

Studioirmack x Tshepo Jeans: Facilitating the future of South African e-commerce

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In the 21st century, e-commerce is a pervasive and ever-growing part of our everyday lives. From global leaders in the game like AliExpress, eBay and Shopify; to local brands connecting their products to consumers all across the country; the ability to present high-quality, 'real-feel' images is a crucial part of connecting with audiences; drawing their interest and providing an online shopping experience that they'll want to return to. Now, local fashion legends Tshepo Jeans partnered up with leaders in e-commerce visual solutions, Studio[K]irmack : whose range of world class, cutting edge technology will elevate the beloved denim brand's online store from a digital adaption of their top class in-store service; to an e-commerce experience to rival any fashion label around the world.



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And the collaboration could not be more timely. Like many businesses forced to ‘pivot’ their operations as a result of Covid-19; Tshepo Jeans recently switched over to an e-commerce platform. Tshepo Jeans is the denim choice of local fashionistas but has serviced clients as far afield as China and the United States, including the Duchess of Sussex, Meghan Markle. Used to the individual consultation approach they were used to, switching to e-commerce meant thinking carefully about how to provide a top-class consumer experience. Studio[K]irmack made use of their automated live capture technology to capture high resolution photo and video, which can be uploaded to a website or social media with just a click of a button. The flat lay photography setup combines a traditional, camera, Lightbox and stylist set up to capture the details of each garment, showing up fit and fold with awesome precision.

And there’s good data to support this strategy. Research estimates that up to 70% of the top 100% search results are video and image based; and the new savvy consumer is far less likely to complete an online shopping experience if they have been able to access a product video; or particularly in the case of the apparel; have been able to see what it would look like on a real life person. Particularly for millennial and Gen Z audiences, accurate representation of products; attention to detail

and detailed product information are important parts of gaining their trust. Studio[K]irmack aims to solidify this message locally too. In a world of endless Instagram swipes; Twitter scrolling and 20 second Tik Toks; high quality product photography and videography is one of the only ways to get audiences to stop, click and take action.

“International brands and many of the athletics brands have understood how much the quality of their photography elevates their consumers’ experience and drives sales. It’s possible in South Africa and we can offer our solutions to high-end brands, but also smaller, more niche brands like Tshepo Jeans.”

The collaboration with Tshepo Jeans will feature the full use of Studio[K]irmack’s one of a kind photographic studio, their team of dedicated stylists and of course, their technology. Speaking ahead of the shoot, Founder and CEO, Craig Bellingham shared this insight,

“The most important way that the consumer can interact with your brand or product online is through the quality of your product photography. Before anything else, it’s the one true reason consumers feel like they can trust your product. The user interface, the platform; all of that counts - but being able to deliver on what your product is and looks like is crucial. And delivering this consistently means fewer returns on products and more return customers... That’s what we want to see in our collaboration with Tshepo”.

The technology is the perfect solution; and the collaboration will include the full range, including flat lay images, products

shot on mannequins and models and a few surprises too. For Tshepo Mohlala, the designer behind the Tshepo Jeans brand, this innovative smart technology offers immense potential to local and pan-African brands:

“I believe this tech and what Studio[K]irmack does can really take small South African brands to the next level. Elevating your brand image and enhancing your e-commerce through this amazing technology will really put more South African brands out there and widen their reach. Right now, we are all struggling with e-commerce concepts and having help and guidance will really allow brands to make use of e-commerce platforms and ultimately save their businesses”.

It's an important point to make. While a strong online user experience and product photography were previously relegated to the marketing budget; more and more businesses are starting to realise these are key parts of the business function; particularly in an increasingly digital world. Now, the Tshepo Jeans website will reflect what Mohlala calls that 'Tshepo flair' by matching the product imagery and website look and feel to the luxury quality of the garments. This kind of elevation of South African business rings true to the ideals which drive Studio[K]irmack. As Bellingham explains,

“I think we have a business that can make a difference to people's businesses and their lives. We've identified a young entrepreneur who has an amazing product, and whose brand can be elevated through our work. We have the tools, the technology and the know-how. Our relationship with Tshepo Jeans started with just an email and a conversation, but true to nature, it has grown to be so much more. We're excited for what this will mean for his brand and what it can mean for other brands too.”

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