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Fashion E-Commerce: Digital Marketing's Dirty Little Secrets Exposed

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We have seen the landscape of fashion ecommerce move fast. It's as if we've seen it all, from fresh trends and bold ideas to innovative tactics. However much happens behind the curtains. Big names like Myntra, Shein, and AJIO may be front and centre, but behind the glossy campaigns are some lesser-known tactics that fuel their growth and quietly influence how we shop. From turning returns into profit to copying viral content formulas and stumbling through tech experiments, these are some of digital marketing's dirty little secrets in India's fashion e-commerce world.

Myntra's 'Return to Profit' Strategy: How They Monetise Returns

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Returns are one of the biggest headaches for online fashion retailers. They eat into margins and add layers of complexity. But Myntra, one of the country's top fashion platforms, seems to have figured out a way to soften the blow. Their answer? A simple-looking discount game called "Scratch & Save."

Myntra isn't just accepting returns, they're giving them a second life. Returned items are

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cleaned up, repackaged, and put back on sale, often at a small discount through their popular “Scratch & Save” offers.

Most shoppers don’t realise just how widespread this is. Industry sources say that up to 30% of Myntra’s so-called “new arrivals” are returned items that have been refreshed and re-listed. Since many of these pieces were only tried on or worn once, they’re good as new, and the discount feels like a deal, not a red flag. It’s a smart way for Myntra to cut losses on returns and keep inventory moving.

The Shein Hack: How Indian Brands Mimic Its TikTok Playbook

Shein changed the fast fashion game with lightning-fast production and sharp, scroll-stopping social media content, especially on TikTok. And even though the app’s banned in India, its influence lives on through Instagram Reels, where Indian brands have quickly picked up the same tricks and tailored them to suit local styles and platforms

Brands like Libas and Suta have found major success on Instagram Reels, turning ethnic wear into viral gold. They’ve mastered the art of creating short, engaging video content that showcases their products in dynamic, aspirational, and highly shareable ways.

Behind this fast-fashion strategy is the growing use of Shein-style dropshipping in India. Brands like Bewakoof are tapping into this model to test fresh designs and ideas in real time, without the pressure of mass production right away. It helps them see what clicks with shoppers, catch viral waves early, and avoid getting stuck with excess stock. It’s a nimble, trend-responsive approach that lets them keep up with what’s hot on social media almost as quickly as it appears.

AJIO’s ‘AR Stylist’ – A Flop or Secret Weapon?

Augmented reality try-on tools were once seen as the next big thing in online fashion—a way to bring the fitting room experience to your screen. AJIO, backed by Reliance, jumped on the trend with its “AR Stylist” feature. But while the idea sounded promising, the response from shoppers tells a different story

While the tech was innovative, it did not see widespread shopper adoption. Meanwhile, Myntra’s “Stylecast” which features influencers showcasing styles in real-time, has become far more popular.

Marketer’s Take: Indian shoppers still seem to prefer the buzz of live commerce, think Meesho-style livestreams over high-tech AR try-ons. It’s less about flashy features and more about connection. People enjoy interacting in real time, asking questions, getting instant responses, and feeling like they’re part of something. That sense of community and trust, built through direct engagement with sellers or influencers, often wins out over the more isolated, solo experience of trying on clothes virtually. Right now, live commerce just feels more relatable and more effective when it comes to driving sales.

There’s more to fashion e-commerce in India than meets the eye. Clever returns policies, content-driven selling, and smart tweaks to global trends are all part of the game. While the tech might get flashier, it’s still human behaviour, trust, trendspotting, and timing that drive what sells and what doesn’t. Peel back the glossy banners and you’ll find a whole world of strategy at play.

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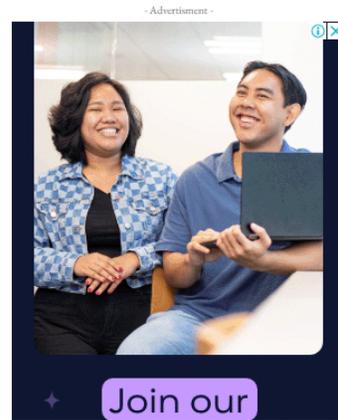


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