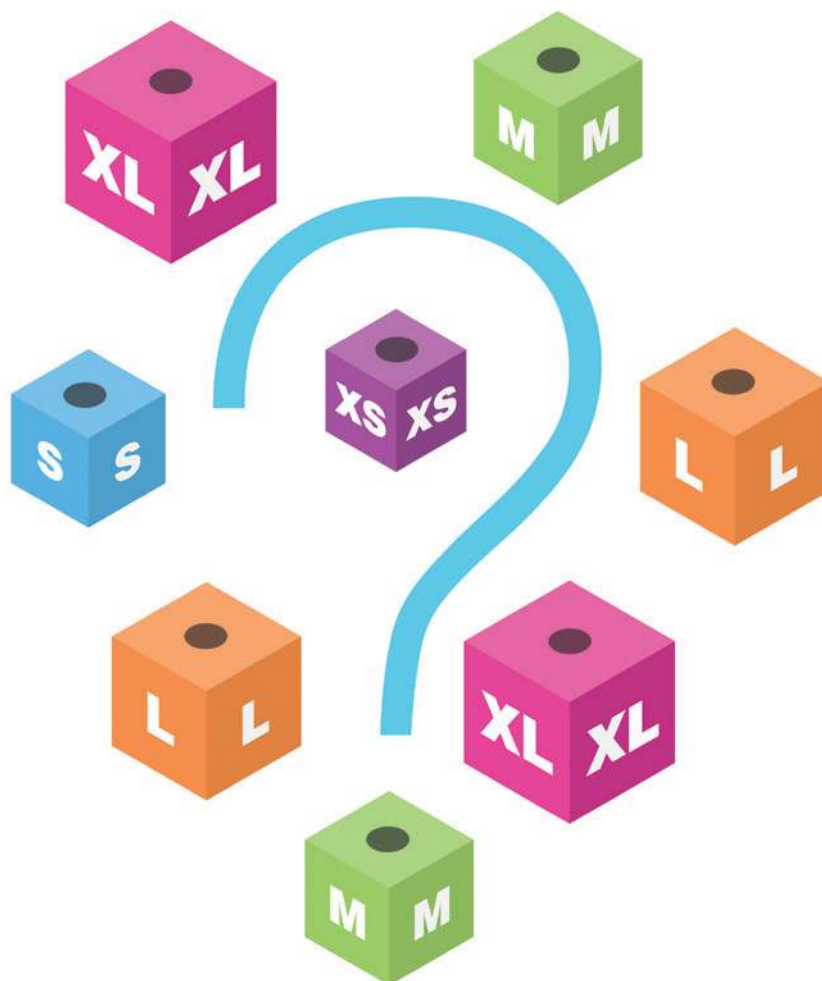# Shaping your business to take advantage of fit

How sizing up your customers can have huge operational benefits

Executive summary

KEY FINDINGS

- More than half of retailers say it's crucial to get sizing right

- Information about customers' measurements and body shapes is lacking – more than half of retailers don't have such data

- Nearly two-thirds of retailers use size charts to present fit data but there is huge opportunity to do more with this resource

- Only a handful of retailers collect biometric data about their customers

- More than 40% of retailers fail to share fit data across their business

- Using fit data to improve trading and online merchandising is the most popular future priority for such data

ABOUT THE EDITOR

Liz Morrell is an experienced retail and business news and features journalist who has more than 15 years' experience of writing about the retail sector. She is a former features editor of Retail Week where she spent more than 9 years as a full-timer. She loves all things retail but just wishes her "research" (insert shopaholic tendencies here) didn't cost her quite so much.
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F it data has never been more vital to a retailer's business when it comes to those in the clothing and footwear sector. In an age where retailers want to know everything about their customers – from what they do and what they like to how they shop – it seems ludicrous that they sometimes still don't know the very basics of what their customer actually looks like, both in terms of their size and shape as well as their preferences around how they want a garment to fit. Instead many retailers go on delivering what they think their customers want rather than what they actually need.

Consumers don't trust the sizing information they see online, are baffled by vanity sizing and the lack of sizing coherency across both stores and brands and have to either physically try clothes on instore to double check fit, or in the online world accept that it's more than likely that they may need to order multiple sizes or re-order a different size at a later date, leading to frustration and delay in the buying process as well as a bigger returns and logistical challenge for a retailer to manage.

For too many retailers fit data is often simply a poorly resourced size chart table on their website – if they have such a resource at all – which often bears little if any relevance to the clothes they are actually selling. Instead of guidance from retailers, shoppers end up having to trawl customer feedback – again if available - for advice on what size they should be buying and how it may fit them.

The operational impacts both instore and online from this are huge. Get the use of size and fit data right and you have more satisfied customers, reduced returns and associated handling costs and a greater propensity to get it right first time.

