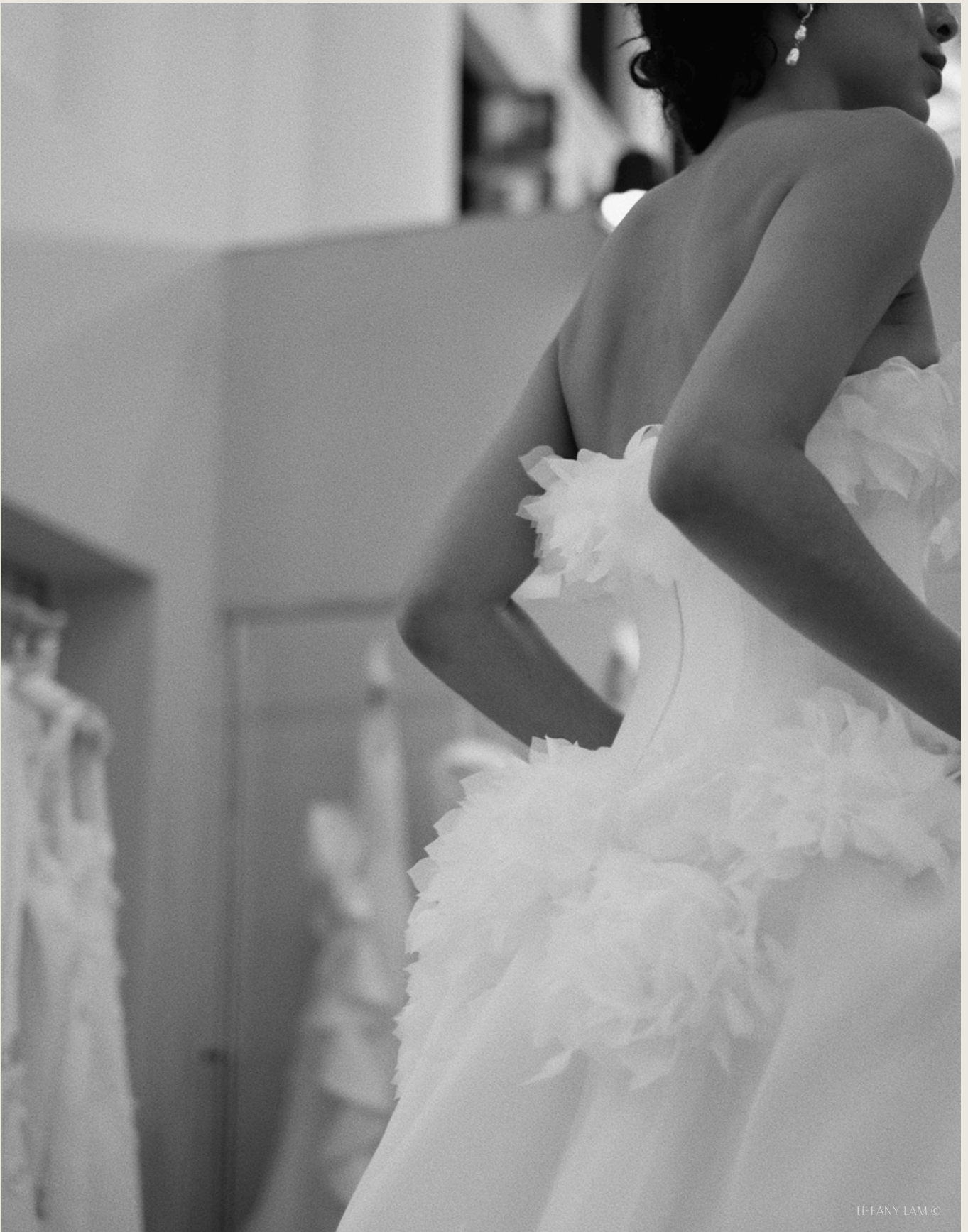


MUSES OF SUSTAINABLE LUXURY



TIFFANY LAM ©

*A celebration of the diverse and dynamic roles of women
at the forefront of sustainable luxury.*

OUR PHILOSOPHY

At *Muses of Sustainable Luxury*, we celebrate the diverse and dynamic roles of women at the forefront of sustainable luxury, as well as the transformative intersection of luxury, sustainability, and female empowerment.

OUR MUSES

We are dedicated to unveiling the stories of female pioneers — from innovative designers reimagining luxury ateliers, sustainability leaders in the realms of luxury and professional services, and strategists embedding sustainability into the DNA of iconic brands. The interviews in *Muses of Sustainable Luxury* are curated to underscore the idea that there is no singular path to making a meaningful contribution, highlighting how varied journeys and experiences converge to redefine the luxury sector through the lenses of sustainability and female leadership.

