

The New Age of Retail Fashion Imagery:

AI-Enabled Product
Photoshoot Alternative

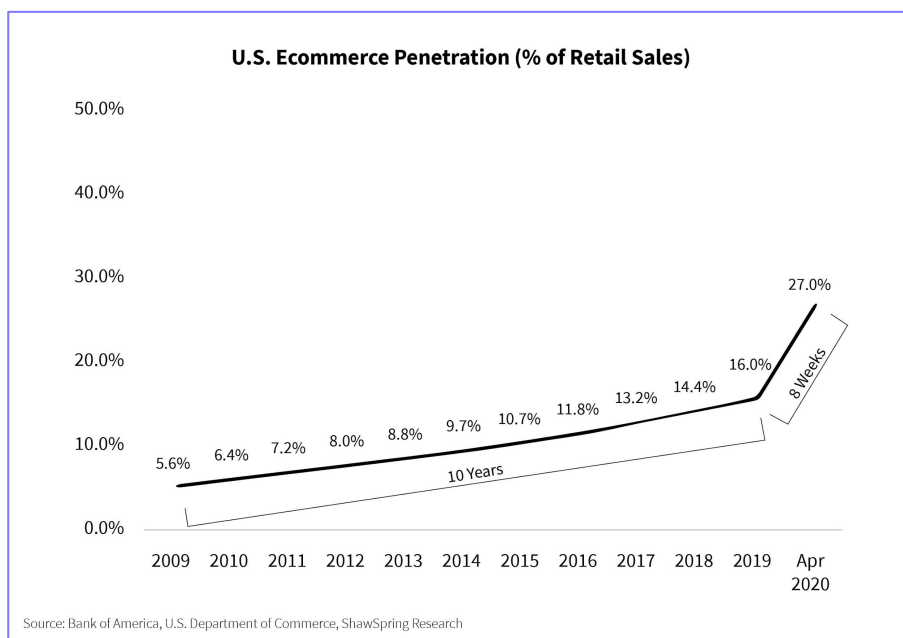


The Covid-19 Impact

On E-Commerce and Product Photos

How do you conduct photoshoots in a world that is working from home and under lockdown? This is the dilemma retailers across the globe are facing today.

All of retail has had to move online. US e-commerce has seen higher growth in the last eight weeks than in the last ten years combined.



Sundar Pichai, CEO of Alphabet echoed business leaders around the world when he said the longer we live under restrictions, the more permanent will be the change in consumer behaviour. With e-commerce rapidly becoming the clear choice of shopping channel, there is an undeniable need for high-quality product imagery. And for fashion retail in particular, this is becoming increasingly difficult.

Bringing together models, stylists, photographers, technicians, and a lot of support staff is not the smartest move in today's age of social distancing. Not to forget, most photo-studios are not even open because of the lockdown.

This raises the need for a photoshoot alternative - a method of building high-quality, on-model product photos that does not require a lot of resources and elaborate processes.

A.I. brings just that.

The Compelling Case for On-Model Fashion Imagery

Product imagery is a vital component of retail e-commerce. It is a sensory experience in an otherwise rather impersonal medium - and this is no different for fashion. In remote shopping, shoppers cannot touch and feel the products - they can't hold, stretch, and inspect garments. The images displayed on the site play a key role in helping them understand what the product looks like. These images help shoppers visualize what they may look like in person and on them.

75% of online shoppers rely on product photos when deciding on a potential purchase.¹

Product photos need to be high-quality and depict the product as realistically as possible. Showing products on models helps achieve this for fashion retail.

- **Shoppers are able to understand what the product looks like on a person**
Mannequin, ghost-mannequin, and flat imagery cannot illustrate the product as well as an actual person can. Showing products on a human body helps shoppers visualize how it wears.
- **Shoppers are able to relate to the product better**
Shoppers are able to compare themselves to a person wearing a product better than to a mannequin or a ghost mannequin. This is made even better when the model is of a size and ethnicity similar to them.
- **On-model imagery makes the product look more credible**
Shoppers are likely to trust a brand and a product more if they are able to associate a face with it. Showing garments and accessories on models builds a certain amount of confidence in the shopper's mind about the product.

