

MULTICHANNEL

Versace embeds instant ecommerce in runway show livestream

September 12, 2014



Look from Anthony Vaccarello Versus Versace show

By SARAH JONES

Italian fashion house Versace is letting customers immediately buy items from its Anthony Vaccarello for Versus runway show, speeding up the wait time for new merchandise.

Sign up now

Luxury Daily

Typically, there is a period of months between a runway show and when items hit store shelves, giving fast fashion retailers the opportunity to copy the original design before it is available for purchase. Moving up the production process to before the show and making items available right away may help Versace beat fast fashion at its own game.

"Although this strategy was a huge win for social engagement, Versace is able to get real time data on interest as well as the immediate conversion of interest seen through sales," said Kimmie Smith, accessory expert and co-founder/creative director of [Accessory2](#), New York.

"This speedy commerce aspect allows the brands to establish its interests and parameters and brings a new concept to fast fashion where luxury designers are able to participate on their own terms," she said.

Ms. Smith is not affiliated with Versace, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

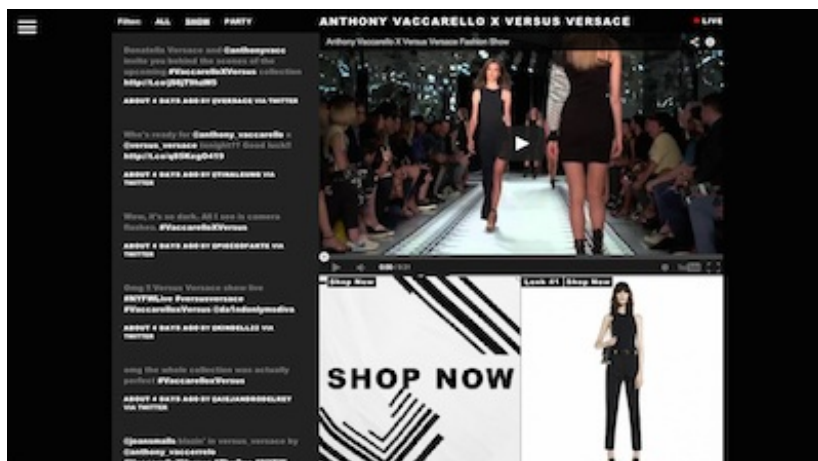
Versace was unable to comment directly before press deadline.

Ecommerce event

Versace streamed its live runway show on Sept. 7 from New York. Before the event, Versace used email and social media to drive traffic to its dedicated livestream microsite so consumers could #ShowShopParty.

The email included a link to a making of video, also posted to social media, showing both designer Donatella Versace and Mr. Vaccarello talking about the collaboration. He explains that he looked to Versace codes when designing the special collection for its diffusion line.

Versace's microsite for the event included a scrollable social feed that updated during the show to include posts from the brand as well as show attendees. Each post can be expanded and shared on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Google + and Tumblr.



