THE WHITE PAPER

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DefineStyle

Why fit is fashion's costliest problem

The fitting room, reimagined

Inside the Smart Changing Room

A DEFINESTYLE WHITE PAPER

Fashion *meets AI*

Turning retail screens into experiences shoppers can step into.



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N° 02 — EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From guesswork to evidence: *“will this suit me?”* gets an answer.

AI is moving fashion’s most important decision, “will this suit me?”, away from guesswork and towards evidence. DefineStyle applies that shift where it counts most: in the store, at the screen and in the fitting room, where shoppers are closest to buying.

THREE FORCES MAKE THIS THE MOMENT

i. **Fit is fashion’s costliest problem.** Size and fit drive more apparel returns than any other reason, online and off.

ii. **AI is now how people shop.** Fashion leaders name AI as the industry’s biggest opportunity, and shoppers increasingly expect personal, conversational discovery.

iii. **Stores are full of screens that only advertise.** UK retailers have built large in-store screen networks, but most still play one-way content to people walking past.

DefineStyle turns those screens into places a shopper can step into. A 90–100" interactive display, an in-store edge AI computer and the DefineStyle app recognise the shopper and the garment, suggest complete looks and virtual try-ons, and call staff when needed. The journey then carries on through the shopper’s phone.



Emerging labels featured on the DefineStyle app.

“

The screen stops being an advertising board and becomes a retail experience that sells, serves and learns.

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N° 03 — THE GROWTH STORY

Why fashion meets AI *now*

Fit is the problem AI is best placed to solve, and both the cost of the problem and the market for solving it are now large. In the industry's own annual outlook, executives named AI as fashion's biggest opportunity for 2026, ahead of product differentiation and sustainability (FashionUnited on BoF–McKinsey).

30%

of fashion items bought online in the UK are returned each year, with **poor fit** the top reason.

Source: Just Style / fulfilmentcrowd

53%

of apparel retailers name **size or fit** as the top reason for returns.

Source: Coresight Research



VIRTUAL TRY-ON AI

$14.2bn

by 2033, up from US$5.1bn in 2026 (15.8% a year). Fashion is the largest segment, at 35%.

Source: Persistence Market Research

41%

of consumers say they **trust generative AI** search results more than traditional advertising.

Source: BoF–McKinsey via FashionUnited

UK RETAIL MEDIA, 2025

£3.8bn

spent in 2025, up 18% on the year before.

Source: IAB UK

Together, they point one way.

Shoppers want certainty before they buy. Retailers lose margin when that certainty is missing. And the budgets that follow the point of purchase are growing fast.

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N° 04 — THE TRY-ON, REIMAGINED

How AI is reshaping try-on and *the moment before buying*



Style me: a complete look, tried on virtually.

AI changes try-on from a solo trial of one garment into a guided styling session around the whole look. Four changes matter most:

From size label to fit profile

Body measurements and fit preferences turn "I'm usually a 12" into a recommendation for this cut, from this brand.

From garment to complete look

Recognition of what's in hand lets AI suggest what goes with it and what else in store would work.

From imagining to seeing

Virtual try-on shows the shopper styled in options they haven't carried to the fitting room.

From silent room to connected room

A request for another size reaches staff at once, rather than waiting for a knock on the door.

