

RETAIL

## Handled disrupts personal shopping by making service more accessible

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*Handled looks to disrupt personal shopping. Image credit: Handled*

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

Mobile application Handled is working to make personal shoppers more accessible and easier to manage for affluent shoppers who are pressed for time.

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The new personal concierge app works to connect consumers with personal shoppers who will take the work out of shopping for them. Launched in Toronto, Handled sets up a free consultation and allows users to set a timeframe and budget for their shopping needs.

"Handled is revolutionizing shopping with a personalized approach, all enabled through technology, so that it's an extension of how our customers already live their lives," said Shira Yoskovitz, founder of [Handled Concierge Services](#), Toronto. "Most busy professionals don't have extra time in their day, or the desire to spend searching for the perfect clothing item or gift."

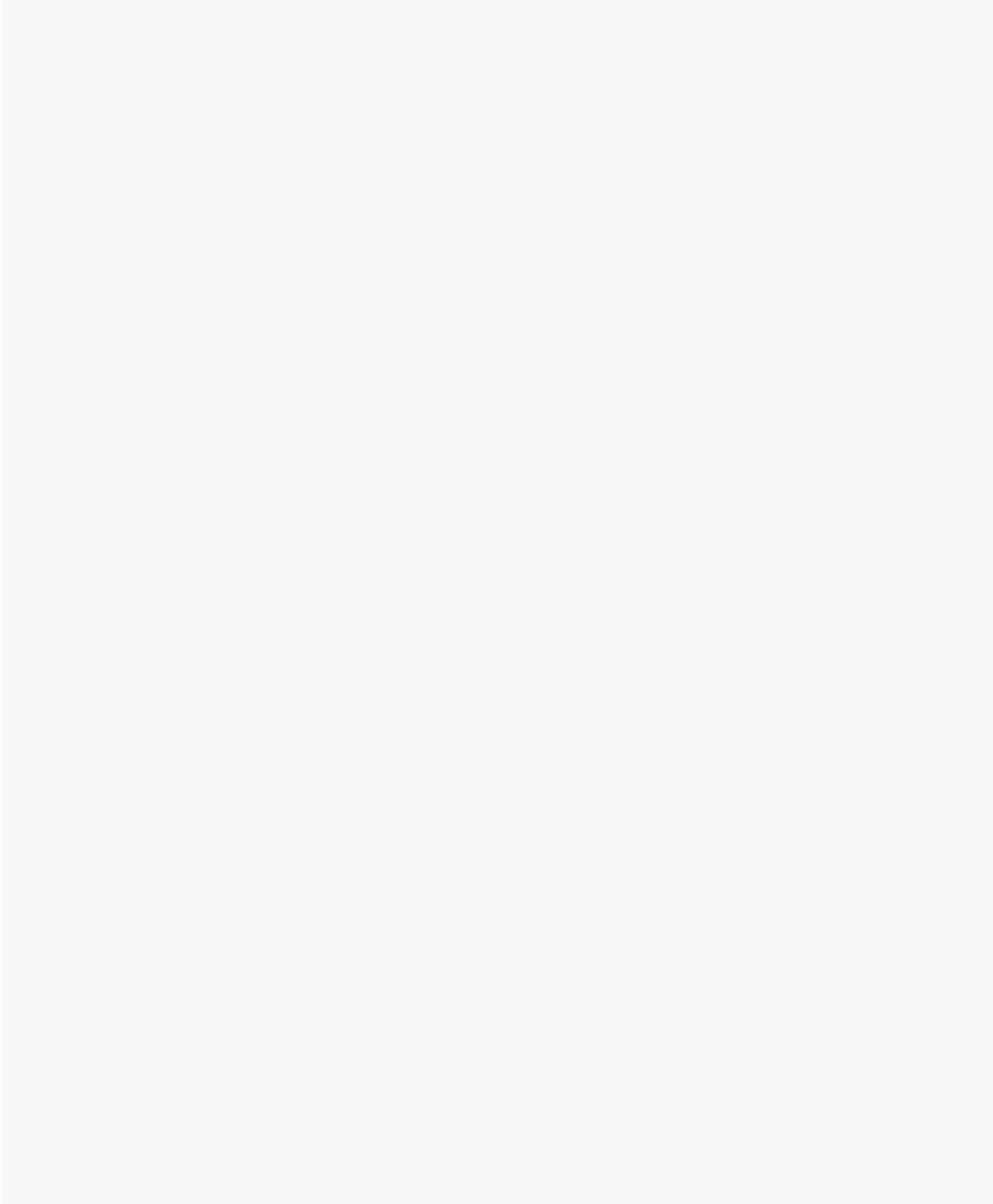
"In fact, studies show that one out of five people regularly experience the feeling of time crunch,' or simply not having enough time in their day to do what's really important to them," she said. "Handled's platform allows the already busy person to easily outsource their shopping, in a low-risk and transparent way."

