

Fashion Retail Experience Transformations Informing New Design Approaches and Tools for Managing Technological Integration and Value Creation Through Retail Experience Design

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Abstract

This work synthesizes research on transformations happening in fashion retail experience design aimed at a broad understanding of changings in contemporary consumer practices, and complex entanglements and interrelations between different actors participating in the fashion retail experience design process. First, an exploration of the evolution of experience definition is presented, secondly, major transformations in retail customer experience are described, organised by the following overarching topics: retail experience designed to empower brand engagement; retail experience influenced by communities and collaborative media; retail experience as a conjunction between brands and urban environment; retail experience aimed at communication and services offering. Fourth paragraph presents: how in the present research, major transformations detected are informing the future work on a transdisciplinary framework for professionals working in the fashion retail experience design; the reflections on the new requirements for designers working in the retail experience design; a retail experience design tools' map highlighting the disciplines from which each tool originates and the overlapping between them through the design process phases.

Keywords: Fashion Product System; Retail Experience Design; Design Tools; Customer Experience; Consumer Practices.

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Introduction

Twin transition is heavily influencing brands' strategies, offerings and communication at every level. In Fashion Product System digital and sustainability transformations are leading to experimentation from product to retail and communication design.

In this context, the evolution of consumer practices and the relationship brand-consumer are radically transforming retail experience design. Contemporary consumer practices in fashion and lifestyle are transforming into experiences of civic engagement, of co-creation, of peer-exchange and much more; also sustainable consumption practices like second-hand purchases, product repairing, recycling, rental practices etc. are completely reshaping retail experience concepts. The above-mentioned changes are facilitated by technological integration possibilities at all levels of the relationship brand-consumers.

The role of design in this context is not just linked to the spatial design, but also to integration of technological potential with functionality and imagination; designers in the retail experience need to produce sociocultural contents and practices able to generate value for brands, customers and territories. This research is investigating how design approaches and tools can manage the complex entanglement of stakeholders' needs and technological integration in customer experience, with a focus on: the future-scenarios possibilities for the retail spaces (taking into consideration their urban context); tools for transdisciplinary work aimed at retail experience design.

Methodology

To investigate the contemporary retail design process, the research has been conducted through two main questions and related sub-questions: 1) How is retail evolving consequently to the changes in consumption practices, boosted by technological and sustainable transformation processes? 1.1) What are the new meanings and functions of retail stores? How do they relate to digital and virtual retail possibilities? What impact will the digitization of retail have on urban environments? 2) What design approaches and tools can foster transdisciplinary and collaborative work in the design process of fashion retail experience design?

The aim of answering to the first research question is the understanding of the requirements and scenarios in the contemporary fashion retail field, to put the basis for answering the second question, which is investigating the retail design process and its adaptation to the new scenarios and requirements, with the intention to create a framework and specific tools to be included in the retail design process. In this work, the research related to the first question, has been conducted as secondary research on the fields of marketing and management studies, information technology, design studies, consumption practices studies, media and communication studies, and urban studies with relation to fashion retail experience and consumption practices innovations, with the aim of understanding ongoing transformation in the field of fashion consumer practices and experiences. The choice of including different fields of studies in the literature review answers to the need to understand the complex entanglements and interrelations between the different disciplines involved in the retail experience design process. The findings are hereby organized as follows: first, an exploration of the evolution of experience definition is presented, secondly, major transformations in retail customer experience are described, organised by the following overarching topics: retail experience designed to empower brand engagement; retail experience influenced by communities and collaborative media; retail experience as a conjunction between brands and urban environment; retail experience aimed at communication and services offering.

Currently, the investigation of the second research question is still in its preliminary stage. The initial findings, which are based on the crossing of the results of secondary research on the retail design process and higher education teaching and training activities, have been presented in the fourth paragraph. This section explores the need for the development of a transdisciplinary framework for professionals engaged in fashion retail experience design, taken into consideration the ongoing transformation in retail and consumer practices, as well as technological transformation. It also reflects on the new requirements for designers working in this field. Moreover, a retail experience design tools map is provided, highlighting the disciplines from which each tool originates and showcasing their overlapping utilization throughout the various phases of the design process. It is important to note that these findings

are part of an ongoing research endeavor and have been obtained through secondary research as well as higher design education activities.

