

MULTICHANNEL

## Armani is Luxury Daily's 2015 Luxury Marketer of the Year

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Armani's New Normal fall/winter 2015

By SARAH JONES

Italian fashion label Giorgio Armani is Luxury Daily's 2015 Luxury Marketer of the Year for peeling back the curtains of its brand history in a meaningful, consistent way.

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Celebrating a milestone 40 years in business, Armani took the opportunity to remind consumers of how far it has come, solidifying its position in the luxury industry through lasting initiatives. Burberry, which placed second, stood out for its innovation in digital channels and early adoption of new social platforms, while third place winner Gucci made moves as it transitioned to the vision of newly instated creative director Alessandro Michele.

The Luxury Retailer of the Year award was decided based on luxury marketing efforts with impeccable strategy, tactics, creative, executive and results. All candidates selected by the Luxury Daily editorial team and from reader nominations had to have appeared in Luxury Daily coverage this year. **Judging was based purely on merit.**

Open book

Armani was successful at maintaining a consistent brand message throughout the year. The brand's anniversary campaign explored all aspects of its business in great detail.

The label created a dedicated microsite, entitled #Atribute, which launched March 16 and was updated with new themes for the next 40 weeks. Unveiling new serialized content kept consumers invested and engaged throughout the year ([see story](#)).



### *Screenshot of Armani Atribute*

During 2015, #Atribute looked into the brand's history through the lenses of sports, architecture, beauty and music, among other topics.

Outside of #Atribute, Armani celebrated its relationship to music through a mobile application linked to Spotify. This joins together fashion and recording artists in one platform, bringing the experience of its branded music parties and concerts to a mobile audience ([see story](#)).

The label's eponymous designer was a key focus of the anniversary, penning a memoir to share his personal reflections on his own history and that of his brand ([see story](#)). The two are intrinsically tied, a connection also explored in chapters of #Atribute.

Ensuring that its history is not forgotten after its anniversary has ended, Armani opened a branded exhibition space in Milan in April. Armani Silos, housed in what was formerly a Nestle factory, displays apparel from throughout the brand's lifetime as well as holding digital archives of sketches, illustrations, campaign imagery and celebrity photographs ([see story](#)).



### *Inside Armani Silos*

While museum exhibits can shed a light on a particular label's history, having a brand-owned space allows for a more well-rounded, expansive look at the past and present. For luxury brands in particular, these company museums are key in communicating a lasting legacy, and for the comparatively young Armani, this positions the label among storied houses at least twice its age.

Armani also launched a new apparel collection of staples, the New Normal ([see story](#)). Bolstering its lifestyle focus, it kicked off a global culinary tour and teamed with Piaggio Group to create a special edition Vespa ([see story](#)).

The brand also continued to engage with consumers within digital channels. Showing its innovative approach, the brand incorporated a Web cam into an eyewear campaign, allowing consumers to navigate content simply by blinking ([see story](#)).

### *First runner's-up: Burberry*

Throughout 2015, Britain's Burberry was consistently a frontrunner in embracing new possibilities in digital channels.

This particularly noticeable on Snapchat, where the brand hosted the first fashion show and ad campaign.



