

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Ralph Lauren taps Instagram Stories for multichannel fashion show lead-up

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Ralph Lauren's show takes place in a garage in upstate New York. Image credit: Ralph Lauren

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

U.S. lifestyle brand Ralph Lauren weaved an interactive story leading up to its New York Fashion Week presentation through Instagram, intertwining storytelling with see-now, buy-now, as well as behind-the-scenes content.

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The designer took on two rising trends in fashion week, hosting its runway presentation outside of New York and focusing on see-now, buy-now. However, Ralph Lauren is making a stronger impact with its use of Instagram Stories and unique interpretations of the trends.

"Instagram happens to be a good choice for this kind of thing because it draws on a base of subscribers who voluntarily express their interest in the brand," said Rob Frankel, branding strategist & expert at [Frankel & Anderson](#), Los Angeles. "As such, Ralph Lauren is appealing to its most willing victims who have a genuine interest in the brand and thus may be likelier prospects.

"That's the good news," he said. "The bad news is that Instagram fans tend to be younger and less affluent, so while they may be fans of the brand, they may not turn out to be real customers just yet.

"Still, it's a no-lose proposition for the brand, as it's grooming future customers at the very least."

Mr. Frankel is not affiliated with Ralph Lauren, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [Ralph Lauren](#) was reached for comment.

### Interactive lead up

Ralph Lauren is drawing tangible parallels between its designs and the automobiles by which its founder is inspired in its latest show. The designer has showcased both its women's and menswear collections at Mr. Lauren's private garage in Bedford, NY.

Leading up to the unique show, the label shared special behind-the-scenes content on its Instagram for 24 hours. On each hour, 24 hours before the show, Ralph Lauren has shared one piece of content related to the show.

Preparation for the Fall 2017 Fashion Show at Ralph's Garage. [#RLRoadToRunway #NYFW pic.twitter.com/IlwdhS6NXY](#)

Ralph Lauren (@RalphLauren) [September 12, 2017](#)

"I don't have a favorite car," says Ralph Lauren as he discusses his passion for driving and why he buys cars in the short Instagram Stories clip that kicks off the experience.

The entire experience is in black and white and features footage with intimate close ups of its subjects such as sketches, automobiles and pieces from the collections.

Ralph Lauren's videos go back and forth between Mr. Lauren's discussion of how automobiles inspire him and a look at preparing for the show. He talks of how he enjoys seeing a woman in a convertible with her blowing in the wind and how he prefers tuxedos on women.

Short clips of preparing for the show include the casting for both gender models and fittings.

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Ralph Lauren (@RalphLauren) [September 12, 2017](#)

Interactive elements of Instagram Stories encourage users to swipe up to interact with more vehicles that inspired Mr. Lauren. A dedicated page features information about a variety of vehicles related to the collections.

Another dedicated page that users can swipe up for allows them to purchase certain items from the collection.

Ralph Lauren initiatives

For last year's NYFW, Ralph Lauren took over an entire city block to debut its runway-to-retail concept as see-now, buy-now took hold of New York Fashion Week.

Ralph Lauren debuted its Ralph Lauren Collection along Madison Avenue, which was closed to traffic for the occasion. The stretch of retail high street that hosted the women's ready-to-wear collection is home to the Ralph Lauren Collection flagship boutique found at 888 Madison Avenue between 71st and 72nd Streets ([see more](#)).

The designer also recently announced Patrice Louvet as its new president and CEO in May.

Mr. Louvet began his new role this July following his most recent position as group president of global beauty at Procter & Gamble. In his new role he will report directly to Ralph Lauren, who serves as executive chairman of the board for the entire company ([see more](#)).

"It keeps the brand in front of motivated brand fans," Mr. Frankel said. "To a certain extent, social media followings do play a part in the marketing of brands and especially talent.

"Twenty years ago, no deals in Hollywood cared about online presence," he said. "Today, an agency's consideration of any emerging talent is bolstered by social media followings: the bigger, the better."