Fashion Retail Experience

Experience, sustainability, and digitalisation are key themes that sought to challenge existing business models and posit new ways of producing, consuming, and experiencing fashion.¹ Already from the rising of experience economy, customers expected a more exclusive and personal relationship with brands,² which does not end with product purchasing and does not end outside the retail space.

The definition of the term “experience” according to Pine and Gilmore is the following: “an experience occurs when a company intentionally uses services as the stage, and goods as props, to engage individual customers in a way that creates a memorable event. Commodities are fungible, goods tangible, services intangible, and experiences memorable.”³

If services are intangible and experiences are memorable and personal, the question arising could be what role fashion retail spaces are assuming in this shift to experience economy, now that the digitalisation and cultural change have created conditions which can overcome the need of shopping in a physical place. The increasing focus on customer experience arises because customers now interact with firms through myriad touch points in multiple channels and media, resulting in more complex customer journeys. The explosion in potential customer touch points and the reduced control of the experience require firms to integrate multiple business functions, including information technology (IT), service operations, logistics, marketing, human resources, and even external partners, in creating and delivering positive customer experiences.⁴

Hoyer et al.,⁵ building on the analysis of the customer experience as a multidimensional construct,⁶ develop a conceptual framework that connects the technologies with customer experience, arguing that, as brand-related stimuli, technologies can evoke different experience dimensions and thereby create experiential value. Grewal et al.⁷ investigated the functions which are being delegated to in-store technology, framing five key areas: technology and tools to facilitate decision-making; visual display and merchandise offer decisions; consumption and engagement; big data collection and usage; analytics and profitability.

Alexander and Blazquez Cano⁸ define five typologies of technology’s role, enabling physical store integration in omnichannel experience: entertainment (amplify the sensory experience); servitization (customer service); provide knowledge of brand or product (storytelling); choice editing; and fulfillment. Kotler,⁹ listing the technologies used in customer experience and marketing 5.0, adds that there is no exact prescription on when and how to use it and, defining marketing 5.0, he writes that

1. Bethan Alexander and Charlotte Rutter, “Towards Transformation: Digitalization, Sustainability and Customer Experience,” *Fashion Practice*, 14.3 (2022): 319–328, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17569370.2022.2129468>.
2. Joseph Pine and James H. Gilmore, *The experience economy: Work is theatre and every business a stage* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1999), 21–43; Joseph Pine and James H. Gilmore, *Authenticity: What consumers really want* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2007), 9–30; Ann Petermans and Koenraad Van Cleempoel, “Retail Design and the Experience Economy: Where Are We (Going)?,” *Design Principles and Practices: An International Journal—Annual Review*, 3.1 (2009): 171–181, <https://doi.org/10.18848/1833-1874/CGP/v03i01/37604>.
3. Pine and Gilmore, *The experience economy*, 21–43.
4. Katherine N. Lemon and Peter C. Verhoef, “Understanding customer experience throughout the customer journey,” *Journal of Marketing*, 80.6 (2016): 69–96, <https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.15.0420>.
5. Wayne D. Hoyer et al., “Transforming the Customer Experience Through New Technologies,” *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 51 (2020): 26–43, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2020.04.001>.
6. Cfr. Lemon and Verhoef, *Understanding customer experience*, 69–96.
7. Dhruv Grewal et al., “The future of in-store technology,” *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48.4 (2019): 96–113, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-019-00697-z>.
8. Bethan Alexander and Marta Blazquez Cano, “Store of the future: Towards a (re)invention and (re)imagination of physical store space in an omnichannel context,” *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 55 (2020): 2–12, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.101913>.
9. Philip Kotler et al., *Marketing 5.0: Tecnologie per l’umanità* (Milano: Hoepli, 2021).

technology “is applied to help marketers create, communicate, deliver, and increase value throughout the customer journey. The goal is to create a new customer experience (CX) that is fluid and compelling. In developing it, companies must achieve a balanced symbiosis between human and computer intelligence”.