So why aren't retailers doing more to make their business truly fit? Do they understand the value of comprehensive sizing and fit data to their business? What data do they have already and how are they sharing it across departments to improve the operations of their business? These are the questions that we have asked for this whitepaper, interviewing retailers both through a comprehensive online survey and in further in-depth interviews.

As you will see on the coming pages the results show that there is still much to be done in this area and huge potential for retailers to really shape up to the challenge of fit data across their businesses.

Liz Morrell
Research editor

Why are retailers missing one of the most important pieces of the puzzle?

The fashion industry has long been regarded as one of the most exciting and dynamic markets to operate in. Whilst the competition heats up and the prospect of an Amazon monopoly is looming, retailers face a constant need to innovate and adapt to industry pressures, while consumers become increasingly savvy and demanding both on and offline.

With many new brands and retailers entering the market, each trying to attract shoppers and offer the best possible customer experience, the cost of acquisition is growing and the importance of retention and loyalty increasing. Despite continued investment in ever more engaging online experiences, usually with unrivalled delivery times and generous return policies, one piece of the shopper service proposition is often missing.

Size and fit are often voiced as key sticking points in the consumer shopping experience, a challenge that becomes particularly pertinent online where shoppers don't have the option to try before they buy. Bad fitting clothing and poor returns experiences can leave shoppers reluctant to try new brands, new trends and even deter them from shopping online at all. As self-tailoring is a styling concept that is increasingly recognised (*that* blazer slightly loose to look like an oversized boyfriend cut or *that* sweater a couple of sizes down for a cropped look) fit has become a central topic of interest in ecommerce today.

Through our own research we've found that 86% of shoppers believe online shopping is a gamble when it comes to finding the right fit while 81% describe the process of finding what they want online as frustrating.

In this context, fit data is essential, yet often overlooked by retailers. We know that ecommerce and customer insights departments are clued up as to what their core customer demographic is; understand shopper behaviour on-site and know how to deliver content-driven experiences that sell. Amongst all this data however, they don't know the measurements, body shapes or fit preferences of their shoppers. These data points are hugely relevant to the shopper journey on both a physical as well as an emotional level. Size is just a number whilst fit is personal. Simply put, on a physical level the wrong size will lead to a returns experience most would prefer to avoid. Emotionally, the wrong fit can have a greater impact on shopper confidence and brand loyalty.

New innovations and technologies enable retailers to access and understand their shoppers by taking their unique measurements, body shape and fit preferences into consideration. This allows retailers to make informed decisions around their product design and even inventory management.

More and more brands are recognising that by introducing fit data to their business, a positive cross-departmental impact can be gained. In this whitepaper, we will uncover some examples and learn from businesses that are already embracing the fit revolution.

Kimberley Carr
Chief Product Officer
Rakuten Fits Me

Contents

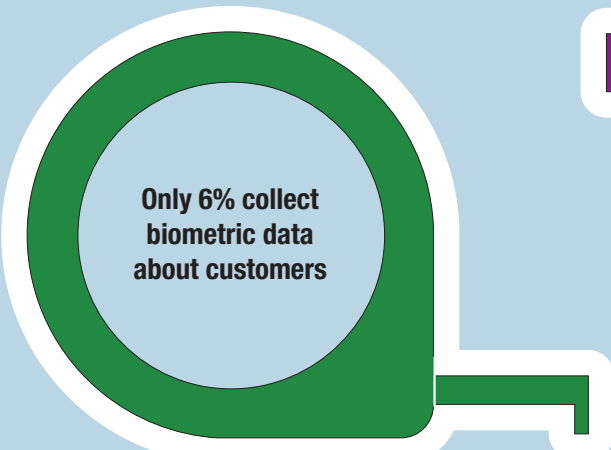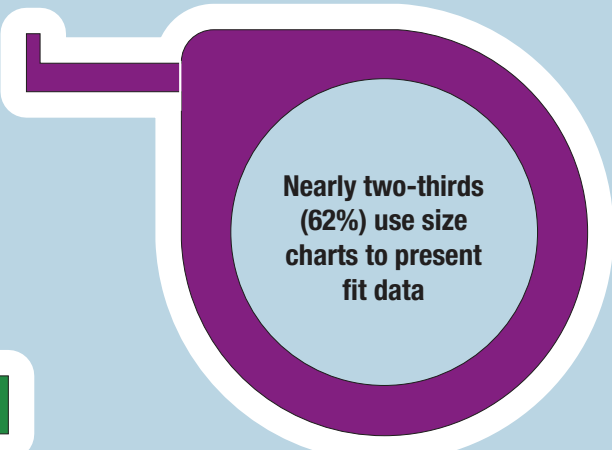❝ Size is just a number whilst fit is personal ❞

