

LUXURY MEMO SPECIAL REPORTS

## The allure of pop-up shops – Luxury Memo special report

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Omega's pop-up in Paris sells the brand's Nato straps. Image credit: Omega

By NANCY BUCKLEY

Taste-testing has expanded beyond ice cream shops into the luxury world with small tastes of a bigger brand through pop-up shops.

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From standalone bricks-and-mortar shops to setups in airports and malls, the pop-up-shop trend has expanded across sectors of the luxury business. The small, temporary shops allow consumers to interact with a brand in a more personal, often interactive, manner in a less traditional setting.

"The three most prominent trends among luxury brands in the pop-up world are the ability to share from the pop-up with branding for shoppers, experiential, not sales-y, and brand story more than product," said Bob Phibbs, CEO of retail consultancy [the Retail Doctor](#), New York.

### Top 5 trends in pop-ups

- Technology

Brands are enticing consumers to stop by their pop-up shops through interactive, tech-savvy campaigns that allow the consumer to try something new, or connect with the brand on social media.

- Unusual locations

Luxury brands can be found in predictable locations from city to city, but the pop-up concept allows brands to expand beyond the esteemed streets of luxury hubs into different settings, likely reaching atypical consumers.

- More industries popping up

Fashion, jewelry, beauty and fragrance brands have traditionally been the categories leading the way in opening pop-up shops, but in recent years more watch, automotive and hotel brands have turned toward temporary shops to showcase various aspects of their brands and culture.

- Expansion of brands through temporary teasers

Pop-ups have proven to be a space for brands to branch out and try a new product or bring a product to a new region.

- Opportunity to show true colors

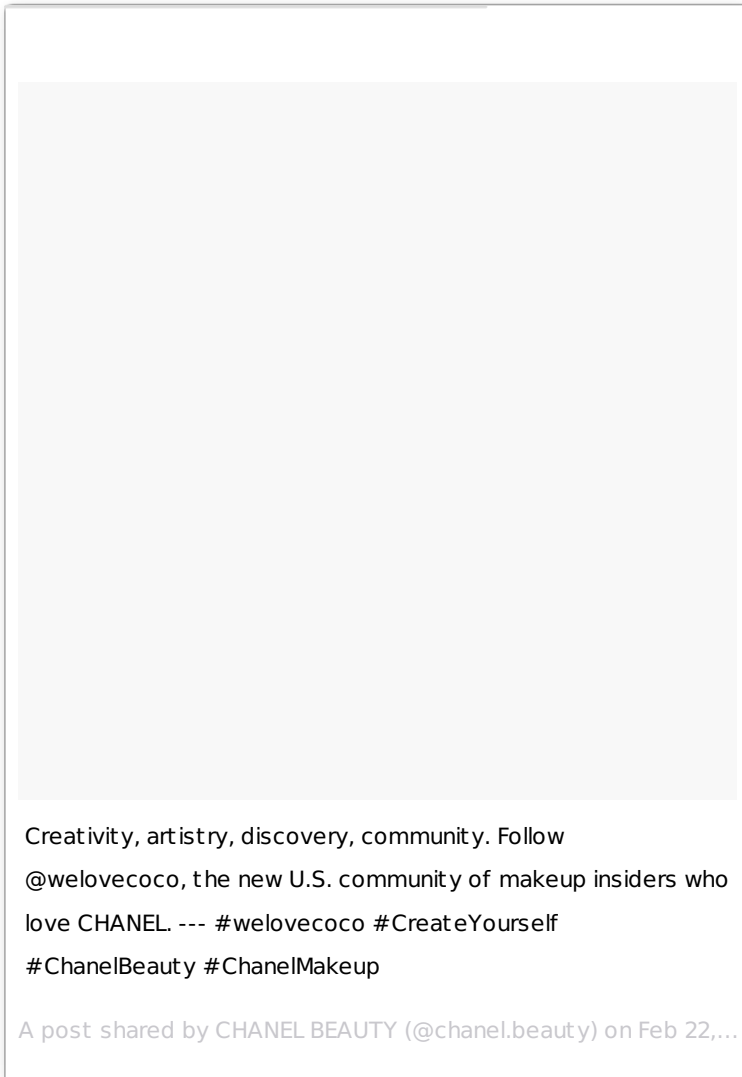
Luxury brands have a unique traditional persona that they portray throughout each storefront, and pop-up shops offer an opportunity to divert from this and explore a fun, quirky side to the brand.

