

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Safilo eyes Middle Eastern growth potential with local partnerships

June 12, 2017



Max Mara fall/winter 2016 campaign shoot

By STAFF REPORTS

Italian eyewear maker Safilo is growing its distribution in the Middle East through a Saudi Arabian deal.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

Safilo has inked an exclusive distribution agreement with Dr. Mazen Fakeeh C. Healthcare Company, which will begin representing the company's eyewear from licensed brands such as Jimmy Choo and Dior beginning in mid-June. A rapidly growing market for luxury in general, the Middle East also holds great potential for eyewear.

Sights on Saudi Arabia

Earlier this year, Safilo launched a Global Partner Network, uniting the partners that exclusively represent its eyewear around the world. These approximately 70 collaborators work with local retailers on Safilo's behalf, leveraging their understanding of their particular market.

As part of its deal with Safilo, Dr. Mazen Fakeeh C. Healthcare Company will open two new showrooms for the eyewear creator. Located in Riyadh and Jeddah, these will serve retailers in the area, allowing them to view frames by brands such as Fendi and Max Mara.



Bella Hadid for Fendi, spring/summer 2017. Image credit: Fendi

"We are proud to welcome Dr. Mazen Fakeeh C. Healthcare Company to our Global Partner Network, representing us exclusively in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," said Luisa Delgado, CEO of Safilo Group, in a statement. "Their experience in local healthcare and eyewear, and a newly-established local network, offer Safilo brands a unique local infrastructure, resources and branding know how.

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a significant market for Safilo in our IMEA region with a population of over 30 million people," she said.

Along with its new partnership, Safilo has also renewed its alliance with Optitalia Gulf. A partner of Safilo's for more than a quarter century, Optitalia handles retail distribution across the Gulf countries.

2016 marked the second year of double-digit growth for Safilo in India, the Middle East and Africa.

"We are very happy to continue our partnership with Optitalia for the independent retailer distribution across our other GCC markets," Ms. Delgado said. "Optitalia has represented us for many years with professionalism and commitment, effectively building our brands' strong local presence."

The eyewear market is turning its sights to the Middle East for growth, according to a new report by Transparency Market Research.

Through 2023, the Middle East's growing class will propel the eyewear market to an 8.8 percent compound annual growth rate, with luxury brands comprising a large share. The Middle East's growing middle class, fashion sense and general eye for luxury will buoy sector growth ([see story](#)).

Safilo is not the only eyewear company stepping up its presence in the Middle East.

In May, Tom Ford, Balenciaga and Emilio Pucci eyewear licensee Marcolin Group signed a joint venture with Rivoli Group, a regional luxury retailer ([see story](#)).

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.