CUSTOMER STORY

Bringing 3D Into the
Product Development Workflow

with Browzwear and Fruit of the Loom

FRUIT OF THE LOOM®

INDUSTRY:	Casualwear Apparel
PLATFORM:	VStitcher & Lotta
GOALS:	✓ Enhance business efficiency
	✓ Reduce waste
SOLUTION:	Leveraging 3D for proof of concept

RESULTS

Pattern Development and Garment Fitting

Sales and Marketing Tool

Enhanced Communication Between Departments

Increase in Rapid Decision Making

Reduction in physical samples for design intent

Meet the Company

Established in 1851, **Fruit of the Loom** stands as one of the world's most iconic cotton cloth and textile brands. As a global brand with over 28,000 employees worldwide, the company produces authentic quality and timeless casualwear apparel including t-shirts, fleece, and underwear for all ages.

With a commitment to people, planet, and product, Fruit of the Loom prides itself on ensuring that all of its products are produced the right way, from beginning to end through the combination of eco-friendly dyes and responsibly sourced cotton with innovative manufacturing techniques.

Shifting to Digital

The Fruit of the Loom product development team began to investigate the potential of 3D design to enhance business efficiency and reduce waste back in 2019. After extensive research performed by a collaborative cross-functional team, the company began its digital journey with Browzwear in June 2019.

The company started by training a small team of pattern makers, engineers, and designers and exploring the ways that Browzwear's suite of 3D design solutions, including VStitcher and Lotta, could be incorporated into the product development cycle. The first stage of 3D adoption was leveraging the software as a proof-of-concept tool where designers could present designs digitally to internal stakeholders. The team then began to look into incorporating 3D into the design workflows for the intimates product line, including sports bras as well as build customized block libraries for base layers. However, towards the end of the training program, the pandemic hit, confining the teams to remote work. During that time, the team was challenged to produce PPE such as protective health masks which became a critical resource.

Soon after, Fruit of the Loom was challenged to make non-surgical isolation gowns, which are disposable gowns used when there is a medium to high risk of contamination. This was a completely new product type to the company that had not been explored previously, requiring the product development team to design the product offering entirely from scratch. The isolation gowns were to be produced in various styles, meaning that different materials and constructions were needed, which proved to be challenging at the time due to global material shortages and limited resources.

"As we began to investigate how we could present and deliver the products in the fastest and most efficient way possible, we realized that we had the answer at our fingertips. We could effectively create the garments in 3D without being limited to the availability of resources," says Jamie Aikins, VP Process Improvement at Fruit of the Loom.

X:244

Y:426

The Impact of 3D

"With Browzwear's VStitcher, our designers and pattern makers were able to start from scratch, construct and visualize each pattern piece on a 3D model, and analyze its fit and function," says Jamie. "Due to the lack of fabrics available, we took existing fabrics and tweaked it digitally to get it as close to the exact fabric as possible" he adds. Although Fruit of the Loom was early on in its 3D adoption process, by having the right set of tools in place the teams could jump right in when the time came to presenting PPE prototypes digitally to customers during the pandemic when in-person meetings were simply out of the question.

"It goes without saying that VStitcher drove the success behind the PPE project and prospective customers were very impressed by the results," says Bruce Smith, VP Product Development, Fruit of the Loom. With the development of Fruit of the Loom's PPE program, pattern makers were able to execute their responsibilities and accomplish fittings remotely throughout the pandemic.

"I worked through several alternate construction scenarios to determine the best solutions for our customers' needs and design objectives," says Doug Champion, Senior Pattern Maker, Fruit of the Loom. "Through email, it was easy to send 3D Renderings and screenshots to group members as well as decision-makers. Overall, if we would not have had 3D, this PPE program would not have developed as quickly as it did."

"As 3D offers an extremely detailed and visual representation of any garment, decisions concerning fit, styling and construction can be made at an increased pace. We don't need to wait on a garment to be sewn for review, a fitting to take place or a style meeting to occur. Decisions can be made quickly and the result is a reduced development cycle time and a reduction in physical samples."

Doug Champion
Senior Pattern Maker,

browzwear | FRUIT OF THE LOOM.

The Next Steps →

With the success of the PPE project, Fruit of the Loom is now working to expand its efforts in 3D and further embed it within the product development process as well as across departments.

"As we continue to implement 3D technology into our product development process and look at making it a part of our day-to-day, we are ready to gear up and leverage 3D to reduce the amount of fabric waste throughout the prototype approval cycle," says Mercedes Lopez, VP Corporate Social Responsibility at Fruit of the Loom.

"By being able to leverage such technology, not only are there gains in the product development time frame, but we can quickly explore the potential of new products and see how it can impact the fabric utilization. These insights can help us in our goals to reduce fabric waste. We look forward to reaching a point in the near future where we no longer require physical samples," adds Doug.

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