

# Troy Nachtigall



*“When does innovation need to confront the practicality of the real world?”*

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Coming from a fashion industry background, Troy Nachtigall has worked for traditional craftsmanship brands such as Fendi in Italy. Those experiences shaped his interest in less standard craftsmanship models and in the use of innovation on manufacturing shoes.

That led him to teach at major design institutes and universities in Europe: Institute of European Design, Eindhoven University of Technology and Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences.

Currently, Nachtigall chairs the Fashion Research & Technology group at AUAS as they look for emergent future manufacturing, embodied interaction, and socio-technical practice.

# Developing new technologies and analysing users' data to create personalized shoes

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**Success transpires far beyond business achievements, that is what Troy Nachtigall's Lighthouse Story proves.**

**His company had to cease its activities before its launching, however the project presents itself as a successful valorisation story, being able to map important challenges and opportunities in the industry, producing many outcomes that are shaping new projects and businesses in the field.**

**Nachtigall's studies aimed to answer questions such as "How to make personalized shoes that take into consideration user's specific needs?" and "What does personalization means?". Therefore, Troy Nachtigall started a business as part of his PhD research. Nachtigall developed a company that could create personalized shoes through 3D printers by analysing users' data, such as foot shape, walking pattern and users' social behaviour.**

The business didn't prove to be financially viable, and the company had to close before starting its commercial production. However, the business project made a major impacts in the fashion industry and the academia, besides the distribution of different publications, documents and tools, it created codes and algorithms that are used for different companies to produce shoes and clothing components. Nachtigall indicates that success in the business innovation field is a matter of timing and that a valorisation project might be successful on different levels that are not only economic.

In Nachtigall's words: "success is to create an understanding of the business space, of the technological space, sociological space and professional space. All of them matter."

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

### & ADVICE

Find the **right moment** so valorisation can happen.

Researchers already have products, services and tools on their hands that society make use of, but they don't often reach a **larger audience**.

**Researchers care about people** and their everyday lives. They should give something back to society, since they also take things from society.

Valorisation allows academics **to experience a multi-stakeholder context** and to learn how to translate a specific technical field language to other fields.

“It is important for me to give back the knowledge acquired through the project because I also learned a lot from other people, so I wanted it to be a two-way road.”