

TIPS AND TRICKS FROM FARFETCH

Shamin Vogel

IN AN EVER-DIGITIZING INDUSTRY, IT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW HOW THE KEY PLAYERS OPERATE. **WeAr** INTERVIEWS THE CEO AND THE NEW MENSWEAR BUYING MANAGER OF **FARFETCH** TO GET AN INSIGHT INTO THE WORK OF A LEADING RETAILER THAT IS BRINGING OFFLINE AND ONLINE TOGETHER.

JOSÉ NEVES FOUNDER AND CEO

What is Farfetch's recipe for success?

We want to revolutionize the way people shop. We unite over 400 international boutiques – from London and New York to Kuwait and Tokyo – into one online destination and celebrate independent retailers by giving them a global platform to sell through. Our partner boutiques occupy a total retail space of over 1 million square feet. The diversity of boutiques creates a broader product offer than e-commerce businesses with traditional buying models, allowing customers to shop an unparalleled range from around the world.

What was the reason behind purchasing Browns?

My vision is to develop, test and demonstrate innovations in retail technology at this iconic retailer, in one of the world's leading fashion cities, with the objective of later rolling it out to our other partners in 35 countries.

Are you looking to expand further into bricks and mortar?

The opportunity to buy Browns came at a mutually beneficial time. We are not looking to buy any more boutiques. Farfetch's strength lies in being an omnichannel platform for luxury fashion, and we will remain a platform business.



REECE CRISP MENSWEAR BUYING MANAGER

What key features make a brand successful in e-tail?

It's obvious: the most 'visual' pieces work best online. The tangible element doesn't come into play, so the product needs to tell a story through imagery alone. For this reason, some of the brands that are performing particularly well for us are **Off-White**, **Gosha Rubchinskiy**, **Thom Browne** and **Comme des Garçons PLAY**.

Social media are more important than ever. The customer needs to be able to get anything they want in a heartbeat: if they see an item on a blog or on Instagram and like it, they will go online to buy it. The reach a brand has and the hype it generates play a major role in e-tail.

Coming from Harvey Nichols and Selfridges, did you have to change your buying behavior when joining Farfetch?

Definitely. My role is new not only to me, but to the industry. It is a lot more strategic in the planning stages, and more laissez-faire in terms of brand and product selection, as ultimately it is the boutique that is responsible for the stock. Relationships are also important; the boutique needs to trust me if they are going to take my advice.

Any advice for buyers?

Always go with your gut.

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