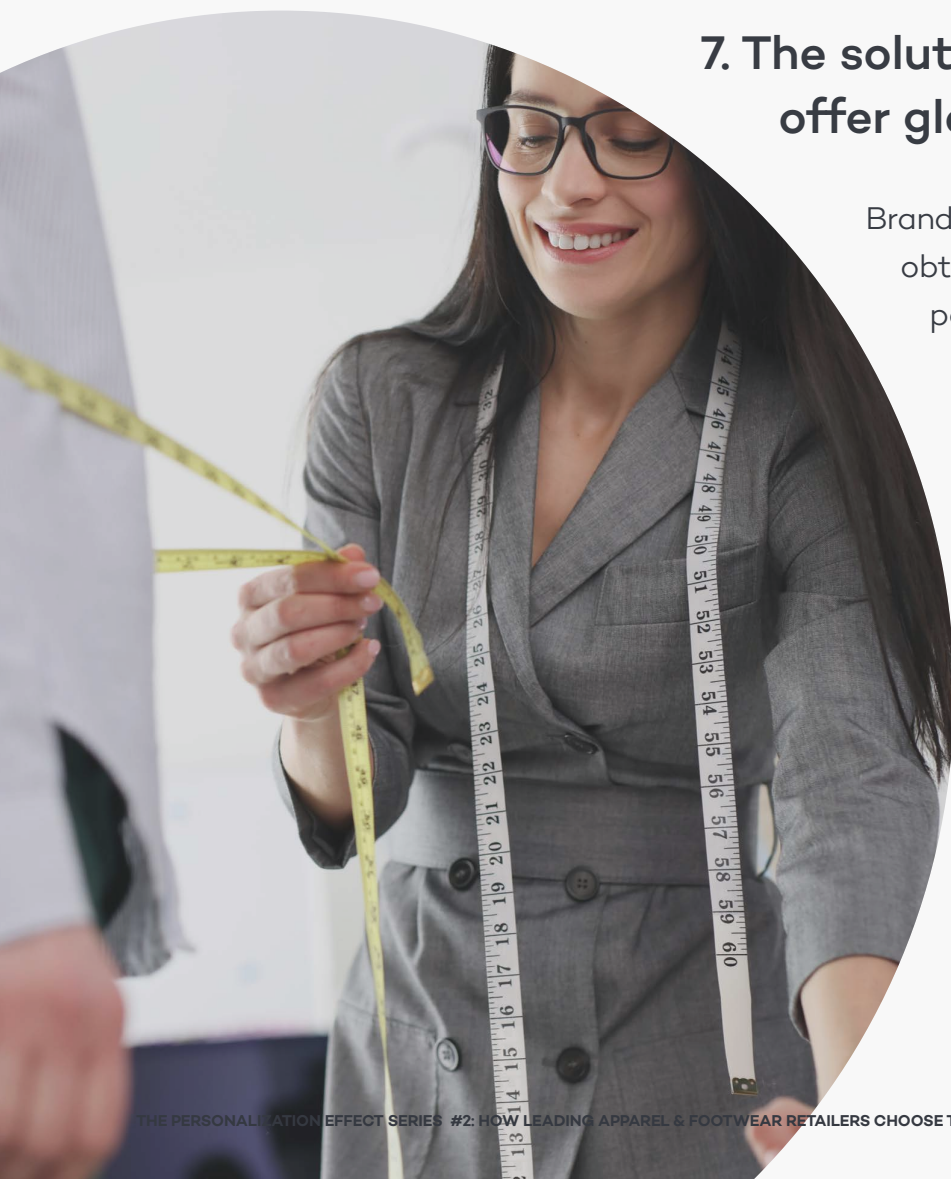
the technology are being managed by the service provider.

It may go without saying, it's also critically important for retailers to choose a platform that does not disrupt the business flow of the company while it's being installed and one which shows results quickly once it's set up.

## 7. The solution you choose should offer global capabilities

Brands and retailers have the option of obtaining customers from different parts of the world, so offering a global solution gives retailers an edge with customer acquisition.

Sizing systems change globally across brands and countries, so the platform needs to 'speak' in the same sizing system language your shop does. A solution that is able to take in different characteristics like sizing systems, languages, measurements, and even a right-to-left application flow for specific cultures will provide a more enjoyable experience for the user.



## 8. Your solution should have the ability to scale

When partnering with technology providers, retailers should look not only at the main challenge the technology is solving, but also to assess how the provider can address current and future challenges in the business.

Every retailer wants to grow in profitability and expand as a result. Therefore it's important to choose a technology that has the capability to withstand growth but also multiple facets and features to support changing needs in your business without adverse issues.

