

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Aquazzura's instant global reach came from social media

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Aquazzura's Wild Thing sandal

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

MUSCAT, Oman The founder of footwear label Aquazzura attributes the brand's ability to have an immediate worldwide reach to the popularization of social media and Instagram, which connects women all over the world.

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During a conversation at the Cond Nast International Luxury Conference 2017, the founder explained that social media was extremely helpful for the growth of the brand. Street style popularity on Instagram has given brands the ability to reach a wide audience, no matter the size of the brand.

"I have to be thankful to social media," said Edgardo Osorio, founder and creative director, [Aquazzura](#). "Social media, well more importantly, Instagram was born at the same time as my brand.

"It had a huge influence in the growth and the element of my brand," he said. "Not only because we have additional media in magazine, print giving us support but we also have influencers and the fashion community being photographed.

"This was at the height of street style. This kind of worldwide exposure would have been impossible before. For us, we became global from one minute to the next."

Social importance

When Aquazzura first launched, Instagram was gaining steam and social influencers across the world were starting trends.

The Internet and the digital age have allowed users all over the world to follow the same trends and content online. This means the Aquazzura brand was able to go global immediately, after social influencers grew an affinity for it.

Mr. Osorio recently played the role of psychologist as four fashion influences divulge their fanaticism for shoes.



Aquazzura Holli & Osorio

In the role of Mr. Osorio's patients was Holli Rogers, CEO of Browns Fashion, Claire Distenfeld of Fivestory, Prince Deena Al-Juhani Abdulaziz, Vogue Arabia's editor in chief and Pascaline Smets of SMETS, all of whom are devoted fans of Aquazzura. Along with these fashion influencers Mr. Osorio has created four footwear styles based on the women's style ([see more](#)).

Bricks-and-Mortar

But while digital is important for brand, the atmosphere of a bricks-and-mortar is just as important. Mr. Osorio explained how when opening each Aquazzura store, the interior design is crafted with the same thought process as decorating a living room in a home.

While personal style, or the brand style, is important, each individual location is important. When designing a home for New York, it drastically differs from designing a beach home in Miami.

The same concept goes for bricks-and-mortar stores in different cities.

For instance, Aquazzura brought its Italian style to Russian consumers in a new Moscow boutique.



Aquazzura Moscow

The brand has opened its Moscow store in partnership with Russia's AIZEL Group. Founded in 2002, AIZEL began as a luxury fashion concept store and now operates international brands within Russia due to its understanding of local culture ([see more](#)).

"If you are going to start bricks-and-mortar today you need to make it an experience," Mr. Osorio said. "You need to give people a reason to come to your store and not buy online.

"It is a globalized world, people see everything, they go everywhere, they travel," he said. "In most luxury stores it is the same shops, by the same architect with the same window display and probably the same products.

"This feels old, boring and stale. My retail concept is I treat retail like I would my home."

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