

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Fendi turns Trevi Fountain into catwalk for 90th anniversary

July 6, 2016



The Trevi Fountain in Rome

By JEN KING

Italian fashion house Fendi is honoring its connection with the city of Rome as the brand begins celebrations for its 90th anniversary.

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Fendi's story began in 1926 at a family-operated atelier on Rome's Via del Plebiscito, and today the label is known the world over for its boundary-pushing designs at the hand of creative director Karl Lagerfeld, who has been with the house since 1965. In a celebratory homecoming of sorts, Fendi is readying Rome's iconic Trevi Fountain, where the house will stage its Haute Fourrure runway show on July 7.

"Fendi does a nice job in their use of storytelling through compelling visuals to incite user engagement and interactivity within their microsite," said Sebastian Jespersen, founder/CEO of **Vertic**, New York. "Subtle inferences in the design to the DNA and heritage of Fendi is very apparent. The rippling background image acts as a nice ode to the Trevi fountain.

"Additionally, the copy on the right hand side of the page that reads share the magic' can be interpreted as a reference to the mystique around the fountain, which is famous for people visiting and making a wish," he said. "The use of Roman numerals, as well as the storytelling in the lead up to the showcase definitely provides delicate glimpses into the roots of the fashion house without overwhelming visitors with information.

"Fendi's use of storytelling in the build up to the event will create an incentive for consumers to continue revisiting the site and promotes an entangling relationship with Fendi and its customers."

Mr. Jespersen is not affiliated with Fendi, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

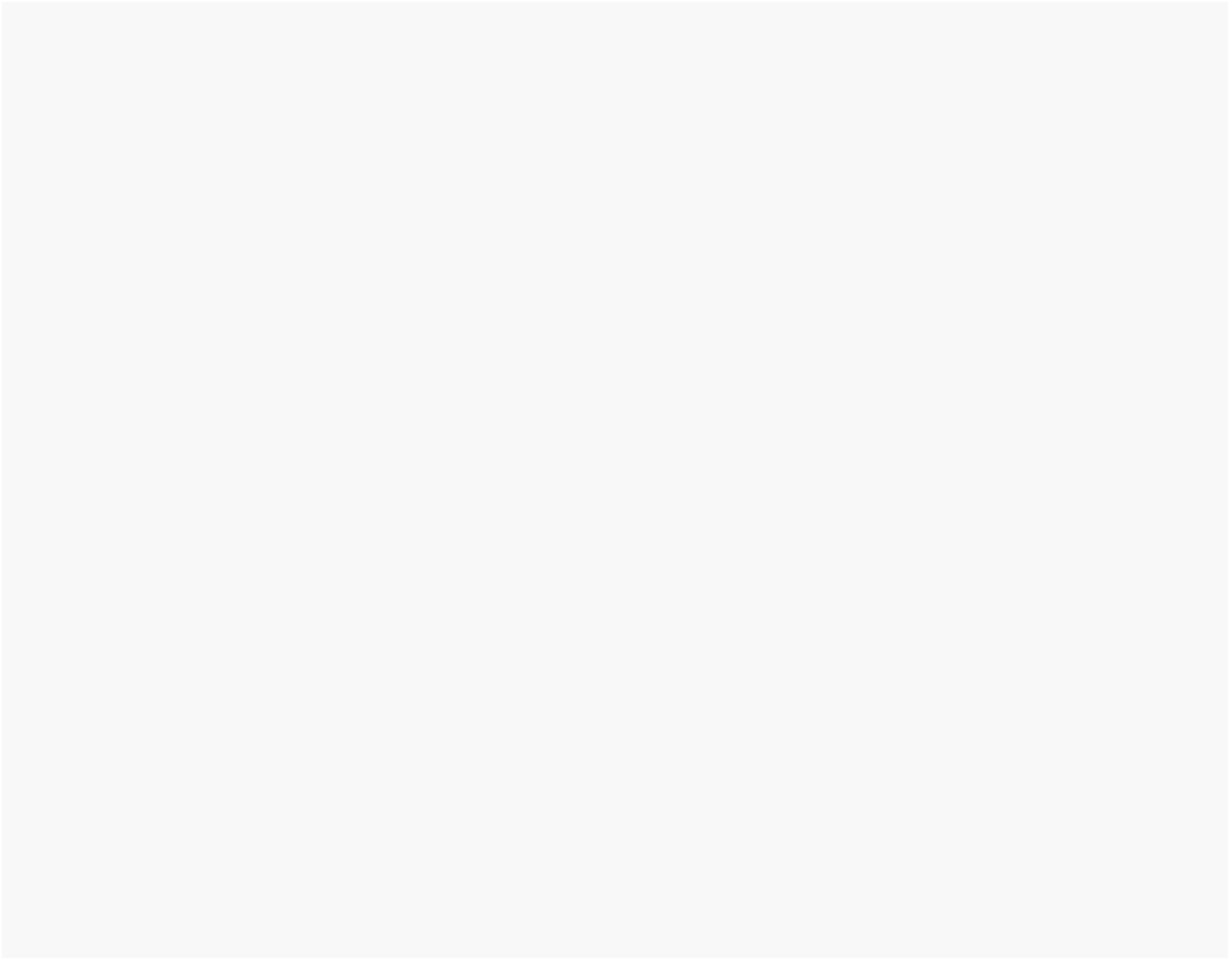
Fendi was unable to respond directly before press deadline.

