



What does  
Data  
say about

**WGSN's  
SS2020  
Trend Forecast?**



Are the trends that we see today a product of organic shifts in design or simply dictated by trend agencies like WGSN?

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If you're getting the impression that most items being sold on the high street seem very similar, it's because they are. Almost every major retailer in the fashion industry subscribes to a trend forecasting service, the most notable being WGSN.

The core of WGSN's service is forecasting fashion trends several years into the future by watching the current market conditions and consumer behaviour to detect new patterns. Brands that are subscribed to the service gain access to these forecasts along with the design information to support it. As stated in this article by [Splinter](#), "those outside the industry may have never heard of it [WGSN] but it likely picked the clothes you're wearing today."

While fashion forecasts (WGSN or other platforms) are able to fulfill the function of providing inspiration to industry professionals, they have also contributed to the homogenised state of the fashion landscape. As one of the most highly used services in the industry, thousands of retailers are often looking at the same information at the same time, creating a parallel ecosystem where everyone generates the same ideas.

Tie-dye is expected to be one of the **major trends** in menswear by WGSN.



Image credit: GQ.com

The results can clearly be seen on the runway where certain colours or silhouettes seem to dominate an entire season. It's tough to conclude whether the trends that we see today are a product of organic shifts in design or simply dictated by trend agencies like WGSN.

## Speed to Adoption

The fashion industry is going through **turbulent times**. Slow economic growth, societal shifts and rapid digitalisation are impacting retailers faster than they can respond. Fashion consumers' increasingly fragmented interest proves retailers will really need to tap into what consumers want and understand why they want it. In the current conditions, retailers that win are the retailers who make an early move and adapt to shifts accordingly.

Data-derived solutions give fashion buyers better context on specific trends and track development accurately. Buyers that are able to identify the signals of an upward moving trend, even before it's translated into a forecast, will be able to validate the trend by themselves – guaranteeing a higher probability of success.



# Trend Forecast for SS2020 by WGSN

As we approach the Spring/Summer 2020 season, we've analysed WGSN's top forecast in colour, womenswear, menswear and key products against data, along with external insights to find out what will retailers be stocking up on, and whether you should be too.

## Colour of 2020 : Neo-Mint

One of the most prolific colour trends WGSN has forecasted for this year is neo-mint. The pastel greenish-pistachio hue is meant to symbolise an optimistic reaction to advances in science and technology.

The colour that is already a mainstay in Scandinavian style and contemporary fashion has started to influence the masses. Neo-mint was featured prominently on the runways of Givenchy, Kenzo and Acne Studios throughout the '19/20 collections.



Lacoste SS20. Image credit: Vogue Runway

SS2020  
NEO-MINT

“  
Omnytics data captured over 5,000 new-ins tagged under mint last year. 16% of these new-ins were non-apparel items.

Two of the most-stocked categories in mint were bags and accessories. In fact, one of the new key colours for Chanel's leather goods SS20 collection is a mint-ish green. The colour has already been adopted by several shoe and accessory brands such as Asian favourite, Charles and Keith, as part of its latest Chinese New Year collection 2020.

Accessories retailer, **Charles and Keith** adopted the mint trend for their Chinese New Year collection 2020.



While mint shows potential within non-apparel categories, sell-out performance for clothing in this colour is not promising. In the fast-fashion segment, Asos and Fashion Nova had poor sell-out for their mint coloured items, as more than 65% of these products were sold on discount at both retailers. Designer retailer, Farfetch had slightly better luck, but still failed to sell the majority of its mint items at full-price.

Buyers planning to adopt this shade into their summer colour palettes might have to express caution. As mint is a rather polarising colour, buyers can tactically use mint as an accent colour for accessories or specific clothing items. Checking the historical sales performance data on mint green, and other similar colours can provide insight into how this trend will resonate among customers in your market, or pinpoint a better performing alternative.

Chinese New  
Year 2020



Image credit: charleskeith.com

# Womenswear Trend 1: Trapeze Dress

Among the major womenswear themes forecasted by WGSN for 2020 is “Modern Femininity”. As a counter-reaction to the widespread of streetwear, categories like tailoring and contemporary dresses are being revived. “The re-emergence of categories such as tailoring and girly party wear has most definitely warranted a rebalancing of the casual offer this year,” said Laura Yiannakou, Senior Editor of Womenswear at WGSN.