Be part of the in-crowd

Everyone is joining in on the pop-up trend. Luxury brands from all industries have been opening temporary stores.

Beauty and fragrance brands commonly open up temporary pop-ups. The limited-time engagements allow brands to have fun, whimsical experiences, often surrounding a single product or collection.

For example, Chanel encouraged consumers to embrace colorful cosmetics in a pop-up event.



Open for four days in March, the Los Angeles Chanel Beauty House opened its doors to the public, allowing guests to try out its latest lip products. Increasingly, beauty brands are providing consumers with interactive experiences, taking discovery beyond the traditional counter consultation ([see story](#)).

Giorgio Armani similarly opened a pop-up for a few days in the Westfield World Trade Center shopping pavilion in New York. As the “new port of entry to Lower Manhattan,” the area is home to 60,000 neighborhood residents, 300,000 daily commuters who pass through the subway terminals and nearly 15 million international tourists.

The temporary shop introduced passersby to Emporio Armani’s fragrance duo: Stronger With You and Because It’s You ([see story](#)).



*Westfield World Trade Center. Image credit: Westfield*

Fashion brands are similar to beauty and fragrance brands in that the temporary pop-up shop is now a core part of many labels' retail presences.

For instance, Prada set up shop at the Promenade Shops, Galaxy Macau for a month ([see story](#)).



*Prada Station pop-up at the Promenade Shops, Macau Galaxy. Image credit: Galaxy Macau*

Valentino hosted a pop-up featuring its resort collection for 2018 in advance of its release with a series of pop-up "active spaces" around the globe. In Tokyo, Milan, New York and Hong Kong, the shops offered a sneak peek at the new collection ([see story](#)).

Miu Miu also showcased a small glimpse of the brand through a display featuring its bejeweled accessories alongside the jewelry offerings at Costa Mesa, CA's South Coast Plaza ([see story](#)).



*Miu Miu's South Coast Plaza installation was up Oct. 6-17. Image credit: South Coast Plaza*

Watch brands are also following this trend by bringing the watch counter concept from department stores into other realms.

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*Breitling Colt Racer video*

In June 2017, Breitling opened at Galeries Lafayette's Parisian flagship to launch the exclusive pre-release of the

brand's Colt Skyracer timepiece, giving shoppers the opportunity to get their hands on the watch before its official retail debut ([see story](#)).

Even hotels have recently decided to move past being a host of other brands' pop-ups and open their own.

Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts invited customers into a unique temporary experience with its first "Pop Down." The experience was hosted in Toronto during the city's annual film festival to attract high-profile guests.

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*Four Seasons Pop Down video*

The broader global Pop Down initiative is a collection of curated experiences ranging from food and drinks to floral arrangements, bringing artisans and designers from different countries together for new engagements that last only a few days ([see story](#)).

Another less likely sector to embrace the pop-up concept is automotive brands. However, Porsche decided to join in with its lifestyle brand.

The pop-up experience offered customers the chance to inspect a Porsche car as well as browse a variety of related products and images connected to owning a Porsche. The idea was to give consumers a glimpse of what their lives could be like if they were to own a Porsche, with the hopes that they will then purchase a Porsche in the future ([see story](#)).

Location, location, location

Shopping centers, storefronts, events, airports and hotels all serve as potential locations for pop-up stores to set up shop.

"When it comes to luxury clients, they believe that location and layout are the two most important factors when selecting a space," said Elizabeth Layne, chief marketing officer of [Appear Here](#), New York, in an interview with *Luxury Daily* ([see story](#)).

