

The Role of eCommerce in Sustainable Fashion

18th Jul, 2022



BY ANKITHA

LOCALLY-PRODUCED
ORGANIC

SLOW FASHION

VEGAN

Today, environmental damage is rapidly occurring on a global scale. And there are many reasons and causes for this. Global warming is one, deforestation, over population are some others. The list is long. In a small way, the retail & clothing industry contributes to environmental damage too. The good news is that sustainable fashion addresses this issue. Sustainable clothing is designed using sustainable fabrics like organic cotton, hemp, and Pima cotton that have less of a negative impact on the planet.





Sustainable clothing and its benefits

In this blog, we will discuss the rise of sustainable clothing and its benefits. We will also discuss marketplaces for sustainable fashion.

Benefits of Sustainable Fashion

a. Reduces carbon footprint

The fashion industry emits numerous greenhouse gases annually. Most clothes are made from fossil fuels and require significantly more energy in production. Sustainable brands often use natural or recycled fabrics that require less chemical treatment, water, and energy. Organic fabrics such as linen, hemp, and organic cotton are biodegradable and environmentally sound.

b. Saves animal lives

Leather isn't a by-product of the meat industry, and it's estimated that it alone is slaughtering and killing over **430 million animals** annually. Sustainable fashion brands are increasingly embracing the use of cruelty-free alternatives. Various alternatives include polyester made with ocean trash, plant-based compostable sneakers, bags from recycled seatbelts, silk created from yeast, and bio-fabricated vegan wool. Another interesting leather alternative comes from pineapples, where the fabric is produced using the leaves of pineapples.

c. Requires less water

Water is used in the dyeing and finishing process for nearly all items in the fashion industry. It takes **2,700 liters of water** to produce a single T-shirt. Cotton is highly dependent on water but is usually grown in hot and dry areas. Linen, hemp, Refibra, and recycled fibers are some other sustainable fabrics that require little to no water during production.

d. Supports safer working conditions

Endless working hours, unacceptable health & safety conditions, and minimum wages, are the reality for most garment workers in the fast fashion sector. A few informative documentaries like **“The True Cost”** or **“Fashion Factories Undercover”** document the social injustices of the fast fashion industry. Eco-ethical brands advocate for sustainable fashion, health care, humane working conditions, and fair wages for their workers.

e. Healthy for people and the environment

Fast fashion products often undergo an intense chemical process where **8,000** types of chemicals are used to bleach, dye, and wet process garments. Those chemicals often lead to diseases or fatal accidents for workers and inflict serious congenital disabilities on their children. These chemicals harm our health, as our skin absorbs anything we put on it.

5 Sustainable & Ethical Online Marketplaces

Here is a list of five earth-minded and socially responsible marketplaces that have sustainable and fair trade brands for the discerning and mindful shopper:

1. thegreenlabels

Netherlands-based webshop **thegreenlabels** is a sustainable fashion retailer that sells sneakers, womenswear, and accessories from various “green labels” brands. Founded in 2018, this is a marketplace where people can buy products from brands that care about a positive impact on the environment. All brands featured here guarantee fair working conditions and represent at least one of these 4 values - “CLEAN PROCESS” environmentally friendly production, clothes that support “LOCAL” communities, “VEGAN” brands to assure no animals were harmed and “WASTE REDUCTION”