Survey results

97% of retailers says it's important to their business to get sizing right

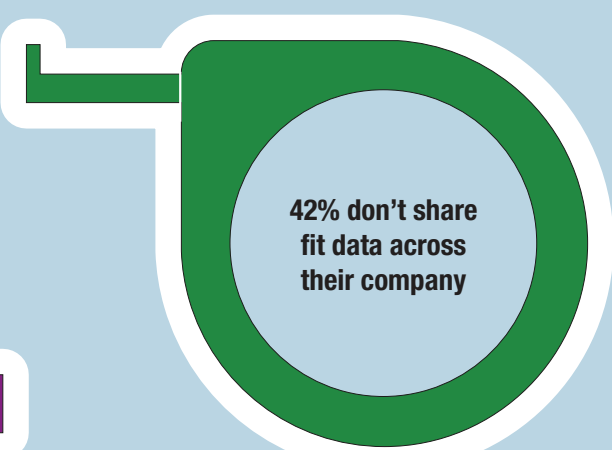**More than half (53%) don't know their customers' measurements and body shapes**

Only 6% collect biometric data about customers

Nearly two-thirds (62%) use size charts to present fit data

Only 1 in ten are using size and fit software on their website

42% don't share fit data across their company

What are the biggest challenges retailers face?

We asked retailers in our survey what the biggest challenge they faced around understanding, collecting and using fit data was.

Here's what some of them said:

❝ The variety of measurements used by suppliers ❞

❝ Accurately showing customers what size they should choose ❞

❝ Knowing if our customers ordered their correct size ❞

❝ Senior stakeholder buy-in is always a challenge given the competition for other projects to be developed in-house ❞

❝ Deciding which tool to use ❞

❝ Visualising data and tying it down to the individual customers for segmentation ❞

❝ Creating accurate size curves at a meaningful level and by geography ❞

❝ The variety of clothing and changing attitudes towards sizing ❞

Why getting fit right is so vital for retailers

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ACTION

- Understand the importance of fit data for your business

- Communicate its value to the board and rest of the business

- Assess its impact on operations – eg returns, lost sales, dissatisfied customers - to help support your business case for investing in fit data

- Consider fit as a way to position your brand and use as a competitive advantage

" 97% of retailers surveyed said that getting sizing right was important for their business **"**

The importance of fit, and getting sizing just right, is and always has been, a contentious issue for retailers and their customers.

For customers, getting it wrong creates uncertainty and mistrust as well as inconvenience. For retailers the operational impacts of poor fit are more severe - impacting sales, ramping up costs in terms of dealing with returned product and potentially losing customers.

"It's still a long-winded process to return items and get the correct size and if a customer chooses to order two sizes upfront it can be more risky if the customer doesn't know or trust the business," says Chris Farrow, ecommerce manager of fashion retailer Celtic & Co.

Peter Williams, chairman of boohoo and a former senior director at both ASOS and Selfridges, says retailers must ensure fit is more consistent, even within their own businesses. "At the moment, there is an irritation around sizing but there's an expectation that there is that issue in a physical store and so customers will take a size 10 and a 12 to try on. That's more difficult to do online," says Williams.

Many retailers simply accept that customers will just order both sizes to check but House of Fraser's chief customer officer David Walmsley says he doesn't see the same patterns happening at his business. "When you look at the data the idea that people buy two sizes and return one just doesn't happen. You get serial shoppers that buy a size 12 and then a 14 but you don't get parallel shoppers," he says.

Simply an afterthought for many

As retailers look to improve operations better embracing the issue of fit is a key opportunity. Yet despite a variety of size and fit technologies now being available it's still an afterthought for many retailers – the shopper's problem rather than theirs. And yet understanding what your customer looks like in terms of size, weight, body shape and fit preference, and combining that with fit data can create a really powerful resource to feed into departments such as buying, merchandising and marketing.

Getting sizing right should be high up on retailers' priorities as a result – especially when they put so much effort into other parts of the selling process – such as investing time and effort on photography and descriptions.

Our survey showed unsurprisingly almost all (97%) of retailers felt that it was important to get sizing right as a business, with more than half (55%) saying that it's crucial and 39% rating it important.

But as we will see later, retailers are currently limited over the fit data they have and therefore are unable to make the most of the opportunities it offers. Only just over a quarter (26%) of those surveyed said that their use of fit data gives them an advantage over their competitors currently.

What does fit data mean for your business?

Improving size and fit options requires that the retailer concerned actually understands and has size and fit data available within their business, rather than simply using the generic garment data provided by their suppliers.

It also means that retailers need to better collect and use data to understand how their own garments will fit on customers because of the disparity of sizing across different retailers. "For the retailer knowing what size each customer should purchase is difficult unless customers can be convinced to share their sizing data," says Celtic & Co's Farrow.

But retailers need to take into account customer preference around fit and wear too. "In order to really understand fit retailers need to know not just what the ideal fit is based on the design of the garment but they also need to understand their shoppers – their body shapes, fit preferences and how shoppers are choosing to wear the garment," says Kimberley Carr, chief product officer at Rakuten Fits Me. "Ideal fit is unique to the shopper at a garment level and so fit recommendations should be unique to that shopper and garment," she says.

