

MULTICHANNEL

## Armani lets consumers have a piece of anniversary with branded Vespa

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*Vespa 946 Emporio Armani*

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By SARAH JONES

Italian fashion label Giorgio Armani is extending the impact of its 40th anniversary efforts with a branded Vespa, enabling consumers to purchase a souvenir from the milestone.

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**Luxury Daily**

The Vespa 946 Emporio Armani features a number of design details that mimic the aesthetic of the house, including a special grey finish that reveals hints of green in certain lighting. This collaboration may help Emporio Armani reach a younger audience of brand enthusiasts, as they seek out tangible ways to commemorate this special occasion with Armani.

"This is nothing new," said Rob Frankel, branding expert at marketing consultancy firm [Frankel & Anderson](#), Los Angeles. "Big auto manufacturers like Ford and General Motors were doing this back in the 1970s and 1980s with 'special editions' designed by Mark Cross and Bill Blass.

"As Vespas are typically purchased by younger, more affluent hipsters, it makes sense for Armani to want to reach those young hipsters before someone else does," he said. "These are the twenty-somethings that spend everything they earn—often even more than that.

Fashion is important to them, so they'd likely fall for a campaign like this."

Mr. Frankel is not affiliated with Armani, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Armani did not respond by press deadline.

Marking a milestone

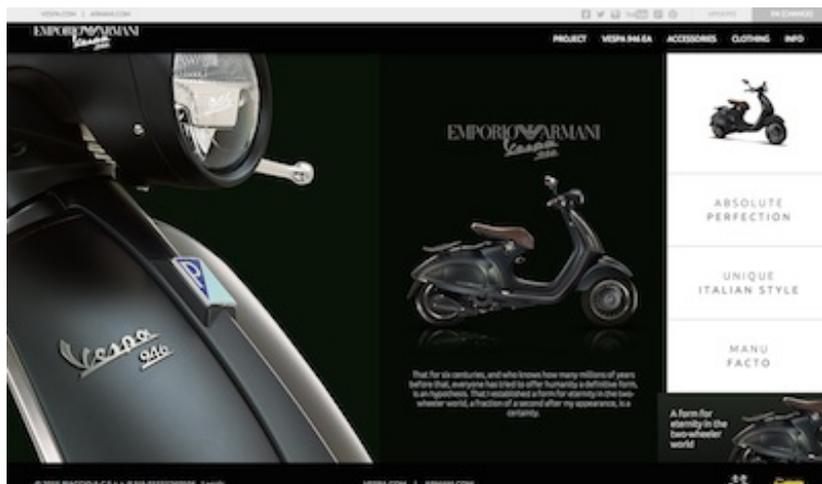
This is the latest effort in Armani's 40th anniversary campaign, which has included the launch of a new handbag, a dedicated microsite and online campaign and the opening of a new brand museum.

Making the collaboration timely, Vespa maker Piaggio Group has also reached a milestone this year, with the company turning 130. The name Vespa 946 is a reference to the year the first scooter was made.

"[Armani is saying] mostly that at 40, it's not an 'over the hill' brand, still relevant and fashionable," Mr. Frankel said.

For the project, Armani made a contemporary interpretation of the original Vespa, which includes a satin finish and brown leather accents.

To introduce the scooter, Armani created a dedicated microsite.



*Screenshot of Armani Vespa microsite*

A brochure for the scooter, available for download via the site, describes the Vespa in fashion terms, explaining how its "unique Italian style" is a rarity, since "elegance is a virtue that eludes most people."

Further through the marketing materials, the companies explain how both are a marriage of style and technology. This is illustrated with close-up images of the Emporio Armani eagle logo, which appears in multiple places on the scooter, including above the headlight.



*Page from Armani Vespa brochure*

Furthering the connection between fashion and vehicle manufacturing, the brand tells of the handwork that goes into each scooter, including the stitching on the handgrips.

Looking to appeal to those who value aesthetics, the collection also includes accessories, such as a travel case and helmet that correspond to details seen on the bike.

The Vespa 946 Emporio Armani will be available in select cities beginning in June. Each scooter in the limited run will be individually numbered.

Showing off the scooter's ideal use in cities, due to its fuel economy and limited emissions, Armani released a short video.

A sharply dressed woman walks along the water, her dark attire standing out against the white stone path. She descends a staircase and meets up with a man sitting on one of the brand scooters.

Embedded Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/7rrfeBlkBg4>

### *Emporio Armani - Vespa 946*

Another film shared by the brand on social media follows a group of revelers as they take a two-day tour of Rome via Vespas, stopping off for soirees and sightseeing.



*Photo from Armani's Vespa launch event in Rome*

On the move

Other companies outside of the automotive sector have launched collaborations that enable consumers to drive vehicles that show their affinity for a certain brand.

For instance, French perfumer Guerlain partnered with Italian car company Fiat on a line of limited-edition Fiat 500 models exclusively for the French market.

The line bore feminine touches and incorporates the icon from Guerlain's La Petite Robe Noire Eau de Parfum, which translates to little black dress. It is rare for an automaker to put out a line of female-focused cars, so this will likely get the attention of fashion-conscious women looking for a vehicle that reflects their style ([see story](#)).

Sometimes these collaborations center on a fashion industry wheelhouse—accessories.

German automaker BMW is polishing the appeal of its BMW i8 model with an exclusive luggage line crafted by Louis Vuitton. The luggage set includes two travel bags, a business case and a garment bag and were crafted to mesh with the i8 ([see story](#)).

For this partnership between Vespa and Armani, the fact that it is an anniversary for both is likely a secondary thought in strategy.

"Tying it to a milestone doesn't carry as much weight as the two brands viewing themselves as compatible and mutually beneficial," Mr. Frankel said. "Armani gets an injection of Vitamin Youth and Vespa gets to step up in class."

## Final Take

*Sarah Jones, staff reporter on Luxury Daily, New York*

Embedded Video: [https://www.youtube.com/embed/uLlIX5X0\\_fs](https://www.youtube.com/embed/uLlIX5X0_fs)

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