JW Anderson SS20. Image credit: Vogue Runway

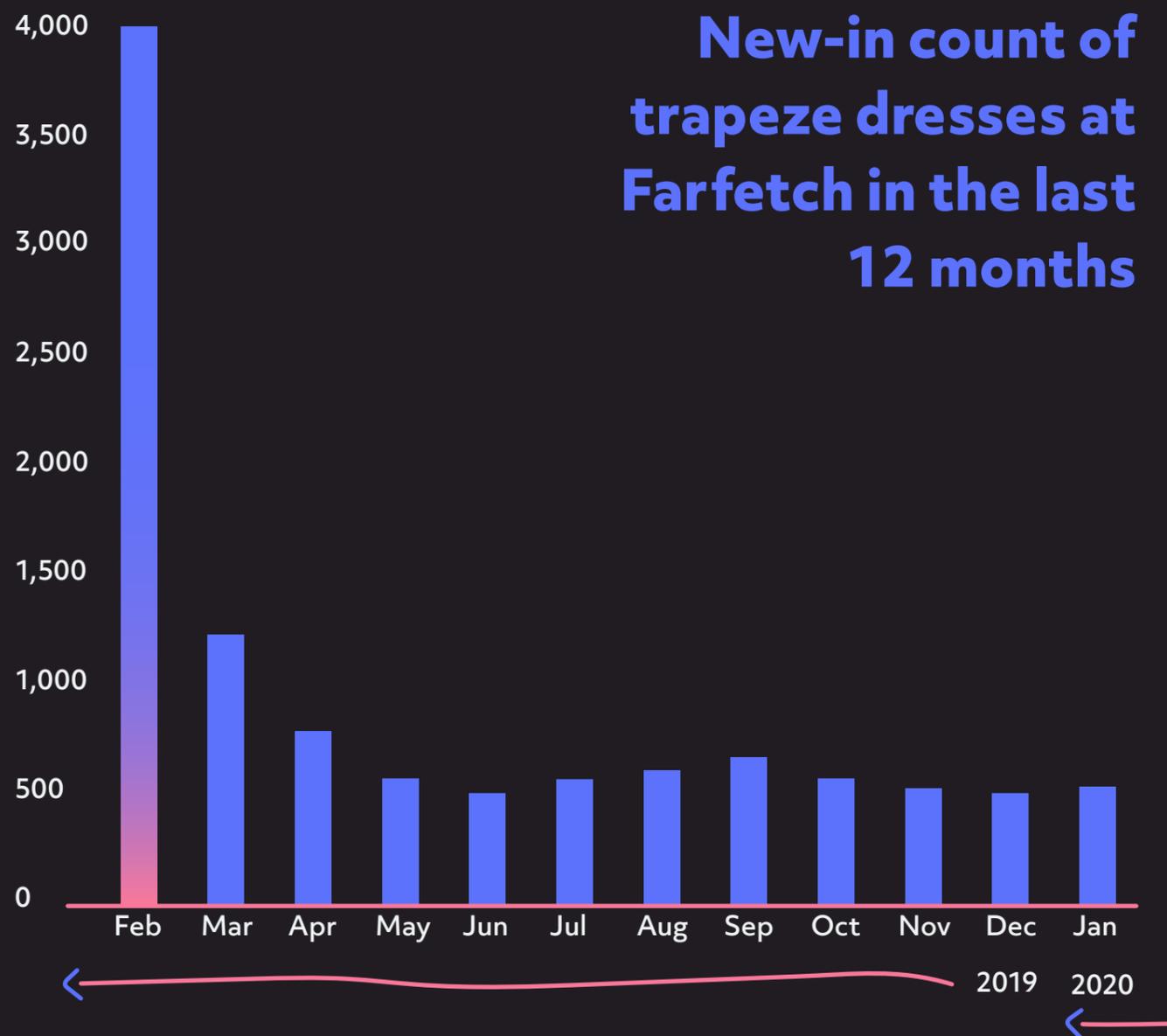
SS20  
TRAPEZE DRESS

One of the key silhouettes highlighted from this trend is trapeze dresses. Farfetch alone had over 10,000 SKUs of trapeze dresses last year. Data shows the retailer aggressively stocking up on these dresses for Spring 2019 newness, as over 4,000 new SKUs were detected in February. Bestsellers came from more contemporary brands such as Johanna Ortiz, Rosie Assoulin and Jacquemus. Sell-out performance for this sub-category did not exceed 65% but factoring in the retailer’s high prices, this was unsurprising. The median price of trapeze dresses from Farfetch was nearly \$800.

For the premium segment, the more affordable Nordstrom also brought in over 2,800 new-ins last year with a median price at approximately \$139 – far lower than Farfetch.

The trend trickled down to the high street as well, Asos and Zara picked up on the trend but only in small quantities. The median prices of their trapeze dresses were \$31 and \$26 respectively. Sales for this style at both retailers were relatively poor as discounts drove over 90% of the total sell-out.