1. Three Statistics About eCommerce Product Photography - [Efelle Creative](#)

Building On-Model Imagery: What it looks like today

The Process:

The steps involved in building product imagery in most retail teams look something like this:

- Choose a photographer
- Coordinate location and outfit transportation
- Create styled looks for all outfits
- Find models
- Style models for each look
- Editing and reshoots
- Finalize images
- Upload imagery on website
- Monitor performance
- Reshoot under-performing products & repeat the entire process



Building On-model

What it looks like today

The Cost

In the US, product photos on models usually cost up to **\$500** for a single look, and in some cases, even more.

This cost includes:

- Models' time
- Photographer's time
- Digital tech & post production
- Stylist + assistant stylist
- Hair stylist
- Makeup artist

However, it does not include:

- Pulling sample products
- Transporting samples to the photo studio or other shoot locations
- Photo studio/location & equipment rent
- Time required to cast models & hire photographers & stylists
- Time of internal teams involved in a photo shoot process
- Reshoots due to items not selling with a current image (usually 3-5% of items)

Time Taken

The number of looks possible in a day usually depends on the amount of work that goes into each. But on an average, teams are able to complete:

35-40

looks per day per studio with
hair & makeup

60-70

looks per day per studio
without hair & makeup

An A.I. Intervention

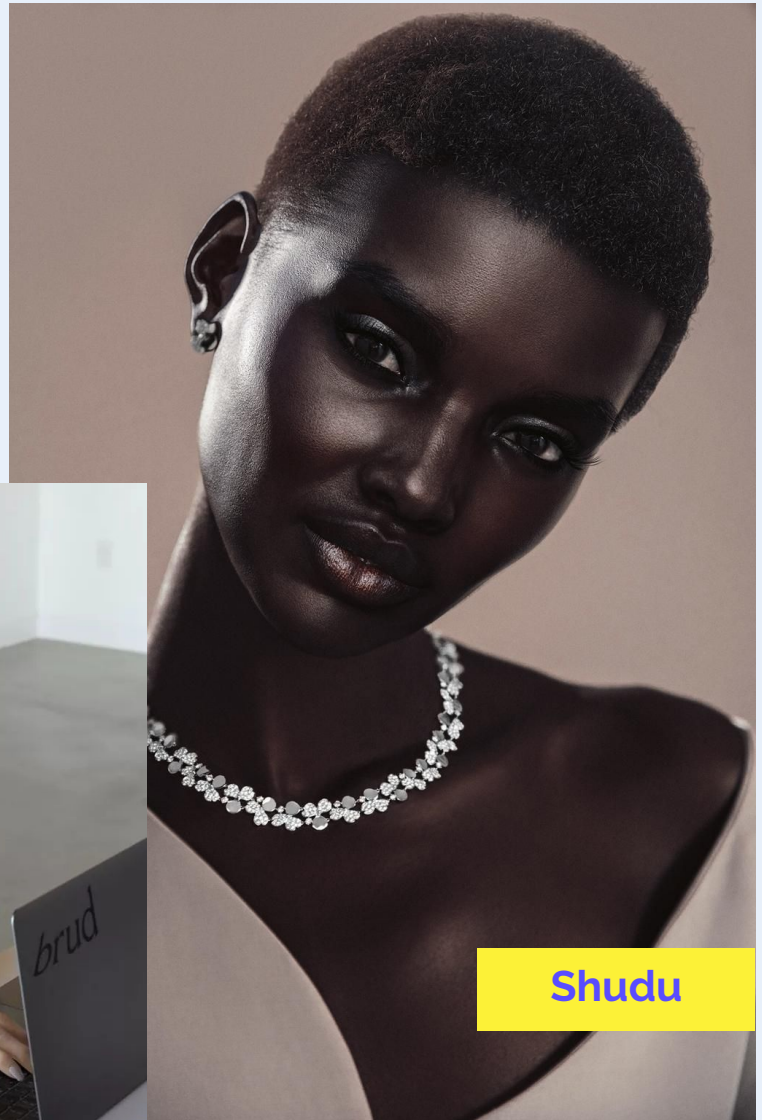
A.I. can be used to build virtual models and digital model imagery.



Virtual Models in the Influencer World



Lil Miquela



Shudu

Today, virtual models have a significant role in the social media and influencer space. Digital, CGI models have very active social media profiles, sharing and promoting content. They come with their own set of human traits and personality - clear through their social media handles. They star in ads, TV shows, and feature in magazines.

