

Tommy Hilfiger Revolutionizes the Fashion Industry with a Digital Selling Ecosystem Powered by DC/OS

Accelerating Digital Transformation to Enable the Showroom and Store-of-the-Future

Introduction

The fashion industry is no exception when it comes to the transformative power of modern technologies. In fact, it's where technology has rapidly reshaped the consumer experience, enabling shoppers to do everything from virtually trying on clothes to seamlessly shop via mobile phones.

An industry innovator, Tommy Hilfiger—owned by PVH Corp.—wasn't satisfied with only leveraging technology to improve the customer experience. Instead, its visionary CEO wanted to lead the company down a game-changing path to revolutionize the way business itself was conducted. "Innovation is transforming the fashion industry every day, and we are embracing this new normal, integrating digital technology into every area of our business—from internal processes to consumer-facing touch points," says Daniel Grieder, CEO, Tommy Hilfiger Global and PVH Europe.

Recognizing the need for radical transformation in order to stay competitive, Tommy Hilfiger developed innovative ways to leverage technology and digital transformation for its retail and wholesale partners to view and order the latest collections.

Tommy Hilfiger Project At-a-Glance

Customer

Tommy Hilfiger Global, owned by PVH Corp.

Challenge

Deploy infrastructure capable of taking the company into the future

Solution

DC/OS

Impact

Dramatically evolving how retailers and wholesalers view and purchase



Challenge:

Digitalize the Fashion Value Chain

Spurred by Grieder, the company began rethinking how its retail and wholesale partners view, choose, and purchase products to offer customers. The traditional process involved buyers visiting a showroom, reviewing the collection, and placing an order with Tommy Hilfiger. While seemingly straightforward, this was a tedious and resource-intensive process for both partners and Tommy Hilfiger alike. Tommy Hilfiger needed to produce a significant number of samples to represent its numerous labels in showrooms around the world. Buyers then needed to travel to a physical showroom to view the products.

A lean digital transformation team was charged with exploring ways to digitalize the showroom experience, with the ultimate goal of digitalizing the entire supply chain. The team was responsible for enabling the backend for the entire digital ecosystem. One of the main requirements was an ecosystem the team could easily manage without IT involvement while still adding applications as part of a continuous development pipeline. To enable this process, the team knew it needed to pivot from the complicated backend and middleware systems comprising the disconnected tools that inhibited communication and process flows.

Knowing this would require a modern and flexible architecture, the team studied the technology stacks of some of the world's leading companies.

Solution:

Bringing Its Architectural Vision to Life with DC/OS

What they saw was lean IT teams managing environments for huge organizations running on tens of thousands of servers. With a goal of operating efficiently at scale, the team realized it needed to embrace a DevOps mindset and design a modern architecture.

Inspired by the technology stacks of industry leaders, the team created an architectural vision comprising five building blocks. The foundational element was a platform for container orchestration and scaling up a limitless number of modern applications. It needed to be highly available, enable rapid development, and suffer zero downtime from deployments. The platform also needed to auto-scale services and support workload co-location.

DC/OS makes it possible to easily build services and capabilities that people throughout the company around the globe can consume in a self-service way.

The team selected Kubernetes and DC/OS from D2iQ as their foundational platform. They complemented this with Couchbase for the NoSQL data store, Kong as an API gateway and management layer, Kafka for distributed data streaming, and Elastic for search and analysis.

Using DC/OS and the other building blocks, Tommy Hilfiger's platform architect and a single consultant built the entire back-end ecosystem, with the building blocks decoupled as much as possible. According to Tommy Hilfiger's platform architect, because of extensive automation enabled via DC/OS, he and his consultant were able to dedicate the majority of their time to other activities.

Behind the scenes, in addition to enabling the DevOps team to work autonomously, the DC/OS platform empowers the digital transformation team to enforce its mantra of "If we build it, we support it." Knowing they will be the ones to support their applications encourages developers to write optimal code from the start. Once they write their code, DC/OS gives them the tools to easily support their infrastructure and ecosystem as needed.

Essentially, Tommy Hilfiger created a new operating model where a core development team builds assets that enable other teams to launch initiatives at will. Moreover, because of the way data is decoupled from applications, developers can make changes at any time without additional coding or integration.

Impact:

Revolutionizing the Business on Many Levels

This architecture has become a digital selling platform that creates an immersive, multimedia experience in Tommy Hilfiger's showrooms, allowing buyers to efficiently explore entire fashion lines. Workstations within the Digital Showrooms display entire collections on monitors and half-meter by one-meter touchscreens that connect to a wall-to-wall grid of ultra-high-definition ultra-HD screens. Buyers can digitally see every item and, with a single click on the screen, see product details, pricing, buying history, and delivery dates. Once they purchase, an instant email confirmation is sent, significantly reducing paperwork.

The platform supported a six-month proof of concept, followed by a seven-month pilot, which powered the first Tommy Hilfiger Digital Showroom for two seasons. In just a few years, the majority of showrooms in Europe were digital and, as of mid 2019, PVH has launched 53 Digital Showrooms in countries around the globe, featuring over 300,000 products.

Since launching the concept, Tommy Hilfiger has already surpassed its target to reduce sample production by 80% at its flagship Digital Showroom in Amsterdam, with similar reduction projected for all locations globally. This supports the brand's ongoing sustainability mission, diminishing the ecological impact of shipping.

That's not all. Tommy Hilfiger's reputation has taken on a new sheen in the industry. The company has also been able to reduce its sell-in time by six weeks, setting a new industry benchmark.



The success of the Digital Showroom created a wave of excitement across the business, triggering the launch of many internal teams and business offshoots. Fortunately, DC/OS makes it possible to easily build services and capabilities that people throughout the company around the globe can consume in a self-service way. Now other teams within Tommy Hilfiger Global are able to leverage DC/OS to launch additional projects and further disrupt the industry.

Following on the success of the digital showrooms, the DC/OS platform also supports Tommy Hilfiger's Store-of-the-Future concept, which revolves around digitally infused retail spaces that serve next-generation experiences. Essentially, the platform enables PVH to continuously innovate and stay ahead of today's constantly changing shopping habits and preferences.



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