
Dress Without Distress

Everyone needs to buy and wear clothes, but this seemingly simple part of life contains a lot of difficult decisions. Most people have limited financial resources and want to make sure that the clothes they are buying are worth the money. Is the quality good? Will the clothes last? Will it go out of fashion? Will they end up wearing it often enough to justify the price? There are many important questions that people ask themselves when buying clothes, but not a lot of answers supported by data. For example, consumers might have heard that a brand is good, but they don't know the average number of days that the clothes last. Likewise, after buying those clothes, consumers might have a vague idea of which clothes they wear the most often, but they don't have an easy way to track whether they're rotating their wardrobe appropriately. Consumers want to avoid wearing

Spending on footwear and clothing in America grew by almost \$100 billion from 1999 to 2013¹

In 2013, Americans spent an average of \$1,604 on apparel and services¹

the same clothes too often, which can cause socially awkward reactions such as "Do they only own three shirts?", and consumers want to make sure that they wear each clothing item enough times that the item was worth buying.

In other words, consumers need a way to easily track data related to their clothes instead of using very imprecise heuristics to make clothing decisions. Something as simple as scanning clothes when they are bought and scanning an ironed-on barcode on the clothes each time they are worn can provide a starting point to help customers evaluate the price of clothing, how often they wear the clothing, and the last time the clothing was worn to avoid repeating outfits. Not only that, but this system



could allow consumers to easily track the price per use of the clothing, allowing them to make informed decisions in the future when buying clothing. Regardless of whether this particular suggested solution is ideal, it demonstrates that there are potential creative solutions that give consumers a low-effort way to track their clothing-related statistics and easily view the statistics they want to see. Additionally, there are many options to explore regarding those statistics, such as the popularity of the clothing and how comfortable other consumers have found it.

¹The Bureau of Labor Statistics