

INTERNET

Yoox Net-A-Porter, IBM establish strategic partnership to advance fashion ecommerce

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Net-A-Porter's The NetSet

By STAFF REPORTS

Yoox Net-A-Porter Group is fostering omnichannel innovation through the creation of a long-term partnership with IBM.

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The goals of this collaboration include planning a single technology platform to power all multi-brand and mono-brand stores in the Yoox Net-A-Porter stable and furthering in-group efforts to reinvent and improve the consumer experience. This strategic move is also intended to help speed the process as Yoox and Net-A-Porter merge their previously independent systems into one.

Sparking ideas

Yoox Net-A-Porter Group's in-house developers will create a platform that mixes IBM commerce products with the group's own solutions that cater to the needs of its affluent clientele.

The retailer will also implement IBM's order management system, which will help it improve on its existing omnichannel experience across the mono-brand online flagships it powers, such as Armani and Valentino. A key component of the system includes the ability to integrate inventory across platforms, allowing YNAP, the brand's distribution centers and retail stores to share the data seamlessly.

Sharing inventory opens doors to additional omnichannel experiences, such as pick up in-store and speedier delivery, enabling these brands to be more competitive in ecommerce. Connecting in-store and online will also help paint a clearer picture of who the consumer is by showing purchase behavior across channels.

YNAP will also leverage IBM WebSphere Commerce, which includes tools for merchandising and marketing. The retail group will build upon IBM's ecommerce suite, customizing the platform with brand-specific solutions.



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"This game-changing alliance will benefit our customers and brand partners, allowing us to push our ambitions even further as we continue to create the future of fashion," said Alex Alexander, chief information officer of Yoox Net-A-Porter Group, in a brand statement. "The partnership with IBM will enable our exceptionally talented technology team to focus on what it is renowned for: industry-leading innovation, cutting-edge technology and customer-centric solutions."

With the launch of this partnership, IBM and YNAP are also creating a Fashion & Luxury Innovation Committee, which will serve as a place where the group and its brand partners can discuss and present ideas to IBM. This input will then go towards generating bespoke ecommerce solutions.

Yoox Net-A-Porter Group will now sit on the IBM Customer Advisory Council. This select forum of IBM customers is an influential force in the technology company's product development.

"The fashion industry is constantly reinventing itself and creating innovative ways to engage with digital savvy shoppers," said John Mesberg, general manager, offering management and strategy at IBM Commerce. "By embracing IBM Commerce capabilities, Yoox Net-A-Porter Group is perfectly positioned to engage with shoppers through personalized experiences that are based on their unique style and shopping preferences and delivered across any device or channel."

The merger between Yoox and Net-A-Porter brings together each of the online retailers' strengths, which will enable them to better serve customers, according to Yoox's founder at the FT Business of Luxury Summit in 2015.

This new venture brought together the companies of two peer entrepreneurs who took different paths toward the same goal, and therefore brought different assets to the table, creating a balanced business. With the company run independently of any conglomerates, it opened the field to potential partners, possibly a first for an industry that centers on strict competition ([see story](#)).

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