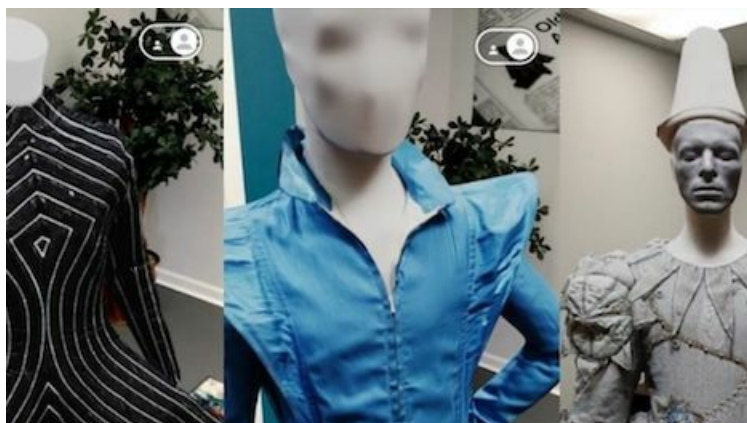


AUTOMOTIVE

BMW sponsors a rare look at AR in editorial content

March 22, 2018



BMW supports NY Times' AR take on David Bowie's costumes. Image credit: NY Times.

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

German automaker BMW is facilitating *The New York Times'* progress from virtual reality to augmented reality in a new project that brings a late musician to back to life.

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The late David Bowie, beloved by millions of fans, is being honored in a new AR push from the newspaper. Sponsored by BMW, the innovative publishing effort includes an interactive ad integrated into the experience.

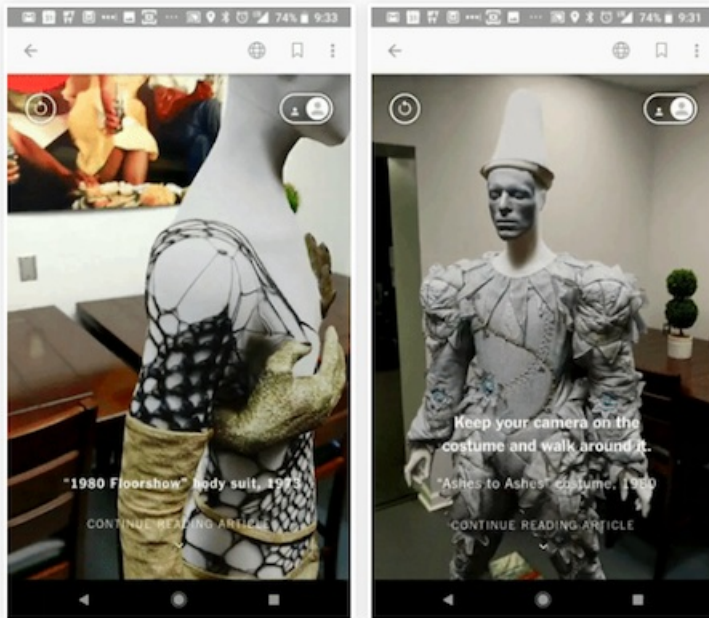
"BMW allows readers to interact with their first ever X2 Sports Activity Vehicle (SAV) in an immersive AR experience within The Times's David Bowie AR article," said Jordan Cohen, director of communications at *The New York Times*, New York. "T Brand Studio collaborated with BMW on the creative design and concept to enhance user-experience."

Sponsoring innovation

BMW has created an interactive advertisement that lives within *The New York Times'* multifaceted David Bowie article.

Much like the editorial content it sponsors, the advertiser incorporates a variety of content that spans both AR and two-dimensional stills. The interactive ad allows readers a 360-degree view of the new BMW X2 in their own spaces.

The David Bowie AR article incorporates a series of photographs that feature the artist's elaborate costumes.



David Bowie's costumes in an AR experience. Image credit: NYTimes.

Ahead of its opening in New York, the "David Bowie is" exhibit acts as the content for the experience. After five years on tour, the exhibit has come to the Brooklyn Museum, featuring a variety of pieces from Mr. Bowie's iconic costume collection.

Once it arrived in New York, photography of the exhibit was taken and turned into AR experiences.

Users on *The New York Times*' application can read the article that provides a wealth of knowledge regarding the artist's eccentric on-stage style. The text provides a detailed look at the collection with commentary from experts that were close to the iconic musician.

While some stills of personal content such as polaroids and images of Mr. Bowie's notes are included, a variety of the costumes are featured with a 360-degree view.

Viewers stage their cell phone cameras angled at the floor or a flat surface, and Mr. Bowie's costumes will appear inside their homes. Users can move around the space to get a full view of the piece.

BMW's ad acts in the same manner, allowing the viewer to explore its new vehicle.



BMW's augmented reality ad on NYTimes. Image credit: BMW

Brands and AR

The New York Times article and subsequent BMW advertising reveals a unique take on AR. While many brands are adopting the technology, it is usually a standalone experience.

However, the *New York Times* campaign peppers the technology throughout the article, placing it among other unique and interesting content. The experience offers a well-rounded look at the David Bowie collection.

Many other brands are looking to AR to establish a greater connection with consumers.

British fashion brand Burberry worked with Apple's newly unveiled augmented reality tool kit to create an app

designed to cater to tech-savvy fashion lovers.

At Apple's recent event unveiling the new line of iPhones, the company spent a significant amount of time talking about the new models' emphasis on augmented reality as well as the ARKit to help developers create AR apps. Burberry was the first major luxury brand to make use of this new feature with an application ([see more](#)).

The New York Times also created its David Bowie experience through the ARKit.

While many brands leverage AR for editorial content, others use it for try-on experiences.

For instance, precision-cut crystal maker Swarovski allowed consumers to give themselves an instant makeover through a collaboration with Perfect Corp.'s YouCam.

With YouCam Makeup and YouCam Fun, the brand launched a holiday AR experience that allowed consumers to try on makeup looks embellished with crystals and Swarovski creations. YouCam has become a popular partner for luxury beauty brands such as Lancme and Este Lauder, but this hybrid jewelry and makeup experience is the first of its kind for the app ([see more](#)).

"The BMW AR interactive, which was produced by New York Times Company experiential design agency Fake Love, is the first AR experience from an advertiser to live inside *The New York Times* app for Android and is accessible directly from The Times news feed," NYTimes' Mr Cohen said. "BMW's experience is also available in iOS."

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