Retailers don't know enough about customer fit

Our survey showed that more than half (53%) of those fashion retailers we surveyed didn't know their customers' measurements and body shape however. Only 9% were confident that they did and 38% to a degree.

Retailers do collect a variety of data which they could use to better inform them about their customers' sizes. The majority of retailers (97%) collect information from previous purchases. More than three-quarters (78%) collect information from returns data and feedback and two-thirds (66%) use social media data and feedback. However only 6% said that they collected biometric data about their customers.

At workwear manufacturer and retailer Alexandra the company collates data from its largescale customers through sizing days where the company measures, sizes and clothes up to 300 people a day through teams of specially trained experts. For online shoppers the company uses the Rakuten Fits Me tool on its website to help customers choose the size most suitable for them.

As a workwear retailer the business also helps to educate customers around why a certain fit is recommended for them – especially important for the functional nature of many of its garments and the tasks its users, such as nurses, have to be able to do in them.

Alexandra has also used fit data to create more accurate profiles of its average customers, allowing a better definition of the perfect fit and of its average customer as a result. "Before we had all that data but hadn't averaged who our customer was," says Sara Catanzaro, technical design manager at Alexandra.

The company is also currently working on a body shape guide to help its customers get a more accurate fit. "That will help our customers to ensure they pick a style which is suitable for them," she says.

> **"** To really understand fit retailers need to understand their shoppers – their body shapes, fit preferences and how they are choosing to wear the garment **"**

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ACTION

- Work out your definition of size and fit and how this relates to your customers

- Collate data you can access already around fit (eg social feedback, reviews, returns feedback etc)

- Look at how you can better encourage and incentivise your customers to share their size and fit data with you

How to collect, share and use fit data within your business

O nce retailers have defined what fit data means for their business and how it can help them, then how can they collect, share and use such data to improve operations? Whilst it's easy to focus on the benefits of reducing returns rates, better satisfying customers on first attempt and the advantages of reduced numbers of garments tied up in the reverse logistics supply chain, there are many other benefits to sharing such fit data within the rest of the business too.

"Knowing what your customers want, and some of the lost revenue opportunity not previously capturable, can help brands determine sizing and ranges, help retailers know what to stock and where to optimise sales and help drive loyalty through personalised experiences across channels," says Rakuten Fits Me's Carr. And she says it's not restricted to the online world either. "Being able to leverage technology and understand your shoppers across different touch points will be vital in the future of fashion," she says.

Some retailers are already beginning to share fit data, according to our research. "We share fit data with design, merchandising, global sourcing and of course technical design," says the design director of one plus size online retailer. "All of these teams play a part in helping to ensure that our customers receive the best fitting garment we can offer," he says.

And if there is a problem with a fit this is also highlighted. "If we see a consistent fit issue voiced by our customers we will take steps to analyse the data and then fit the products generating the complaint. We will take action by either adjusting garment specs or pattern shaping. This is done in conjunction primarily with merchants and design. Marketing would be brought into the equation for repeat items so that we can communicate that fit has been improved," says the plus size design director.

Carr says the opportunity exists across the business. "Every department in retail can benefit from understanding shoppers more. From product design, purchasing, merchandising and marketing, insights on shopper body shapes and fit preferences help all departments not only optimise but target certain consumers," she says. "The overall impact is lower acquisition costs, higher conversion, lower operational and logistical costs and greater levels of loyalty."

A host of benefits

Using additional data – such as combining information about fit preference by garment types amongst a retailer's database and combining it with purchase behaviours – can help retailers create new products and better design other products to fit the particular preferences of their main customer base, leaving garment designers and manufacturers better informed about what they are doing.

Using such data also allows for better targeting too, body diversity being a key and growing movement in fashion, with retailers representing different body shapes online more frequently. At Henri Lloyd, the company uses fit technology and data to help its marketing team ensure that fits are best represented within the photography online. The same is true at Alexandra.

At Celtic & Co the retailer is planning to increasingly share fit data gathered through the Rakuten Fits Me tool to better target communications to customers about availability of their preferred sizes. "We can avoid sending customers links to products where their size is out of stock, or can let customers know if their size has gone on sale," says Farrow.

Carr says the benefits of collecting and sharing such data are huge. "If used to its full potential fit and preference data can differentiate retailers from the competition and provide higher perceived value to shopper at lower costs – improving revenue and profitability."

Are retailers sharing and making use of fit data?

With such benefits available to retailers we asked our survey respondents if they were sharing such data and if so with whom. The survey results showed just under a third (32%) of retailers share fit data. A quarter (26%) share it sometimes but 42% never share their fit data across the company.