Advancements in smart technologies have profoundly disrupted the fashion value chain — design, sourcing, manufacturing, sales, services, and communications. This ranges from enabling dynamic, customer-centred supply chains with accelerated information and product pipelines — boosting novel online, offline, and converged spaces to consume and engage with brands (e.g., the Metaverse) — to improving marketing intelligence, by easing the collection, analysis, and use of data to make more rapid and informed decisions.¹⁰

Major Transformations in Fashion Retail Customer Experience

Retail Experience Designed to Empower Brand Engagement

Accordingly with Arvidsson¹¹ perspective, brands are processual objects shaped by the intricate connections between people, products, information, and images. They engage individuals through symbolic, virtual, and embodied performances, encompassing both material and immaterial elements.¹² The processes of brand performance and identity construction are intertwined with cultural consumption practices and the formation of identities, lifestyles, and cultures.¹³ Brands evolve through interactions with individuals, products, information, images, and cultural practices, emphasizing their dynamic nature.

In the society of experience, customer engagement and brand uniqueness run through experiential strategies and customers’ emotional involvement. The brand identity is not only represented by products, but it is being built through experiences that can be linked to a product, or just recall the brand’s values and atmospheres, and open the brand to a broader offering of products and services. Describing the evolution of customer experience offering Addis categorizes experience as follows: the basic experience (focused on enhancing products);¹⁴ the enhanced experience (opening to product-related services, apps, information); the transformative experience (offering a diversified range of brand-related products and experiences, implying a change toward more complex business models). In this regard Addis also adds that the most effective experience in fostering brand engagement is the transformative experience. “Brands adopting the transformative experience offer multifaceted experiences based on several product categories”, which objective is to arouse emotion to feed the brand’s relationship with customers. Traditional concepts of sector and industry do not apply to the transformative experience, that broadens brand’s perception for the construction of a whole world imagery linked to the brand.

First examples of transformative experience belong to entertainment industry, in the fashion industry one of the many examples could be the Gucci Garden: a boutique offering exclusive luxury products, a museum and a gallery curated by art critic and fashion curator Maria Luisa Frisa, with a bookshop and a restaurant, Gucci Osteria, run by Michelin-starred chef Luca Bottura; located in the centre of Florence, in a historical building, Palazzo della Mercanzia, the Gucci Garden links the brand immediately to Italian Renaissance.

The museum and the gallery allow customers to dig into the brand’s heritage. In the exhibition Archetypes, it is possible to physically enter the brand’s campaigns, thanks to immersive installations. Everything at Gucci Garden is perfectly concerted to be shared on social media by visitors sharing their

10. Cfr. Alexander and Rutter, “Towards Transformation”: 2–12.

11. Adam Arvidsson, *Brands: Meaning and Value in Media Culture* (London: Routledge: 2006), 69–94.

12. Michel Callon et al., “The economy of qualities,” *Economy and Society*, 32.2 (2002): 194–217.

13. Sarah Banet-Weiser, *Authentic™: The Politics of Ambivalence in a Brand Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 15–49.

14. Michela Addis, *Engaging Brands: A Customer-Centric Approach for Superior Experiences* (London: Routledge 2020), 54–77.

emotions and excitement, in accordance with Addis¹⁵ concept of transformative experience which is described as engaging, and therefore with the power to become viral. However, the Gucci Garden does not stop at the Palazzo della Mercanzia, but also manifests itself in the virtual world with various representations, with the intent of expanding its brand to younger audiences. It is possible to navigate through the exhibition Archetypes thanks to a virtual tour on the exhibition website.

None of the described offerings is innovative or original per se, nevertheless, it is the whole of their entanglement and adherence to brand values and aesthetics that contribute to bringing to life the Gucci transformative experience.