Sales performance of trapeze dresses across these retailers do not really paint a clear picture. While most retailers were stocking up on trapeze dresses, sales for this style were underwhelming despite differences in price. However, the large numbers of new SKUs indicate there is a demand but finding the pricing sweet spot is crucial in converting sales.



## Womenswear Trend 2: Cardigan and Knitwear

Dubbed as “2020’s most unexpected fashion item” by WGSN, the cardigan is one of the more unique trends for SS2020.

However, this year’s version of the cardigan gets quite the update – the new silhouette is more cropped with elaborate embellishments but maintains its slouchy comfortable feel. Arising as a key online trend, the “sexy” cardigan was seen all over social media last year, most notably Katie Holmes making waves when she wore the bralette-cardigan combo from Khaite.

What does data say about WGSN’s SS2020 trend forecast? - Camila Coelho wearing the 'sexy' cardigan trend. Popular fashion influencer, Camila Coelho was spotted wearing the cardigan trend in September of 2019. Although knitwear and cardigans are usually considered as a fall/winter staple, new-in patterns from Farfetch and Asos show the trend still moving volumes in the spring/summer season, a considerable number of cardigans were detected arriving in December '19 and January this year. Contemporary brands like Khaite and Alessandra Rich are just some of the names to look out for. Farfetch had nearly 10,000 cardigan SKUs last year.



Altuzarra SS20. Image credit: Vogue Runway

**SS2020  
CARDIGAN &  
KNITWEAR**



The subcategory achieved 52% sell-out at full-price, slightly exceeding the total average benchmark for this category. On the fast-fashion end, Asos had over 1,500 SKUs and also achieved a similar sell-out rate at 48%. Although the sell-out rates for cardigans are not achieving ultra-high numbers, consistent full-priced sales indicate a steady demand for this style with the potential to grow.

## Menswear Trend 1: The Cargo Pants

For the past few years, streetwear has dominated men’s fashion. The appointment of designers such as Virgil Abloh and Kim Jones at notable fashion houses solidifies streetwear as a staple in menswear.

However, collections from ‘19/20 seasons show us that streetwear has evolved beyond just sneakers and t-shirts, taking on a more tactical approach. From designer harnesses to utility belts, luxe utilitarian style was the look. The theme continues this year with cargo pants making a comeback.



Louis Vuitton SS20 Menswear. Image credit: Vogue Runway

**SS2020  
CARGO PANTS**



Utility belts and harnesses were a prominent accessory for Virgil Abloh's first collection as the Creative Director of Louis Vuitton menswear.

Spotted on the runways of Louis Vuitton, Fendi and Stella McCartney, cargo pants have emerged as one of the key products for menswear in Spring/Summer 2020. Last year, our data tracked over 3,100 cargo pants new-ins. Asos was one of the earliest adopters of the trend with over 600 SKUs in this style, including cargo pants and shorts. The online multi-brand retailer managed to achieve a 49% sell-out at full price, exceeding the trouser category's average benchmark by 11 percentage points. Asos' own brand stocked the largest number of cargo pants, followed by Pull & Bear and Bershka.

Bestselling cargo pants from **Asos** design and **Pull&Bear**.



This kind of data evidence shows we'll see more cargo pants this season. For buyers planning to introduce this style for the first time, test out bestselling designs in smaller quantities first, before committing to a massive buy.

# Menswear Trend 2: Tie-Dye

A standout print to anticipate this season is tie-dye. The print was spotted everywhere for the SS20 collections. Christian Dior, Jacquemus, Versace and Armani are just a few of the brands to use the print. Tie-dye had already gained traction in 2019, however, WGSN expects the trend to be even larger in 2020, especially for menswear. Nearly 2,900 new SKUs tagged under tie-dye were found in menswear last year.

