

Smart technology set to fast forward e-commerce imagery and digital design

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As the South African economy comes back to life after the lockdown necessitated by the tragedy that is Covid-19, e-commerce companies are racing to innovate and better serve customers. As supply chains slowly roll into action, a problem retailers and brands now face is how to quickly create the content required to market their goods.

“Imagine the chaos of being a huge fashion brand, and your entire range has been delayed and you now have to shoot an entire line in a few days, never mind a month,” says Craig Bellingham, the founder of Studio[K]irmack, a unique visual studio that embraces automated photographic technology, smart machines and intelligent software to enable retailers and brands to shoot high-end productions without the sometimes and potentially expensive traditional photographic setup and post production.

“Digital transformation is radically changing the way that online trading is being done. For example, in the past, e-commerce entrepreneurs needed to invest in top-flight fashion photographers and crews, but today at Studio[K]irmack, based in Cape Town, offers a setup supported by smart technology that can do a full fashion e-commerce shoot from shoes to belts, boots and buckles in mere minutes. with, or without a model depending on one’s requirements,” he explains.

Today, Studio[K]irmack has evolved from a top retail and digital production studio into a world-class photographic and content studio comparable with global standards because Bellingham invested in importing leading-edge smart technology from Styleshoots and OrbitVu. These are both top European technology companies that specialise in the automation of photography and videography for top global brands. The result is world-class imagery that is quick and efficient to produce. “No matter the brand, no matter the subject matter, the fact is that consumers interact better online with great product photography and video. Great visuals and the way it is considered and portrayed online is the window to your product - make it shine.”

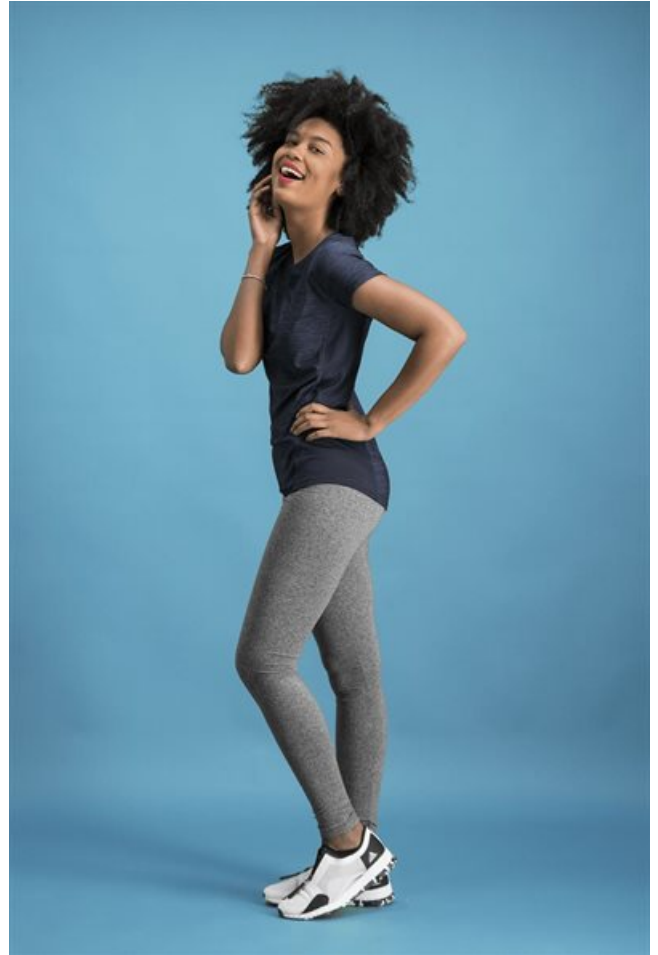
Studio[K]irmack now offers brands six world-leading automated content machines that are the future of imagery production, and that boasts an unrivalled image production process. Each machine is a highly evolved specialist smart studio that allows fast, professional image creation for almost any product. Cutting edge technology makes the capture process user friendly

- so much so that setting up shoots is a cinch for brand managers and brand creatives.



“E-commerce offers this country one of the real growth opportunities,” Bellingham explains, citing a [recent Nielsen study](#) that reveals the surge in online shopping post-pandemic. The research showed that 37% of South Africans now say they shop more online than ever before.

The study revealed that the



lockdown was catalysing e-commerce, in a move that would speed up digital purchasing. “Amid the strange new world of Covid-19, online grocery shopping has been a lifeline for many South African consumers, who have desperately sought out safe and secure shopping alternatives amidst the uncertainty of lockdown living,” Nielsen SA retail lead, Gareth Paterson, [recently reported](#). “As a result, available online shopping platforms, especially for groceries, medicines, and other necessary items, have seen a surge in usage over the last few weeks as consumers prefer not to venture into stores and have increasingly opted for these reduced touchpoint alternatives.”

Bellingham believes that this will drive e-commerce forward as increasing numbers of local shoppers have now become more comfortable with digital and are increasingly more comfortable with online ordering. “Familiarity and trust grow e-commerce, that’s been evident in the growth of online retail in all economies, and South Africa will be no different,” says the design disruptor who is reinventing the way retail content is captured.

“I am a firm believer that investing in innovation not only builds our agency’s offering, but also really helps to build out industries. This is why I’m betting on tomorrow despite the fact that there are so many pessimistic outlooks for this country out there. What the analysts and rating agencies often overlook are the intangibles - the innate ability of locals to transform, and out-imagine our outcomes. We’ve got resilience, determination, and solidarity - the very hallmarks for reformation.”

Bellingham reports that his Cape-based studio is an African first. It’s the first company of its sort on the continent that offers brands, both large and small, access to the best e-commerce photographic and digital imaging technology in the world. The smart machines and studios can be rented or Studio[K]irmack can manage the entire production process.

“Our automated solutions boost product photography while helping brands and agencies cut costs and streamline workflows. We help and empower companies to speed up their visual content production, an interesting stat is that

customers remember 80% of what they see and 20% of what they read,” Bellingham says.



“The pace of retail is accelerating, and brands are looking to move to market much quicker. This is why there’s a massive push to create quick and accurate edited video content and stills for fashion, electronics, health, liquor and lifestyle brands. Today, we’re able to do complex e-commerce shoots in a fraction of time if compared to a more traditional approach. This makes a massive difference in a time-pressed, stressed market,” Bellingham says, adding: “Innovation very often is what jump-starts both e-commerce and economies.”

Brands readily embracing this faster approach to automating content production at Studio[K]irmack include Adidas, Ackermans, Dunns, Hi-Tec, Studio88, Pick n Pay, Frankees, Leatt, Freedom of Moment, Puma, Falke, Watch Republic, New Balance and some production-based agencies.

For more information:

Visit www.studiokirmack.co.za

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www.orbitvu.co.za

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