

Mister YOOX.COM

Be the first. This is one of the driving forces behind Federico Marchetti, the 42 year old founder and CEO of YOOX Group, the colossus bridging the worlds of fashion and Internet. The group, founded in 2000, operates on three different fronts: YOOX.COM - the fashion world's most successful online retailer; THECORNER.COM - an online boutique/incubator for niche brands; and a division that creates and manages the online stores for leading fashion houses. Recently, with YOOX.COM, Federico Marchetti was the first in this industry to enter the Chinese market - arriving before the international luxury retailers, before the Americans, before everybody.

The secrets of his success is 'going against the trend' - challenging the rules. For this reason in 2009, flying in the face of the economic crisis, YOOX Group was the only Italian company to go public. The excellence of the company comes from its ability to combine two apparently contradictory elements: Internet and fashion. One side characterised by limitless communication, while the other is defined by exclusivity at any cost. It must be because Marchetti likes contradictions. "I understood that two things that seemed impossible to put together could be mixed together instead", he explains. "The living proof are the online stores that we have launched, like marni.com or zegna.com (the latest to be launched). They can be reached from anywhere in the world but have one fixed address - like a digital signature". A single reference point, opposing the trend towards standardization. The "twist of fate" which started everything moving came from a personal sense of dissatisfaction. An idyllic two year sojourn in New York (with the excuse of pursuing a Masters in Business Administration at Columbia University) and the subsequent difficult return to Milan, to a job that did not fit. "At the end of the day, when you've got nothing to loose, its much easier to take a chance, so decided to combine my passions and my strengths." The moment was right: The so-called New Economy made funding available even to those who had no capital to invest so long as they had a brilliant idea. Before the banks had a chance to tighten up their rules again, YOOX Group was born. A company with a global visual, born in Italy, with a chameleon-like ability to adapt to the needs of the global context. Marchetti goes against the flow even when he talks about Italy. "In a country like ours, successful people are looked at with suspicion, especially if they maintain a low-profile; because at least if you trip around on a yacht surrounded by models, they look at you with some kind of respect, but if you stay the same as you always have been and get around town on a bicycle they look at you with distrust". He nurtures a humanistic, almost poetic vision of "how to do business". A company made up of 'good' people who don't fit into the popular national cliché. "When we were listed on the stock exchange, some of our clients congratulated us -sincere, emotional, heartfelt congratulations - It was incredible for us - this was the proof that we had worked well: we didn't betray anybody and we didn't trick anybody. And in the end this pays off."