HEC WiB CLUB

Founded in 2019, the *HEC Paris Women in Business Club* joins the international business community in creating a network built on the support of women's careers. The articles in this magazine are written and edited by our Vice President in Sustainability (2023-2024), Tiffany Lam (MBA).



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Elisa Niemtzow

03

BSR

Marta Liporace

08

Artknit

Louise Laing

14

PhygitalTwin

ELISA NIEMTZOW

BSR



She also co-leads the Inclusion Task Force of Paris Good Fashion, the sustainability initiative of the French fashion sector, and sits on several advisory boards.

Elisa's approach is not just about adapting to trends but actively shaping them, ensuring that luxury not only represents sophistication and beauty but also stands for responsible innovation and enduring values.

Delve into our full conversation with Elisa below.

Elisa Niemtzwow's journey at the crossroads of luxury and sustainability has made her a thought leader and trusted advisor in the evolution of environmentally and socially conscious practices in consumer sectors. As Vice President (Consumer Sectors and Membership) and a member of the executive leadership team at BSR, a sustainable business network and consultancy, Elisa's expertise spans sustainable luxury, fashion, and beauty.

With a passionate commitment to assisting luxury brands in navigating the complexities of a changing global landscape, she helps these entities reframe their business strategies to embrace more resilient and inclusive practices. Her work not only aids companies in reducing their environmental footprint but also strengthens their relationships with consumers through enhanced brand loyalty.

Her blend of deep sustainability knowledge and sales and marketing experience in the luxury sector provides a unique perspective that is both strategic and practical. This is particularly reflected in her current leadership of BSR's Responsible Luxury Initiative. Additionally, Elisa serves as a strategic advisor to the Watch & Jewellery Initiative 2030 founded by Kering and Cartier, helping to shape sustainable futures for these specific luxury segments.

Elisa, could you describe the journey that led you to join BSR and share your career progression with us?

Absolutely, I'm glad to share. Like many young people, I started off as someone who had dreams of changing the world.

I pursued a master's in international relations at Sciences Po in Paris and interned at major international organisations like the World Bank and the EU. Initially, I envisioned a career within these international bodies, but my internships revealed how much the private sector was contributing to economic development. This realisation prompted a shift in my career path.

After graduation, I moved into audit and consulting to gain practical business experience. Working in France, I found myself on projects that involved retail and luxury players, which resonated with my artistic leanings and my background in French literature. Later, as an account executive in the ready-to-wear department of Chanel, I was involved in everything from selling-in collections to department store buyers, to producing events and trunk shows, and training salespeople across the US. It was an exhilarating phase where I could blend my passion for artisanry and business.

Over time, I felt a tug from my past — a need to make a difference aligned with my earlier academic pursuits. Around 2007, sustainability was just starting to gain attention, and together with a friend who was a CEO in the industry, we pondered on making the luxury sector more sustainable. This led us to establish a boutique agency in New York around 2008, collaborating with social entrepreneurs and luxury brands, though it was quite early for a full focus on sustainability.

Eventually, I joined BSR, a pioneer in sustainable business, where I have been for the past 11 years.

Now, as part of BSR's executive team, I dedicate my time to helping businesses develop and implement sustainability strategies and leading initiatives like the Watch and Jewellery Initiative 2030, which have been rewarding.

Could you share more about your day-to-day role, especially in leading the BSR Responsible Luxury Initiative?

At BSR, we are, first and foremost, a membership network. So, we work with over 300 of the world's leading multinationals to enhance their sustainability strategies and implementation. My work involves a vast range of activities, from addressing policy questions to helping with specific implementation details across the spectrum of ESG issues, with a focus on strategy, leadership engagement, and stakeholder engagement.

Secondly, we engage in one-on-one advisory work, helping companies develop strategic roadmaps and implementation plans.

Thirdly, a significant part of my role is fostering collaboration. We organise initiatives that bring together stakeholders from across industries on specific topics to drive systemic change. This often means involving business, civil society, and government entities to address and solve complex sustainability challenges collectively. To that end, one of the key initiatives I lead is the Responsible Luxury Initiative, which gathers key players in the luxury sector to tackle persistent and emerging sustainability issues. For example, we previously covered topics like animal welfare, supply chain issues and responsible e-commerce, especially considering the rapid changes during the pandemic.

Recently, we've been delving into the social acceptability of luxury, examining how luxury is perceived in various socio-economic climates and what that means for the future of the industry. It's fascinating to see how perceptions of luxury evolve and what we can do to ensure it remains desirable

in a changing world and more polarised world. We are continuously exploring solutions that address the immediate needs of the industry while also anticipating future challenges. Our goal is to develop strategies that not only respond to current criticisms but also proactively shape a more sustainable and equitable vision for luxury that aligns with broader societal values.

