

Image now

VOL. 15

AICI USA

Style Tech Immersion
Miami:
An Event That Brought Our
Community Together

— EDITION



Revisiting the AICI
Code of Ethics:
Bringing Its Principles Into
Our Daily Practice

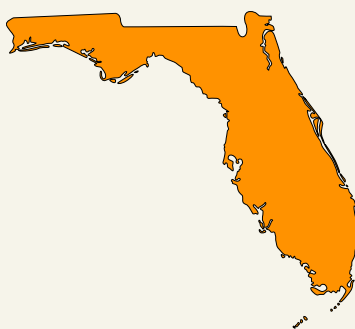
Know a little bit
more about USA
AICI Board.



Style Tech Immersion

Miami 2026: Where Human Expertise Meets Artificial Intelligence

What happens when you bring image consultants together in Miami for two days and ask them to rethink the way they work? You get conversations about artificial intelligence, luxury retail, personal branding, client experience, entrepreneurship, local designers—and, just as importantly, conversations with each other.



That was the idea behind StyleTech Immersion Miami 2026.

The program was born from something our AICI USA members had been asking for: more practical education about Artificial Intelligence and how it applies to the everyday work of an image consultant.

2026
Miami



Learning From *Each Other*

There is understandable concern across many creative professions that AI will eventually replace human expertise.

But perhaps we are asking the wrong question.

The better question is:

How can AI help us become better at the things our clients already hire us to do?

AI cannot replace the empathy required to understand why a client has lost confidence. It cannot fully understand the personal story behind a wardrobe, the emotion behind a color choice, or the transformation that happens when someone finally recognizes themselves in the mirror.



But it can help us research faster, generate ideas, organize information, personalize experiences, create content, automate repetitive tasks, and dedicate more of our time to the human side of our profession.

That distinction became the foundation of our Miami experience.

Why Image Consultants *Need* to Understand AI

The transformation is already happening.

Businesses are incorporating AI into marketing, sales, customer service, product development, research, content creation, personalization, and operational processes.

For image consultants, the possibilities are equally significant.

Why Image Consultants *Need* to Understand AI

Imagine using AI to help you:

- Generate initial wardrobe concepts before a consultation.
- Develop personalized shopping lists.
- Create client presentations and visual proposals faster.
- Research brands, products, trends, and competitors.
- Build marketing campaigns around specific client niches.
- Transform consultation notes into organized action plans.
- Generate ideas for corporate workshops.
- Create follow-up materials personalized to each client.
- Analyze business processes and identify tasks that could be automated.
- Spend less time producing materials and more time actually consulting.

The objective is not to allow technology to make every decision.

The consultant remains the expert. AI becomes the assistant.

That was one of the most important lessons behind StyleTech.

DAY ONE: *From AI Theory* to Real Business

Inside Anatomie: Seeing AI at Work

Our first experience took us inside **Anatomie**, a Miami-based luxury travel-fashion brand.

Instead of beginning the program by sitting in a conference room talking about what AI might do someday, we wanted members to see what technology is already doing inside a real fashion business. We learned how AI can be integrated into creative and operational processes and how technology can potentially reduce costs, accelerate workflows, support decision-making, and allow smaller organizations to accomplish work that previously required considerably more resources.



For an independent image consultant or entrepreneur, this is particularly relevant.

Most consultants do not have large marketing departments, research teams, graphic designers, copywriters, assistants, and technology departments.

AI can begin to function as part of that support system.

Practical Takeaway #1

Before downloading another AI application, write down every repetitive task you perform during a normal week.

Ask yourself:

What am I doing repeatedly that does not require my unique human expertise?

Start there.

The best AI strategy is not necessarily adopting the newest tool. It is identifying where technology can give you back the most valuable resource you have: **your time.**

Making AI Practical: *Learning with Thiago E. Ferreira*

A portrait of Thiago E. Ferreira, a man with short dark hair and a beard, smiling. He is wearing a white polo shirt with blue trim on the collar and a thin chain necklace. The background is a solid light blue.