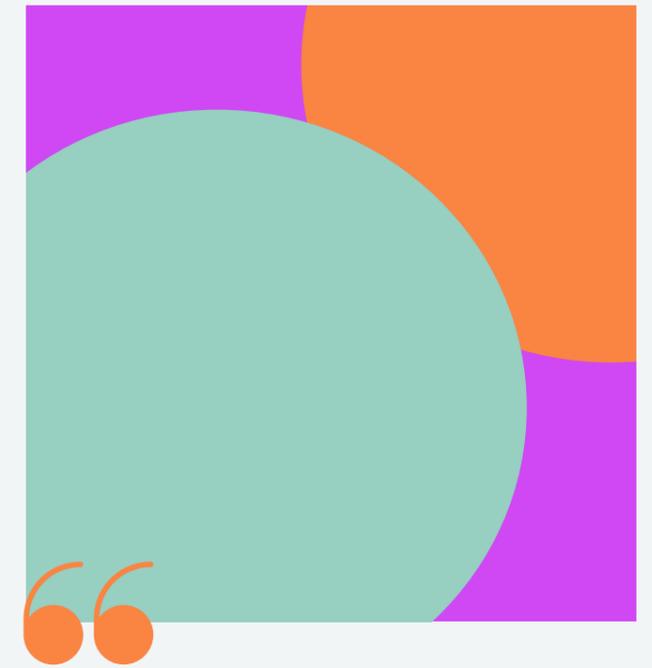
SS2020  
TIE-DYE

This trend was quickly picked up by fast-fashion retailers, analysing our data from the men's offering at Zara, Boohoo, Asos and Urban Outfitters show these retailers were stocking up on tie-dye items starting March through to September. Boohoo's collaboration with the rapper Quavo last year featured the tie-dye print extensively across its 200 piece collection.



MGSM SS20 menswear. Image credit: Vogue Runway

Despite the print being heavily backed by high-end designers and fast-fashion retailers, our data shows sales for tie-dye did not take off. With the exception of Urban Outfitters, most fast-fashion retailers were unable to drive high sell-out for the print. Zara, Boohoo and Asos all failed to exceed a 30% sell-out rate at full-price, forcing them to drive sell-out through heavy discounting. Asos and Zara had price slashes up to 79% while Boohoo went all the way up to 90%.



Poor full-priced sales of tie-dye indicate this trend might be too progressive for the male mass-market consumer.

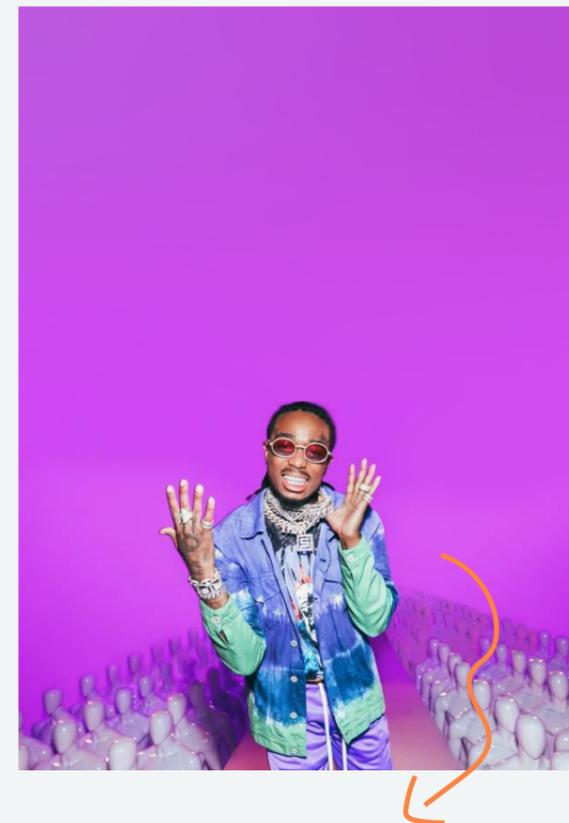


Image credit: WWD

Designer retailers like Farfetch and Nordstrom had no problem driving sell-out over 50%, even with the higher price points.

Although tie-dye's influence on fashion is undoubtedly growing, buyers will need to be wary of consumer readiness before stocking up on this trend, especially in fast-fashion. An optimal time to capitalise on tie-dye is during festival season when men's fashion tends to be more elaborate.

BoohooMan by Quavo collaboration was released in April of 2019.

# Discovering Trend Insights with Data Analytics

This list of trends acts as a mere buying guide, with other factors such as target customer, local preferences and consumer readiness needing consideration before adopting any of the trends. It is important for buyers to layer trend forecasts (from WGSN or other platforms) with historical sales data and market insights to gain a better understanding of the trend, giving them the ability to gauge consumer readiness.

As demonstrated by the tie-dye and neo-mint trends, some major trends from the runway and trend forecast simply do not translate for mass-market. Certain styles may work better for the designer segment while others are able to reach all audiences. In the case of the trapeze dress, the perceived value in pricing played a huge factor in determining sell-out.

The trend's trajectory can also vary dramatically depending on market conditions, external factors or current events. Social media is incredibly influential in making or breaking a trend, especially in womenswear. The popularity of knitwear and cardigans is a clear example of how a trend from Instagram is able to enter the mainstream.

Detecting upward-moving trends by constantly monitoring SKU volume and new-in launches can provide clues into how a trend is developing. Data solutions help buyers to highlight bestsellers and analyse new-in patterns quickly. Buyers who are able to decipher these signals can react in a more timely manner and identify the optimal time to introduce these trends for their own market.

 omnilytics

All data featured comes from products retailing online as tracked by Omnilytics from February 2019 to January 2020, unless otherwise mentioned.

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