“It’s fascinating to see how perceptions of luxury evolve and what we can do to ensure it remains desirable in a changing world and more polarised world.”

– Elisa Niemtzw, Vice President,
Consumer Sectors and Membership, BSR

Given the breadth of topics you cover, how do you stay abreast of such a wide array of issues?

It can be challenging, especially as sustainability becomes more technical and specialised. My approach is to maintain a strategic overview while relying on deep expertise from colleagues when needed. This allows me to navigate across various topics without getting lost in the details while trying to keep a bird’s eye perspective. Additionally, staying connected through networks like at BSR is also invaluable. It ensures I’m always engaged with the latest thinking and developments. Platforms like LinkedIn, webinars and events are also useful for real-time learning and keeping my finger on the pulse of emerging issues.

Zooming into the watch and jewellery segments, what unique opportunities and challenges do they face?

The watch and jewellery segments are distinctively connected to positive emotions, such as love and friendship, which position them uniquely when addressing sustainability.

Consumers are increasingly interested in the origins and ethical implications of the products they purchase, echoing trends we’ve seen gain momentum in sustainable fashion. While the sector has traditionally lagged slightly behind fashion in sustainability efforts, this emotional connection provides a powerful lever for change. With recent geopolitical tensions, such as sanctions on Russian diamonds, there’s been a renewed drive within the industry to ensure that every element of a piece’s journey aligns with ethical standards. This scrutiny offers both a challenge and an opportunity to build trust and strengthen consumer relationships through demonstrated responsibility.

In terms of innovation, there’s a lot happening. From recycled steel to Fairmined gold, the sector is exploring various alternatives that offer consumers different choices without compromising on quality or design, so it’s a very interesting space to follow.

Could you share a memorable sustainability initiative that you’ve led or implemented?

Two types of initiatives come to mind. Firstly, I’ve had the pleasure to develop some of the foundational sustainability strategies for prominent brands, having directly participated in convincing brand executives to make a climate commitment, or create a sustainability strategy in the first place. For instance, I worked closely with Ralph Lauren to design their initial sustainability strategy, Design the Change, which was a pioneering effort at the time. I also assisted many other brands in their early sustainability forays, helping them to conceptualise and implement strategies that are still in use today. It’s gratifying to help executives experience those ‘Aha!’ moments when they grasp the value and necessity of sustainability.

Another kind of impactful experience has been being on-the-ground to see how the initiatives you’ve worked on have tangibly improved lives. A notable project was the HERproject by BSR, which has now evolved into the powerful women’s empowerment initiative known as RISE.

This program offers women in factories training on health, financial literacy, and workplace respect. I've been able to visit some of these factories in China to see the impact first hand. Speaking with women who have benefited from the program, such as those who detected breast cancer early enough to seek treatment, was profoundly moving. These experiences underscore the real-world positive change that sustainability efforts can bring about.

Considering your diverse cultural and professional background, how has it influenced your approach to global sustainability challenges in the luxury sector?

My background has helped shape my approach to sustainability, especially in understanding that effective strategies must resonate culturally and operationally within each unique business environment. Knowing your audience is crucial. You cannot develop and implement effective sustainability strategies without speaking the language of the executives and aligning with the business's core objectives. Whether it's marketing, finance, or operations, the approach has to be tailored to integrate with existing business practices.

From a diversity perspective, incorporating a diverse range of stakeholder voices into decision-making is critical. At BSR, we act as a bridge between companies and civil society, facilitating dialogues that incorporate diverse perspectives, including those of the most vulnerable stakeholders. This approach not only enhances the inclusivity and relevance of sustainability strategies but also ensures they are resilient and adaptable to the evolving global landscape.

How do you think we should propel and accelerate further changes in sustainable luxury?

The key is to integrate sustainability seamlessly into the brand's core value proposition.

We need to move beyond seeing sustainability as a separate or less appealing aspect of brand strategy. We need different vehicles than the ones that we currently have to make sustainability discussions more appealing and accessible — there is a lot of underexploited opportunity at the moment. This doesn't mean that sustainability has to be the main message — luxury brands have their own intrinsic resonance — but there are great opportunities to strengthen the ecosystems between brands, consumers and stakeholders on the issues that make the most sense for the brand.

If we're going to make more of a difference in luxury, we need to onboard the creatives, the marketers, and the communications experts on this journey. This approach helps in creating a community around sustainable luxury, making it more inclusive and appealing to a broader audience.



What advice do you have for young leaders aspiring to make a tangible impact on sustainable luxury?

My advice to young leaders is to embed themselves deeply within the business sectors they aim to influence. It's not just about holding a role specifically labelled as 'sustainability'. Rather, it's more impactful to take on roles where you can integrate a sustainability mindset into the core business functions. Whether you're in marketing, product development, supply chain management, or any other area, bring a sustainability perspective to your work. This approach allows you to influence decision-making and business strategies directly, ensuring sustainability becomes a natural part of business operations and culture.

