

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Social media has shifted how Ferragamo accomplishes product design

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Ferragamo began placing RFID chips in its shoes in 2014

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

MUSCAT, Oman Ferragamo's design director of women's footwear revealed how drastic an impact social media has had on trends in the fashion world, claiming that the brand has shifted beyond designing for specific markets.

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Now that social media has essentially made the world a much smaller place, fashion brands are changing their approach when it comes to designing products. During the Cond Nast International Luxury Conference 2017, Ferragamo's design director explained in a session on April 6 that women all over the world are looking at the same trends at the same time, making it out-of-date to separately design for each specific region.

"We used to develop specific product categories for different regions," said Paul Andrew, design director of women's footwear at **Salvatore Ferragamo**. "But I think now with the development of social media and online shopping, everyone all over the world is looking at the same trends, the same tastemakers and the same product at exactly the same moment.

"I find that women all over the ultimately want the same thing," he said. "Yes, we might develop sandals for countries that are warm in January and boots for countries that are cold in August, but the fundamental trends are the same you find internationally at this point."

A new fashion world

Experts have said that millennials are the first global generation, but this mindset can almost be true for women of all ages now.

Today, everyone is following roughly the same celebrities and trends, which makes more sense for brands to cater to the world as a whole instead of different segments.



Ferragamo spring/summer 2017

Various environmental factors may have a small impact on product design, but as a whole trends are now worldwide.

In this new world, driven by technology, Mr. Andrew explained that it is exciting but a new task to cater to these younger, drastically different consumers.



Image courtesy of Salvatore Ferragamo

Fresh products designed with vibrant colors are catching the attention of these young consumers. Ferragamo is combining high tech for products and marketing into designs that also exude a high-end brand image and high quality.

Ferragamo strategy

Ferragamo proved its continued commitment to its core shoe business by appointing Mr. Andrew design director of women's footwear last September.

The designer, who founded his eponymous footwear label in 2013, came to Ferragamo with experience working in other luxury labels including Donna Karan and Alexander McQueen. For Ferragamo, this first-of-its-kind hire came as the brand was in the midst of other changes ([see more](#)).

Ferragamo is embracing new merchandising strategies as the company transitions under new creative talent.

With three new creative at the helm of its women's footwear, women's wear and menswear lines, Ferragamo gave its stores a makeover to go along with the new look of its product. Additionally, the label revamped its marketing approach starting with its fall/winter 2017 campaign to focus on its "brand DNA with a contemporary twist" ([see more](#)).

"It is about introducing this amazing Italian heritage brand, I could call it a sleeping beauty, to a new younger generation of consumers," Mr. Andrew said. "We do that by developing fresh new products, a vibrant color palette and developing materials that really harness innovation.

"But all this goes right back to Salvatore himself," he said. "He was so ahead of the curve."