

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Zegna's service, trustworthiness stands out among men's fashion labels

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Ermenegildo Zegna delivers the best customer experience in men's luxury fashion. Image credit: Ermenegildo Zegna

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Italian house Ermenegildo Zegna is considered the most emotionally intelligent men's luxury fashion brand by affluent consumers, outranking Hermès and Brooks Brothers in a new report.

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According to Luxury Institute's 2018 Emotionally Intelligent Brand Index, Zegna sets itself apart with its strong consistency in product quality, customer service and empathy. Out of the almost 20 men's brands rated, several succeed in the empathy elements but fall short in terms of quality and vice-versa.

Luxury Institute's report is based on a survey of 1,200 affluent U.S. consumers with a household income of at least \$150,000.

Blending service and emotion

Ermenegildo Zegna received the highest scores for customer service and trustworthiness, and ranked in second for merchandise quality and generosity. All together, Zenga scored 7.16 out of 10 in Luxury Institute's Brand Index.

To better serve its clients, Zegna is connecting the dots between ecommerce browsing and in-store purchases with a try-and-buy service.

The label is now giving consumers the option to reserve pieces that catch their eye online at a store near them, easing the dressing room experience. While luxury shoppers are becoming increasingly comfortable converting online, this feature will allow consumers to easily try before they buy, leading to expedited bricks-and-mortar trips and more confident purchases ([see story](#)).



Hermès men's fall/winter 2018 campaign. Image credit: Hermès

French fashion group Hermès was the top-rated men's label for quality, and earned an overall score of 7.05.

In the first half of 2018, Hermès saw its reoccurring operating profits reach an “all-time high” at 34.5 percent of sales.

Hermès saw revenues of 2.8 million euros, or \$3.3 million, an 11 percent growth at constant exchange rates and 5 percent at current exchange ([see story](#)).



Ralph Lauren Men's Spring 2019. Image credit: Ralph Lauren

U.S. fashion label Ralph Lauren did not rank in the top 10 for merchandise quality or customer service, but it is nonetheless one of the brands affluent men most recommend to each other.

The label's widespread familiarity was beneficial in the ranking, as it performed well in the emotional intelligence areas of generosity, trustworthiness and empathy. Ralph Lauren was also named as the brand customers were most likely to purchase in the next 12 months.

Emotional ties

While luxury brands have the same emotional connections with their customers, emphasizing these bonds can benefit companies' bottom lines.

According to a study by Motista, emotionally-connected customers remain loyal to brands for longer, and spend up to two times more in a year. Coupled with a growth in annual spend, creating deeper relationships can lead to a greater lifetime value for retailers.

Motista's report found that within the luxury business, consumers who are satisfied spend an average of \$699 per year, while those who have an emotional connection spend \$1,423 ([see story](#)).

In women's apparel and accessories, Chanel's use of quality customer service and products as well as its emotional connection with consumers pushed it to the top of the Luxury Institute's 2018 Emotionally Intelligent Brand Index. The brand was closely followed by another French label, Louis Vuitton.

Similarly to Ralph Lauren in the men's sector, Stella McCartney surprised researchers, as it was ranked number one in empathy within Luxury Institute's index, but was only listed as number 17 in product quality ([see story](#)).

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