Finally, if sustainability were an ingredient in a recipe, what would it be and why?

I would say it's the 'secret sauce' in a recipe. Just like a secret sauce, sustainability is the ingredient that fundamentally enhances everything it touches. Without it, the end product might seem bland or lacking in depth. In the context of luxury, sustainability adds value, resilience, and desirability to the brand, ensuring it is not only more appealing but also future-proofed. This ingredient ensures that a company remains relevant and desirable in a world where consumers increasingly make choices based on ethical considerations and are looking for meaning.



About Elisa Niemtzw

Elisa leads BSR's consumer sectors practice globally and oversees the BSR global membership network. She works with companies in the luxury, beauty, fashion, hospitality, and retail industries to better integrate sustainability into core business strategy, products, and operations.

She helps companies understand the world's big disruptions, create resilient and inclusive business models and practices, and evolve brand strategy to integrate changing consumer expectations. Elisa also leads BSR's Responsible Luxury Initiative.

Prior to joining BSR, Elisa was an account manager at CHANEL and a consultant at Accenture and Ernst & Young.

Elisa is French-American. She holds an M.B.A. in Luxury Goods Marketing and Management from Sup de Luxe, an M.A. in International Relations from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques Paris, and a B.A. in French from the University of Pennsylvania.

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MARTA LIPORACE

ARTKNIT STUDIOS

A seasoned marketing and communication expert, Marta Liporace blends her extensive experience in luxury fashion with a profound passion for sustainability.

Her journey unfolded in the vibrant world of Milan's performing arts, where storytelling and strategic communication are paramount. This experience laid the foundation for her transition to Luxottica, where she refined her expertise in luxury branding and strategic communications. It was there that Marta mastered the art of engaging consumers, a skill she carried forward into her role at Artknit Studios in 2022.

As the Marketing and Communication Director at Artknit Studios, Marta leads initiatives that not only promote the brand's sustainable mission but also ensure that luxury and innovation remain at the core.

Through her role at Artknit Studios, Marta continues to redefine the luxury fashion landscape. She ensures the brand's ethos — crafting timeless pieces with the planet at heart, directly from the cradle of the Italian textile tradition in Biella — is communicated in a way that resonates with a global audience seeking conscientious elegance.



In this interview with the HEC Paris Women in Business Club, Marta shares her vision for luxury fashion and insights for communicating sustainability with authenticity and transparency.

Marta, can you tell us about your role at Artknit Studios and what inspired you to join the company?

As the Marketing and Communication Director at Artknit Studios, my role involves leading the development and execution of the brand's marketing strategies, shaping its public image, expanding the business, and fostering connections with our audience.

I decided to join Artknit Studios because of its unique position at the intersection of sustainability and luxury in the fashion industry.

Joining the brand in 2022, after six years of experience in one of the biggest multinational companies, I aimed to leverage my know-how and expertise in marketing and communication to contribute to shaping and growing Artknit Studios' mission of redefining the standards of the fashion sector towards a more sustainable way of apparel production. It was a compelling opportunity to apply my expertise in a context that deeply resonates with my personal values and professional ambitions.

It wasn't an easy decision at the time; we were just emerging from the pandemic, and the external environment was still very uncertain. Despite this, I felt the need to do my part and take a step forward in my career to contribute to the development of a young company with a strong and clear vision of innovating the way we conceive fashion production.

Can you share with us a typical day at work?

What I enjoy most about my role is that every day is different. At a growing and emerging brand, there's always the opportunity to challenge myself with new exciting projects and experiences.

I would say that a typical day at Artknit Studios is a mix of strategic planning, creative collaboration, and purpose-driven execution.

My day usually begins with a review of performance metrics and market trends to shape our strategic direction. I then dive into brainstorming sessions with my team, where we develop new ideas and move forward on executing multiple projects. We pay meticulous attention to details that uphold our brand vision and strive to expand our community. Whether it's crafting compelling content, refining our messaging, cultivating partnerships with like-minded partners, or developing our physical and digital markets, each task is guided by a commitment to authenticity, passion, innovation, and consciousness.

Most of my efforts are dedicated to supporting the team, giving them the tools to grow their experience and evolve as professionals.

Could you tell us about Artknit Studios' sustainability strategy and efforts, and how do you communicate that to customers effectively?

Our sustainability strategy is rooted in a holistic approach that encompasses every aspect of our business, from the sourcing of high-quality, natural materials to our production processes and beyond.

We prioritise the use of eco-friendly materials that are sourced and crafted in a responsible manner, and partners who share our commitment to ethical practices. In our production facilities, we implement innovative techniques and a data-driven approach to minimise waste and reduce our environmental footprint.