Retail Experience Influenced by Communities and Collaborative Media

Collaborative media is what allowed consumers to become also producers, changing media paradigms and users' expectations. "In Collaborative Media, these new production logics are embedded in the idea that not only do collaborative media enable the user to produce media content, they also enable them to modify or even (re)design the very infrastructure of the media: the programs, software components and web services that can be used for media production."¹⁶ This kind of modularity and modifiability has been already existing for a long time in the gaming industries, which are nowadays inspiring the new rules of experience. Gamification and its paradigms are already being used as a valuable method for improving brands' customer engagement, motivation, loyalty, users' onboarding experiences, and data gathering. It seems that this tendency is being confirmed and consolidated also in the future of fashion phygital customer experience.

Intangible experiences, virtual and digital worlds and the related communities are emerging and creating new business opportunities, although the technology and infrastructure does not yet exist to allow the development of new immersive virtual worlds at scale — one that our avatars could transcend across platforms,¹⁷ fashion is going through its first attempts of de-materialization, thinking about completely virtual products to purchase in online gaming platforms or virtual limited editions products certified thanks to NFT technology (i. e.: Balenciaga; Gucci; Nike; Ralph Lauren and Prada experiments on gaming platforms and Luis Vuitton and Burberry linking NFTs to gaming). According to LSN Global Future Forecast 2023 report, gamers are placing almost the same importance on looking good in virtual worlds with their avatars as they do in real life, opening space for experimentation for fashion brands in the virtual worlds. So digital/virtual world opportunities cannot be left behind, since younger generations and new emerging communities¹⁸ are demonstrating strong interest toward new ways of expressing themselves through virtual and digital fashion. According to Bolter¹⁹ mainstream culture doesn't exist anymore, culture is fragmented and cannot be analyzed following former categories of "elite" and "popular" culture, it is fragmented into a diversity of cultural practices and communities operating beyond the dichotomy of high and popular culture. As Bolter writes "The knowledge that defines each community is canonical only within that community."²⁰

All these aspects deriving from digital media and cultures are shaping society and consumers and can't be ignored while envisioning the future of customer experiences.

15. Addis, *Engaging Brands*.

16. Jonas Löwgren and Bo Reimer, *Collaborative media: Production, consumption, and design interventions* (London: The MIT Press, 2013), 13–42.

17. Yogesh K. Dwivedi et al., "Metaverse beyond the hype: Multidisciplinary perspectives on emerging challenges, opportunities, and agenda for research, practice and policy," *International Journal of Information Management*, 66 (2022): 1–55, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2022.102542>.

18. Jay David Bolter, *The digital plenitude: The decline of elite culture and the rise of digital media* (London: The MIT Press, 2019), 1–26.

19. Bolter, *The digital plenitude*.

20. Bolter, *The digital plenitude*.

Retail Experience as a Conjunction Between Brands and Urban Environment

Urban environment is a complex and stratified, its constitution changes over time, due to countless factors among which political, economical and social conditions are just the easiest to individuate; however retail and brands have with no doubts a role in shaping the identity and the perception of the city. As Bookman states,²¹ three distinct modalities by which brands interface with city life can be listed: retail brandscapes (brand retail spaces in the urban context); urban branding (areas, neighborhoods, and whole cities linked to brands in their identities); mobile brand strategies (the way brands exploit mobile technologies and marketing to engage individuals on the go).

Brands, not only thanks to retail, but also as media communication and representation, are relevant in urban structures, they play a role in urban organization and functions. Moreover they influence routines and practices in the urban areas and mediate the public appearance.

In the context of mediated city, fashion has a special role, both historically and contemporaneously, because of its ability to communicate signs and symbols of social status and actions. The first urban entities influencing the appearance and activities of the cities have been shops and department stores. Benjamin in his *Passagenwerk* (Arcades projects) talks about the fantasmagorie of goods, the pleasure of getting lost in the lights and shop windows in the streets of 1930s' Paris, also referring to Le Bon Marché (one of the first fashion and luxury department stores in the world).

