

MOBILE

Snapchat enables intimate storytelling during fashion month

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Michael Kors was one brand using Snapchat to keep consumers checking their phones during fashion month

By SARAH JONES

Fashion brands embraced Snapchat this season to give their consumers secret insider content, providing more access to the inner workings of putting on a runway show.

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Michael Kors and Valentino were among the brands that took advantage of the application's ability to share fleeting glimpses of personal moments, inviting them into a form of community. Snapchat users tend to skew younger, opening up labels to a new generation of consumers.

"This season has been flooding snapchat feeds everywhere for two main reasons: to expand fashion brand's storytelling marketing strategies and to provide fans with the incentive and opportunity to experience the brand in different ways," said Morgan Jones, digital account executive at [Say it Social](#), Wilmington, NC.

"Storytelling is huge in the marketing industry right now because it personifies brands in a way that the audience can connect with on a personal level, or aspire to connect with," she said.

"At the same time, the luxury fashion brand has always been for the most part mysterious

and out of reach for the everyday fashionista. Giving an inside look to fans via Snapchat allows those to be able to experience more than they would even if they were sitting in front row of a runway show."

Millennial messaging

According to a **report** by comScore, Snapchat has the third highest penetration among social media platforms among millennials, aged 18 to 34. The app is used by 32.9 percent of the generation, coming in behind Facebook and Instagram, which has 43.1 percent penetration.

Therefore, Snapchat can help brands reach both an aspirational and established audience.

"Labels connecting with Snapchat are reaching out to both the die-hard brand fans that want to know and experience everything about a certain brand they use and love and fans that want to connect with the brand but for whatever reason, be it monetary, schedule conflicts, etc., aren't able to make the connection with the brand in reality," Ms. Jones said. "These Snapchat stories are providing viewers with the experience of a lifetime for some."

The app shows a more unfiltered version of personal moments, enabling brand fans to tune in for a brief glimpse at what it is like backstage or sitting in the audience at a runway show. Adding personality, still or video snaps are often embellished with emojis.



Snap from Valentino

Michael Kors used Snapchat for the first time during its fall/winter 2015 show. Beginning the morning of Feb. 18, consumers could access content for 24 hours via the application's "Our Stories" feature.

Our Stories enables fans to contribute their own content via a public hub surrounding a popular event, in this case "Fashion Week in NYC." Michael Kors shared exclusive shots of the backstage atmosphere, candid captures of the front row attendees and photos from the runway show itself.

"We chose to work with Snapchat for the first time during New York Fashion Week because we're always looking for innovative ways to bring our 'All Access Kors' campaign to audiences around the world," said Lisa Pomerantz, SVP global communications and

marketing at [Michael Kors](#), New York. "Snapchat is growing rapidly, particularly within the millennial range, and our fans are using it to connect, not only with their friends and family, but with their favorite brands and influencers.

"The 'Fashion Week in NYC' Our Story allowed us to seamlessly become a part of our fans' Snapchat experience, taking them behind the scenes and up-close with Michael in a way that we haven't done in the past," she said.

This campaign also enabled Michael Kors to reach a considerable audience with content.

"Based on our individual snaps that were pulled into 'Fashion Week in NYC' Our Story, we can report that those pieces of content received over 14.6 million unique views," Ms. Pomerantz said. "Additionally, 8,000 screenshots were taken of these snaps.

"Based on these numbers, which point to a larger global engagement rate than some other platforms, we're looking forward to honing our strategy to tell even more successful and relevant stories on the platform in the future."

This puts Michael Kors closer to its goal of being on every social media platform to connect with a global audience.



Snapshots from Michael Kors

Last fashion week, the brand added a customizable Weixin and WeChat campaign to its runway show live stream microsite.

Consumers could create their own personalized skyline by uploading their selfie, or writing their name, which was then shown in silhouette against the New York skyline. Once the imagery was created, consumers could shake their device or swipe their screen to see different angles of the skyline ([see story](#)).

"While there is some overlap of fans using Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat, Snapchat offers a more real-time approach, as well as the opportunity to reach a new global audience," Ms. Pomerantz said. "Fans using Snapchat are craving a personal connection with the brand that is intimate, playful and authentic.

"We felt it was a strategic platform on which to provide a close range, unedited look of the brand and the runway show," she said. "We are always looking for new ways to engage

with a global audience that loves fashion, our products and the lifestyle we convey, and we're continuing to explore how Snapchat plays a role in that.

"Like fashion, the digital world is constantly evolving, and we're evolving with it."

Stella McCartney took a different personal approach. The label's eponymous designer handed off Snapchat duties to her sister Mary, who got shots of model Edie Campbell in the makeup chair, had cosmetic artist Pat McGrath and the designer pose for a photo and shared images from her seat.

For those that may not have been on Snapchat during the show, Vogue magazine shared a short social video recapping the shots taken. Stella McCartney also shared this film on more established social media networks, potentially getting late adopters to join and follow the brand across more accounts.

Embedded Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/3bpw97w7Now>

Kanye West, Edie Campbell, and father Paul on Stella McCartney's backstage Snapchat story - Vogue

Prior to its runway show, Valentino shared the process it goes through to prepare, from tasks such as hand writing invitations to assembling the set.



Snap from Valentino

Following Paris Fashion Week, the brand shared photos as it was back at its headquarters.

Media mix

Other brands have used Snapchat to reach a younger consumer base.

German automaker BMW is joining the instant gratification application world by sponsoring CNN's daily news updates in the new Discover feature on Snapchat.

CNN will deliver a new Discover edition which will publish five or more global news stories every 24 hours, and BMW will run video ads between the stories for its i3 vehicle. The stereotypically young audience of Snapchat will likely be intrigued to discover more from the advertising presence of the environmentally conscious BMW i3 within the latest feature of the app ([see story](#)).

Social media and live-streaming have become a necessary part of a fashion brand's runway show strategy as consumers increasingly look for insider access.

Across platforms, brands found ways to bring their show to life in new ways, whether incorporating a photo trend or speaking directly to consumers during the show. With so many platforms to consider, brands have to choose what content to publish where to achieve the best results ([see story](#)).

Snapchat is just another possibility to contemplate when planning social strategy for a runway show.

"I 100 percent think that Snapchat complements the luxury image that certain brands in the fashion industry want to portray," SayItSocial's Ms. Jones said.

"For years, luxury brands have been able to be somewhat complacent with their marketing strategies due to the sheer power of their brand name," she said. "Snapchat brings luxury brands into the storytelling era without overturning their brand voice. Think about it—they can share or not share whatever they want, and fans and aspiring fans will eat it up regardless due to the mysterious and exclusive air that has always surrounded luxury brands.

"As for risks, some luxury brands will assume that joining the Snapchat trend is a risk of potentially diluting the sense of exclusiveness surrounding their brand, but they couldn't be further from the truth. Sharing pictures and videos that fans wouldn't normally see will leave them wanting more and paying more attention to what your brand will release in the future."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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