Supporting local communities and engaging Italy's finest makers to produce exceptional products is our core mission. We provide these artisans with the tools they need to evolve and meet the needs of contemporary customers.

Our commitment extends to transparency and traceability, providing customers with insights into the journey of each product through our website, social media channels, and dedicated sustainability

initiatives. We place a strong emphasis on educating and informing our customers about our supply chain. By sharing stories of craftsmanship, innovation, and social impact, we aim to inspire and empower our community to make informed choices that align with their and our values.

What are some challenges you have faced in sustainability communication in the luxury sector, and how have you overcome them?

One of the main challenges we've encountered is the perceived contradiction between being sustainable and producing high-quality, contemporary products, as many consumers still associate sustainability with compromises in quality or design. From a communication perspective, our challenge is to present a comprehensive story, balancing educational messages with compelling aesthetics, innovative design, and transparency of the supply chain.

We've addressed this challenge by reframing conscious choices as a hallmark of luxury rather than a compromise. By placing meticulous attention to detail and uncompromising craftsmanship at the forefront, along with a steadfast commitment to ethical and environmental responsibilities, we demonstrate that sustainability enhances, rather than detracts from, the luxury fashion experience.

We position ourselves as an alternative to standard luxury brands: our mission is to make the finest quality, responsibly-sourced materials accessible to the largest possible audience. By consistently delivering exceptional products and experiences that align with our brand values, we've been able to shift perceptions and cultivate a loyal following of conscious consumers who value quality, design, and sustainability.

Artknit Studios is a certified B Corp — could you share with us in what ways this was a significant step for Artknit, and how does it impact its marketing and communication?

Becoming a certified B Corp was a significant milestone for Artknit Studios, as it reaffirmed our commitment to using business as a force for doing better for the planet.

This certification not only holds us accountable to rigorous standards of social and environmental performance but also makes us part of a growing community of brands that want to make a difference.

Being part of the B Corp community has provided us with access to a network of like-minded businesses and opportunities to evolve, enabling us to amplify our impact and drive meaningful change on a larger scale.



Artnit Studios' content relating to sustainability is authentic, consistent yet varied, from the lifestyle journal, the academy on fabrics, to its own app on traceability. Where do you gain inspiration from, and how do you stay informed?

Our inspiration stems from a myriad of sources, enriched by the diverse backgrounds of our team. Each team member brings different experiences in fashion, design, art, and culture, and personal interest in innovative sustainable practices. This mix fuels our creative approach that remains authentic to our values and interests.

We are also deeply inspired by the personal stories of our artisans; we make it a priority to listen to their ambitions and concerns first, then try to tell their story in the most authentic way possible, thereby giving them a voice through our platforms.

Additionally, we actively engage with thought partners, maintain a valuable network that keeps us connected to the pulse of the industry, and stay attuned to emerging trends through continuous research and exploration.

By embracing a spirit of curiosity, creativity, and collaboration, we strive to push the boundaries of what's possible.



Among the many social media platforms, how do you manage them to most effectively communicate sustainability-related topics?

Any platform has its unique tone of voice, rules, and ways to approach and engage their communities; the most exciting part of our communication job is to find creative and authentic ways to shape the message based on the context.

We focus on our community. We start by deeply understanding how they behave and where they interact, and we try to differentiate and amplify the message based on the landscape. For instance, Instagram's visual-centric format allows us to showcase our messages in an engaging and impactful way to make the stories very effective. We use Stories and Reels to delve into educational content, using an informal but refined tone that makes complex topics accessible and appealing. On LinkedIn, we engage with a professional community that includes industry experts and peers.

We continuously explore new creative approaches and adapt to emerging trends to ensure our communications resonate effectively with our audience. By leveraging the unique strengths of each platform, we are able to reach and engage with diverse audiences across different channels, driving awareness, engagement, and advocacy for our brand and mission.

From your experience, what are some practical steps that marketing teams can take to ensure consistency, authenticity, and transparency across sustainability communications?

Ensuring consistency, authenticity, and transparency across sustainability communications requires a thoughtful and strategic approach.

Firstly, it's crucial to align messages with the brand's core values and mission, ensuring that it resonates authentically with the brand identity.

We have very strict guidelines about words and verbiage to avoid greenwashing and generic information. Our Ethical Marketing Policy is integral to our brand ethos and guides every aspect of our communication strategy. For example, we refrain from exaggerating sustainability claims or greenwashing, opting instead for transparent and factual messaging by measuring the real impact of our production and actions. Additionally, we prioritise education over persuasion, empowering consumers to make informed choices based on their values rather than marketing tactics.

Secondly, transparency is key - be honest about both successes and challenges in your journey, and provide customers with clear and accurate information about products and practices.