"Once they've gone through the free consultation, the client can upload as many tasks as they'd like. We handle everything from there- from sourcing to delivery, and then manage any alterations or returns if needed."

Mobile concierge

Through the Handled app, "Handlers" take care of everything a user needs based on parameters he or she provides.

Customers create a profile on the app to schedule their free consultation. There they set the budget and time frame for the shopping task.



Happy #HumpDay Toronto! We'd like to introduce you to @cleowade An artist, poet & Handled's #WCW We not only love Cleo for her inspirational work on gender and race equality, but we love Cleo's use of diverse colours and textures in her wardrobe - a true sign of an artist. Let Handled's experts help you achieve this vibrant style with ease Link in bio

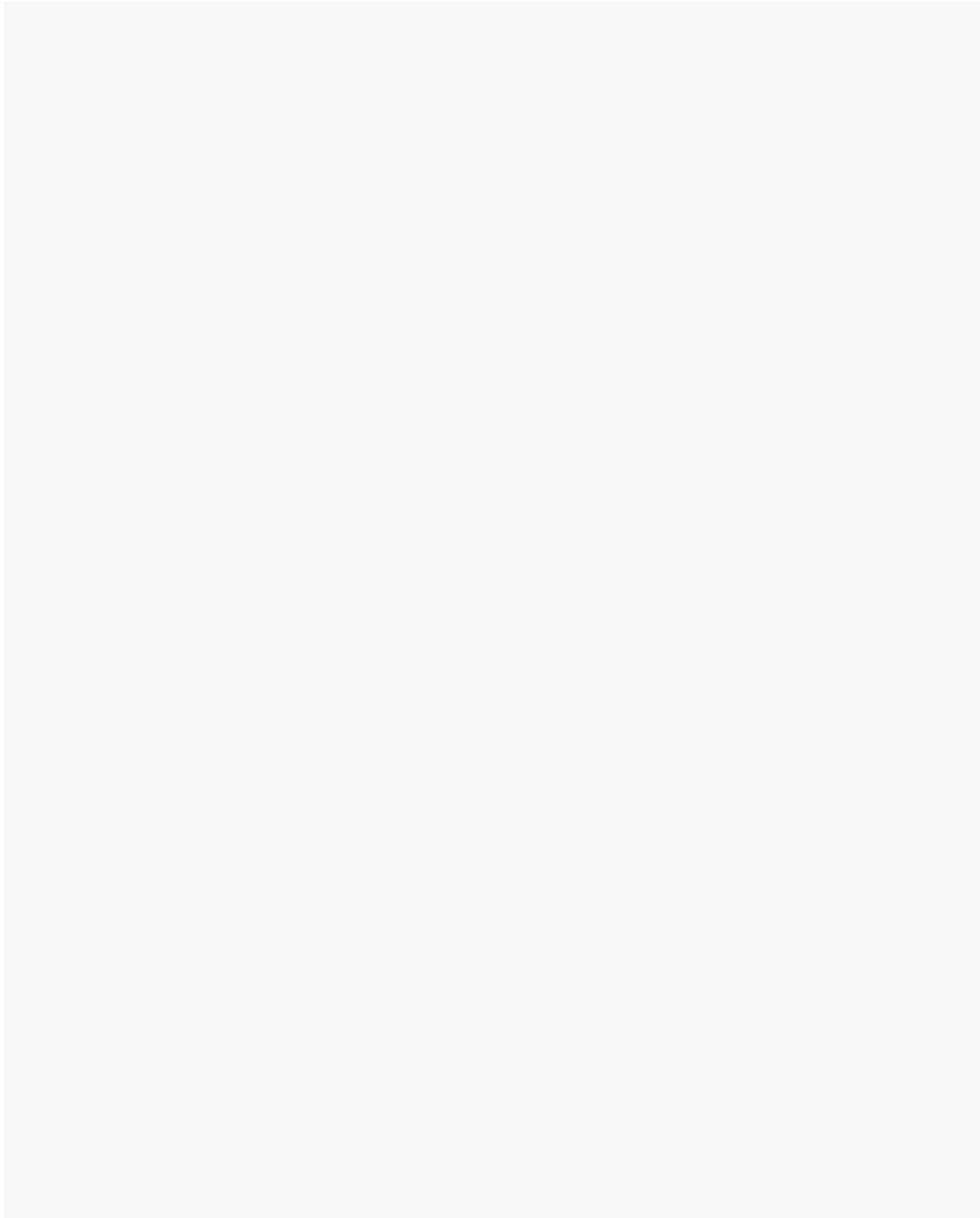
A post shared by Handled (@handledconcierge) on Aug 16, 2017 at 3:54pm PDT

