

EVENTS/CAUSES

## CFDA taps BCG to explore fashion show's role today

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*Marc Jacobs' fall/winter 2014 runway show*

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By STAFF REPORTS

The Council of Fashion Designers of America is looking to find a solution for what many in the industry find to be a "broken system" the fashion show.

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An immediacy of content streaming from social media means that consumers are now experiencing collections right as they happen, but in most cases the same clothes that come down the runway are not available for sale until months in the future. To try to find answers about what place the runway show actually holds in today's fashion calendar, the CFDA has contracted Boston Consultancy Group to conduct a study.

Communication or commerce

Traditionally, the runway show served as a platform for designers to introduce their collections to buyers and editors, who needed to know about merchandise ahead of time to plan retail strategies and fashion spreads.

Today, this purpose seems to have gone astray, as brands oftentimes broadcast their shows directly to consumers via livestreams and social content. Bloggers have taken seats at front rows, sharing their thoughts directly with their readership, while online media publishes coverage almost immediately.

The CFDA is examining whether the place of a fashion show is still to serve the insiders in a functional sense or if it has evolved into a form of spectacle completely unconnected to a brand's commercial activities.

Various designers have tried to solve this dilemma.



*Look from Tom Ford's spring/summer 2016 video*

Tom Ford frequently used embargoes to limit press coverage until closer to the time when product would hit stores. For its spring/summer 2016 show, Tom Ford eschewed the formal runway show entirely, instead filming a video in its place ([see story](#)).

Moschino went in the opposite direction, and now makes capsule collections available in-stores and online right after its shows ([see story](#)).

Some alternatives BCG will be looking into are more intimate presentations and large-scale consumer-facing events scheduled closer to when fashions are delivered to stores.

"Designers, retailers and editors have been questioning the relevance of fashion week in its current format for some time," said Steven Kolb, president and CEO of the CFDA, in a brand statement. "Out of this industry need came our decision to hire Boston Consulting Group to create an in-depth analysis and roadmap for the future of fashion shows."