Finally, engage with your audience authentically by actively listening to their feedback, addressing their concerns, and incorporating their values into your communications.

By staying true to your brand identity, being transparent about your practices, and engaging with your audience authentically, you can build trust and credibility with your customers, driving long-term loyalty and advocacy for your brand.

What are some trends and opportunities in luxury sustainability that you are most excited about?

I am particularly enthused by the increasing focus on circularity and upcycling within the luxury sector. These practices not only help minimise waste but also enable the creation of unique, artisanal products that carry compelling stories.

Further, the potential for leveraging technologies like blockchain and AI to improve traceability and transparency in supply chains is immensely promising, allowing consumers to make informed choices and hold brands accountable.

I'm also excited about the advancements in innovative materials and more sustainable natural fibres, as they offer promising avenues for enhancing our efforts to innovate the sector and our product offering.

“Transparency is key — be honest about both successes and challenges in your journey.”

– Marta Liporace, Marketing and Communication
Director at Artknit Studios

Do you have any tips for business students looking to work for luxury companies while making a positive impact on sustainability?

Seek out opportunities that align with your values and passion for sustainability, starting from yourselves and try making your own impact by adopting more sustainable practices in your daily life. Look for companies that are not only renowned for their luxury offerings but also demonstrate a genuine commitment and interest to take actions in this direction. Additionally, don't underestimate the power of networking and building relationships - attend industry events, connect with professionals in the field, and seek out mentorship opportunities to learn from experienced leaders. By staying informed, building relationships, and staying true to your values, you can position yourself for success in the sector while making a meaningful impact on sustainability.



Finally, an out-of-the-box question that we ask our interviewees. If sustainability were an ingredient in a recipe, what would it be and why?

If sustainability were an ingredient in a recipe, it would undoubtedly be flour—drawing on my Italian roots, it's as foundational as flour in pasta-making.

It is the essential and most fundamental element that can really make our approach to production and consumption more in line with nature and our planet. It is something we can't overlook any longer in any sector; it's the critical basis that underpins other creative and innovative recipes.

About Marta Liporace

Marta Liporace is a Marketing and Communication expert with extensive specialisation spanning luxury fashion, sustainability and performing arts management.

She holds a degree in Economy & Cultural Heritage from the Cattolica University of Milan and a Master of Science (MSc) in Marketing from Napier University of Edinburgh. Marta's professional journey as marketer began in the performing arts & event field in Milan. She moved to the luxury sector with a role in Luxottica, one of the largest multinational corporations, where she gained valuable experience in strategic communication and content creation.

Driven by her passion for sustainability, Marta joined Artknit Studios in 2022 as its Marketing and Communication Director. In this role, she leads strategic initiatives to promote the brand's expansion in line with its sustainable mission while maintaining a focus on luxury and innovation.

Discover more & connect

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LOUISE LAINING

PHYGITALTWIN



A visionary entrepreneur and trailblazer in digital fashion innovation, Louise stands at the forefront of sustainable technology with her start-up, PhygitalTwin.

Founded by Louise in May 2022, PhygitalTwin aims to revolutionise the fashion industry by leveraging emerging technology to reduce waste and improve efficiency, all centred around market responsiveness and bridging the gap between the digital and physical worlds.

As the former CEO of Shrimps and with experience at leading brands like Burberry and Reiss, Louise has established a deep expertise in addressing challenges and opportunities that lie at the intersection of technology and fashion. With over 25 years of industry experience, she is now committed to redefining fashion for a sustainable future.

Louise, could you share what inspired you to create PhygitalTwin?

It was during COVID-19, when I was working for multiple brands that ended up running out of cash because they were sitting on hundreds of thousands of pounds of stock. I also saw how my two teenage daughters were spending their time in Roblox, caring about their digital identity and what they were wearing.

The concept of PhygitalTwin was centred around validating the digital asset first — using 3D technology to test, validate, put in a game, on social media, then producing on-demand once the concept is proven. This transforms fashion from an industry that sends 35 billion garments to landfill annually into a zero-waste industry.

Can you tell us more about the mission of PhygitalTwin and the services it offers?

Our mission is to launch our B2B SaaS model into the market which will automate the process between 3D design, in-game skins, and production-ready patterns, empowering brands and creators to produce fashion collections with zero waste, at a fast speed to market (two to three weeks), and to react to consumer trends in an agile and opportune way, enabling mass-customisation.

Currently, we help gaming companies, creators and brands in bringing their digital clothing designs to life for their audience (meaning turning them into production, on-demand, in real time) and support large brands in digitising their current collections into 3D.

We are working with some of the largest fashion retailers to implement their digital strategies across gaming, immersive worlds.