Highlighting how already in 19th century fashion has developed a distinctive form related to the parallel emergence of consumerism and spaces of consumption, spectacle, leisure, and pleasure.²² Fashion brands in the city become products and territories: they become worlds in which one can also physically enter, as happens in consumer centers, megastores, cities, theme parks, so that the very display of the brand sign becomes almost superfluous.²³

In the contemporaneity, physical experiential retail is transforming into cultural, entertainment and sensory stimulation space firmly anchored to the urban space of the new smart cities, or even a space capable of promoting individual and social wellbeing.²⁴ Also, Alexander & Blazquez Cano²⁵ link the new physical retail to localization and territory while describing the concept of “slow retail” (in opposition to “fast-retail”), adding at the definition also the following features: pursuit of pleasure, convivial experience, diversity, quality and slowing-down. The shift to a more interactive relationship between brands and consumers-producers, mentioned in the above paragraphs, implies that brands and branded places such as urban cultural quarters are as not simply the product of a top-down imposition of a hegemonic vision by branding agencies and agents. Rather, they surface through a complex, dynamic interplay involving multiple actors and auspices in the performance and co-creation of a range of experiences, meanings, and cultures associated to the brand.

New consumer-citizens' strong expectations, call brands to proactively contribute to improving the quality of life in cities, while at the same time cultivating local presence and awareness. Branding activity has become increasingly sophisticated in terms of its involvement with, and usage of, urban space to create specific environments for brand engagement.

An emerging practice consists of forming partnerships with cities to launch and/or finance temporary or permanent urban development projects, devoting a fraction of their marketing budgets to improve city dwellers' quality of life, in 2019 JCDcaux defined this practice Brand Urbanism® (a well-known example is the Pigalle Duperré Court, the basketball court created by fashion brand Pigalle in collaboration with Nike, which transformed an urban void into a new vital space for the city). According to Bookman²⁶ this is a dynamic process in which brands frame and co-generate experiences of everyday life

21. Sonia Bookman, *Brands and the City: Entanglements and Implications for Urban Life* (London: Routledge, 2018), 1–17.

22. Jennifer Craik, “Fashion: An urban industry of style,” in *The Routledge Companion to Urban Media and Communication*, eds. Zlatan Krajina and Deborah Stevenson (New York: Routledge, 2020), 304–313.

23. Eleonora Fiorani, *Moda, corpo, immaginario: Il divenire moda del mondo fra tradizione e innovazione* (Milano: Polidesign, 2006), 7–87.

24. Mark S. Rosenbaum et al., “Retail knockoffs: Consumer acceptance and rejection of inauthentic retailers,” *Journal of Business Research*, 69.7 (2016): 2448–2455.

25. Cfr. Alexander and Blazquez Cano, “Store of the future”: 2–12.

26. Cfr. Bookman, *Brands and the City*, 20–45.

and forms of urban sociality as part of the interface with consumers and the creation of brand value.

Retail Experience Aimed at Communication and Services Offering

Digital companies such as Google and Amazon are opening showrooms and physical experiential retail spaces gaining back in corporeity and tactility, which are in fact physical bridges to digital worlds and services. A form that creates new sales space through the creation of experiences, moving towards increasingly integrated strategies that use omnichannel sales and communication methods.²⁷

The idea of the fashion retail space seen as one of the physical interfaces of the brand with consumers brings in an important concept: the servitization of fashion retail spaces, that is the transformation of physical retail into a space dedicated to services offered from the brand, from beauty and fashion counselling, to repairing services and many others digitally driven innovations. For example, the Amazon Style store, that merges the physical and digital experience, displays one piece of each model, optimizing its space. The format does not prevent customers from trying the products, the pieces are available thanks to a complex inventory management system. Through the Amazon Shopping app, customers scan a product's QR code and see information such as sizes, colors, overall customer ratings, and additional product details. Once inside the changing room, the user can, through a large display, try on a thousand variations of the same garment with the certainty that it will be his size. Machine learning algorithms produce real-time recommendations to give customers the most personalized experience. It is also a form of upsell by digitally capturing a customer at the physical location, as suggestions related to your preferences will appear in the Amazon Shopping application. Finally, with the support of technology, the team responsible for the service can help customers by supplying the fitting rooms and back-of-house operations, as well as at check-out, having as an option of payment method the Amazon One feature.