THE FITTING ROOM IS WHERE THIS PAYS OFF MOST

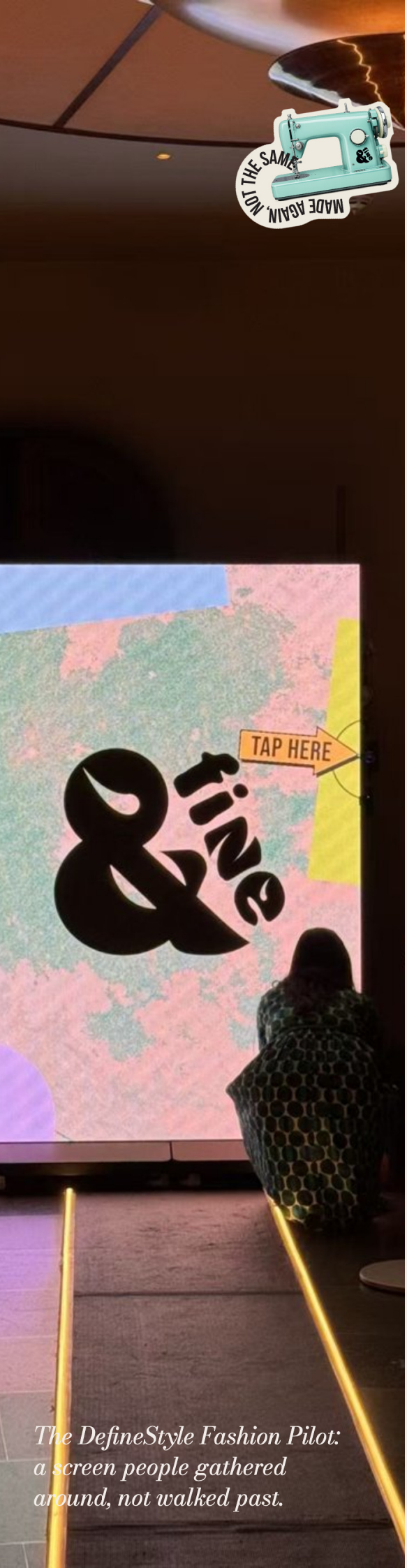
71%
more likely to buy than browsers

2×
about twice the spend of a browser

3×
almost three times, with service in the room

Research by London consultancy Envision Retail found that fitting-room users are 71% more likely to buy than browsers and spend about twice as much. With service in the room they spend almost three times as much (Retail Customer Experience). Yet most stores capture nothing from that moment: not what was tried, which sizes failed, or what was paired with what. *AI makes the highest-intent moment in retail visible for the first time.*

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The DefineStyle Fashion Pilot: a screen people gathered around, not walked past.

N° 05 — THE SCREEN OPPORTUNITY

From advertising boards *to experiences*

UK stores already have the screens; what they lack is a reason for shoppers to stop and step in. Digital now carries 67% of UK out-of-home ad spend, £954.6m in 2025 (The Media Leader, AA/Warc). Retailers are building in-store networks on top, such as Co-op's roll-out of 1,000 front-of-store screens (Retail Technology Innovation Hub).

Almost all of that glass works one way: it broadcasts, and shoppers pass by. DefineStyle's view is that a screen in a fashion store can do far more than advertise.

	ADVERTISING BOARD	DEFINESTYLE SCREEN
Speaks to	Everyone walking past	**The shopper standing in front of it**
Knows	A playlist and a schedule	**The garment in hand, the shopper's profile, live stock**
Shopper does	Watches, maybe	**Gestures, styles, tries on virtually, asks for help**
Next	Hope they remember	**Staff are alerted; looks are saved to the app**
Store learns	Impressions	**Try-ons, sizes, pairings, requests**

To inhabit a screen is to make it a place.

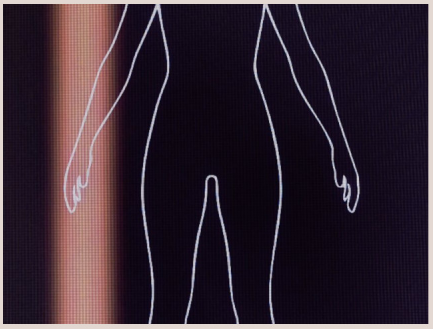
It becomes somewhere a shopper is recognised, sees themselves and gets served. The same glass can still carry brand content between sessions, so it earns as media and as a sales tool.

