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PRESS RELEASE

Technology propelled by Industry 4.0 brings new opportunities for the fashion industry

Lectra & ESCP Europe 'Fashion & Technology' Chair roundtable event hears panelists emphasise the need for fashion companies to embrace Industry 4.0

Paris, February 27, 2018 – Lectra, the technological partner for companies using fabrics and leather, the French business school ESCP Europe and their joint 'Fashion & Technology' Chair explored the impact of Industry 4.0 on fashion's value chain during a recent insightful round table discussion at ESCP Europe's London campus.

For the participants Robert Diamond, Founder and CEO, Fernbrook Partners; Dan Hartley, Global Head of Digital Commerce at AllSaints; Laetitia Hugé, Vice President, Product Marketing, Product Development Fashion, Lectra; Pierre Mercier, Senior Partner and Managing Director, Boston Consulting Group; and Evelthon Vassiliou, CEO, Alison Hayes, there was consensus: Industry 4.0 represents unparalleled opportunities to take the fashion industry forward.

From brand to manufacturer, panelists from across the value chain emphasised the necessity for the industry to embrace the alliance between man and machines to leverage massive benefits, from quicker decision-making to cost-reduction.

Exploring the advantages of Industry 4.0 technology, Evelthon Vassilou commented: "Interpreting the data of what is, and isn't, selling should help to speed up decisions. You can react very quickly across the entire supply chain, and either stop producing something unsuccessful or ramp up production if successful. Data and data analytics is not sufficient, to succeed this also requires a high degree of trust and integration between retailers and suppliers."

"It's about using technology to deliver continuous improvement in everyday business," said Robert Diamond. "People are not good at making a large volume of repeatable decisions with many different data inputs." Identifying where machines, and where people, bring value is an important part of embracing Industry 4.0. "If the business decision, or the outcome of the resolution tomorrow, is pretty much the same as what happened yesterday, then there is a chance for machine learning to help improve the situation."

For Pierre Mercier, technology propelled by Industry 4.0 is disrupting former sources of competitive advantage, "forcing companies to rethink how they want to compete in their respective industries, and how to use data to compete differently. The common denominator in the fashion ecosystem is that everyone is facing the opportunity for a step change and need to figure out where to double down and accelerate their transformation."

"Agility and flexibility are increasingly important for fashion players. Cutting-edge technology is supporting the fashion industry as it steps into the 4.0 era, ensuring businesses have the right solutions in their own

ecosystems, to effectively harness the right data to make the right decisions," stated Laëtitia Hugé.

At UK fashion brand AllSaints, valuable data harnessed from the net promoter score is paramount for their business. "We take customer feedback very seriously and we use it as a framework for our internal roadmap - from a tech and development point of view, through to design and fit, the customer is at the heart of everything we do," stated Dan Hartley.

In addition, he underlined that using technology across communications, "will be huge going forward for AllSaints. From supply chain to store teams, we aim to use a cloud-based system that works within our own eco-system, complementing our agile model."

The round table was moderated by the co-director of Lectra-ESCP Europe 'Fashion and Technology' Chair Valerie Moatti.

For further information, join the Lectra - ESCP Europe Chair's social networks: Facebook (where the roundtable is available on replay), Twitter and LinkedIn.

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