

## **PRODUCT & MARKETING**

# **How an Italian 3D scanner manufacturer has stormed the footwear industry**

By Philip Webster 24 October 2024

The startup **Covision Media** decided to initially focus on the footwear industry to commercialize its 3D scanner developed in Bressanone, near the northern Italian town of Bolzano.

The company, which was founded on Feb. 9, 2024, after having spun off from the technology group **Covision Lab**, currently has a slate of high-profile clients that includes **Inditex** – which owns the brands **Zara**, **Pull& Bear**, **Massimo Dutti**, **Bershka**, **Stradivarius** and **Oysho** –, the textile brand **Gore-Tex**, **Dr.Martens** as well as sportswear brands such as **Adidas**, in partnership with the content creation studio **NUREG**, **Salomon**, **La Sportiva** and **DMT**, an Italian producer of cycling shoes.



Source: Covision Media

Franz Tschimben

The company currently generates about half of its revenues from sales and services provided for the scanning of footwear, bags and accessories. At the end of the first quarter of 2025, it plans to propose and start testing the scanning of apparel, according to the CEO and co-founder, **Franz Tschimben**.

The rest of Covision Media's activity stems from the scanning of objects for other industries, such as the gaming industry, or to create large and high quality 3D datasets for AI algorithms. One of its key clients in that scenario being **Meta** and more specifically its AI (artificial intelligence) and AR/VR (augmented reality/virtual reality) division **Meta Reality Labs**. Meta released the "world's highest quality dataset for object reconstruction", which was scanned using "a state-of-the-art scanning rig from Covision Media to capture the geometry and material properties of these objects". Meta thinks that "making 3D reconstruction robust and efficient is the most important step that the computer vision community can take towards the democratization of digital twin creation for businesses".

Covision Media has developed its own scanner and software enabling it to propose an integrated 3D solution.

"Our cutting-edge technology is the capacity of separating light from the object being scanned. As it isn't part of the 3D object, it can be moved in the 3D image, but also in downstream automatic applications like 2D product photos from 3D, and videos from 3D. This also results in a significant reduction in post-production retouching," Tschimben explains in an exclusive interview with [Shoe Intelligence](#).

He indicates that the scanning process takes 10 minutes for the company's D-Twin 2 model, and about 9 minutes for the D-Twin 1, and only 17 percent of the footwear scanned need retouching. On average, post-production requires about two hours of work.

Thanks to the generation of a "relightable 3D asset", Covision Media notes that its clients have the data necessary to create all visual content for 3D and 2D images, videos and AR for virtual try-ons. The content can be used for product detail pages, social media marketing as well as creating datasets for generative artificial intelligence, according to the company.

Tschimben pointed out that there is a “frenzy” for high definition images as it is now technologically possible to immediately upload 3D images to smartphones, boosting their use for online and omnichannel retailing solutions. Meanwhile, companies are also increasingly using 3D renderings in manufacturing to cut costs and increase lead times.

He noted that over the years the company’s business has widened from working solely with e-commerce and marketing departments to also interacting with design and development teams.

Companies can either purchase or rent Covision Media’s scanners, which cost about €300,000 to €350,000 each to buy, or can use the services of a scanning center, as is the case with La Sportiva, which specializes in mountain and outdoor footwear and apparel.

**Quad Inc.**, a US provider of marketing solutions, installed its first Covision Media 3D-Twin scanner for client-facing projects in North America in June.

“As a company that lives and breathes innovation, Quad is no stranger to being ‘first,’ but this partnership with Covision Media is especially exciting because of the tremendous advantages scalable, automated 3D scanning will bring our clients,” said **Eric Ashworth**, President of Quad Agency Solutions and Executive Vice President of Product & Market Strategy, in a statement at the time of the announcement on June 4.

“Marketers no longer have to think of assets for each channel as disparate things that are produced separately. This solution delivers exceptional creative with one adaptable asset to be used across multiple channels – and that’s a game-changer for brands,” Ashworth added.

In Europe, Covision Media has a similar partnership with **NUREG**, which is based out of Nuremberg, where it built the largest 3D scanning center in Europe.

“The unparalleled quality and reusability of 3D scans allows our global team of 3D and photo specialists to leverage the 3D models for all final applications we are

creating,” said **Tommy Lenssen**, head of the adidas team at NUREG in a Nvidia AI Blog statement on Sept. 5, 2023.

To bolster its presence in the US, Covision Media opened a commercial office in Brooklyn, New York City. “In the US, companies tend to be less risk-averse” in adopting new technologies than in Europe, noted Tschimben, who previously worked in California working on the development of self-driving vehicles before joining Covision Lab.

Covision Media employs 11 people but Tschimben sees the headcount rapidly doubling as the company expands its North American sales team and technical staff in Italy.

“We are currently working on a financing round” to fund the company’s development, he concluded.