Our next session brought members together with **Thiago E. Ferreira**, founder of Elevate AI Consulting, whose approach focuses on making Artificial Intelligence accessible, strategic, and human-centered for businesses.

This perspective is particularly important for image consultants. You do not need to become a programmer.

You need to understand how to communicate with AI, how to identify valuable use cases, how to evaluate its output, and where human judgment must remain in control.

We explored how AI can become part of everyday business rather than simply something we occasionally ask to write an Instagram caption.

Practical Takeaway #2

Give AI a Better Brief

Treat AI as you would a new assistant.

Instead of:

“Create a wardrobe for my client.”

Try providing:

- Client profession
- Age range
- Lifestyle
- Climate
- Dress codes
- Personal style
- Color direction
- Budget
- Existing wardrobe
- Shopping priorities
- Desired perception
- Situations in which the clothes will be worn

Then ask AI to generate possibilities.

AI does not eliminate your methodology. Your methodology makes AI more useful.

THE HUMAN + AI CONVERSATION



One of the highlights of the program was a panel featuring **Charles Gregory, David McKnight, Lisa Shor, and Craig Nordstrom**, bringing different perspectives to a conversation about processes, business, technology, and practical AI applications.

The discussion reinforced an essential idea:

The future of image consulting is unlikely to be human or technology.

It will be human plus technology.

Image consultants possess something extraordinarily valuable: context.

We understand visual communication, perception, identity, personal goals, body characteristics, color, professional environments, cultural expectations, and human behavior. Technology becomes much more powerful when directed by someone who understands those variables.



Practical Takeaway #3

Give AI a Better Brief

Use AI to generate.

Use AI to organize.

Use AI to research.

Use AI to accelerate.

But **you decide.**

Check recommendations for accuracy. Protect confidential client information. Question assumptions and bias. Never allow convenience to replace professional judgment.

Your expertise is what turns an AI output into a professional recommendation.

NETWORKING *Is Also* Professional Development



After a full day of learning, we changed the environment completely.

Our members gathered for dinner overlooking Miami.

There were no presentations and no screens.

Just conversation.



And that was intentional.

Professional associations sometimes concentrate so heavily on education that we underestimate the importance of belonging.

A conversation over dinner can become a collaboration.

A person sitting beside you can become a referral partner.

Someone who was a stranger that morning can become the person you call six months later when you need advice.

The best way to create connection is to create spaces where connection can actually happen.

This wasn't simply dinner.

It was community coming to life.



DAY TWO: WHAT LUXURY RETAIL CAN TEACH US

We Were Inside Saks Before the Doors Opened

The following morning began differently.

We were inside **Saks Fifth Avenue** before normal opening hours.

Lights on.

Doors closed.

Private class.

But this wasn't about shopping.

It was about understanding how luxury works.

Luxury retailers have spent decades studying client experience, service, storytelling, presentation, positioning, environment, and relationship building.



These lessons matter enormously to image consultants.

A client does not experience only your color analysis or wardrobe recommendation.

They experience:

How you welcome them.

How your materials look.

How you communicate.

How you present recommendations.

How you follow up.

How you make them feel.

Practical Takeaway #4

Audit Your Own Client Experience

Pretend you are your client.

Look at every touchpoint:

**Inquiry → Booking → Welcome → Consultation →
Materials → Follow-up → Continued Relationship**

Then ask:

***Does every stage communicate the level of
expertise I want my brand to represent?***

Luxury is not simply price.

Luxury is often the removal of friction.

FROM OBSERVERS *To* STYLISTS

Then came one of the most entertaining parts of the immersion.

Members were divided into teams and given a styling challenge inside Saks.

Each team had to create an outfit for a specific occasion, explain its choices, and ultimately model the look in a runway-style presentation inside the store.



Suddenly, theory became action.