Of those who did share such information the spread of departments was fairly equal for the top three but underutilised by some other parts of the business. Just over a quarter (26%) of retailers share such data with marketing. One in five (21%) share it with the design and product departments.

"The most important department who uses our fit data is our product development team but we also use it to forecast profile across both style and sizes. This helps us to ensure that we are holding the correct stock at the correct time, something that is very important to Alexandra as a catalogue business," says Catanzaro.

However only one in ten (11%) of our survey respondents said they shared it with purchasing and only 5% with merchandising, suggesting that retailers could be doing more with such information in these parts of the business.

A failure to use the data for change or advantage

Many respondents said that their use of fit data to inform any changes to products was limited or non-existent currently. A third (36%) of retailers are using fit data to work with their suppliers to improve their products and 12% plan to do so in the future but more than half (52%) aren't using such data meaning that learnings aren't being passed on to improve products for their customers.

Retailers are also failing to make use of it for marketing purposes too, with more than three-quarters (76%) not using it in their marketing communications despite the fact that it could allow for better targeting of items around fit preference as well as style or, as with the Celtic & Co example above, could allow retailers to only target customers with items that are available in their size if stocks of certain sizes are low.

❝ From product design, purchasing, merchandising and marketing, insights on shopper body shapes and fit preferences help all departments not only optimise but target certain consumers ❞

Why fit data should be more than just an Excel spreadsheet

❝ When asked why they weren't using fit data on their site many retailers claimed ignorance to its value. It's an ignorance retailers simply can no longer afford **❞**

Our survey shows that for many retailers size and fit data remains an untapped potential. In our survey more than a third of retailers (38%) were not using fit data on their website. 13% have it as a project to start this year. Although 47% claim to be already be using it the other answers show that for many retailers their definition and use of fit data goes little beyond the size charts they present on their websites, rather than the greater benefits that comprehensive size and fit preference data could give them.

Quite why they are overlooking the problem, given the operational benefits it can bring to their business and crucially their bottom line, is puzzling when you consider the time and money spent on other elements of a retailer's business.

"Given the amount of investment in design, marketing and platforms that goes into fashion it's a shame that the last step of an online purchase is left to hard to understand size charts or shopper guesstimation based on other items in their wardrobe," says Rakuten Fits Me's Carr. "Retailers should not fall over at the last hurdle and need to make sure the customer experience right through to the last part of the purchase is considered," she says.

Failing to present adequate fit options

Unsurprisingly the size chart remains the overwhelming option for presenting fit data on retailers' websites, according to our survey. It showed that it was a tool used by 62% of respondents. For some this will be a comprehensive product sizing database accompanied by how to measure guidelines that guide customers on where to position a tape measure for optimal results. For others it's simply a collection of numbers that the customer can fail to relate to.

Such a reliance on a size chart – often presented little more glamorously than a simplified Excel table – can leave customers scratching their heads and turning instead to customer feedback or contacting the retailer's customer services department themselves to try to ascertain best fit. Both these options can place unnecessary strain on logistics and customer service operations that could be avoided with a better understanding and presentation of size and fit in the first place.

Our survey found that just over a third (34%) of retailers use their editorial product descriptions to present more information about fit to their customers. Only one in ten (10%) of retailers said that they were using size and fit software to better present their size data to customers however.

When asked why they weren't using fit data on their site many retailers claimed ignorance as to its value – having not investigated its uses or having not realised the possibilities it offered. It's an ignorance retailers simply can no longer afford because a basic size chart - or worse no definition of size at all - is no longer good enough for more demanding customers.

How retailers are approaching the issue of fit

CELTIC & CO

Using fit data to better dress its customers

www.celticandco.com

At fashion retailer Celtic & Co, ecommerce manager Chris Farrow says that being an online only business makes it even more important to get fit right. "As an online-only business our customers can be extremely frustrated by ordering clothes that are too big or small."

Because of the risks concerned Farrow says it's something that's monitored closely. "During the manufacturing process we use fit models and adjust our clothing based on feedback during the design process. Once ready for sale we monitor fit-related returns and feed this back into our manufacturing process," he says.

"We see returns rates upwards of 25% so getting size and fit right for our products and conveying the right size for our customer can have a big impact on our bottom line. Designing the clothing to the right size and making sure customers purchase the right size for them can have huge benefits," he says.

But it needs customers to share their sizing data, says Farrow. To this end the retailer uses standard size guides but has also started recently collecting fit data onsite through the use of a find your fit button and lightbox. Using technology from Rakuten Fits Me the retailer is able to collect its customer size data and compare it to the exact garment measurements from the design process. Customers enter four data points into the tool which it then compares against the garment data before calculating three possible body shapes for the customer to choose from. After they've selected their body shape it provides a size and fit recommendation.

"We are fairly early on in our journey of collecting fit data so we mostly use it to understand returns and how our products could be altered to bring them in line with customer expectations," says Farrow.