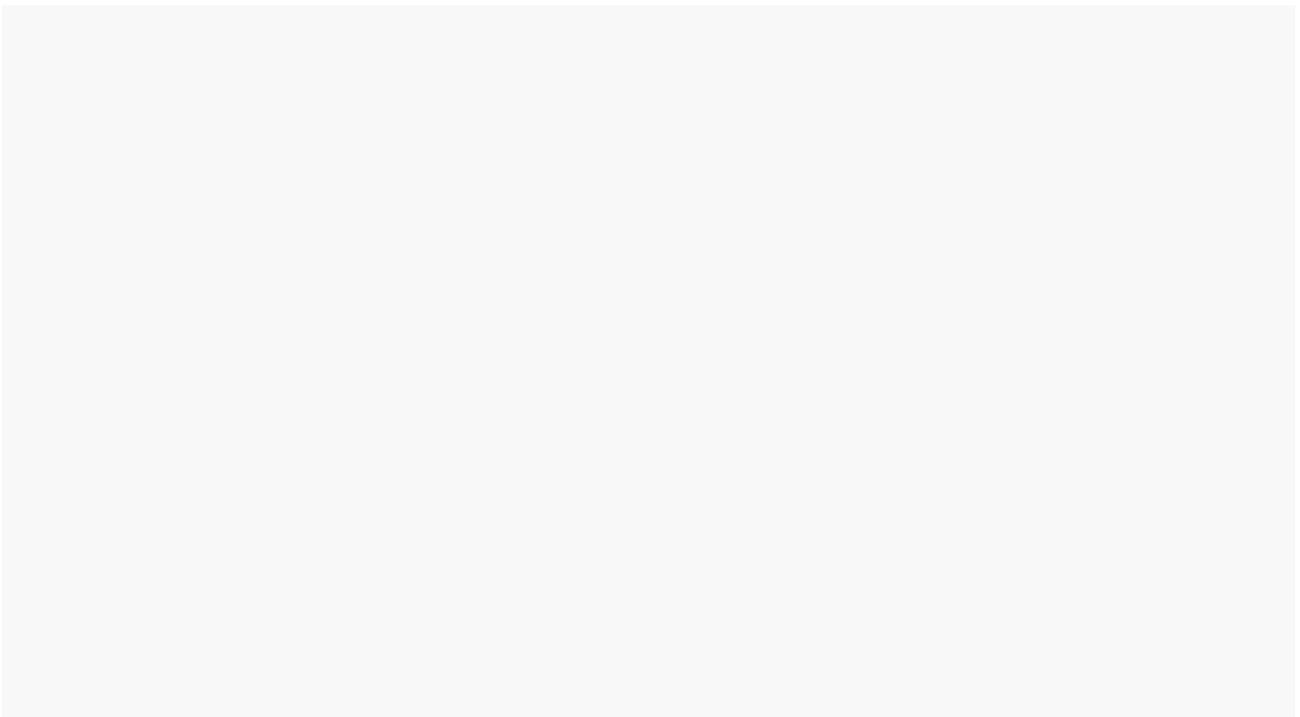
### *Burberry Snapchat campaign*

Before Burberry's spring/summer 2016 runway show, Snapchat users were given a sneak peek through a story documenting the last-minute alterations and tweaks to the collection ([see story](#)). Similarly, during the photo shoot for its spring/summer 2016 campaign, Burberry had photographer Mario Testino capture behind-the-scenes snaps that were then shared for just 24 hours ([see story](#)).

Adopting Periscope before many of its peers, Burberry used the app to give fans a front row seat for a Los Angeles event ([see story](#)). Burberry turned to Japanese social media app Line to live-stream its Prorsum autumn/winter 2015 women's wear show ([see story](#)).

Allowing consumers to become part of the marketing, Burberry teamed with Google for an interactive photo booth at its London flagship. Here, participants could step inside to add themselves to the brand's holiday video inspired by the film "Billy Elliot" ([see story](#)).

Burberry was also the first to collaborate with DreamWorks Animation's technology firm NOVA. The result was an interactive billboard in London's Piccadilly Circus that consumers could control with their smartphones ([see story](#)).



Introducing 'Personalised For You', the @Burberry big screen scarf experience Join Burberry at Piccadilly Circus throughout December to interact and play with your monogrammed scarf on The Curve screen

Playing off its Burberry Acoustic music series, the label also created the first ever branded Apple Music channel. This is a space dedicated to fostering British talent, featuring collaborations, playlists and films ([see story](#)).

Ecommerce customer service was also a priority, as Burberry launched a scarf bar, giving online shoppers access to an extensive array of styles as well as customization ([see story](#)).

Burberry regained its number one ranking in think tank L2's fashion rankings released in December after slipping below competitors Gucci and Ralph Lauren in 2014 ([see story](#)).

Burberry strengthened its retail footprint with key openings in Beverly Hills, CA and Miami's Design District, as well as a renovated SoHo store. In London, the brand's Regent Street global flagship has been expanded to include the eatery Thomas' Caf.

#### Second runner's-up: Gucci

Italy's Gucci revealed a new look under creative director Alessandro Michele. Starting with collections and expanding to its stores and marketing, the label has traded its formerly overt sex appeal for romanticism.

While Mr. Michele worked with previous creative director Frida Giannini at Gucci for years, the two have very different aesthetics.

The "contemporary spirit" of the new head designer was captured in his first campaign for pre-fall, which featured couples in a starkly furnished apartment, evoking a youthful appeal ([see story](#)). From there, his advertising efforts and designs have evoked both a modern and vintage appeal, with the cruise effort depicting a dance party and fall's ads taking place on a city street at rush hour.

#### *The Cruise 2016 Campaign The Director's Cut*

Mr. Michele's new motifs and prints developed for Gucci has also been explored in its #GucciGram project. Here, his Blooms and Caleido textiles, which utilize the brands' iconic interlocking G's, have been incorporated into artwork by both handpicked influencers and consumers ([see story](#)).

This shift is evident in Gucci's stores, which are transitioning to a new retail concept. Starting with the Milan flagship, the brand's boutiques are being redesigned to reinforce the new look developed for the collections and campaigns ([see story](#)).

The brand also unveiled a new Web site design that gives the brand more space for storytelling and narrative while improving the ecommerce experience ([see story](#)).

Protecting its brand, Gucci also won a court order that will prevent Alibaba merchants from selling counterfeits as part of its ongoing lawsuit with the Chinese ecommerce giant ([see story](#)).

#### Final Take

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