Fendi at the Fountain

Along with social content meant to build anticipation for the July 7 runway presentation, Fendi has also created a microsite meant to serve as a hub for its 90th anniversary. Segmented into four chapters, from July 4 to the day of the show, the site also works as a countdown for the presentation, giving consumers access to editorial content and images pulled from Fendi's social accounts to explore prior to the live-stream.

A countdown clock is central on the Web page and is set against a backdrop of moving water. Along the

circumference of the countdown's outline, Fendi has shared thumbnail images of #BFFendi, a group of fashion influencers who were invited to try on the brand's ready-to-wear and accessories.



Hmm, which fabulous Fendi outfit is the one? @styleheroine looks good in everything, let's be real. #Fendi90Years #BFFendi #LegendsandFairytale

A photo posted by Fendi (@fendi) on Jul 5, 2016 at 6:00am PDT

"The use of influencers on the microsite is an effective way to gain the trust of consumers, by aligning with those that have a prominent and trusted voice, share values, lifestyle and have credibility within their social networks," Mr. Jespersen said. "Fashion has evolved over the last decade, in the past customers would look to fashion editors as their source for what was in style, whereas consumers today look mainly to bloggers, influencers and celebrities.

"Customers expect brands to talk together with' them and not at' them," he said. "Fendi has identified the right influencers to help initiate organic conversations, this will ultimately lead to Fendi witnessing shortened sales cycles, lower acquisition costs, and a dramatic increase in share of life' with their customers.

"The prominent integration of social content on the microsite coupled with the visually appealing and simplistic design will help attain and maintain the attention of younger audiences."

July 4's content gives consumers a brief glimpse into Fendi's heritage and Roman roots, saying "It's fitting that Rome, The Eternal City, is home to a maison that is now loved across the globe and continues to push the boundaries of innovation."

It is here that Fendi gives the details of its "once-in-a-lifetime event that reflects the deep connection between Fendi and Rome." The Trevi Fountain was chosen as the brand's runway venue because the water and lights will create a "magical atmosphere" for Fendi's "Legends and Fairytales" collection.

Likewise, the landmark is forever tied to Fendi after the house funded a nearly \$3 million renovation. The restoration project was announced in 2013 and was completed ahead of scheduled in 2015.

