

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Fashion month's enduring influence translates to millions in earned media

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Ralph Lauren's spring/summer 2019 runway show. Image credit: Ralph Lauren

By SARAH JONES

Ralph Lauren, Victoria Beckham, Versace and Gucci drove the most publicity during their respective fashion weeks, as they celebrated milestones or made unconventional moves.

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According to data from Launchmetrics, Ralph Lauren's half-century celebration and Victoria Beckham's mark of a decade in business helped the brands earn the most media impact value (MIV) during the fashion weeks in New York and London. While a number of brands have been forgoing the traditional fashion show in favor of consumer-facing events apart from the spectacle, the remaining impact of the runway rush is seen in millions of dollars' worth of publicity generated throughout the month-long series of fashion weeks.

"Nowadays fashion shows have become far more than just an industry event for press and media, but a consumer-facing marketing platform powered by social networks and the viral nature of digital," said Alison Bring, chief marketing officer of **Launchmetrics**, London.

"We see brands generating up to 800 percent more online media impact value during fashion week than any other time of the year and with the activation of these new voices, such as influencers, the brands' owned media and end consumers," she said. "This change has brought about a new relevance and importance to these historic events as a vehicle to speak to the end consumer."

Fashion features

New York Fashion Week drove a total \$186 million in MIV, according to Launchmetrics. While brands saw significant publicity, the top social media post came from Nicki Minaj, who posted a photo of herself and friends tagged #NYFW.

Ralph Lauren was the top brand account during the week.

On Friday, Sept. 7, Ralph Lauren held a fashion show and dinner at Bethesda Terrace in Central Park for its 50th anniversary. The event benefited the Central Park Conservancy, a nonprofit dedicated to preserving the public space ([see story](#)).

In addition to its own posts, Ralph Lauren's sponsored post by Chiara Ferragni was one of the top two paid posts from the week, generating \$290 million in MIV and 571,000 engagements.

Behind Ralph Lauren were Calvin Klein, Tom Ford, Michael Kors and Coach.

During London Fashion Week, Victoria Beckham marked the 10-year anniversary of her eponymous fashion line. The milestone show earned the label \$10 million in MIV, with a total 8,200 posts.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

#VBSS19 at the Piccadilly lights! So excited to see you all at the Dover Street Store at 3PM today where I will be signing my anniversary t-shirts! x VB #VBSince08 #LFW

A post shared by Victoria Beckham (@victoriabeckham) on Sep 16, 2018 at 4:49am PDT

Instagram post from Victoria Beckham

"With fashion week shifting from a traditional media event into a means to reach the end consumer, it's important that brands think of these shows as a marketing platform and build 360-degree campaigns around these moments to make them truly successful," Ms. Bring said.

"To use the example of Victoria Beckham this season who, from launching a full social campaign with a sneak peek behind the scenes of her spring 2019 collection, to playing shopkeeper at her Dover Street store, used all of these on and offline activities, not to mention her star-studded and highly Instagrammed 10-year anniversary party hosted by Edward Enninful and David Beckham, gave the Victoria Beckham show the most buzz at London Fashion Week, according to Launchmetrics' media impact value rankings," she said. "It is this type of mixed marketing strategy that helps propel brands and really leverage the power of fashion week for maximum ROI."

Right behind Victoria Beckham was Burberry, which was celebrating a creative transition. Burberry looked to make a big splash during London Fashion Week for newly installed chief creative officer Riccardo Tisci's first show through guerilla marketing ([see story](#)).

With 46,000 posts and a total MIV of 5.5 million, Burberry saw significant publicity.

London Fashion Week drove a smaller MIV than New York, with only \$37 million worth of media placements. Influencers' power was also less prevalent during London compared to New York, with the top Instagram post during the week belonging to the Victoria Beckham brand rather than a social media star or celebrity.

During Milan Fashion Week, Versace rose to the top of the brand rankings partly thanks to Gucci's choice to take its show to Paris this season. At the end of the week, news also emerged that Versace was being about to be acquired by Michael Kors, adding to the discussion of the brand ([see story](#)).

