

# Where **Luxury** Lives Online

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Anthony Milano works to make the e-commerce experience for HUGO BOSS customers as thrilling as their physical stores

By David Baez | Portraits by Kristin Deitrich

**More and more each day, online shopping has made going out to shop for clothes seem like a thing of the past.** However, HUGO BOSS is determined to show that online and in-person shopping can go hand-in-hand. That's why Anthony Milano and the company's e-commerce team are working tirelessly to make online shopping just as easy and luxurious as shopping in a physical store.

As vice president of e-commerce, Milano's focus is on HUGO BOSS's e-commerce channel, which includes digital retailing, marketing, and retail innovation. "Whether it's looking into mobile opportunities or into different retail technology vendors, anything that falls into the digital realm comes from our team," Milano says.

Since HUGO BOSS's e-commerce site launched in 2010, Milano and his team have enhanced consumer engagement with innovations like integrating live chat for customers to have questions answered and concerns addressed, and in an effort to drive that web traffic to physical locations, they have designated spots on the site where consumers can set up in-store appointments. Milano will also establish a channel that creates personalized shops for customers based on past click-through behavior.

"Getting more advanced is a goal for us," Milano says. "Like with all digital retailing, we try to present the customer with what they are looking for at any touch point."





## PREMIUM PROFESSIONAL

Over the past six years, Anthony Milano has been quintessential to the digital evolution of HUGO BOSS, one of the global market leaders in premium and luxury apparel. After launching the online store for the United States in 2010, he continues to drive double-digit growth in both topline sales and profitability. In his current role as vice president of e-commerce, Milano leads all digital commerce initiatives, from executing merchandising and marketing strategies, to enhancing online user experience and maintaining B2C operations.

Milano oversees platform development, including third-party implementations, and leads the conception and execution of the US omnichannel pilot program. He is also responsible for all digital drive-to-store initiatives, including the relaunching of the digital CRM platform and establishing 1:1 predictive marketing strategies.

Since 2007, he has held other executive level roles at HUGO BOSS, including business development manager and director of e-commerce. He holds a degree in marketing and management from New York University Stern School of Business.

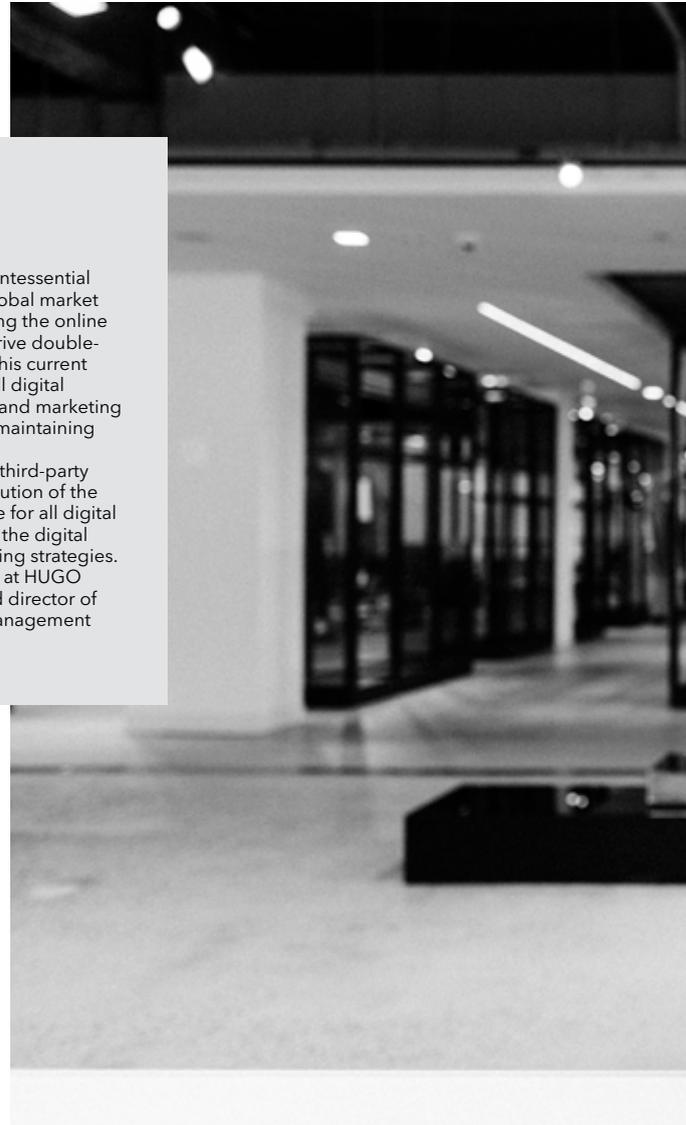
Customer service has been key in helping Milano get HUGO BOSS's digital traffic to its physical stores. Milano's team will communicate with customers via the aforementioned online chat and relay information to in-store employees. "Making the connection from digital to physical stores is key because we are able to leverage the experts in the field," he says.

To clarify this, Milano details a story in which a customer in Australia was on a live chat and needed a dress shirt for a wedding for which he was traveling to Hawaii. The BOSS Waikiki store didn't have the particular shirt in his size, so the store contacted the BOSS Rodeo Drive location, which did have the shirt and sent it to Hawaii in time for the wedding. "We would have lost that transaction and the customer completely if we didn't have the digital interface that started the whole process," Milano says.

Other customer service examples include "ship-to-store," where customers can buy online but can have the item sent to a HUGO BOSS physical location near them, for instances in which the ordered item wasn't the right fit, for example.

"A \$1,000 suit is a bit of an investment for most people, and to not exactly know your fit can make purchasing difficult," Milano says. "With ship-to-store, you're at the store with the expert and you have the ability to return the product and exchange it for something that's more fitting."

Milano has also seen tracking customer behavior improve HUGO BOSS's overall success. Working with its digital CRM platform, AgilOne, HUGO BOSS stores customer data, tracks their browsing behavior on its site, and couples that data with past buying information. Milano's team can then create customer segments and profiles based on this information.



"The number one advantage is the propensity-to-buy modeling AgilOne provides," Milano says. "When a customer frequents the store and also visits the site, we know he's ready to buy. He's engaged and at the bottom part of the funnel. The question is, how can we engage him even more? Are our resources better used with him than maybe a reactivation initiative for one of our lost customers?"

HUGO BOSS also has its sights on expanding its reach in terms of providing a luxury experience. Currently, those efforts included loading its site with video content and extended product descriptions of higher-priced items like handbags and handcrafted dress shoes.

"You have to add some value so the customer feels a little more assured purchasing at such a high price point," Milano says. "That's kind of the goal there: keep on putting out data-rich content and keep creating more around that."



**Anthony Milano**  
HUGO BOSS  
VP of eCommerce

Regardless of the method, HUGO BOSS just wants customers to buy its products on a consistent basis. As long as that's the goal, Milano and his team will continue to provide as much information as they can to help the company decide the best way to make that happen.

"I think we're just trying, in a difficult retail climate, to figure out what our customer is looking for, who they are, and what they're about," Milano says. "Instead of just saying it and making certain concessions, you have to replatform a mentality around this, and that even comes with technical platforms. How can you look at the customer differently, and then how do you start making decisions differently based on that information? That's something I'm trying to bring to light with the team here, both in-store and online." ●

TradeGlobal is proud to partner with Hugo Boss, a company leading the way in innovative retail and personalized customer experiences. Anthony's vision has helped guide the evolution of the Hugo Boss brand's identity through its online presence and across all touch points.



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