"Luxury brands typically have a vision in mind of what they want to do in the space and where they want to do, so it's a matter of finding that for them in order to make their idea come to life," she said.

"Another parameter that is considered is the status of the space. If they appear on a certain street, what other brands will they be alongside? Does the space have some type of history or unique story behind it that makes them stand out amongst the rest?"

Picking the location varies on what the brand is looking for with the specific pop-up.

With shopping center foot traffic declining, pop-ups and branded installations offer an opportunity to spur interest and visits from discerning consumers. But malls may not be the ideal location for brands to place a temporary shop.

Prada opened a temporary site at Galeries Lafayette with a takeover that played off the juxtaposition of interior and exterior.



*Prada at Galeries Lafayette*

Through window displays and in-store shops, the brand gained attention for its autumn/winter 2017 collections for men and women. Prada's window displays featured a series of branded posters both inside and outside the panes, accompanied by fashions and accessories from the label. These posters depict both surreal and vintage-inspired scenes, exploring women's roles in modern society ([see story](#)).

Other luxury brands have chosen to set up independent bricks-and-mortar stores offering a glimpse to the brand's typical storefront, but while having the creativity to branch out and offer a twist to the standard space.

Some brands have looked towards events to host a day or weekend pop-up that is small but interacts with guests on a personal level.



*Land Rover at the Rolex Central Park Horse Show*

For example, Land Rover was the official vehicle for the Rolex Central Park Horse Show. Land Rover was selected as the official vehicle of the equestrian event for three years running.

In its role as the official vehicle of the Rolex Central Park Horse Show, launched in 2014, the automaker displayed its latest Range Rover Sport HSE model and activated a children's driving experience alongside must-see Olympic equestrians ([see story](#)).

Other brands have taken the airport route, opening temporary storefronts or kiosks in terminals where travelers often have the time to interact with the brand.

For example, Moncler put its outerwear in front of consumers who passed through the Hamad International Airport

in Doha, Qatar with a temporary shop in fall 2016.



### *Moncler pop-up*

The Middle East has emerged as a transportation hub with many of the region's airports being counted among the busiest in the world. With an immense amount of travelers departing, or on layover, the travel retail sector in the Middle East has developed as well.

In the space, Moncler created a brand installation to display its DNA through a luxury shopping experience. For example, the pop-up's walls featured a group of mannequins styled to resemble skiers lounging on gondolas draped in fur blankets ([see story](#)).

Similarly, Lalique opened a pop-up in London's Heathrow in 2014 that had an olfactive bar, with the notes of the fragrance, including rose, gardenia and sandalwood, displayed in open clear boxes.

Embedded Video: [https://www.youtube.com/embed/Xfd1\\_4URUks](https://www.youtube.com/embed/Xfd1_4URUks)

### *Lalique at Heathrow*

In addition to the fragrance, Lalique's jewelry was placed in podiums, marking the first time the brand displayed and sold its jewelry through World Duty Free Group. There were also signed and limited-edition crystal pieces, such as the Dahlia chandelier ([see story](#)).

Other trends in the locations of pop-ups have been seasonal stores that hope to boost a brand's presence with consumers during key seasons.

Fortnum & Mason annually heads to Somerset House, a neoclassical building in the heart of London, for its seasonal residency at The Christmas Arcade, which recreates Fortnum & Mason's flagship by displaying the department store's finest offerings. The Christmas Arcade is known for its selection of gifts, food stuffs, fashion accessories and holiday décor.



### *Fortnum & Mason at Somerset House*

Fortnum & Mason's shop at The Christmas Arcade is separated into individual rooms: men's and women's gifts, a Christmas room with a children's section, confectionery and spaces for the retailer's own teas and coffees ([see story](#)).

With brands popping up all over, finding a unique temporary location is difficult. However, some brands go beyond the mall, airport or bricks-and-mortar placements and open up a fully interactive experience.

For example, Maserati took over two suites at Monaco's Hôtel de Paris, Place du Casino de Monte-Carlo for a literal in-room experience.