It is worth mentioning that Amazon already used artificial intelligence to improve its fashion services before. Style by Alexa, for example, a feature in the Amazon Shopping app that suggests, compares, and rates clothing using algorithms and human operators.

To summarize, in Amazon Style stores, online-chosen products are delivered directly into the fitting room booked by the customer, together with other items selected by the algorithm, based on customer data gathering and amazon recommendation system, to deliver a tailored shopping experience, strongly influenced, guided, and mediated by the algorithm, just like the amazon online one, but in a physical store, bringing the recommendation algorithm from digital to physical dimension.

From Retail Experience Transformations to Meaning-driven Design Process Innovation

In the present research, findings on retail experience transformations described in the previous paragraphs, are considered as the starting point to map and define the variables to be included in the retail customer experience design process.

As already stated in the previous paragraphs, technological and customer experience transformation is changing the designers' work, which is gaining more and more level of complexity and needs to be addressed in a transdisciplinary way. More precisely, the retail designer of the next customer experience should be able to match technical potential with imagination and function, generating or enhancing socio-cultural contents and practices, and feed value production equally for brands, customers, and territories, in a meaning-driven design process.

This implies the need to build a framework of shared knowledge and tools able to foster the collaboration between all the stakeholders involved in the design process; and to improve the decision-making processes by considering variables and conditional factors.

In this phase, it is still to study further which design-driven approaches will lead to the creation of the

27. Valeria Maria Iannilli and Vittorio Linfante, "Exploring disrupting scenarios in the fashion retail and communication paradigms," *Luxury Studies: The In Pursuit of Luxury Journal*, 1.1 (2022): 45-65, https://doi.org/10.1386/ipol_00005_1.

framework this research is aimed at. A first attempt to systematize the tools used in the retail experience design process is illustrated in the next paragraphs.

Design Role in the Ongoing Transformation of Fashion Retail Experience Design

Retail design is quickly changing, causing struggles for retail designers on how to perceive and approach what is designed and how to find out. However, the description of an interface between retailer and customer²⁸ reflecting the small system of design, inclusive of web shop, social media, curated product assortment, and visual merchandising offers an idea of the context to investigate.²⁹

The retail designer of the next customer experience should be able to match technical potential with imagination and function, generating or enhancing socio-cultural contents and practices, and feed value production. Quartier et al.³⁰ set the new requirements for the retail designer in the age of phygit, asserting that now more than ever designers should assume a holistic approach and that transdisciplinary work is necessary to manage the complexity of customer experience. The authors further argue that the competencies to be integrated in retail designers' skills are: understanding how digital technologies can be applied and how they work; ability to generate creative ideas; ability to think across channels starting from the customer journey and technology integration, considering variables and conditional factors. Building on Quartier's work, Servais analyzes fashion retail key components that contribute to designing a valuable in-store experience (namely: brand, customer, offer/service, physical space, and "unexpected factor"), and problematizes the need for retail designers to integrate the experience design in a "pre-concept" design process stage.

Mapping Existing Tools Supporting Retail Experience Design

Architects' and designers' work is typically characterized by the use of tools. Some meet the coordinative functions as objects of persuasive communication while others help to develop a general understanding of an idea or a task and others still may work as recall of design principles, approaches, methods or open questions. Still, some others help to keep control of the activities and materials while others represent the design decisions to a predetermined level of detail and technical precision.³¹ The new directions in retail experience design raise questions about which tools need to be integrated in retail experience design process. Firstly, the questions address which tools designers use to generate creative ideas, to think across channels and, to integrate technology. Further, it is to understand how these tools have been modified or need to be updated to be respondent to the new requirements. Furthermore is important to understand how to foster transdisciplinary work; and facilitate the dialogue and the exchange of ideas and concepts between the different, heterogeneous actors during the customer experience design process.