Lil Miquela, a digital influencer, and **Shudu**, the world's first digital supermodel, are a couple of the early virtual models who gain a lot of attention from the fashion world.

An A.I. Photoshoot Alternative

Building Model Imagery for Fashion Retail

With A.I., retailers can automate building on-model fashion imagery. Using either photos of real models or 3D generated virtual models, A.I. can help visualize products on a person.

High-quality imagery without elaborate processes

A.I. can enable automated on-model product imagery. With inputs of a product image and a model image, the A.I. (GANs, deep learning networks) can morph the product on the model, adjusting it to take the natural shape, twists and turns of the model's body position. It removes the need for elaborate photoshoots involving multiple people.



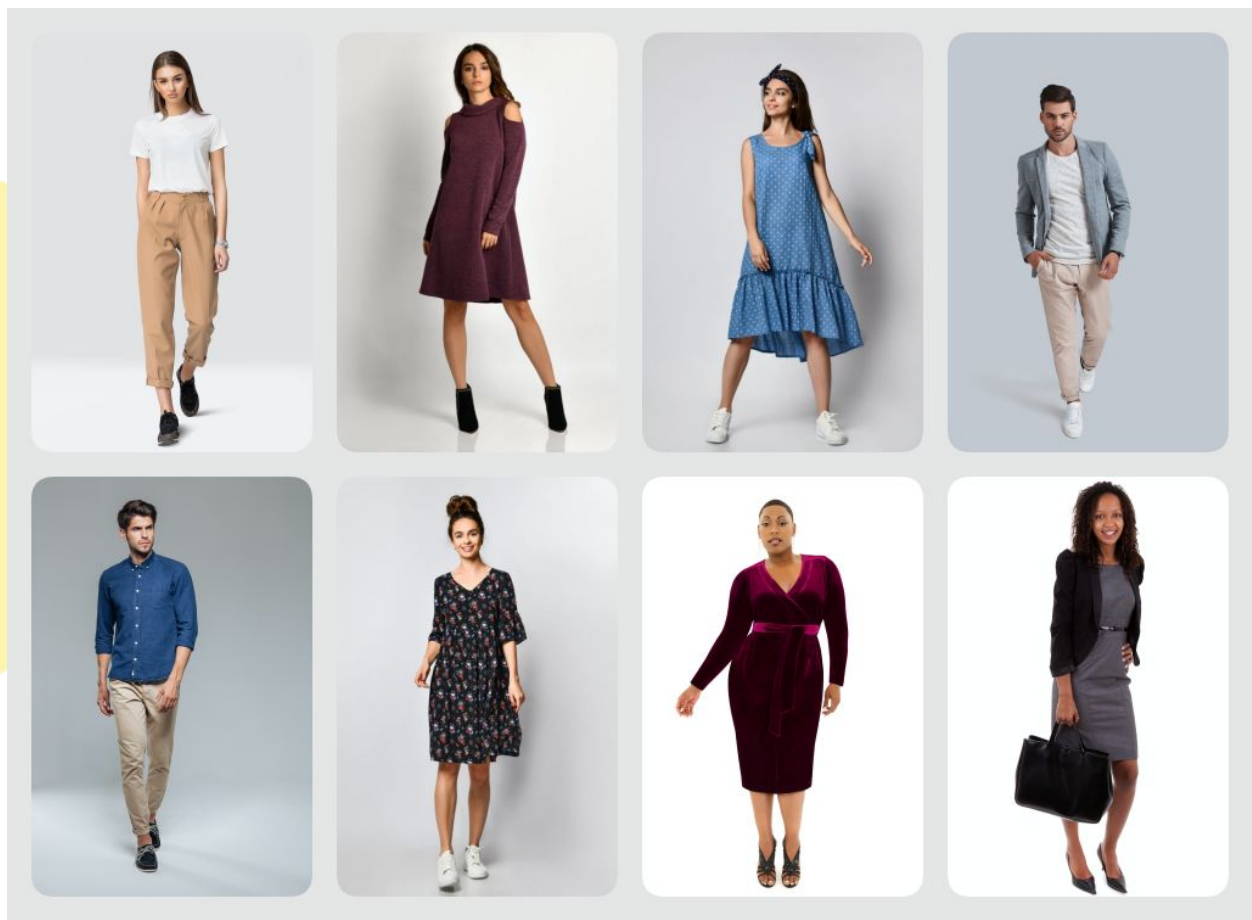
Using A.I. to build product imagery can be 5 times faster than traditional photoshoots.