But data is increasingly being shared with the product design teams too and will filter into other departments too. "In the future, we will look to use this data to help design future ranges, ensuring they fit. We will also start to tailor communications to customers based on the data we have," he says.

PLUS SIZE ONLINE FASHION RETAILER

A greater challenge in the plus size market

The size and fit challenge becomes even greater where the plus size market is concerned, according to the technical design director of one such online retailer. "In the plus size market customers definitely care about size and fit information," he says. "With the influx of so many new players into the plus size market space fit and sizing nomenclature is all over the place. One brand's size 1X is a 16/18, another a 14/16. Not only that but the body measurements vary by size as well," he says. "Some brands fit a curvier-shaped customer and others someone with a fuller mid-section."

Knowing about a company's fit data is also vital to helping with customer queries, he says. "Our customers are not hesitant to call and request fit information and sometimes the questions that they ask are not easy to answer," he says.

His business monitors returns rate by reason – such as bust, waist or hips too big or small. "We have no way currently to get accurate feedback on the size or shape of our customers – that is one of the challenges of having no brick and mortars stores in which to set up a body scanner," he says.

The business also relies heavily on reviews and focus group feedback. "Information from these data sources is analysed and we will call in garments to try on models to see where improvements can be made," he says.

And in the plus size market confidence around sizing is key, says the design director. "Size and fit data is extremely important as fit satisfaction is the number one reason a customer will buy from us again. Using size and fit data feedback from our customers enables us to remain competitive in the market.

The company is also about to begin the collection of fit preference data from its customers to better understand how they want products to fit. At the moment this is done through the company's product communication. "We rely heavily upon the product team and copywriters to help convey the fit intent of our garment to our customers. This primarily captures the silhouette of the item – such as shaped, relaxed etc," he says.
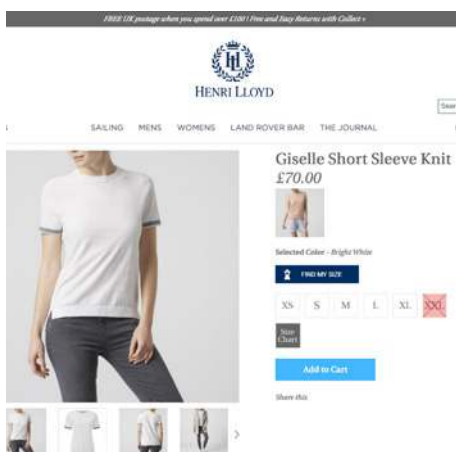
HENRI LLOYD

Using fit technology as a learning tool for customers

www.henrilloyd.com

At Henri Lloyd the retailer uses fit technology to better serve its customers – and to ensure it can adjust its own ranges and marketing from the learnings it gains. "For us size and fit data means that we can see the average and specific sizes of our customers who purchase online and use our size and fit software," says Henri Lloyd commercial director Graham Allen.

He says it helps to boost the confidence of shoppers when purchasing. "They definitely care about fit and we have circa 50% of customers using that information. Customers are getting less tolerant because fit is increasingly important," he says.

As well as using the Rakuten Fits Me technology to help customers in their purchasing decisions he says the company feeds such data into the rest of the business too. "Feedback is given to both the design and marketing teams," he says. "Design so that they have a deeper understanding of who is buying and the marketing team in order that we ensure that fits are best represented within the photography online," says Allen.

For Henri Lloyd the biggest benefit operationally of using size and fit data is to have a lower returns rate, according to Allen. "From an ecommerce point of view our aim is to ensure customer satisfaction at all times and by helping them to understand fit then we will have less returns," he says.

And he says such technology helps customers better understand what they are buying more than a size chart ever will. "Most size charts are just about body sizing. That's not fit that's just saying a large fits this size person. It doesn't say it will fit in a certain way," he says.

And it's important to be honest too. "When it comes to photography it's got to be supported. For instance you can't have a photo of a top with pins down the back. Yes you want to style it to look great but you can't lie about what the fit is otherwise you will just end up paying for it through returns," he says.

Ultimately however the data helps the company learn more about its shoppers. "We dovetail this into our demographic profiling to help develop more understanding of our consumers," he says.

HOUSE OF FRASER

Trying to recreate the offline store experience when it comes to fit

www.houseoffraser.co.uk

House of Fraser is another advocate of using fit data to improve the experience for its customers and reducing returns by keeping items sold.

David Walmsley, chief customer officer at House of Fraser, says that retailers want to better collate data around fit and understanding why customers return items but says it can be a thankless task for retailers. "Understanding the behaviours around returns is important but it's really difficult to understand. Like all retailers we put out a reason for returns questionnaire but people think that if they tick some boxes a retailer won't refund them. That won't happen. We just want to understand why a customer is returning something. However, the data can get quite skewed by how people think they out the respond to those reasons for returns," he says.