Coming in second was Fendi, which Launchmetrics notes saw a greater share of MIV from owned digital media and influencers this season compared to the spring/summer 2018 fashion week.

Moschino, Prada and Max Mara rounded out the top five.

The top influencer promoted post about #MFW was an advertisement from Ms. Ferragni about a Pomellato event during the week.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

Ready for @pomellato event #advertising #mfw

A post shared by Chiara Ferragni (@chiaraferragni) on Sep 22, 2018 at 10:07am PDT

Instagram post from Chiara Ferragni

Milan Fashion Week falls between New York and London for total MIV, with \$62 million in publicity.

Paris Fashion Week rounded out fashion month with a MIV of \$80 million. Compared to Milan, Launchmetrics notes that media is a greater portion of the conversation around Paris Fashion Week, with a 40 percent share of voice.

Gucci paid homage to France by showing its spring/summer 2019 collection in Paris. The show was held the day prior to the official start of Paris Fashion Week ([see story](#)).

Having joined Paris Fashion Week, Gucci became the top brand in MIV. Following Gucci were Dior, Saint Laurent, Balenciaga and Chanel.

Similarly to Burberry, Celine's spring/summer 2018 show was the first for creative director Hedi Slimane. Ahead of the show, the brand debuted a new logo and look in line with Mr. Slimane's vision ([see story](#)).

"With any big change such as the welcoming of a new designer there will always be an increase in media coverage and of course that means higher media impact value from stories surrounding the anticipation and delivery of these designers' first collections at their new houses," Ms. Bring said. "That said, when we look at the data from spring/summer 2019 versus spring/summer 2018, we don't see any major spikes for the moment driven by these two designers at their respective brands for this season relative to the show rankings."

Social survey

When looking at Instagram alone, Dior took the top seat for earned media value, generating more than \$3 million worth of placements, according to InfluencerDB. The label's spring/summer 2019 included a dance performance by choreographer Sharon Eyal.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

In a further spirit of collaboration, the dance piece choreographed by Sharon Eyal performed during the Spring-Summer 2019 show saw its dancers' costumes designed by #MariaGraziaChiuri. The four elements of nature were reinterpreted on exquisitely-colored leotards that looked almost like body paintings, the placement of the motifs corresponding to the anatomy, the chakras and the energetic expressions of the dancers bodies as the sinuously strode and twisted their way through the petal-dusted space. #DiorSS19 Choreographer: @SharonEyalDance Music: #OriLichtik

A post shared by Dior Official (@dior) on Sep 27, 2018 at 12:03am PDT

Instagram post from Dior

Moschino and its creative director Jeremy Scott came in third and second, respectively, for Instagram earned media. During Milan Fashion Week, the brand debuted a collaboration with vodka label Croc ([see story](#)).

"Especially during fashion week its crucial to stand out among all the active brands as the whole world of fashion is watching what the influential community on Instagram is talking about," said Robert Levenhagen, CEO and founder of [InfluencerDB](#), Mnster, Germany. "This also drives additional press and generally makes the difference between a big success and failure."

Over the past couple of years, numerous fashion labels have toyed with new runway show formats in an effort to keep up with an increasingly fast fashion cycle.

Luxury brands Burberry and Ralph Lauren are among those giving the fashion calendar a makeover in an attempt to meet consumer demand for instant gratification. Fashionbi's "[Challenging the Fashion Calendar](#)" report notes that there are pros and cons to every option, leading to lots of experimentation ([see story](#)).

With influencers often driving more publicity than brand-owned accounts ([see story](#)), partnerships are key for fashion week.

"The most important thing is having the true influencers in your audience," Mr. Levenhagen said. "True influence in the fashion world is not determined by the number of followers, though. It is determined by a creator's respect from other influencers.

"So brands need to try to identify influencers that not only reach mainstream consumers, look for influencers that influence other influencers, get them to join the their event and provide them a great experience so they share the emotions organically and authentically with their audiences," he said.