

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Trussardi makes handbag push with first accessible design

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Trussardi's Lovy handbag

By SARAH JONES

Italian fashion label Trussardi is showcasing its enhanced focus on its leather goods business with the release of a handbag designed to be a constant companion.

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Part of the house's planned five-year transformation toward accessible luxury, the Lovy bag features the craftsmanship and design details at an approximate \$600 price point. As the luxury industry seeks growth in a difficult climate, a number of brands have reorganized their businesses with profitability in mind.

"There's something to be said for accessible luxury in today's market especially with how a simple accessory can change the look of an outfit," said Dalia Strum, professor at the [Fashion Institute of Technology](#) and founder of [Dalia Inc.](#) and [MommysToolbox.com](#), New York.

"Accessories are currently generating one sixth of Trussardi's revenue and by lowering the price point and adjusting the aesthetics to brighter colors, etc., they are making their product more accessible to a larger market thereby increasing their revenue," she said.

"It's a similar strategy that Burberry uses by introducing their products to a younger demographic to increase their brand loyalty and lifetime customer value."

Ms. Strum is not affiliated with Trussardi, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Trussardi was unable to comment directly before press deadline.

Growth plan

2016 represents a period of renewal for the century-old house. Led by CEO Tomaso Trussardi and creative director Gaia Trussardi, the plan includes streamlined operations, increased brand awareness and a move toward accessibility.

"Trussardi has always been a wide-spanning brand that represents a precise desirability and identity so my focus is to revamp the house's core values across all the categories," Ms. Trussardi said in a statement. "Not only is it deeply-

rooted in history but it is also distinguished by a clear aesthetic that channels an elegant, dynamic and joyful Italian lifestyle.

"My goal is to keep these values alive in a fresh and contemporary manner to fit into a fast-paced global economic context."

As part of its shift, Trussardi has consolidated its collections, eliminating the diffusion Tru Trussardi to leave its main line and its Trussardi Jeans label. Today, most of Trussardi's revenues come from ready-to-wear merchandise, but the brand is looking to even out the ratio between its apparel and leather goods with a greater focus on its handbags.



Trussardi's Lovy bag

The Lovy handbag reflects this vision. Given a trapezoidal shape, the leather bag includes a front flap embellished with a metallic closure in the shape of a circular greyhound, a reference to a historic interpretation of the house's symbol.

Ms. Trussardi also imbued the bag with functional details, such as a detachable crossbody strap and multiple pockets and zip compartments.

Bringing this utility to life, Trussardi has created a microsite to introduce the Lovy. Split into sections, the site opens with a campaign film for the bag featuring multihyphenate personality Michelle Hunziger.

Shot by Virgilio Villoresi using a stop motion technique, the film casts Ms. Hunziger as an Alice in Wonderland-style character who bounces through an imaginative scene, interacting with greyhound figurines and larger-than-life inanimate objects along the way. Underscoring the whimsical film is a pop track written and sung by Ms. Trussardi.

Michelle Hunziker and the Trussardi Lovy Bag: A Modern Fairytale

Ms. Hunziger also stars in the print campaign, shot by Federico de Angelis at the Trussardi family's historic residence Villa Trussardi in Bergamo.

Another section introduces the Lovy as if it were a celebrity, with a short film shining a spotlight on some of its design details. Giving further background on the design choices is an interview with Ms. Trussardi.

A set of "Lovy Stories" gives a snapshot of different imagined owners of the handbag around the globe, set at different times of the day to show the versatility of the bag's style. In Milan, the Lovy accompanies a woman to a breakfast with friends, while in New York at 2 a.m., the Lovy contains its owner's secrets from a night out.

Price points

Other luxury brands have showed a move toward affordability, focusing on entry-level leather goods that have a wider appeal.

Mulberry's handbag sales struggled in 2014, as a move upmarket hurt its earnings. Following losses in the first half of the year ending Sept. 30, in which the brand issued three profit warnings, sales of more moderately priced items within the nine weeks ending Nov. 29 helped Mulberry's total sales rise 8 percent.

In 2015, the brand announced it had achieved 12 months of continual growth in women's handbags, its largest category ([see story](#)).

Similarly to Trussardi, Burberry recently condensed its collections, showing that the current collections formula may no longer be working as it once did. The brand combined its Brit, London and Prorsum lines into one "Burberry" label, designed for a global audience ([see story](#)).

In parallel moves, Marc Jacobs eliminated its diffusion Marc by Marc Jacobs collection, bringing the former entry-level items into its main line.

Marc Jacobs is also upping its focus on the leather goods and accessories category.

Marc Jacobs' spring collection of handbags, available in a variety of sizes and colors fitted with new double-J hardware, will be the first released with the brand's democratized pricing strategy as it gears up for a future IPO offering. Modeling its strategy off Michael Kors, which has seen immense success in the category, Marc Jacobs handbags, ideally, will account for 70 percent of the brand's overall sales going forward ([see story](#)).

"[Trussardi's] video was meant to introduce some of their new aesthetics and start bridging the gap with their younger potential clientele," Ms. Strum said.

"As long as they stay strong with their branding and customer relationship, this could be a strong strategy to keep them relevant."

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