"The first part of the puzzle is to get the fit and returns data into a usable format. We do know there are not just categories with disproportionate returns rates but critically individual brands with disproportionate returns rates and providing that data and insight back to the buyers in a structured manner is a critical feedback tool.

It could be a brand where their sizing is not helpful and that aids buyers in their conversations with brands," says Walmsley.

The challenge though is in understanding and bringing together all the data that is available to retailers. "We are looking at the moment at the fit experience. A big thing currently is crowdsourcing data on fit so if you are looking at a Hugo Boss dress and we know you've previously bought a Whistles dress then we could relate between the sizing between Hugo Boss and Whistles based on what other people have bought, then cross checking your sizing to other people's sizing and your choices to other people's choices and what they returned and what they didn't return," says Walmsley.
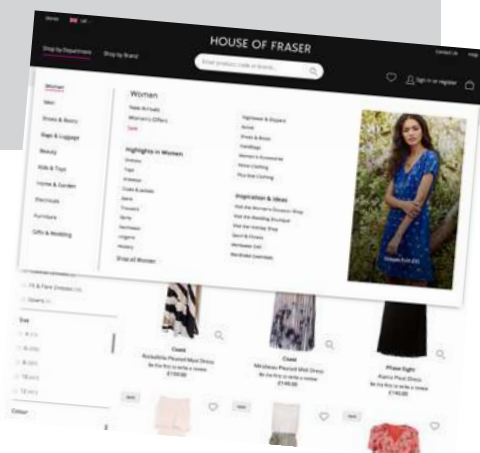
ALEXANDRA

Where sizing has to be more about health and safety and fit for purpose than simply vanity

www.alexandra.co.uk

At workwear manufacturer and retailer Alexandra the company has a different motivation beyond just customer preference as to needing to know the size and fit of its customers. "Within the workwear industry if your garments don't fit you correctly that can hinder the ability to do your job or even cause a health and safety risk," says Sara Catanzaro, commercial design manager for Alexandra. "Ensuring that we have a firm understanding of who our customers are, their body shapes and sizes and their expectation of our garments enables us to create a collection which is fit for purpose," she says.

The company puts huge effort into collating sizing information of its customers which is also shared with its sister companies. For its largescale clients, the company offers a sizing service where a team of specially trained employees will size and clothe up to 300 people a day. "The sizing team are able to collate and compare a sizing profile by customer, industry type and gender which can be used to predict forecasts for future rollouts, provide information on a typical customer within a certain industry and provide that customer with a profile of their typical wearer," she says.

The company is also a user of technology from Rakuten Fits Me. "On our website we use the application to guide our customers to picking the right size for them" says Catanzaro. Data from this has also been used to create the company's average customer – a profile that has remained fairly consistent over the three years the company has been using the tool but which was different to what the company thought it was. "Fashion retailers sample on a size 10/12 but our customer is a 12 to 14, 5ft 6 inches and has a bigger bust," says Catanzaro. And, as a result the company has altered the models used to illustrate its workwear to better reflect its typical customer.
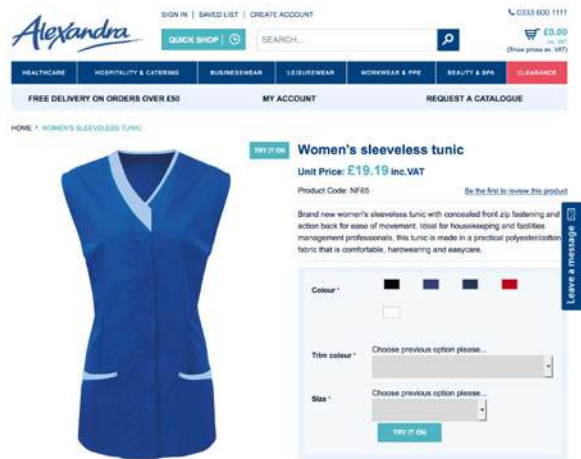
In summary:
Why it's time for retailers to wake up to the value of a consistent fit experience

There is little doubt that retailers need to wake up to the value of fit data within their business to better understand their customers and better meet their needs. Fit technology can obviously help in this area and Rakuten Fits Me's Carr says it's something retailers should look at as a must-have. "Offering a fit recommendation tool is as important to the online shop as providing a fitting room in a physical store would be," she says. "In fact, all shoppers, regardless of online, instore or via a partner wholesaler should be able to see how a garment will fit and compare sizes without the need to queue, change or buy multiple items and have to return when it doesn't fit."

Our survey results showed that retailers are currently massively underutilising fit data when it comes to both working with suppliers to ensure product better fits and also using it to inform their marketing strategies too.

The results showed that merchandising was also an overlooked area for the use of the data and yet when asked what their priorities for using fit data in their business in the future was for retailers surveyed more than half (52%) said their main priority was trading and online merchandising, 28% cited product development and 20% cited marketing.

