

MOBILE

Burberry courts Japanese consumers with live-streaming app

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Burberry campaign starring British actress Emma Watson

By KAYSORIN

British fashion house Burberry is live-streaming its upcoming Prorsum women's wear autumn/winter 2015 show thanks to a partnership with Japanese social application, Line.

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Luxury Daily

The two companies are teaming up to allow Line users who follow Burberry's official account to watch the runway show live from London on Feb. 23. The project will use the live mobile cast functionality of the app to stream the show in real time on viewers' mobile devices.

"Line is definitely the right partner for this project, as the service nearly saturates Japan's mobile market – across all demographics," said Mike Sim, business strategist at M&C Saatchi Mobile. "The Line app is a major channel of communication for nearly all smartphone users in Japan.

"Its service seeps into nearly every facet of the daily life – family, friends, even business communications (Line handles on business cards are not uncommon in Japan, just as KakaoTalk addresses can be found on Korean business cards)."

Live on line

Burberry has a significant history with Japan, where it currently has 16 stores and millions of fans. The app will give these consumers a chance to connect with one another and perhaps bond over a mutual love of Burberry.

Line is a popular instant messaging app developed in Japan in 2011 that now has more than 560 million users worldwide. Line has expanded to include social networking features that give users the opportunity to share personal information and links with friends.



Burberry location in Tokyo, Japan

In addition to the live-streaming, Burberry is also introducing a series of unique stickers that Line users can share with one another on the app. The stickers feature popular anime characters Cony and Brown dressed in classic Burberry trench coats and scarves, and they will be available in the weeks leading up to the runway show.

Live streaming the show will also allow Japanese consumers to feel more intimately connected with the brand. Because Japan is so far away from Burberry's headquarters in London, it is possible that some fans may feel isolated and appreciate the opportunity to participate more directly in brand events.



Model walks the runway in the Burberry Prorsum spring 2015 show

Another benefit of using Line for this collaboration is the added social element that the app provides. Viewers will be more likely to share images and video as they can use the same platform to watch the show and to connect with friends.

Users who post about the show and discuss it on social media will be giving Burberry additional publicity. Many more fans will be able to watch the show and word of mouth may help promote purchases.



Japanese social networking app Line

Lastly, Burberry is establishing a precedent that it is a tech-savvy brand that is willing to cater to its consumers' needs. In an increasingly mobile-oriented world it is important for brands to stay up to date and keep up with the latest technology.

"We've become so accustomed to static images associated with fashion brands even fashion shows are static snapshots," said Stacy DeBroff, founder/CEO of [Influence Central](#), Newton, MA. "With Burberry's partnership with LINE, it's an opportunity to showcase and extend powerful visual imagery within live fashion."

Staying in touch

A recently released study from L2 emphasizes the importance of using mobile marketing to maintain a cutting edge.

Despite increased investments, luxury beauty, fashion and jewelry brands are still missing opportunities to appropriately integrate mobile into their overall digital strategy, according to the report.

The convenience, accessibility and independence that mobile allows has resulted in affluent consumers, especially "emerging affluents," embracing the "low touch luxury" approach for product purchases and preliminary research. But, L2's "[Mobile & Luxury 2015: Insight Report](#)" found that although mobile is increasingly important for luxury brands, many have limited strategies for digital that do not create a consistent branded experience for consumers across platforms ([see story](#)).

This collaboration with Line is not the first time Burberry has used technology to connect with consumers.

In 2014, the British apparel brand 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](#)).

The collaboration with Line will take this same strategy and apply it to the Japanese market. Perhaps in the future the brand can introduce similar projects around the world.

"Burberry should certainly look into how they can cater their presence to each market, but as stated previously, only if it makes sense to do so," Mr. Sim said. "If the brand sees measurable success with this initiative in Japan, they should explore markets that exhibit similar communication behavior and usage of over-the-top (OTT) messaging platforms like Line, and see where it makes sense to apply a similar awareness tactic."

Final Take

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