An A.I. Photoshoot Alternative

Building Model Imagery for Fashion Retail

Customizable imagery options

Since A.I. generated imagery does not have time and resource restrictions like a model photoshoot, it is a lot more customizable. Retailers can choose from models of different types, ethnicities, sizes, and in many different poses. It gives retailers the flexibility of choosing models and building imagery that would best match their brand personality.



A.I. Imagery: Applications

Use-Cases for A.I. Powered On-Model Imagery

Retailers using virtual model options employ them for various purposes from decision making to marketing & selling.



Product Imagery

The most obvious and frequently used use-case is building photos used to sell the products. These are put up in product description pages on the retailer's e-commerce site. The imagery is also used to build banners and other marketing material the retailer may need.



Outfitting

In traditional photoshoots, it may not be possible to show all the looks and outfits that can be created for a product. A.I. imagery creates the scope for this. Retailers get to show all the products that can be paired with a particular product - directly on the model. This helps shoppers make faster and more inspired purchasing decisions. It also helps internal merchandising teams see how designs look together before sending them for large-scale production.

A.I. Imagery: Applications

Use-Cases for A.I. Powered On-Model Imagery

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Customer Demand Testing

On-model imagery can be used as a means of testing shopper interest for a certain product before placing orders for it. When a new product is introduced, either the digital designed version or a photo of the actual product can be displayed on A.I. model images. This can help e-commerce merchandising, creative, and design teams make better and more informed decisions.



Complying with Partner Image Guidelines

Online marketplaces have different image guidelines for product imagery. Brands selling across multiple of these need to ensure that their photos are compliant to all - or create different versions for each. Building images that would comply with all of them can be very time-consuming. A.I. can help automate that.

Business Impact

Of Using A.I. Model Imagery

For Retailers Who Don't Currently Use On-Model Imagery



Increased Shopper Engagement

Product photos with models help shoppers relate to them better. Shoppers also tend to trust a product more when they see it on a person. This increased trust and relatability leads to shoppers engaging more with the products and the site.



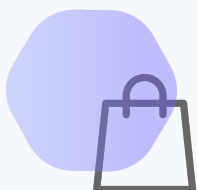
Increased Conversions

When shoppers are able to visualize products well, they are able to make informed buying decisions. With on-model imagery, they are confident about how a product would look, they are more likely to make the decision to buy a product they may have otherwise had apprehensions about.



Decreased Returns

A large chunk of e-commerce returns today happen because shoppers feel the product looks different in person. You can help your shoppers understand your products better by showcasing them on models they can relate to.



22% of returns today happen because the product looks different from how it seems on the website.

The need for **relatable imagery**

“

“The average American model is about 6’ tall, size 0 and the average American consumer is 5’ 4”, size 14. Garments get returned because the fit is not there, or the opposite happens where the customer doesn’t even buy it because she thinks, "there is no way I am going to be able to pull it off". But when she sees that dress in different sizes or in a body of her size, she’ll think "wow that actually looks pretty good," so we can actually increase conversions and purchase but also decrease returns.”¹



**Julia Dietmar,
CPO at Vue.ai®**

at WWD Style Dimension

1. The changing face of retail and why AI is crucial - [R-Vue London](#)

Business Impact

Of Using A.I. Model Imagery

For Retailers Who Use On-Model Imagery



Save Photoshoot Costs

A.I. can save upto 75% photoshoot costs

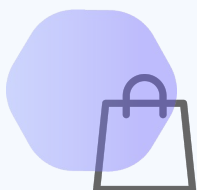
A.I. helps remove the need for many processes and resources required in traditional photoshoots. It removes a lot of the associated costs - making building product imagery a lot cheaper than what retailers have known till now.



Go to Market Faster

A.I. can build product imagery 5 times faster than traditional processes

By reducing the number of processes and people involved, A.I. can build on-model product photos much faster than existing methods. This helps retailers go live with the products on their e-commerce site and start selling sooner.



A.I. can build product imagery at 1/4th the cost and 5 times faster than traditional photoshoots.

“With the A.I. based Model Generator, everything changes. No more fashion photography at the same scale or costs incurred from the same.”