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N° 06 — THE DEFINESTYLE USE CASE

The Smart *Changing Room*

One system of three parts that turns a fitting-room screen into a personal stylist with a direct line to the shop floor.



i. The screen

A 90–100" vertical interactive display with an RGB camera, used for gesture and pose recognition only, and an RFID/ NFC garment reader. It is the "Marvelous Mirror" the shopper steps up to.



ii. Edge AI mini computer

A fanless NVIDIA Jetson Orin unit (up to 100 TOPS) mounted behind the screen. Vision AI runs in the store, so responses are fast and camera processing stays local.



iii. The DefineStyle app

Fit profiles, outfit recommendations and virtual try-on, plus saved looks and a basket that travel with the shopper.

THE SHOPPER'S JOURNEY RUNS IN FOUR STEPS

01 *Recognise me*

Shoppers connect their Define profile from their phone, peer-to-peer, or start as a guest.

02 *Style me*

The garment is recognised. AI suggests fit, styles and complete looks, with virtual try-on.

03 *Assist me*

A request for another size or item checks stock and sends an actionable notification to staff.

04 *Continue anywhere*

Looks are saved, added to cart and picked up in the DefineStyle app.

This is how a screen becomes an experience.

The screen knows who is in front of it and what they are holding, and it can act for them. Each session also leaves the store with data it never had: what was tried, in which sizes, and what was paired with it.

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N° 07 — WHERE DEFINESTYLE GOES NEXT

Inhabiting *the screen*

The fitting room is the first place, not the only one: the same intelligence works wherever a fashion store has glass. DefineStyle describes it as one intelligence platform for many retail environments, linking people, product and place.

Fitting rooms

The Smart Changing Room: recognition, styling, try-on and staff assist at the point of decision.

Shop-floor screens

Screens that now play brand loops could become styling points that answer “what goes with this?” and show what’s in stock.

Windows and entrances

Screens that invite passers-by to step in and try a look virtually, then find it inside.

Brand moments and events

Launches and pop-ups where shoppers become part of the display, as at the DefineStyle Fashion Pilot.

Emerging brands

A stage for the independent labels on the DefineStyle app, discovered in store alongside the house collection.



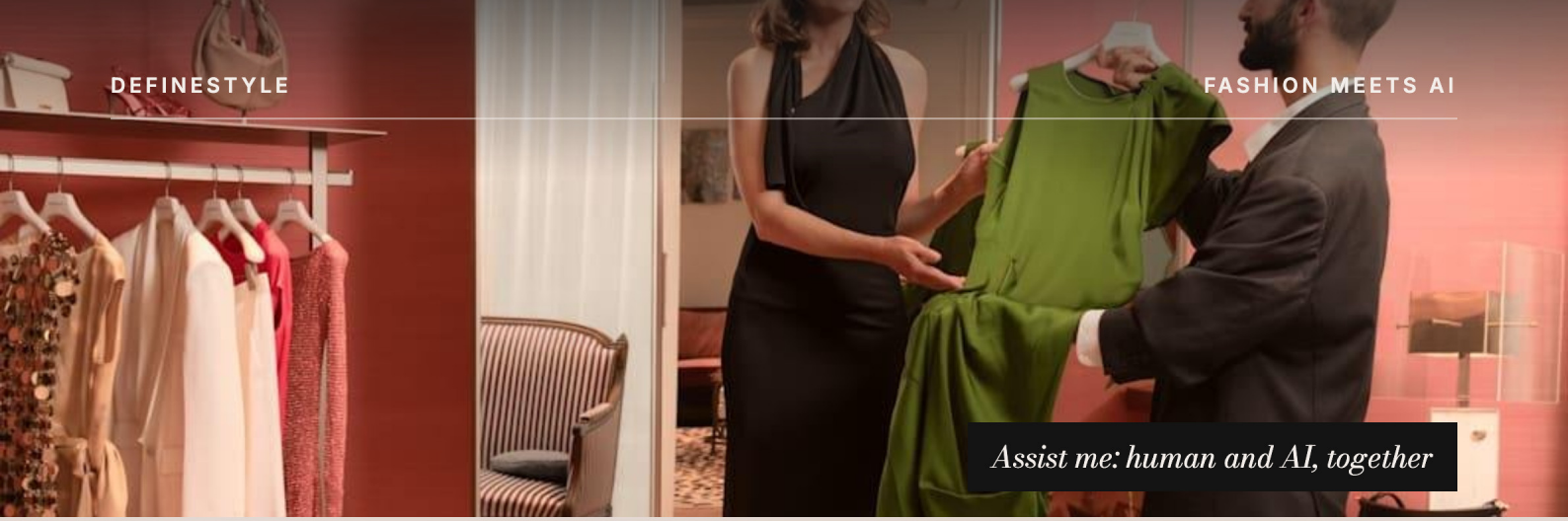
Emerging brands on the DefineStyle app.