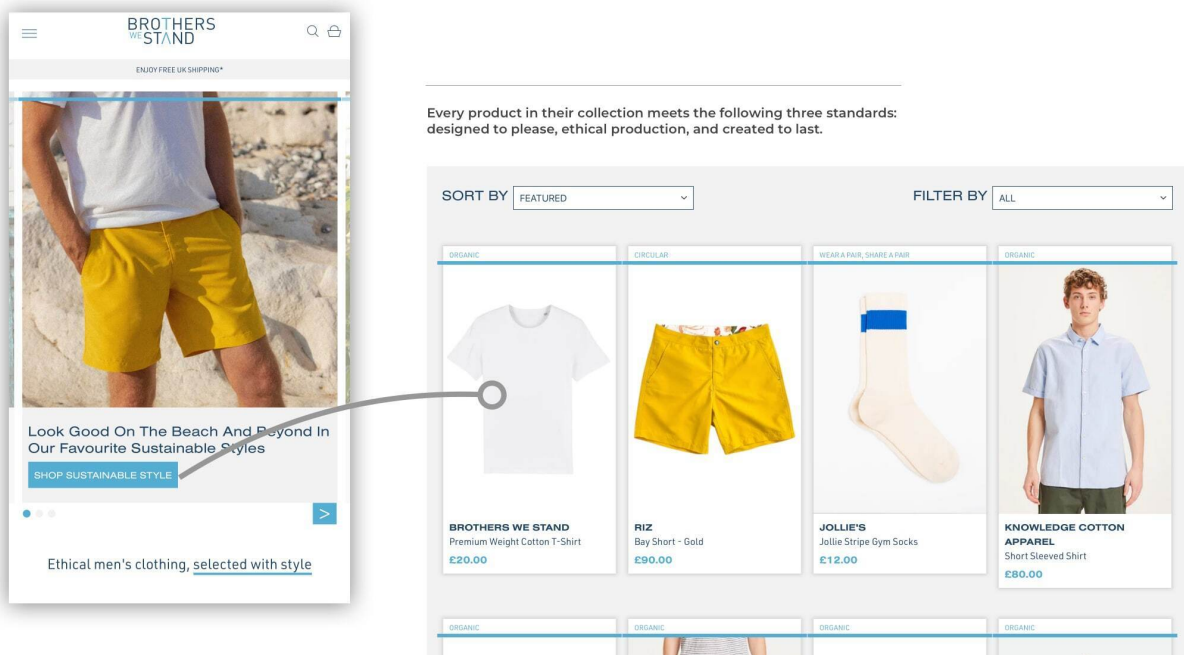
2. LVR Sustainable

The image shows a composite of two website screenshots. On the left, a 'FW22 LVR SUSTAINABLE' banner is positioned above a navigation menu (WOMEN, MEN, KIDS, HOME, LVR MAGAZINE) and the LUISAVIAROMA logo. Below this, three circular icons represent 'Ethical Trade' (scales), 'Organic' (plant), and 'Women's Empowerment' (woman with fist). Each icon is accompanied by a short paragraph explaining the concept. A summary line states: 'You can find organic, vegan, eco-friendly, ethical, and recycled & upcycled items in their catalogue.' On the right, a product page for a '7 DAYS ACTIVE MALONE CREWNECK SWEATSHIRT' is shown. It features a main image of a model wearing the blue and yellow tracksuit, a price of €160.00, and options for color (Midnight Blue) and size. The page also includes 'ADD TO BAG', 'ADD TO WISHLIST', and 'EDITOR'S NOTES' sections.

LVR Sustainable

Luisa Via Roma started as a family-owned boutique in the early 1900s. They have grown into a luxury e-retailer and created an **LVR Sustainable section** for people trying to insert sustainability into their wardrobes. They have brands rated 'Good' or 'Great.' The site offers a wide range of products like bags, accessories, sports, shoes, lingerie, and much more for men, women, and kids. You can find organic, vegan, eco-friendly, ethical, and recycled & upcycled items here.

3. Brothers We Stand



Brothers We Stand

Brothers We Stand is a retailer set up in solidarity with the people who make our clothes. This retailer conducts rigorous research to ensure that every product in their collection meets the following three standards: designed to please, ethical production, and created to last. It's a great platform to shop for ethical and sustainable menswear. They also have their private clothing line along with other brands.

4. Labell-D

Labell-D was launched with a clear mission to reduce the negative impact of fast fashion on the planet. This retailer wants to make Responsible Fashion the new norm. They intend to make sustainable clothing and fashion easy for both brands and consumers. Labell-D has a transparent accreditation process where they evaluate the brand's carbon footprint and environmental impact. Their verification assessment includes animal welfare, emissions, materials, production processes, chemical usage, waste management, and traceability.

5. Cerqular

Cerqular wants to make sustainable shopping affordable and accessible for all. The retailer promises that every product and seller is verified as organic, recycled, sustainable, carbon-neutral, eco-friendly, vegan, or circular. They have a wide range of sellers and do not limit products only from luxury brands, so sustainable shopping is no longer expensive or inconvenient.

Conclusion

The fashion industry is a contributor to worldwide carbon emissions. Sustainable fashion is the new big thing giving rise to more and more sustainable brands and marketplaces.

To stand out and shine in the crowded eCommerce space is not easy. Having a robust Digital Shelf becomes critical for brands. A brand's Digital Shelf is all of the ways their customers digitally interact with the brand, not only on marketplaces but on the brand's DTC website & shoppable social media. This is why brands need to closely track & optimize their Digital Shelf KPIs like **assortment, availability, pricing, ratings & reviews, product discoverability & product content** to increase their online sales.

Want to learn how DataWeave can help you win the Digital Shelf? [Sign up for a demo](#) with our team to know more.

- Ankitha Nagaraj

Ankitha is a Customer Success Manager at DataWeave who works with some of our key Fashion, Grocery & CPG customers to help them optimize & increase their eCommerce sales., 18th Jul, 2022