Costa Colbert,

Chief Scientist at Vue.ai®,
from GTC at NVIDIA.



It is time for an upgrade:

A.I. Model Imagery by Vue.ai

VueModel is Vue.ai's product imagery solution. It automates the creation of on-model imagery. Using A.I., VueModel transforms basic product photos into high-quality fashion imagery that retailers can use across their platforms.

Simplified On-Model Imagery Processes

Regular Process

Choose a photographer

Coordinate location and outfit transportation

Create styled looks for all outfits

Find models

Style models for each look

Editing and reshoots

Finalize images

Upload On-Model Imagery on website

Monitor Performance

Reshoot underperforming products & repeat the entire process

With VueModel

Shoot basic product photos with simple equipment

Automate on-model fashion imagery with A.I.

Upload On-Model Imagery on website

Monitor Performance

Edit underperforming images with A.I.

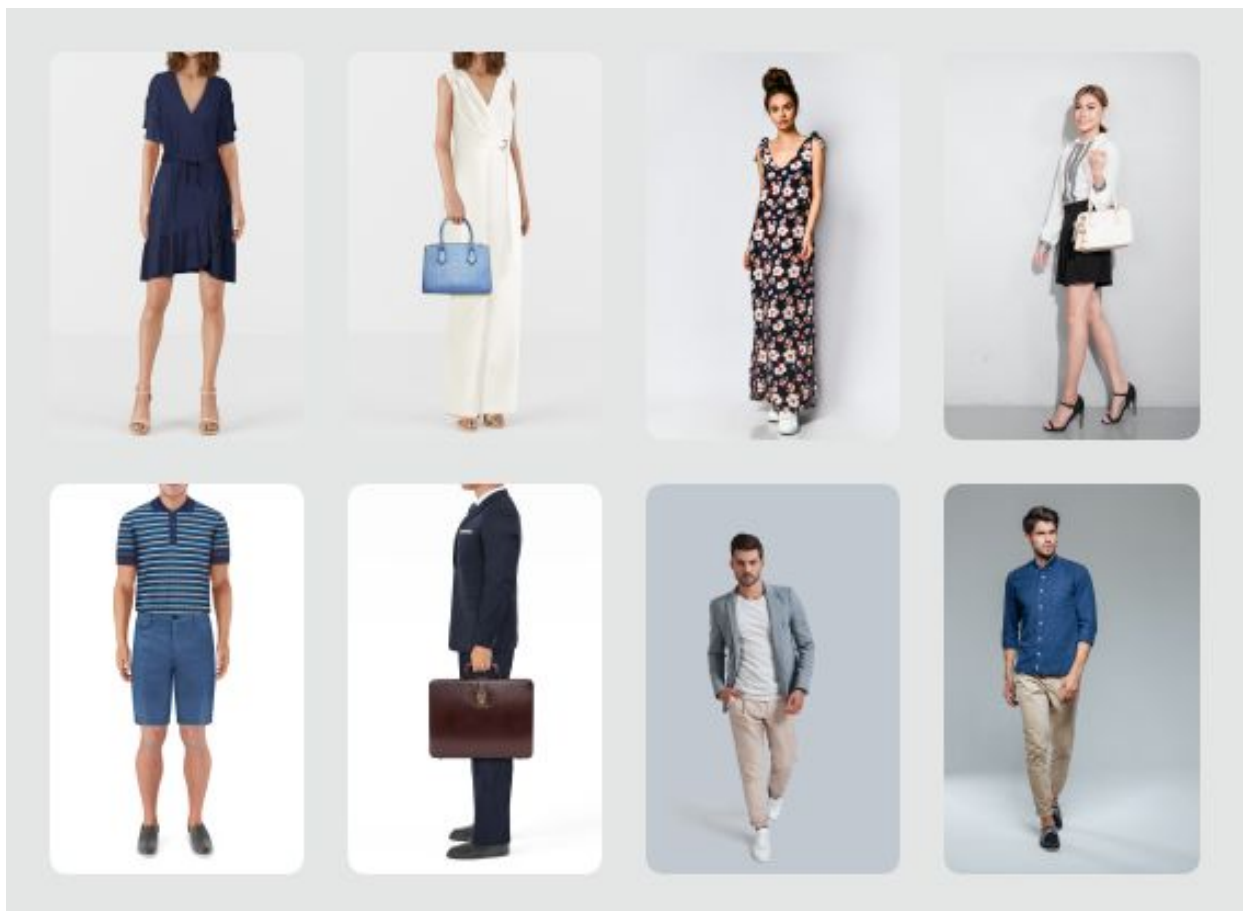
A.I. Model Imagery by **Vue.ai**

Customizable Models

Retailers can choose to display their products on models that would fit their brand personality well - and their shoppers will be able to relate to best.

