



Humans V Machines

Who wins when it comes to merchandising?

The Menkind Story

INTRODUCTION

Founded back in 2001 by men who love their gadgets, Menkind know all about Humans vs Machines. When it comes to merchandising, they know which one comes out on top.

The rise of AI and machine learning within the eCommerce industry has given us great power, with the ability to offer customers highly personalised product recommendations, never showcase out of stock items, deliver tailored content and all the while increase revenue.

But what does it mean for manual merchandisers? Are we looking at a future where merchandising is powered completely by algorithms with no need for human input? We don't think so. In fact, we know that the answer is somewhere in the middle.



THE CHALLENGE FOR MENKIND

Menkind's eCommerce platform is Magento 2 which despite being a wonderfully powerful platform does present some merchandising challenges when it comes to the inbuilt functionality.

Our agency partner The Glasshouse Project (TGHP) found that Magento's standard merchandising offering provided no more functionality than ordering products by price, stock levels or the date the product was added to the catalogue.

This made it incredibly difficult to tailor merchandising in line with the brand's product range, the nature of customer behaviour and the business objectives.

There was no doubt that what was needed was a much more comprehensive array of merchandising solutions and the ability to automate some of the merchandising processes. But equally the nature of a gift based site is that purchases can often be spontaneous, potentially influenced by a wider group and with brand loyalty playing little part in a decision. As a result, previous behavioural patterns could be difficult to analyse, and therefore, relying on machine learning alone could be problematic for them.



MANUAL V MACHINE

Both manual merchandising and machine lead merchandising have their benefits, but equally, both very much have their drawbacks...

MANUAL

- ▣ Dates very quickly and is hard to keep fresh
- ▣ Is time consuming and can be expensive
- ▣ Cannot offer any direct 1 to 1 personalisation
- ▣ Cannot respond to stock levels in real time
- ▣ Needs updating constantly

MACHINE

- ▣ Has the potential to offer a jarring experience if executed poorly
- ▣ Cannot react to real world events, such as brand controversy, PR incidents or national disasters
- ▣ Is based on historic data so can struggle to be forward looking
- ▣ Is not fully trusted by merchandisers
- ▣ Can lead to duplication when placed alongside manual merchandising



CONCLUSION

When it comes to Humans vs Machines and who wins in merchandising, the answer is that it shouldn't be a competition. The intelligence of skilled human merchandising teams, collaborating and controlling powerful machine learning will give you the best results and the best experience for your customers.

WHY NOT WORK WITH US?

It's not just **Menkind** that are making the most of our technology and intelligent approach to merchandising. The likes of **Liberty of London**, **Trading Depot**, **MyMemory** and **Turnbulls** have also chosen to work with us in order to provide the best possible experience for their customers and ultimately improve their revenue. Furthermore, they are currently taking advantage of our Innovate UK funding win to utilise the industry leading innovation that it is driving, at a very reasonable price.

TRY IT FOR YOURSELF

If you would to find out how we could help your business, why not book a demo via our website at www.thefilter.com/demo.

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