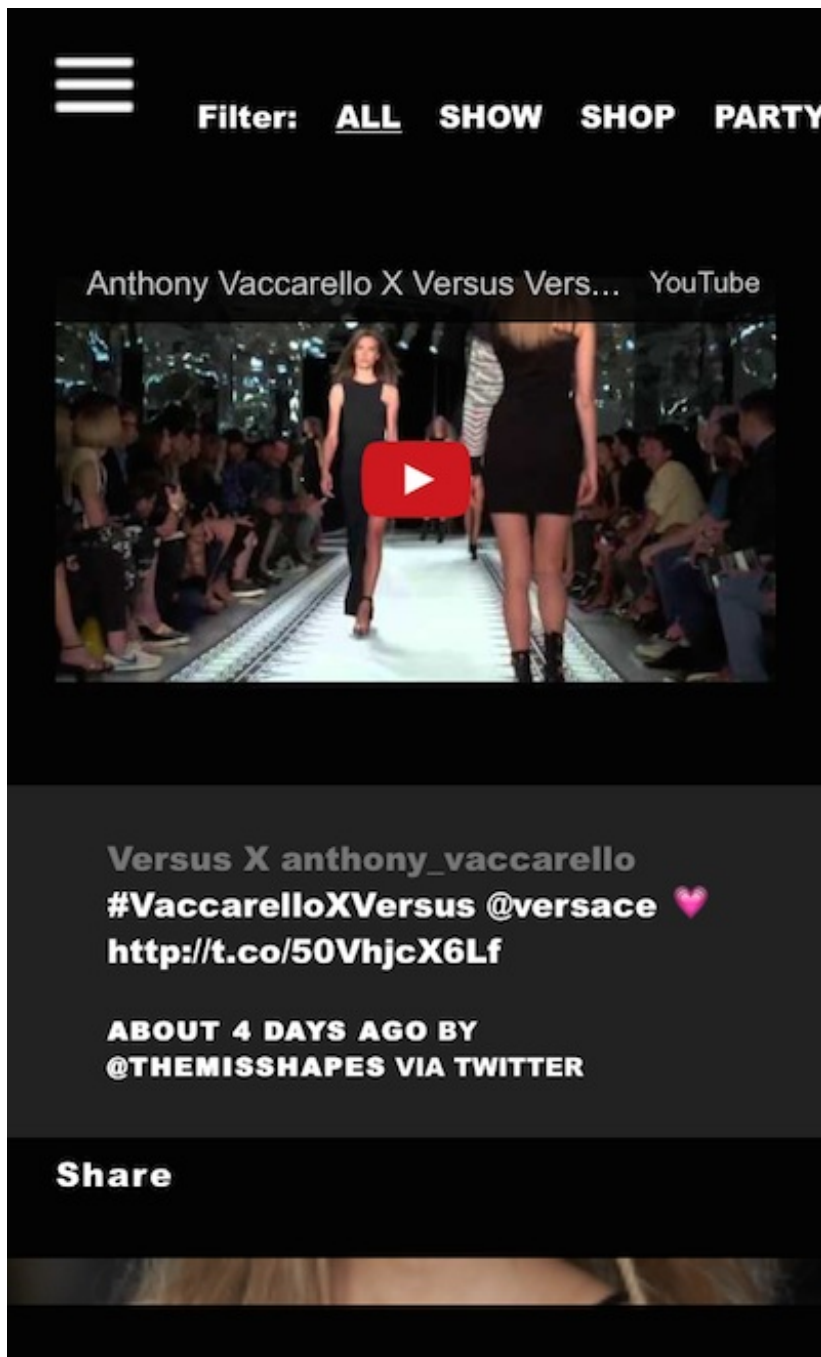
Screenshot of livestream site

These posts can also be organized to only show content from the show or the party.

The runway show feed appeared at the top of the page next to the social wall. Directly below the show, ecommerce links for items appeared in real time, allowing consumers to purchase corresponding looks right away. Clicking the “shop now” button takes consumers to a separate ecommerce page.

About 40 looks total were available online.

Versace also made the microsite mobile-optimized to encourage shopping on-the-go.



Mobile site for Versus Versace livestream

In addition to online, the collection is available in select Versace and Versus Versace boutiques, including the label's Fifth Avenue flagship in New York, as well as in some multi-brand stores.

"The marketplace is competitive and with everyone having access in one way or another to fashion shows whether they are attending or watching virtually, there has to be an element of behind the scenes action that makes people feel like they are involved," Ms. Smith said.

"Being able to see the commerce portions pop up as the looks hit the runway is not new, as one of the bigger draws of NBC's 'Fashion Star' is that as the looks hit the runway, the selected look was available for purchase at that moment," she said. "However, being able to purchase each look in real time without waiting for the next season as well as being able to purchase physically within Versace's stores is new.

"You can also see how excited others are by being able to watch the show and interact with other's comments. What made this show dynamic was the fact that this line showed during New York Fashion Week as opposed to being in Milan, which made the interest and need even larger."

Faster fashion

Other brands have done similar ecommerce initiatives on a smaller scale, enabling for purchase of a capsule, rather than the entire runway show worth of looks.

For instance, Italian fashion label Moschino gave consumers the opportunity to shop a capsule collection during its fall/winter 2014 runway show during Milan Fashion Week.

Moschino's "Watch It, Taste It, Shop It" event was heavily promoted on the brand's social media channels leading up to the runway show with bold imagery, prompting consumers to sign up for an access code. By making the event exclusive, consumers who participated felt they were special and part of the brand's inner circle ([see story](#)).

Preordering is also becoming more common.

British apparel brand Burberry allowed consumers to purchase pieces from its fall menswear collection immediately after the runway show.

Consumers were able to "Shop the Runway" following the brand's London Fashion Week show Jan. 8, and the collection was available through Jan. 22. By shortening the time between collection presentation and commerce, Burberry was able to give consumers a unique experience of owning an item long before it hits store shelves ([see story](#)).

However, the Burberry items were not produced until after the show, compared with the immediacy of Versace's effort.

More luxury brands will likely take on this type of speedy commerce.

"After attending a range of shows this week as well as styling them, I always get a sense of excitement of items that I want to purchase," Ms. Smith said. "In many cases, I have seen these items previously in trade shows, then again at the runway shows and as an insider, and I know I can get the items a few months prior to their deliveries depending on the brand as I use them to style or to wear personally.

"But the idea that you are not simply pre-purchasing an item to arrive at its later delivery and that you can literally own the runway garment for next season now, I think that this is an exciting retail concept that luxury shoppers will largely embrace," she said. "People like being able to out do one another and to ensure that they have the latest and greatest.

"This model is one that many designers will look at as the possibilities of what it means for collections, seasons and more is completely turned on its head. The idea of inventories being able to be released as soon as they are made and to possibly bring them back within the actual season at its designated time, or to create a slight difference so that one can differentiate the one that was direct from the runway versus that which was purchased later for the season is a status symbol in and of itself, is a novel way to show

the changing face of fashion."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

© Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.