Retail Innovation Shout Out: Tanya Heath Offers Couture Shoes with Changeable Heels

by Amanda Rouse

Tanya Heath created her own brand of patent protected innovative shoes specifically for women who want to be fashionable but don’t want to suffer the pain of high heels. The shoes come with two pairs of heels, so that one pair of shoes will suffice for various activities during a day. The heels range from 4.5 to 9 centimeters and “eject” using a button inside the shoe. Her Paris boutique has a “heel bar” (think Apple Genius Bar) where patrons share their ideal heel concept and receive personalized service. These amazing shoes are also available online.

Prior to becoming a designer, Tanya worked in consulting and private equity and experienced the painful reality of walking miles in stylish heels. Tanya also worked as a professor at the university, l’Ecole Centrale Paris, teaching marketing of disruptive innovation to engineering students. After Tanya was unable to find a shoe on the market that met her needs, she decided to create one herself.

Tanya was told that her idea was technically unachievable but she did not give up. She hired industrial engineers and turned to fellow professors from l’Ecole Centrale who reverse-engineered and improved the mechanical heel using mathematical models and testing. It took several years for her team of over a dozen individuals to successfully create this shoe with adjustable heel heights.

Innovation combined with engineering and persistence resulted in a remarkable advance in fashion!

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