

‘Consumers are reconsidering what’s in their closets’: The state of fashion in 2021

In this interview, Tiger of Sweden CEO Linda Dauriz shares her views on design inspiration and digital innovation—and why consumers are embracing conscious consumerism.



Linda Dauriz joined Tiger of Sweden as its new CEO in December 2019, and she is driving the digitization of the Stockholm-based clothing brand's operating model. She recently spoke with McKinsey's Justine Jablonska about the trends shaping the fashion and retail industries in 2021—including the impact of reduced travel on fashion, as well as a consumer spotlight on social justice. The following is an edited version of their conversation.

McKinsey: What does “less is more” mean for fashion in 2021?

Linda Dauriz: It means that consumers are reconsidering what's in their closets. We've all spent way too much time at home wondering when we will ever be able to wear everything we have in there again. A new appreciation is coming for higher quality, more sustainable fabrics, and real craftsmanship in the garments. So I see a renaissance of premium garments and more conscious consumerism—with consumers spending on fewer, higher-quality garments.

McKinsey: What in the burgeoning online shopping space excites you most?

Linda Dauriz: What I find most fascinating about the digital developments happening in the fashion industry is all the analytics going into measurements, and customer data linked to the sizing and fitting of each brand. That will be a turning point: no more friction with trying on garments and having to return them. Imagine a world with far fewer returns because you know it's your size and it's the perfect fit. This will be thrilling to see later this year, and in the coming years.

McKinsey: What will happen to physical stores in 2021?

Linda Dauriz: My perspective is that physical retail stores will become a moment of true emotional experience with a brand. So the era of lots of digital screens and gimmicks in digital stores will come to

an end, because customers by now know very well how to shop online. And when they come to a brick-and-mortar store, they will really want personal advice, human connection, and that emotional bond with the brand.

McKinsey: How will retailers rethink overstock in 2021?

Linda Dauriz: What I'm seeing in terms of stock levels and dynamics in the market are two different and very distinct directions. There are brands deciding to sell completely on a sale-and-return basis. So there is a lot of overproduction. Whatever sells will be sold. Anything else will be returned. But then you really risk drowning in your own stock. And there are also other brands that are consciously deciding to produce less or shift to on-demand production.

McKinsey: And what about diminished travel: What impact will that have on fashion in 2021?

Linda Dauriz: Interrupted travel, in my view, has had the biggest impact on design teams' inspiration. Because the source of inspiration is very often traveling, and being exposed to new cultures, new contacts—really seeking the perspectives, the angles that you don't find at home.

Now design teams are being forced to find inspiration at home—local inspiration, or inspiration in their daily lives. That gives a completely new perspective.

McKinsey: Why is social justice such an important theme for 2021?

Linda Dauriz: The pandemic has taught us how dependent we in the fashion industry are on each other along the entire supply chain, from suppliers to brands to retailers. We all must pull in the same direction to ensure safe working conditions and sustainable business models for everyone in this value chain.

Linda Dauriz is the CEO of Tiger of Sweden. This interview was conducted by **Justine Jablonska**, an editor at McKinsey Global Publishing in the New York office.

Designed by McKinsey Global Publishing
Copyright © 2021 McKinsey & Company. All rights reserved.