A retail expert will be assigned as their Handler to complete the task. Through research, online and in-store browsing, the Handler finds the best possible product and deal.

When the task is completed, the expert will arrange shipping and logistics for customers to receive their goods. The more a customer uses Handled, the less expensive the service will become. Beginning at \$60 an hour with 20

percent of an items value for shopping services, the service could possibly threaten the standard personal shopper industry.

Handled aims itself to busy families and individuals who lack the time to complete these various tasks that can be better "handled" by a professional. The app also offers closet visits, styling, alterations, hair and makeup and themed gift-wrapping.



Happy #Monday Toronto! Kicking off this week feeling inspired by these summery yet perfect-for-fall outerwear pieces from the stylish duo @miraduma & @naseebs Its time we face the truth - Fall is just around the corner & we want to help you make the transition as smooth as possible. Let Handled's experts help you evolve your

summer wardrobe to Fall without spending hours at the mall! Link in bio

A post shared by Handled (@handledconcierge) on Aug 14, 2017 at 2:45pm PDT

The service will also begin to roll out a gifting service early next year as well as rewards and VIP program.

#### Technology and innovation

Mobile concierge services have become more present over the years, as the technology allows for an easy method of handling these tasks.

For instance, mall owner and manager Simon delivered personalized assistance to shoppers at its 208 North American locations at scale through a chatbot concierge.

Launched on Aug. 8, the mall chain's chatbot connects consumers with real-time information pertinent to their particular location through Facebook Messenger. Increasingly, malls are creating ways of bringing digital experiences to the bricks-and-mortar environment to ease consumers' searches ([see more](#)).

Turing Robotic Industries, a San Francisco-based company focused on mobile technology, is releasing a new high-end smartphone that comes with a built-in concierge service.

Turing's smartphone is called Appassionato, meaning "enthusiast" in Italian, as well as being a play on words with the word "app." Appassionato's main selling point however is an on-board digital concierge named Sir Alan who, Turing boasts, can assist in managing every part of an owner's life ([see more](#)).

"Handled takes care of shopping tasks so that clients can spend more time living their lives," Handled's Ms. Yoskovitc said. "The first step after signing up is to schedule a brief, maximum 30 minute, consultation using the app at a date and time that suits the client.

"During the initial 30-minute consultation, the Handled team works to understand each client, their goals, lifestyle and how the Handler can best help," she said. "Using this we build a personalized style and lifestyle portfolio that then acts as the instructions and guidelines to the Handler when managing the client's specific tasks.

"Handled makes shopping effortless and saves customers time at the mall during its busiest times or season, by allowing customers to make a list, upload it to the app and let their desired Handler take care of it."

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