*Maserati suite*

Guests could book suite 321 or 322 at the Hôtel de Paris to immerse themselves in the elegance of Maserati while in one of the world's most luxurious cities. The suites were conceptualized by up-and-coming Italian interior designers Ludovica+Roberto Palomba as the hotel undergoes renovations ([see story](#)).

The entirely immersive pop-up experience is rare but definitely allows consumers to experience the brand fully.

#### Techie trends

As with every trend and industry, technology is key to keep up with the evolving times, and pop-up shops are no different.

From totally digital shops to social media to digital brands coming to the physical storefront, pop-ups allow space for a limited engagement opportunity with a company.

"Luxury brands are able to reach consumers in tons of ways - there's no size-fits-all approach," said Arielle Crane, communications manager at [The Storefront](#), New York. "The most impactful way is an omnichannel approach where brands use digital and physical channels such as a pop-up store to expand reach.

"Omnichannel allows brands to give greater impact and enhance the customer journey," she said. "It's all about meeting consumers online for discovery and product research, and then developing an in-store experience for that same customer to come and try on the product and purchase.

"Brands are also creating in-store experiences with interactive digital elements to track consumer data, keep consumers engaged in-store and enhance the customer journey."

Last holiday season, crystal maker Swarovski opened two pop-up shops, one in Toronto and the other in Milan.

Swarovski's Sparkle Pop-up in Toronto's Square One shopping center allowed visitors to browse and buy products in an entirely virtual concept. Rather than displaying physical merchandise, the temporary store instead translated functions of the ecommerce experience to a store that measured less than 270 square feet.