Reflecting on your journey, what made you realise the potential of digital innovation in integrating fashion with sustainability?

We realised the potential of digital innovation in bridging the gap between the digital and physical workflows. Observing the excessive waste in traditional fashion production and the environmental impact of unsold garments highlighted the need for change.

Advances in 3D design and AI technology are enabling us to streamline the design process, reducing garment waste by enabling fast production. The growing consumer demand for mass-customisation and personalised, sustainable fashion further validates this potential.

What are some of the most significant challenges you have faced when introducing PhyigitalTwin to fashion brands?

It is very difficult to change a brand's mindset from ordering nine months in advance to adopting agile manufacturing.

Corporate governance and internal regulations also make progress slow and challenging.

That being said, we do work for brands that want to use AI and 3D designs to reduce sampling and waste as well, supporting them on how AI can be used to streamline their workflow from design to production and back to merchandising and forecasting.

What are some common misconceptions about sustainability within the fashion industry, and how do you address them?

The biggest misconception is that focusing upstream in the value chain is the holy grail of sustainability.

While organic farming reduces water usage and non-toxic dyes are better for the environment, the sheer volume of production that is made, shipped, and ultimately not needed is unsustainable.



Brands may claim they are sustainable, but unless they are working closer to the market and actively engaging with customers to understand their needs, I don't believe they truly are.

Why don't these brands engage with their customers, show them 3D/AI designs, and get their buy-in before producing thousands of garments that may not sell? This approach could drastically reduce waste and align production with actual demand.

This is my bugbear and significant frustration with the fashion industry. The focus should be on practical, real-world solutions that address overproduction, rather than simply ticking the boxes of upstream sustainability practices.

To date, how has PhygitalTwin made a tangible impact in sustainability?

Leveraging our vast library of 3D patterns and an agile supply chain, we have reduced the time to market from nine months to just three weeks.

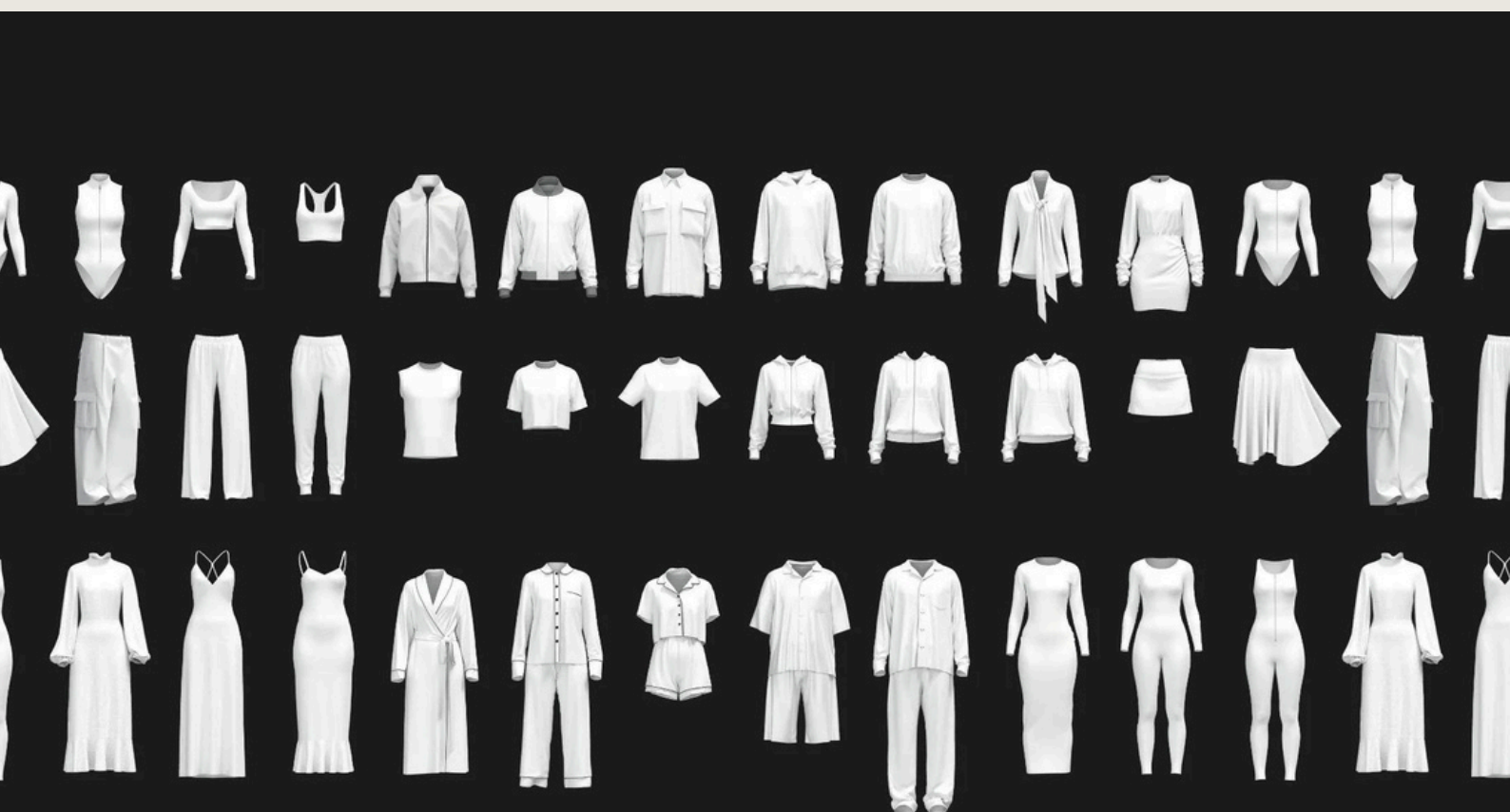
Additionally, we have cut the cost of creating a fashion collection from approximately £50k to £5k.