As our research also showed, getting to grips with the opportunities offered by comprehensive size and fit data can be seen as a challenge too far. Retailers are already overwhelmed with data and understanding how and why they should collect and make use of more can seem a daunting task. But as our retailer focus section also shows, those that are investing in such technologies and are better understanding the role of fit within their business, are seeing huge operational and business benefits.

Can you really afford not to get your business in shape too?

Rakuten Fits Me ®

GET STARTED WITH FIT RECOMMENDATION TECH TODAY, IT'S FREE!
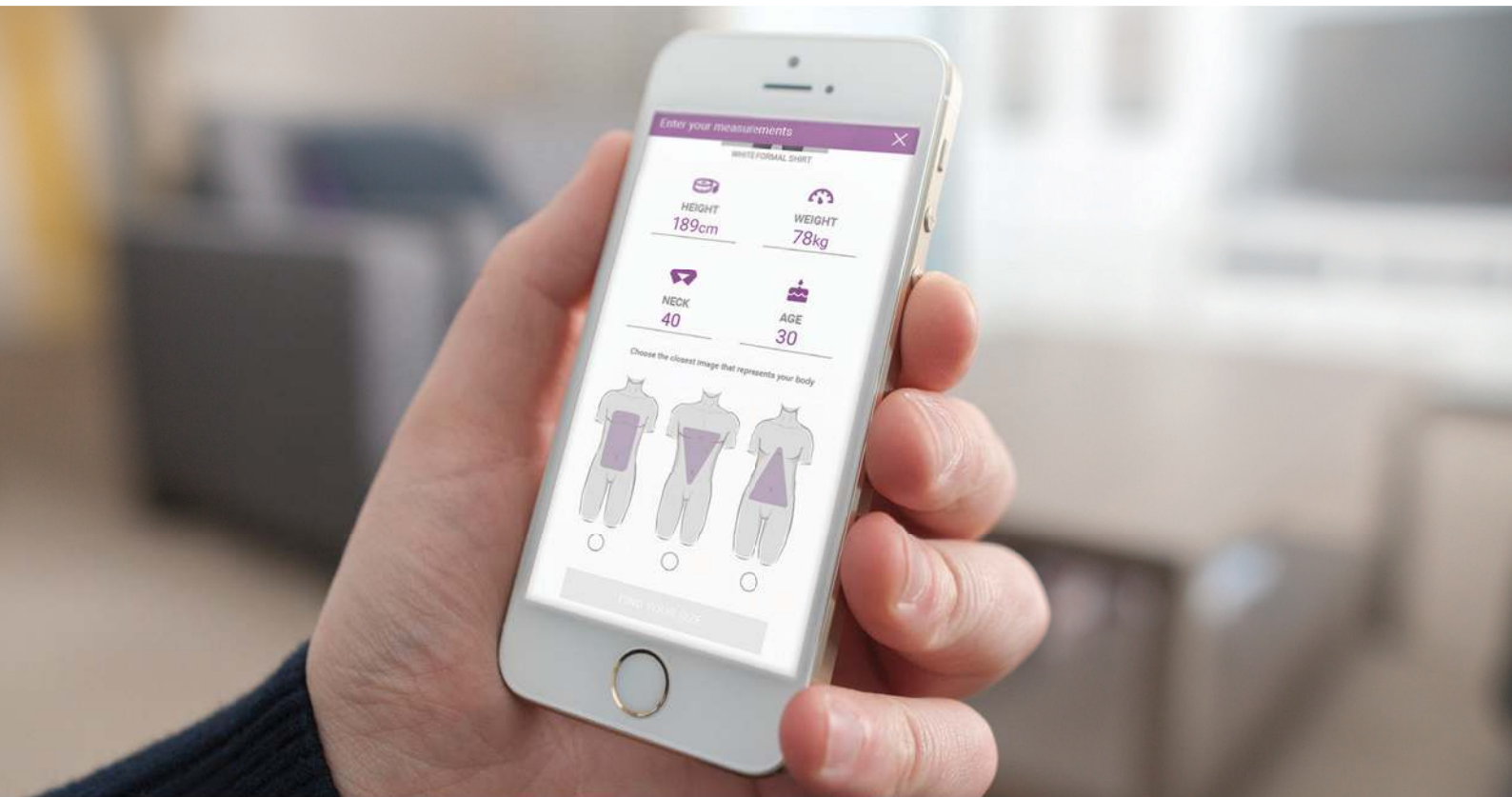
GIVE YOUR SHOPPERS THE RIGHT FIT, **EVERY TIME**.

- Increase conversions

- Reduce fit-related returns

- Get new-to-business shopper data

- Use insights to drive lifecycle services, from product development to range planning

Help your shoppers find their perfect fit - go to **www.fits.me** and get started today, it's free!

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