

EVENTS/CAUSES

Louis Vuitton pursues innovative edge via hackathon

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Promotional image for Louis Vuitton Iconoclasts line

By STAFF REPORTS

French apparel and accessories house Louis Vuitton is looking to alter luxury's relationship with the technology world through an industry-first hackathon.

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Held on September 25, "Unlocking the Future of Luxury" brought together 58 developers, who were asked to work in teams for 48 hours to create an application that would enable the brand to better understand its consumers and where the luxury industry is headed. Seeking this outside input and expertise may help Louis Vuitton innovate within its company, as well as give data engineers an inside look at the company.

Hacking the system

Louis Vuitton had 400 applications for spots at the event. Of the group of 58 developers, designers and data analysts chosen, half came from nine colleges, including Polytechnique, Centrale and London's Queen Mary University.

Before the hackathon, the tech geniuses visited the brand's headquarters to learn about its strategic needs from mentors in the digital, marketing communications and human resources departments.

This gave a framework for analyzing approximately 1,000 GB of data within two days' time. At the end of the hackathon, each team presented their project to a panel that consisted of Louis Vuitton brand representatives, event partners and big data experts.

The two teams that tied for the top prize received a grant of \$8,800 and a trip to tech hub San Francisco.

Other brands have previously enlisted technology experts to solve problems outside of their organization.

In 2013, Italy's Gucci teamed up with Twitter to continue the charitable efforts of its Chime for Change organization Dec. 5-7 with a hackathon called "Chime Hack" to create mobile app to assist women and girls in need.

The organization opens up a dialogue between tech-savvy and fashion-forward philanthropists and celebrates women in the technology industry while helping those in need. Focusing on the three core areas of Chime for Change's mission education, health and justice Gucci sought to make a difference without any attention paid to profits ([see story](#)).

The luxury industry is in for some big changes as more players from the technology sector enter the space, according to the CEO of Dymant at Luxury Interactive Europe 2015 on Oct. 28.

From Tesla's entry into the luxury auto market to Net-A-Porter's growth as a new online-only company within a landscape of historic houses, new entries are seeing success that some of their more-established peers are not. Beyond posing a threat as a competitor, these newcomers have the potential to change and alter the way luxury brands do business ([see story](#)).

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