Consultants had to collaborate, make decisions quickly, defend their recommendations, work with merchandise they had not selected in advance, and communicate a complete visual story.

And there was plenty of laughter.

Because professional education does not always have to happen behind a desk.

Sometimes we learn more when we are asked to **do**.



YOUR BRAND BEGINS AT YOUR FEET

Our next exercise looked deceptively **simple**.

We went to the shoe floor and asked each participant:

Choose one shoe that represents you—and tell us why.

Not the most expensive shoe.

Not the trendiest shoe.

Not necessarily the shoe they would buy.

The shoe that somehow communicated something about who they were.

The answers were funny, emotional, unexpected, and deeply personal.

One person saw confidence.

Another saw creativity.

Someone else saw simplicity, adventure, elegance, strength, or reinvention.



YOUR BRAND BEGINS AT YOUR FEET

The exercise became a reminder of something image consultants understand better than most:

Objects communicate.

A shoe can suggest rebellion or restraint.

A color can suggest energy or calm.

A silhouette can communicate authority or approachability.

And when we ask someone why they chose something, we move beyond fashion and begin talking about identity.



Try This With Your Clients

Ask your client:

“If you had to choose one item in this store that represents the person you are becoming, what would you choose—and why?”

Then listen.

The answer may tell you more than another ten questions about fashion preferences.

DISCOVERING MIAMI THROUGH LOCAL DESIGN



Our immersion then moved beyond the traditional luxury department store.

We explored local Miami designers and independent businesses, discovering different approaches to sustainability, fragrance, craftsmanship, entrepreneurship, storytelling, and brand identity.



For image consultants, local designers can be an extraordinary resource.

They offer differentiation.

They give us stories to tell.

They introduce our clients to pieces they may never discover through algorithms or mainstream retail.

And they remind us that innovation does not always mean technology. Sometimes innovation means rediscovering craftsmanship, sustainability, personalization, and human creativity.

Practical Takeaway #5

Build Your Local Style Ecosystem

Identify five independent businesses in your own city:

1. A local designer
2. An accessories brand
3. A sustainable fashion business
4. A fragrance or beauty concept
5. An artisan or specialty retailer

Meet the owners.

Understand their stories.

Learn their products.

Then think about which clients could benefit from discovering them.

Your network becomes part of the value you provide.

ENDING WHERE COMMUNITY BEGINS

We concluded our Miami experience with another networking dinner, this time at **Crazy About You**, overlooking the city.

After two days of learning, experimenting, styling, discussing AI, exploring retail, and walking Miami together, the conversations felt different.

People knew each other.

Stories had been shared.

Friendships had begun.

And that may ultimately be one of the most important outcomes of any professional association.

We come for education.

But we stay for community.

Because conversations become opportunities.

Strangers become colleagues.

Colleagues become collaborators.

And sometimes collaborators become lifelong friends.



THE BIGGEST Lesson *FROM MIAMI*



Technology is changing our profession.

We should take that seriously—but we should not fear it.

AI can generate hundreds of ideas.

An image consultant knows **which idea is right for this particular human being.**

AI can generate an outfit.

An image consultant can understand why a client does not feel like herself wearing it.

AI can suggest colors.

An image consultant can connect color with identity, communication, context, and confidence.

AI can accelerate a process.

But human expertise gives that process meaning.

That is why the future of image consulting is not about choosing between technology and humanity.



It is about becoming more human because technology allows us to spend less time on the things that are not.

StyleTech Immersion Miami was created to begin that conversation.

And perhaps the most important question for every image consultant now is not:

“Will AI change my profession?”

It already is.

The question is:

“How will I use it to become a better consultant?”

That is a question worth exploring—together.

Revisiting the AICI Code of Ethics: Bringing Its Principles Into Our Daily Practice

Most members of *AICI* know the *Code of Ethics*.

It is part of the professional framework that unites our community and sets the standard for how image consultants work around the world.

Yet, like many important professional references, it is easy to move forward with our work without revisiting it regularly. Taking a moment to reconnect with its principles can be a powerful reminder of what distinguishes our profession.

