

NORDSTROM

Chief Technology Officer Edmond Mesrobian Joins the WWD Tech Forum

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The Fairchild Live Tech Forum brings together leaders across fashion and beauty brands, social media networks and cloud computing platforms to give insight into major tech trends sweeping the fashion and beauty sectors now and in the future. Nordstrom Chief Technology Officer, Edmond Mesrobian joined this year's event to discuss how technology has enabled us to get closer to the customer and deliver personalization to scale. Below are some highlights from Edmond's conversation with James Fallon, editorial director of Fairchild Live Media.

Delivering Convenience and Connection Through Technology

Our Closer To You strategy is about providing customers with convenience and connection —getting the right product where and when the customer wants is how we deliver on that promise. Part of building connection with customers is getting to know them through our stylists and technology.

Stylists are at the center of helping our customers feel good and look their best. Sometimes fashion can be daunting, and our stylists are able to step in to make it comfortable and approachable.

Part of our challenge is how do you bottle that magic from the store and translate that online? In other words, how do we provide that same kind of service in a digital form?

Data is a prerequisite —knowing as much about the customer as you can is the first step. Now, you have to be able to take that and transform it through AI models that are trained by our stylists. Our stylists play a critical role to train our models, and in turn, those models support our stylists whether they are helping a customer in-store or digitally.

Stylists Embrace the Role of Technology and Digital Styling

Since the pandemic, digital styling has become essential to serving customers on their terms, and our stylists have embraced technology to help them reach their customers. Our stylists now have digital platforms and the right tools to help support how they serve customers, whether they are sending a Style Board, helping a customer digitally or having a one-on-one appointment in-store.

We also want to make sure that we give the customer a rich experience, so every time they visit Nordstrom.com they learn and discover something new. Our stylists and salespeople provide customers with an interactive experience by providing product videos and fashion mood boards —it's translating that in-store experience digitally and removing some of the friction when shopping online. We have several forms of content on the Nordstrom site that provides customers a sense of discovery, present relevant product and inspire.

Supporting Product Discovery with the Nordstrom Fashion Map

Our Fashion Map supports relevant product discovery that is personalized for each customer. Fashion Map and equivalent technology essentially create an internal representation of fashion concepts. The goal is to represent the same concept that points to the same product selection. It also provides us a good idea of what each customer is interested in so that when they shop online, the experience is tailored to them. All of that information gives us a blueprint of the customer and gives us the data to drive personalization at scale.

The Future of Retail Technology

Our goal is to augment an experience, not to replace a person. We're going to see several forms of augmented and virtual reality that are going to play a bigger role in visual discovery within retail.