This agile approach allows us to offer brands, gaming, and sports companies a no-waste solution, enabling them to test new products and launch brands they previously thought impossible. Our method empowers these industries to innovate rapidly and sustainably, transforming their approach to market demands and production efficiency.

What's next for PhygitalTwin?

We have some exciting things planned for the Digital Fashion Week in September, with Epic Games and Clo3D, as well as several other creators launching collections and some gaming company activations later in the year.

Our focus is also on scaling our software to meet growing demand and enhance our capabilities.



As a futurist, what emerging trends do you see shaping the fashion industry in the next decade?

Emerging trends in the fashion industry include a strong push for sustainability with digital product passports and NFC chips to monitor circularity, the transition from 2D commerce to immersive 1-commerce where consumers engage with products in virtual environments.

UGC (user-generated content) will become the norm, with increased customisation and co-creation driven by Gen Z and Gen Alpha allowing everyone to create their own designs.

The integration of AI and wearable technology in gaming and AR will enable consumers to view products before purchasing.

Trends will become more micro-driven, with TikTok and other social media platforms becoming more influential than traditional fashion houses in determining what we wear.

How has your approach to leadership changed as you transitioned from managing established brands to founding your own start-ups?

It's been quite the journey. Growing a successful business is a team sport, and I am very grateful to have amazing advisors and team members who share the same vision.

We are leading through innovation which requires being agile, flexible, patient, grateful, and resilient, as there are always problems to solve and setbacks everything takes longer than expected. I thank my lucky stars every day for the incredible people around me helping to build PhygitalTwin.



What advice do you have for young leaders aspiring to make a tangible impact on sustainable fashion?

My advice for young leaders is to embrace innovation and remain adaptable. The fashion industry is rapidly evolving, and staying flexible allows you to respond to new challenges and opportunities.

Lastly, if sustainability were an ingredient in a recipe, what would it be and why?

If sustainability were an ingredient, it would be water.

We can only survive without water for three days, underscoring its critical importance to our bodies. This reflects how vital sustainability is to our existence; without it, we risk failing to meet the 2050 net zero goals and filling landfills with waste. Treating the planet and the way we consume clothes as we do our bodies emphasises the intrinsic respect required for our resources.





About Louise Laing

A serial entrepreneur and the visionary founder of PhygitalTwin, an innovative start-up at the forefront of driving AI within the fashion industry to drive automation and reduce costs.

Focusing on leveraging emerging technologies, particularly AI, Louise has embarked on a mission to redefine industries and drive sustainable change. Since founding PhygitalTwin in May 2022, Louise has been instrumental in reshaping the fashion industry, utilising technology to reduce waste and enhance efficiency while championing sustainability and market responsiveness.

With over 25 years of experience in the fashion industry, Louise has emerged as a trailblazer in digital innovation. Louise's expertise in scaling businesses is unparalleled, and she has optimised supply chains for renowned brands like Burberry, Reiss, and Kilgour, as well as guiding over 20 start-ups and SMEs towards success through her consultancy. As the former CEO of Shrimps, a London Fashion Brand, she orchestrated remarkable growth, expanding revenue by 240% and achieving positive EBITDA within three years.

Beyond her accomplishments, Louise is a sought-after speaker, writer, and thought leader on innovative tech for businesses of all sizes, with a specialised focus on AI. Her insights resonate globally, inspiring audiences at renowned forums and events, where she shares her vision for the future of technology-driven business models. With her unwavering commitment to driving change and her profound understanding of AI's transformative potential, Louise continues to lead PhygitalTwin in seamlessly integrating digital and physical worlds, shaping the future of industries worldwide.

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<https://phygitaltwin.io/pages/team>