In May 2020, [McKinsey](#)<sup>7</sup> predicted the “online share of fashion and apparel in Europe and North America to increase by 20 to 40 percent during the next 6 to 12 months.” In light of this they advised retailers to reallocate resources and shift management from offline to online (e.g. put more emphasis on customer experience online), and scale-up capabilities in both demand generation and fulfillment.

The retail industry is anything but stagnant. Retailers need to run businesses that are set up for growth and for this growth to be scalable, retailers need a technology that is able to support an increased workload, a rise in customers, additional functionalities, and still deliver efficiently and effectively.



## Summary

Personalized shopping experiences and digital product recommendations play an integral role in how users interact with your e-commerce store and can be the driving force in determining whether a user converts to a customer.

Knowing this and the technological choices available (each offering different features and benefits), it can be a daunting and stressful experience for a retailer to choose the right personalization partner.

That's why we fashioned these eight crucial questions that let you do away with the fluff and hone straight in on the key areas that will help you identify the ideal personalization partner. The answers to these questions will provide a better understanding of the product capabilities and limitations of a particular solution, allowing you to make the right informed decision.



## How Fit Analytics' Personalization Solution Compares to Other Solutions

	Fit Analytics	Platform-Based Solution*	App & Widget-Based Solution**
<b>Omni-Channel Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online</li> <li>• Mobile</li> <li>• In-store</li> <li>• Native app</li> <li>• Social apps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online</li> <li>• Mobile</li> <li>• In-store</li> <li>• Native app</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online</li> <li>• Mobile</li> <li>• In-store</li> </ul>
<b>Personalized Search Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fit Connect provides a personalized search and browse environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Style recommendations based on size are available</li> </ul>	
<b>Security and Data Protection Regulations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fit Analytics adheres to the highest regulations of data and privacy regulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The average solution sells user data</li> </ul>	
<b>User Experience and Direct KPI Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive and regular user testing</li> <li>• User preference over the competition</li> <li>• Proven impact to conversion rate</li> </ul>		
<b>Accurate and Personalized Recommendation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Machine learning algorithms provide recommendations based on user inputs and AI</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solution is based solely on size chart data of reference brands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solution is based solely on size chart data</li> </ul>
<b>Global Solution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fit Finder is available in over 25 languages</li> <li>• Global sizing systems</li> <li>• RTL flow capabilities</li> </ul>		
<b>Ability to Scale</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OOTB solution can work for smaller retailers with limited categories</li> <li>• API capabilities support complex and custom initiatives for our global multi-category retailers</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires work on the retailer's side to increase product listings</li> <li>• No additional solutions to scale</li> </ul>
<b>Seamless Integration and Full-Service Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration only requires 2 lines of code on the retailer side</li> <li>• Each client is assigned a Client Success Manager to ensure ongoing KPI impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each client is assigned a Client Success Manager to ensure ongoing KPI impacts</li> </ul>	

\*This is based on the advertised features and capabilities of the average platform-based solutions

\*\*This is based on the advertised features and capabilities of the average app-based and widget-based solutions

The personalization market space has grown to include numerous vendors offering a different range of personalized solutions. Fit Analytics is a well-recognized leader in personalization. With sought-after features

like the ability to scale, data security, and seamless integration - we take the guesswork out of personalization so that your customers get the experience they want across all your touchpoints.

## Key Takeaways

*In summary, when evaluating your perfect personalization solution, remember:*

- Investing in a personalization solution is an important decision that will have both short and long-term effects on your business.
- An ideal personalization doesn't frustrate your customers and facilitates rather than loses purchase revenue.
- When choosing the right technology, consider the features, support provided, your business objectives, and also factor in how your needs may advance in the future.
- At Fit analytics, adhering to privacy and data regulations is at the core of our business.
- Fit Analytics' size advisor - Fit Finder - provides a global solution that can be seen with its multiple sizing and language support.
- Fit Connect is Fit Analytics' recommendation API that delivers on-demand sizing and style data to any point along the shopping journey.

*To learn more about how our platform and personalized solution can help you offer quality customer experiences, [contact us](#).*

## Foot Notes

<sup>1</sup> McKinsey - [The future of personalization - and how to get ready for it](#) (June 2019)

<sup>2</sup> The Emily Program - [Why healthy looks different on everyone](#) (July 2019)

<sup>3</sup> Reuters - [Privacy concerns](#) (December 2019)

<sup>4</sup> Forrester Research - [Leaving user experience to chance hurts companies](#) (October 2009)

<sup>5</sup> Forbes - [The bottom line: why good UX design means better business](#) (March 2017)

<sup>6</sup> Martech Series- [Sailthru Releases 3rd Annual Retail Personalization Index](#) (September 2019)

<sup>7</sup> McKinsey - [Fashion's digital transformation - Now or never](#) (May 2020)