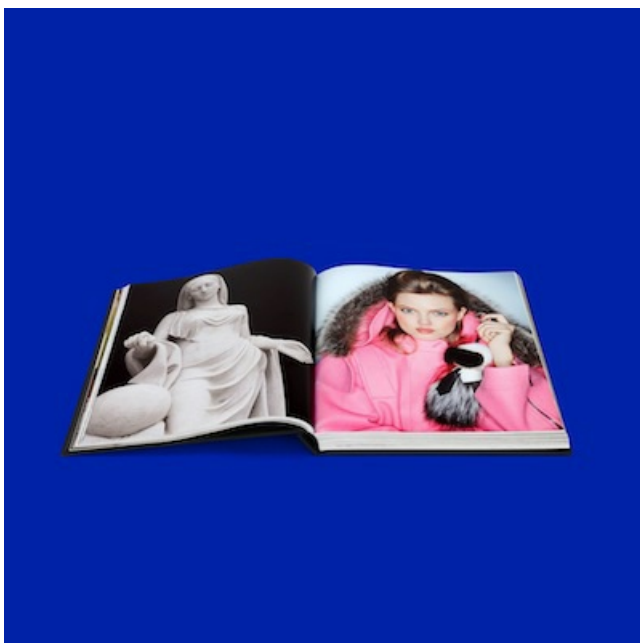


Fendi 90 Years homepage

Fendi's heritage is deeply embedded in the Italian capital and the city has been a constant source of inspiration for the brand, so it felt strongly about aiding the project, according to a brand statement. The "Fendi for Fountains" initiative allowed the brand to reinforce its Roman heritage by giving back to the city that has supplied inspiration to the label over the years ([see story](#)).

"A fashion show in Rome at the Trevi Fountain is the best way to celebrate Fendi's 90 years anniversary as it expresses our roots and DNA while transmitting daring creativity and craftsmanship," said Pietro Beccari, chairman/CEO of Fendi, in a statement. "The Trevi Fountain is a unique place and it represents Fendi's preservation of values, tradition and historic patronage while looking towards the future."

The microsite also promotes Fendi's anniversary tome, shared on July 5, which explores the brand's "visionary collections, empowered femininity and cinematic inspirations." Fendi's story is told through illustrations and historic archival images, all of which show the link between the brand and its hometown.



Pages from the Fendi Roma book

The Fendi 90 Years Web site can be viewed [here](#).

Community assistance

In regard to its supporting patronage of the Trevi Fountain, Fendi is not alone in funding a restoration project in its hometown of Rome. Fellow Roman brands Bulgari and Tod's have given back to their local community as examples of corporate social responsibility, and as a way to give thanks for endless inspiration.

With the first phase of the Roman Colosseum's restoration complete, project supporter Italian apparel and accessories label Tod's is including a global audience in the reveal.

In 2011, Tod's Group pledged 25 million euros, at the time about \$34 million, to help officials fund repairs of the landmark. Along with an unveiling event on July 1, Tod's created a corresponding digital project that takes consumers inside the process.

The restoration of the Colosseum was a project of the commissioner of the archaeological areas of Rome and Ostia Antica, Roberto Cecchi, who worked in collaboration with the Italian capital's archaeological heritage department.

Via a dedicated page of Tod's Web site, consumers can follow the first phase of the renovations, seeing before and after photos and reading about the process ([see story](#)).

As with Tod's restoration Web site, Fendi's event at the Trevi Fountain and its microsite will give reason to tune in.

"The live streaming of this one-day event will also create a sense of urgency with viewers," Mr. Jespersen said. "Customers often take a passive approach to on-demand video content as they can access it regularly.

"However, as the show will be presented via live content, and the stream will only be available at that moment in time it will create a sense of urgency amongst fashion enthusiasts across the Web, and will help amplify engagement and reach," he said. "Furthermore, the rise of applications such a Periscope, Snapchat and Facebook live highlights that younger audiences enjoy such events for viewing, discussing and sharing among their peers in real time.

"Fendi's use of live content demonstrates that they are in tune with the millennials and Generation Z audience as this audience increasingly becomes challenging to reach pending the relevant platforms and channels," he said.

"Lastly, live streaming will provide a wealth of analytics and data insights such as viewer numbers, engagement, and behavior which will give Fendi greater insights into their audience groups. The reporting will also help to test and inform future related engagements to tailor respective content according to segment needs, preferences and demand and various content that can be produced among future events."