The research conducted on the tools supporting retail experience design has resulted in the creation of a tools map (Fig. 1). This map illustrates the correlation between project phases and the corresponding tools used in the retail experience design process. Since retail customer experience design is a transdisciplinary activity, the tools utilized in this field also come from various disciplines. To provide clarity, each tool is labeled with the discipline from which it originates.

One interesting observation is the presence of overlapping labels between disciplines for certain tools. This indicates that transdisciplinary and collaborative work is essential in the retail experience design process. It highlights the interconnectedness of different disciplines and their contributions to creating effective retail experiences.

While the tools map may not be exhaustive and still has room for improvement, it serves as a valuable

28. Grewal et al., "The future of in-store technology": 670–679.

29. Cfr. Petermans and Van Cleempoel, "Retail Design and the Experience Economy": 171–181.

30. Katelijn Quartier, Stephanie Claes and Jan Vanrie, "Rethinking the education of retail design. What are the competences a retail designer needs in this fast evolving discipline?," *Design Journal*, 20.1 (2017): 1285–1292. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14606925.2017.1352657>.

31. Luis Lança and Maria Dulce Loução, "Retail Design: Do we need a project instrument or a project tool?," *Revista Lusófona de Arquitectura e Educação*, 08–09 (2013): 595–619.

starting point for studying the tools used in fashion retail experience design. It will serve as a reference collection for designing new frameworks and tools, which aligns with the goals of the present research. The map provides a foundation for further exploration and refinement of tools to enhance the design process and ultimately contribute to the advancement of retail experience design in the fashion industry.

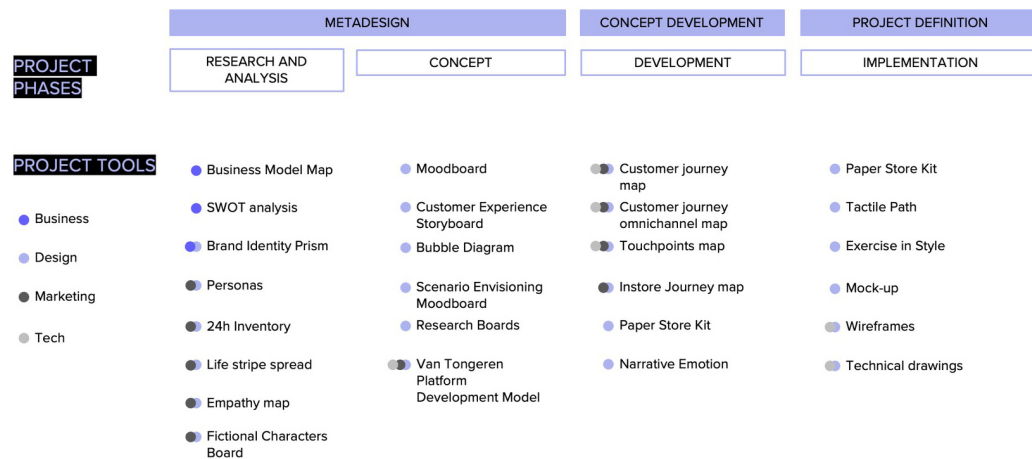


Figure 1: Retail Design Experience Tools Map.

Conclusion and Future Work

The work presented has been built by researching in the fields of marketing and management studies, information technology, design studies, consumption practices studies, media and communication studies, and urban studies with relation to fashion retail experience and consumption practices innovations, with the aim of understanding ongoing transformation in the field of fashion consumer practices and experiences. The choice of including different fields of studies and points of view answers to the need to understand the complex entanglements and interrelations between the different disciplines involved in the retail experience design process, in order to put the bases for the construction of a transdisciplinary framework for experts operating in fashion retail experience, able to manage complexity and cutting-edge technological integration and to generate value for brands, customers and territories.

The results presented in this article are based on secondary research methods, with the main purpose of understanding the transformations in the field of fashion consumer practices and experiences and constitute the first step of the present research. The following steps, aimed at framework definition and at tools designing, will include future work on the visualisation of the tools map, here presented in Fig. 1, better highlighting project phases, actors involved in the design process and how the tools used in the different project steps are able to foster the transdisciplinary work.

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