

The Virtual Fashion in the Global Apparel Industry in the Post-Epidemic Era [★]

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Abstract

The global economy has experienced a downturn due to the COVID-19 epidemic, and the entire apparel industry has been hit hard. However, in the post-epidemic era, the digital trend of the world has become more pronounced. The virtual consumer market and virtual fashion took this opportunity to overgrow. More and more people are willing to spend money on virtual products. In a way, virtual fashion is the acceleration and continuation of future fashion trends. The most crucial difference between virtual and physical fashion is that the latter does not undergo physical production. Instead, virtual clothing can be purchased and “worn” immediately. More and more fashion brands have paused traditional fashion shows in favor of visuals such as video game collaborations, mobile apps, virtual icons, virtual showrooms, and virtual clothing brands. This paper compares and analyzes ten international brands associated with virtual fashion through data collection and case studies. It shows that with the help of modern cutting-edge technology, the traditional apparel industry has ushered in a new transformation point. New virtual fashion will gradually enter our daily life from the experimental field, driving the transformation of the apparel industry.

Keywords: Virtual Fashion; Virtual Clothing; Digital Clothing; Virtual Economy; Fashion Industry

1 Introduction

Affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the world economy has been gravely wounded and experienced a decline. According to the United Nations’ World Economic Situation and Prospects 2020 and 2021, the global economy shrank by 4.3% in 2020, more than 2.5 times that of the 2009 global financial crisis. The latest report predicts that the global economy will rebound by 4.7% in 2021, offsetting the 2020 losses. Global GDP will shrink by nearly 1% in 2021. The United

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Nations indicates that due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The global apparel market fell by 15.2% in 2020 compared to 2019, with a total loss of 297 billion US dollars [1].

Some professional researches have been conducted on the software, including CLO, VR, AR technology, or virtual technology. Some papers [2, 3, 4] focus on the theoretical part, are not combined with the latest reality background-COVID, and lack actual case analysis. It is slightly inadequate in practical operations and applications. Others have mainly studied marketing models [5, 6, 7], Or lack of support for the sudden economic downturn in the offline fashion industry [8, 9, 10].

Therefore, this paper includes video game collaborations, mobile apps, virtual icons, virtual showrooms, and virtual clothing brands. Each aspect will analyze in international virtual fashion-related cases with examples, a total of 30 cases. Analysis of the clothing industry's development trend in the post-epidemic era is made through many cases and data analysis. The conclusions drawn are as follows: In the post-pandemic era, the fashion industry should pay attention to potential opportunities for cooperation with mobile game marketing and design; in-depth research and development of AR and VR technologies, increase investment in scientific research, and seize market opportunities; focus on broadening horizons. Companies appropriately tilted their marketing focus on online channels, developing e-commerce, and simultaneously positioning offline physical stores more as display and concept expression. In the post-epidemic era, the trend towards digitization of the world has become more pronounced. In this situation, the virtual consumer market and virtual fashion are growing excessively. More and more people are willing to spend money on virtual products. With the application of modern cutting-edge technologies, the traditional apparel industry has come to a new point of transformation. The new virtual fashion will gradually become involved in our daily life from the experimental field and drive the transformation of the apparel industry. The online virtual approach can provide an exemplary showcase and promotion channel for more new design brands and rejuvenate old international brands with the help of cutting-edge technology. After the pandemic, virtual fashion can also enable consumers and apparel industry players to rethink the whole apparel industry. In the future, everyone will consume more rationally and have a greater sense of social responsibility in the apparel sector. At the same time, they will also be more susceptible to visual and online social media influences being stimulated to spend.

2 Method

Before the case analysis, it is necessary to define the virtual. Virtual fashion refers to the use of high-tech technologies, such as VR (Virtual Reality includes computers, electronic information, and simulation technology. The primary realization method is that the computer simulates the virtual environment to give people a sense of environmental immersion), CLO (3D clothing plate-making virtual test Clothing system), CGI technology (Computer-generated imagery), and other fashion activities that imitate real models, clothing, scenes, etc. It should be noted that “virtual fashion” is different from the concept of “online”. “Virtual things” do not exist in reality but can be transformed into things that exist in reality, while “online” is through the Internet. Moreover, “online” uses the Internet as a channel to promote things that already exist in reality.

This part collects more than ten virtual fashion cases covering many countries worldwide, such as China, the United States, Japan, and other countries. It is divided into five parts: video game collaborations, mobile apps, virtual icons, virtual showrooms, and virtual clothing brands.