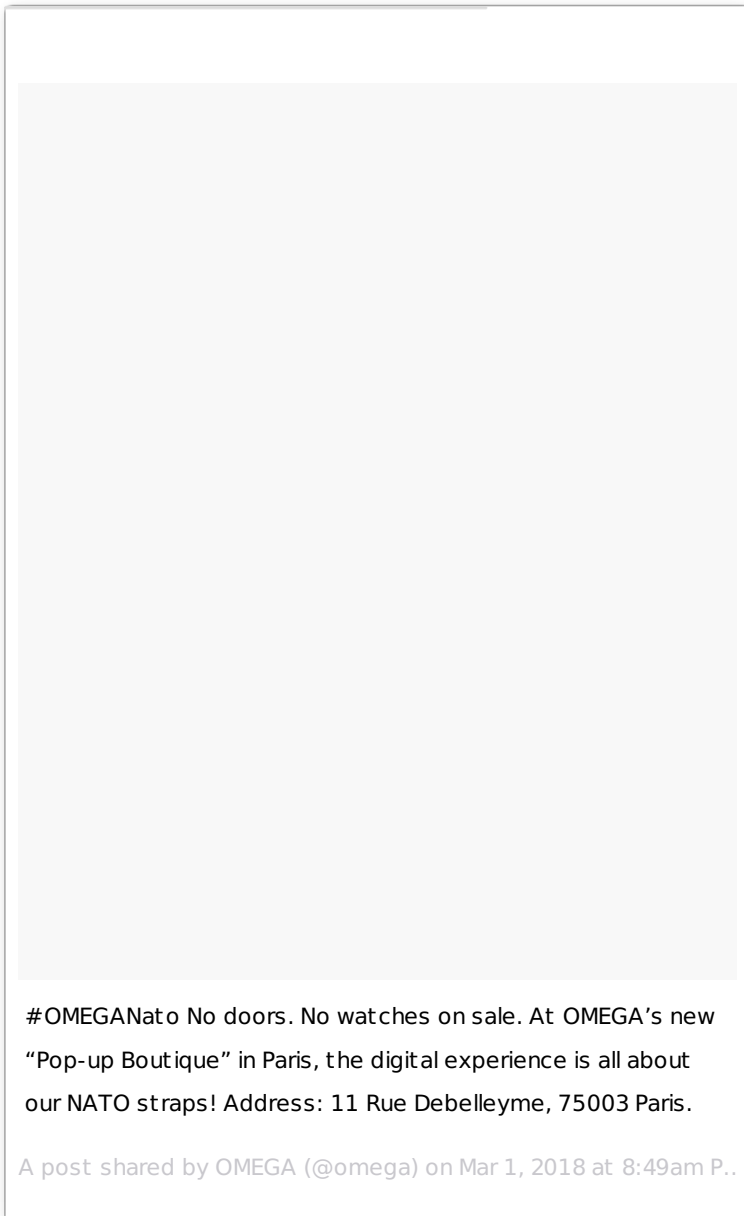


### *Toronto pop-up*

To view collections, consumers used a touchscreen style finder, which offered a virtual try-on experience for Swarovski's jewelry.

In Milan, Swarovski had a digital holiday tree installation in Galleria Vittorio Emanuele. Around the base of the tree, Swarovski installed what it calls a "virtual playground," which included engagement points such as a fun wall, wish list wall, style finder and selfie wall ([see story](#)).

Another virtual experience was seen in Paris through an Omega storefront. The temporary shop features an interactive screen through which visitors can explore and shop the brand's Nato straps. This first-of-its-kind concept reflects the growing digitization of the watch business, as more brands embrace retail formats beyond bricks-and-mortar ([see story](#)).



Some brands are evading the physicality of a pop-up altogether with temporary spaces online.

For instance, in summer 2017, Christian Dior opened up its virtual shop on New York department store Bergdorf Goodman's online store.





*Mia Moretti is an influencer for Dior*

Between June 7-28 Bergdorf Goodman hosted the “J’Adior Dior Shoes” online pop-up where the department store promoted the French atelier’s fall 2017 footwear collection.

To attract virtual passersby, Bergdorf Goodman structured an influencer campaign with four women with strong social media followings. The campaign was designed to bring consumers to the site since Dior does not retail fashion on its own ecommerce channel in the United States and consumers were likely not expecting the online opportunity ([see story](#)).

Social media has allowed pop-ups to be teased, released and made widely known.

Some brands have made the pop-up solely on social media such as Hearst-owned men’s lifestyle publication Esquire. The magazine took the concept of a pop-up to the digital realm with a 48-hour Snapchat Discover experience.



### *Esquire grooming social pop-up*

During the 48-hour editorial pop-up, Esquire provided grooming tips for millennial men looking to “up their style” for the holidays. Instead of creating a Snapchat Story, Esquire turned to the platform’s Snapchat Discover feature, a tool favored by publishers to create magazine-like content ([see story](#)).

Digital experiences within a pop-up make it so that stores can have a fun interaction with consumers and maybe engage tech enthusiasts with the brand. However, some pop-ups serve as a chance to bring digital to real life.

For example, online consignment marketplace The RealReal ventured into bricks-and-mortar selling with the opening of its first pop-up shop in San Francisco ([see story](#)).

Shortly after, the online retailer opened another pop-up in Las Vegas. The limited-time store is 6,000 square feet and features one-of-a-kind products from big-name luxury brands such as Chanel, Hermès, Cartier, Rolex, Stella McCartney and Gucci ([see story](#)).



*Flont x Armarium*

Armarium and Flont extended this trend of online-only fashion startups creating their own pop-up physical experiences further. The two companies share a business model and philosophy, which they brought together for a limited-time in-store experience that allowed customers to rent apparel and jewelry ([see story](#)).

Chance to try something new

Similar to online retailers trying out the physical, pop-ups offer an opportunity for traditional luxury brands to try something new or outside of their norm.

Christian Louboutin took a pop-up opportunity to sell baby shoes. Referred to as “Loubibaby,” baby shoes are a continuation of Christian Louboutin’s collaboration with Gwyneth Paltrow’s lifestyle brand Goop.

The four-piece capsule was designed to include styles meant to “meet every foreseeable wardrobe need,” which has now been extended to the daughters of Louboutin-loving mothers. Loubibaby’s were sold at Goop’s annual holiday pop-up markets in New York, Los Angeles and Miami ([see story](#)).