DEFINESTYLE ROLLS THIS OUT IN PHASES, SO A STORE CAN START SMALL AND GROW

Phase 1	*Phase 2*	*Phase 3*	*Phase 4*
Interactive experience	Connected fitting room	Intelligent interaction	Connected retail network
Large screen, DefineStyle catalogue, digital styling	Garment recognition, inventory link, staff assist	Gesture control, edge vision, personal try-on	One journey across stores, mobile and online
Pilot scope: Phases 1 and 2		Extend and scale after the pilot	

Phases 1 and 2 make a strong pilot on their own. Phases 3 and 4 add vision-led personal try-on and one journey across every channel.

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Assist me: human and AI, together

N° 08 — CONSIDERATIONS

Privacy, trust *and measurement*

A screen that sees shoppers has to earn their trust first. UK and European shoppers expect privacy by design under GDPR, and analysts call it a competitive requirement for virtual try-on and AI sizing (GII Research). DefineStyle is built with that in mind:

- **Processing at the edge.** Vision AI runs on the in-store unit rather than streaming video to the cloud.
- **Purpose-limited camera.** The camera is used for gesture and pose recognition only.
- **Shopper control.** A shopper can start as a guest, or choose to connect their own profile.

Pilots should agree success measures up front. Useful ones include fitting-room conversion, items per basket, size-request response time, staff requests handled, and looks saved or carried into the app. Before any wide roll-out, a retailer will also want a data protection impact assessment and clear in-room signage.

CONCLUSION

Next steps *for retailers*

The fitting room is retail's highest-intent moment and its least intelligent one. AI and the screens already in stores can change that. DefineStyle's approach is to make the screen somewhere a shopper is recognised, styled and served. Stores get better decisions, bigger baskets and fewer fit-driven returns, plus try-on insight they have never had.

For UK department stores, a practical path is:

1. Pick one flagship fitting-room zone and agree pilot measures.
2. Install the Smart Changing Room (Phases 1–2) and connect stock and staff alerts.
3. Review results after an agreed period, then extend to gesture, vision and personal try-on (Phase 3).
4. Scale across stores and connect to online and mobile (Phase 4).

To discuss a pilot, visit define.style.

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N° 09 — SOURCES

Further reading

1 The State of Fashion 2026: Turbulence is the new normal, FashionUnited, reporting BoF–McKinsey

2 UK online fashion returns hit 30% with 'poor fit' as top reason, Just Style, January 2025

3 The True Cost of Apparel Returns, Coresight Research, 2023

4 Virtual Try-On AI Market, 2026–2033, Persistence Market Research, August 2026

5 Retail Media's £3.8bn moment, IAB UK, March 2026

6 OOH adspend continues to exceed pre-pandemic levels in the UK, The Media Leader, reporting the AA/Warc Expenditure Report

7 Co-op Media Network hits digital advertising touchpoints milestone, Retail Technology Innovation Hub, November 2025

8 Are retailers under-valuing the importance of fitting rooms?, Retail Customer Experience, citing Envision Retail

9 Virtual Fitting Room Market, GII Research

10 DefineStyle Smart Changing Room datasheet and "Changing Room is Changing" presentation, Define Ltd, 2026

DefineStyle

Pilot the Smart Changing Room *in your store.*



We're partnering with selected UK department stores for in-store pilots.
Visit define.style

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