

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Data is the asset of the future: Hugo Boss CEO

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Hugo Boss is implementing new strategies to become a leading fashion-tech company. Image credit: Hugo Boss

By NORA HOWE

Having secured a reputation for openly embracing new technology and jumping into forward-thinking opportunities, the new CEO at Hugo Boss plans to transform the German fashion house and double sales by 2025.

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Since joining Hugo Boss as its new chief executive merely five months ago, Daniel Grieder has set ambitious goals to broaden the brand's product range and appeal to younger consumers through innovation. During a keynote session at the *Vogue Business* and Google virtual summit "[The Way Forward](#)" on Nov. 11, in conversation with *Vogue Business* senior innovation editor Maghan McDowell, Mr. Grieder discussed how technology shapes Boss' business, from design to consumer insight.

"In the past few years, Hugo Boss lost some relevancy, and it was sad to see this happen to such a great brand with incredible brand awareness," Mr. Grieder said. "Now, we have an opportunity to transform the Hugo Boss brand and reach the potential it always had."

Future of Boss

Prior to joining Hugo Boss, Mr. Grieder served at the helm of Tommy Hilfiger and its parent company PVH, where he led projects which helped implement digital showrooms and 3D design. He ultimately left his post there to pursue an opportunity to transform the Hugo Boss brand.

"When people talk about Hugo Boss, they see a dusty brand that only specializes in suits," Mr. Grieder said. "We want to become a 24/7 lifestyle brand for any occasion, and already in the last few months, we have changed.

"That means that we are not just doing suits we are doing all product groups in men's and womenswear."

Chris Hemsworth was tapped as the brand's ambassador earlier this year

In its fall/winter 2021 collection, the brand launched new style codes new formal, clash of codes and sports style suggesting a pivot into leisurewear ([see story](#)).

Over the next five years, the brand is fully committed to accelerating top-line growth, claiming a fresh position in

consumers' minds and securing market share for both its Boss and Hugo brands.

To deliver on these ambitions and become a global leader in tech-driven fashion, the company introduced its "Claim 5" strategy, which is based on five pillars: boost brands, product is king, lead in digital, balance omnichannel strategies and organize for growth.

When it comes to taking risks, Mr. Grieder believes versatility and creativity are crucial when teams are developing and testing new ideas. Despite admitting to not understanding video platform TikTok **last year**, Mr. Grieder recognizes the need to reach younger audiences through advancement in digital and technological innovation.

@boss

Covering all bases: @Philsoda, @Niclas , and

@Niclas Maaser link up in BOSS x Russell

Athletic **##BOSSMoves**

This Is How We Do It - Montell Jordan

The #BossMoves TikTok challenge increased social media engagement across platforms

The brand implemented a TikTok challenge using the hashtag #BossMoves, which has generated more than 3 million videos and 7.5 billion views. As part of the strategy, the brand gave away 5 Boss x Russell Athletic NFT jackets, as well as a physical twin.

"After studying how people were using TikTok, [we] realized that's where we had to be," Mr. Grieder said. "[The campaign] exceeded our expectations we had 4 billion impressions in just four days."

Power of data

A major element of Hugo Boss' technological evolution is hinged on the use of data. The company is actively working to make better use of data, from designs to consumer insight.



Hugo Boss celebrated the launch of its second Boss x Russell Athletic capsule collection with an action-packed phygital experience, including NFT giveaways and TikTok challenge. Image credit: Hugo Boss

Fashion and luxury companies that have successfully adapted to the shift to digital, data and analytics continue to build their market value, outpacing competitors.

According to findings from McKinsey & Co., the 25 top-performing retailers have accounted for more than 90 percent of luxury and fashion's growth in market capitalization during the COVID-19 pandemic. Data can drive decision-making across the value chain, from physical stores and ecommerce to merchandising and supply chain logistics (**see story**).

Part of Hugo Boss' data plan is establishing a digital hub, which Mr. Grieder referred to as the "Hugo Boss Digital and Data Campus." Based in Metzingen, Germany and Porto, Portugal, the data campus intends to strengthen the company's online activities as well as analytical, technical and production capabilities.

"Data is the future," Mr. Grieder said. "If we use more data, we can create less waste because we can plan better, create better and ultimately understand our consumers better."

The company is looking toward data sets to inform all aspects of the business from design and consumer interests to supply chains and manufacturing, analyzing every interaction that occurs within the company. However, there is a fine balance between ensuring creative freedom remains and implementing machine-learned information.

"We are not trying to remove creativity or trade it out for machine learning activity," Mr. Grieder said. "In fact, we want to use data to inspire creativity and inform our designers of what is going on, what works and what can be improved.

"When you use the data in the right way, and people understand how to use data, they will see that it does not remove creativity, but allows more room for growth."

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