

No business is too big or too small for Studioirmack's automated image production solutions

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Cape-based Studio[K]irmack continues to lead the charge in offering large and small brands access to the best ecommerce photographic and digital imaging technology at competitive rates.



“In a time-pressed market, clients are looking for cost-efficient solutions that streamline workflows,” says Craig Bellingham, founder of Studio[K]irmack. “There’s a massive push to create quick and accurate edited video content and stills for lifestyle brands.”

The innovation lies in automated solutions and Studio[K]irmack offers six world-leading automated content machines and boasts an unrivalled image production process. “We invested in leading-edge smart technology from European companies OrbitVu and Styleshoots who both specialise in the automation of photography and videography for top global brands. We are able to do full-fashion e-commerce shoots with or without models, and are able to service small boutique businesses as well large corporations across a variety of sectors because of the technology that underpins Studio[K]irmack.

Pick n Pay Clothing falls into the latter category. Studio[K]irmack is responsible for product photography for the Pick n Pay Clothing e-commerce chain. This happens twice a week, averaging approximately 1,200 SKUs per month, confirms Bellingham. It’s pretty much an around-the-clock service and has dramatically improved workflow efficiencies for Pick n Pay Clothing.

“When trying to find a solution for the volume of garments required, we knew we would need a system that could handle the project seamlessly,” says Derusha Naidoo, e-commerce manager from Pick ‘n Pay Clothing. “Studio[K]irmack afford us a 360 solution. They collect, prep, style, photograph, retouch and upload all images via a PIM facility. As a high-volume fashion brand and considering the number of SKUs we require, this has proved to be invaluable. Due to the consistent nature of their offering the imagery is one component of the e-commerce channel we know is fully covered.”

Hazel Pillay, general manager at Pick n Pay, agrees. “Studio[K]irmack made a very big difference in the launch of our online management. They are collaborative and up to date with infrastructure and services that support e-commerce in terms of visuals and processes. Although they are an external supplier for us, they are completely aligned and work very efficiently, making our entire process of e-commerce much easier.

“They are well equipped to cater for retailers doing wide ranges such as ours. Because everything is fully automated there is better control. There’s clear transparency of where something is in the pipeline which eliminates the back and forth and increases efficiency and control.”

Automated product photography is all about speed - without compromising on quality, explains Bellingham. “Although the setup is quick, the output is consistent. Angles, lighting, setting and positioning are automated and stored as a template per client, allowing for easy replication, with exacting precision. Human error is eliminated by automation, but knowledge is kept in the system.”

For Freedom Of Movement (FOM), which offers high-end lifestyle products, Studio[K]irmack worked closely with their team to set up CI guidelines. "Assets are delivered to us on an ad hoc basis, and our understanding of their requirements allow us to offer an almost seamless service enabling FOM to get products online quickly and accurately," says Bellingham.

"Working with Studio[K]irmack has allowed us to work faster and more effectively once a product is ready for online sales," explains Marisa Niemandt, marketing manager at Freedom Of Movement. "Once an item is ready for sale online, we ship the product to the studio with a written brief and the rest is done by their team. When we receive the images or videos, they are ready for web scaling, allowing them to be uploaded in minutes without compromising on quality."

While many people may associate automation with mass production and lack of originality, this is certainly not the case, says Niemandt. "It's important to be able to shoot various materials, textures and styles in a way that brings them to life for an online buyer and the Studio[K]irmack team gets the best results for every product. The technology and the team help us tell a story and the result is a visual treat for our online customers."

The technology also enables FOM to pre-establish a style for all their products, so no matter what they shoot the look is on-brand at all times across their platforms. They also make use of Studio[K]irmack's studio facilities where the setup and use of the machines allow for the marketing team to shoot without any assistance.

When Aca Joe first engaged with Studio[K]irmack for the relaunch of the iconic SA brand the brief was to help elevate their offering. "The more work we did with them the more apparent it became that we could offer them a full service," says Bellingham. "So much so that we designed and launched their e-commerce store and now manage many facets of their online business, photography, concept, content, website, SEO, paid media and social media campaigns."

"For a fashion brand we have found Studio[K]irmack to be the ideal partner," says Moira O'Reilly of the Pegasus Portfolio Collection. "Their specialised machinery has given us a competitive edge in terms of speed to market, and a polished, world-class look that elevates our content. In addition to access to the best ecommerce photographic studio in SA, we have also made extensive use of their creative team. They have great experience creating digital content across many brands and it made sense for us to utilise their extended offerings. Studio[K]irmack has become an extension of our brand team."

Bellingham is confident that his cost-efficient automation solutions will continue to accelerate business in this country. "I'm a firm believer that investing in innovation not only builds our agency's offering, but also really helps our industries. Every brand and or company selling online needs consistent and high-quality content and imagery. We are fortunate that with our offering we can offer solutions to a large variety of clients and industries."

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