

RETAIL

AI can pave way for more personal, efficient customer service

January 10, 2018



AI can free up sales associates' time to better serve consumers. Image credit: Printemps

By DANNY PARISI

Despite fears of artificial intelligence replacing workers, a new report from the Luxury Institute claims that the technology's real value will be in freeing up employees to focus on what really matters: improving a company's culture and efficiency.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246** ▶

Milton Pedraza, CEO of the [Luxury Institute](#), calls these types of workers "platinum collar workers" as opposed to blue collar or white collar workers, and created a platform called EIX as a means of training these types of employees. With the advent of artificial intelligence automating much of a luxury brand's traditional day-to-day practices, these platinum collar workers can focus on improving company culture and enhancing a brand's moral standing.

"Up to now, our institutions have focused on teaching humans to behave like robots," New York-based Mr. Pedraza said.

"Now, with the advent of artificial intelligence, our best minds are focused on teaching robots to behave like humans," he said. "Yet, the critical task now is to ignite an emotional intelligence revolution, to teach humans to behave like good humans."

AI efficiency

Artificial intelligence is one of the hottest technologies on the market.

Machine learning has already been used in a number of products from retailers and brands across the luxury industry, helping to handle customer service, create individualized advertisements and more.

But some things require a human touch, and no amount of intelligent or algorithmic programs can replace a human being fully, especially in the world of luxury where customers expect to have all of their needs met personally.

But AI can still help achieve this goal by freeing up responsibilities and time for employees to become what the Luxury Institute calls "platinum collar workers," workers who are able to push a company to be both more efficient

and moral.

One of the things Mr. Pedraza emphasizes is that platinum collar workers are able to emphasize emotional intelligence and moral judgement. If they are not under the constant stress of dealing with the minutiae of work thanks to AI, they can instead focus on attending to customers' needs on a more personal level.

To this end, the EIX platform, which stands for Emotional Intelligence Xpert, is meant to train these types of employees in brands.

Platinum collar workers

AI has already made a huge impact on luxury brands.

While artificial intelligence has been thought of as computerized solution lacking creativity, a new report from Fashionbi explains that AI-powered creativity will be a new frontier for fashion.

Through the use of data, fashion brands are now looking into creative solutions that build a unique strategy for streamlining trends as well as personalization. AI is now also powering three facets of fashion, according to Fashionbi's Artificial Intelligence in Retail report, such as customer service, product design and within the shopping experience ([see story](#)).

AI has also spawned the creation of entirely new products. For instance, 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 story](#)).

The Luxury Institute, Mr. Pedraza and the EIX platform are hoping to capitalize on the growth in AI by training employees to take advantage of the freedom AI affords.

"The EIX platform unleashes the power of technology to teach humans to build deep relationship skills and work in harmony with other humans, to build a much better world for all," Mr. Pedraza said.

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.