At the center of the AICI Code of Ethics are several core pillars that guide how we practice image consulting.

Integrity is the first and perhaps most visible pillar. It means presenting our qualifications, services, and results honestly. It also means recommending what genuinely serves the client's goals, even when the most ethical recommendation may not be the most commercially advantageous in the short term.

Respect for the client is another essential principle. Our clients come from different cultures, professions, and life stages. The Code reminds us to approach each client with dignity, sensitivity, and openness, recognizing that image consulting often touches deeply personal aspects of identity, confidence, and professional aspirations.

Confidentiality is fundamental to the trust our clients place in us. Many clients share information about career transitions, leadership challenges, or personal concerns that they would not openly discuss elsewhere. Protecting that trust is not only an ethical obligation—it is one of the cornerstones of a meaningful consulting relationship.

Professional competence and continuous development

are also central pillars of the Code. The fields connected to image consulting—leadership presence, communication, personal branding, and professional identity—continue to evolve. Staying committed to learning and professional growth ensures that the advice we offer remains thoughtful, current, and relevant.

Finally, the Code reminds us of the importance of **responsible professional representation**.

The way we communicate about our work, collaborate with colleagues, and contribute to the broader image consulting community reflects not only on us individually but on the profession as a whole.



One of the most valuable aspects of the **AICI Code of Ethics** is that it is not meant to be consulted only when facing a major dilemma. ***Its true value appears in the small decisions we make every day.***

For example, when preparing a proposal or describing our services, the principle of integrity encourages us to communicate clearly about what we can realistically deliver. ***When working with a client who feels vulnerable about their professional image,*** the principle of **respect** reminds us to guide them thoughtfully rather than impose our own aesthetic preferences. ***When discussing case examples in presentations or training programs,*** the principle of **confidentiality** helps us remain mindful of how we protect client information.

In this sense, the Code of Ethics can serve as a quiet compass in our daily practice. Revisiting it periodically—perhaps when designing a new workshop, launching a consulting service, or reviewing how we communicate our work—can help ensure that our professional decisions remain aligned with the standards we share as members of AICI.

Ultimately, the Code of Ethics is more than a professional guideline. It is a shared commitment to excellence, responsibility, and respect in the way we serve others. When we bring its principles consciously into our daily work, we strengthen not only our individual practice but also the credibility of image consulting as a profession.

The Code of Ethics reminds us that professionalism is not only defined by what we know, but by the principles we choose to practice every day.

Know a little bit more about USA AICI Board.

Edwards Buice –
Vice President, AICI USA



Edwards Buice currently serves as **Vice President** of the **AICI USA Board**, where he brings energy, creativity, and a genuine passion for style to the leadership of the association.

Known within the AICI community for his distinctive perspective on menswear and personal expression through clothing, Edwards contributes both entrepreneurial experience and a strong commitment to the growth of the image consulting profession.

He is the Founder and *Creative Director* of **David Edwards Clothier**, an online menswear boutique that curates distinctive, globally sourced garments for the modern man. His work focuses on helping clients build wardrobes that combine elegance, individuality, and practicality—pieces that allow professionals to express their personality while maintaining a refined and confident presence.

Those who have met Edwards in person will quickly recognize that creativity is not only something he talks about—it is something he lives. He is known for his imaginative and thoughtfully styled outfits, often blending color, texture, and pattern in ways that reflect his personal philosophy: style should be expressive, confident, and authentic.

Beyond his work in fashion, Edwards is deeply engaged with the AICI community.

As part of the **AICI USA leadership team**, he actively supports the organization's mission to strengthen and elevate the image consulting profession. His enthusiasm for collaboration, conversation, and creative thinking makes him a valued voice among fellow consultants.

Through his entrepreneurial work and his leadership within AICI, Edwards Buice continues to inspire others to approach style not simply as clothing, but as a powerful form of personal expression and professional presence.