Good taste runs in the family. Coming soon: Loubibaby shoes crafted for the Christian Louboutin x [@goop](#) Collection. <https://t.co/HlQe7LnjgF> [pic.twitter.com/5jvtpoTVwD](https://pic.twitter.com/5jvtpoTVwD)

— Christian Louboutin (@LouboutinWorld) [September 26, 2017](#)

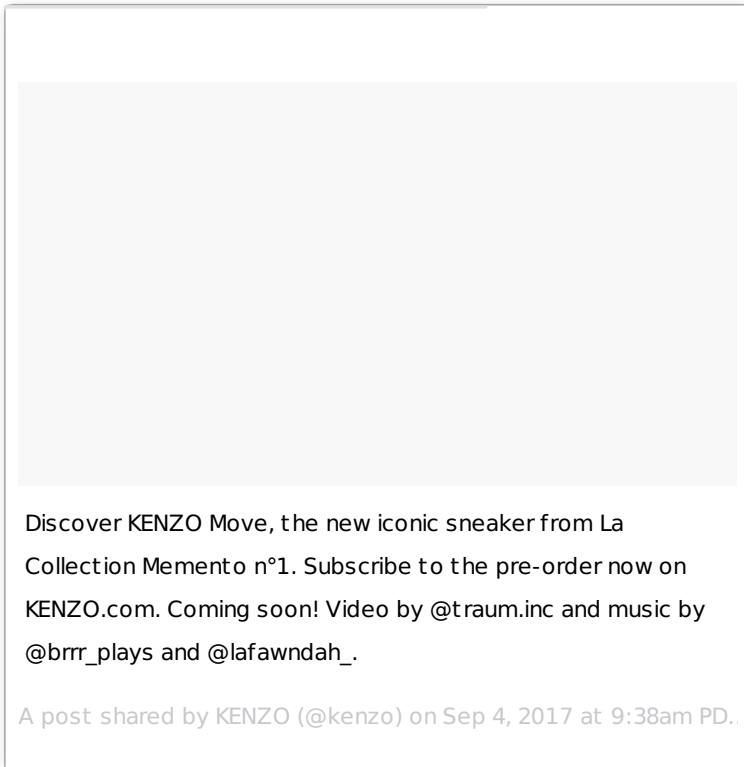
Giorgio Armani Beauty brought its pop-up Armani Box concept to the United States for the first time last fall.



*Armani Box Uri*

The traveling experience immerses visitors in the Armani Beauty universe, giving them the opportunity to have their makeup done by a brand representative or snap a picture in a photo booth ([see story](#)).

Kenzo used a Paris pop-up to introduce its new sneaker line to the world.



Embedded Video: <https://tpc.googlesyndication.com/safeframe/1-0-17/html/container.html>

The brand set up shop at 16 Boulevard des filles du calvaire, allowing visitors to get their hands on the Kenzo Move footwear before it debuted globally. In addition to offering early purchasing, the pop-up hosted a dance-themed day to further engage consumers around the line ([see story](#)).

Best practices for pop-up marketing

- Arielle Crane, The Storefront
  - "Luxury brands should go omnichannel, creating a seamless and unified brand experience whether it's virtual, physical or digital."
  - "They should also consider and identify an 'it' factor to their pop-up store. Is it creating a highly Instagrammable space, hosting a splashy event with influencers, collaborating with a buzzy brand? Some element of it has to be attention-grabbing."
  - "Surprise factor: make sure to hone in on the pop-up effect of your pop-up store so that customers feel a sense of urgency to visit it and check it out. This leads to longer lines and a bigger social media splash."
- Bob Phibbs, Retail Doctor
  - "Know why you are doing it - exposure, testing the waters, new store prototype test, product test."
  - "Hire more than pretty faces - they have to understand and represent your brand, answer 20 top questions and know how to get shoppers to buy products either there or afterwards."
  - "A/B test as much as possible. This is a big laboratory to see how shoppers respond, set goals for engagement in advance, et cetera, and measure afterwards."

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