

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Valentino, Alibaba expand audience for pop-up via VR

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Valentino is part of Alibaba's Luxury Pavillion. Image credit: Alibaba

By DANNY PARISI

Italian fashion house Valentino has teamed up with Chinese ecommerce giant Alibaba for a new virtual reality retail experience.

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The joint effort takes the form of a virtual store, which is a representation of a real Valentino pop-up shop that customers can explore in virtual reality. Valentino created the virtual experience to promote its new line of Garavani Candystud bags.

Pop-up shop

Alibaba has courted yet another prominent Western luxury brand to its platform with a virtual Valentino shop.

The virtual reality store allows customers to explore the interior of a Valentino pop-up shop, letting them examine the pieces on display and purchase them if desired.

Valentino's virtual pop-up mirrors a physical ephemeral store that will be hosted in the Sanlitun District of Beijing in Alibaba's home country of China.



Alibaba's Luxury Pavillion is a bridge between Chinese buyers and wester brands. Image credit: Alibaba

The two companies are hoping that the mirrored virtual and physical pop-up shops will help create a cohesive retail experience between online and offline shopping. Those who do not have access to the actual pop-up in China will still be able to explore its interior thanks to virtual reality.

Valentino is one of the major brands to be a part of Alibaba's Luxury Pavillion, a group of luxury brands partnering with the ecommerce platform to create unique digital and physical experiences in China.

As China continues to become a major market for luxury brands from around the world, Alibaba is hoping to act as a conduit between Chinese customers and Western brands.

Valentino's new pop-up is one of its first major VR efforts since the launch of Luxury Pavillion.

Luxury online

Alibaba's Luxury Pavilion is helping brands deliver experiences and services to top customers through the launch of a loyalty program.

Luxury Pavilion today sells merchandise from almost 50 luxury brands, including Burberry and Maserati. Through the newly created Luxury Pavilion Club loyalty program, shoppers will gain access to perks such as exclusive offers, celebrity events and door-to-door returns ([see story](#)).

Virtual reality in particular has become a hot selling point for luxury consumers in China. Over the past year, VR has continued to infuse every aspect of global luxury and fashion, including the runway.



Valentino's pre-fall campaign. Image credit: Valentino

GQ and HTC, the makers of the popular Vive VR platform, worked together at this year's Shanghai Fashion Week for a live event that made special use of HTC's VR capabilities. The HTC Vive was used as part of the launch show of luxury menswear brand Pronounce, relying on VR tech to sell the experience ([see story](#)).

For Valentino, this VR experience will allow it to reach Alibaba's young audience of affluent luxury buyers in an immersive way.

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