Real and 3D Models

VueModel can display products on existing photos of models that retailers may have. For those who are just starting off, or do not have model photos, they can choose from Vue.ai's catalog of 3D models.



Poses

For both real and 3D models, a large number of supported poses helps VueModel display products in a variety of ways. Retailers can choose model poses that highlight their products well and realistically.

A.I. Model Imagery by **Vue.ai**

Sizes

Retailers can display their products on models of various shapes and sizes. VueModel takes a single size product input image and is able to visualize that on models of different sizes. Showing products on models of different sizes helps shoppers imagine what it would look like on their body - enabling them to make informed buying decisions.



Ethnicities

Products can be shown on models, both real and 3D, of different ethnicities. VueModel understands how a product would look on shoppers of different skin tone and ethnically varying body-proportions

“Why should people all over the globe look at the same size zero model to buy clothes?”

Ashwini Asokan, CEO - Vue.ai®
in Electric Runway's Podcast

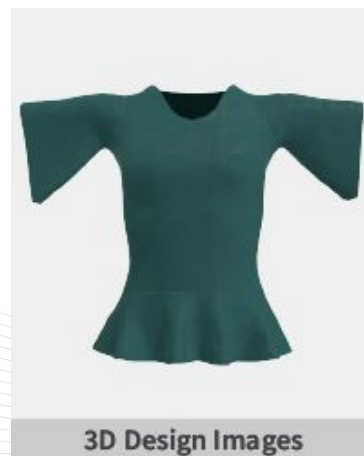


A.I. Model Imagery by **Vue.ai**

Flexible Input Options

To use Vue.ai's product imagery solution, retailers don't require any complex equipment. VueModel accepts all kinds of input product photos - and even 3D designs by the fashion designer. As long as it shows the product clearly, retailers can choose the input they are most comfortable with.

- Mannequin Photos
- Ghost Mannequin Photos
- Flat-Lay Photos
- Hanger Photos
- 3D Designs



Business Impact

Benefits of VueModel



75%

Photoshoot costs saved



5X

The speed of traditional
photography

By using Vue.ai's solution for on-model fashion imagery, a luxury brand's e-commerce platform saw:



40%

Life in
Engagement Rate



1.5X

Lift in
Conversion Rate

Checklist

Fashion E-Commerce Product Photos: Best Practices

There is no denying the importance of product photos for your online store.

75% of online shoppers rely on product photos when deciding on a potential purchase.

Use this checklist to ensure that your product photos are high-quality and helping your shoppers engage better:

- **Optimal Resolution Images:**
Make sure your product photos are of a size that looks good on all screens - and clear even when zoomed. However, they should also not be very heavy and increase load time for the page. Shopify recommends photos that are at least 1024 x 1024 px in size and at 72 dpi.
- **Good Lighting:**
The lighting should look natural, not create too many shadows and help clearly understand the product and its colour.
- **Clean Background:**
Solid backgrounds are always a safe bet. Gray and white walls help highlight the product well. You don't want a busy background to take the attention away from your product.
- **Models:**
Show your products on models and help shoppers understand what it looks like when actually worn by a person.
- **Angles:**
Photos of your product from multiple angles and, for garments, in multiple poses help make informed shopper decisions.
- **Keep it Simple:**
Minimal post processing, no effects or filters. Keep your product photos clean and accurately show the product.



Intelligent Retail Automation

Process Automation & AI solutions for the Retail Industry

Vue.ai is an end-to-end retail automation platform that is redesigning the future of retail with Artificial Intelligence. Using Image Recognition and Data Science - we extract catalog data, analyze it with user behavior and help your marketing, product and cataloging teams get actionable insights that improve customer experiences, drive conversions and reduce costs. We help you digitally map your products' DNA to create one-of-a-kind retail experiences for your customers and translate product information into the language that your teams can understand and make business decisions with.

Making Retail Teams AI-Ready

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