

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Huntsman appeals to time-strapped clientele with speedier service

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Huntsman's Bespoke 100 shortens the production process by 30 percent. Image credit: Huntsman

By SARAH JONES

British menswear label Huntsman Savile Row is expediting the bespoke tailoring process to cater to today's luxury consumer.

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In honor of its 100th anniversary of its current 11 Savile Row London address, Huntsman is launching Bespoke 100, a service that enables clients to get a made-to-measure suit in six to eight weeks. Time itself has become a luxury, and consumers are steadily expecting their fashion faster, making this new offering an opportunity for Huntsman to compete more effectively with ready-to-wear brands.

"All high-end businesses are faced with production time to market, especially those brands that offer bespoke or custom product options," said Rebecca Miller, founder/CEO of [Miller & Company](#), New York. "Due to the lack of genuine knowledge and understanding about the process entailed in making a 'bespoke' suit, consumers will often opt to purchase a 'custom' suit instead where the rules around handwork and the number of fittings are less extensive, therefore reducing the time required to make the suit.

"By reducing the production time and cost, they have the opportunity to acquire a broader clientele, many who may transition to their original offerings," she said.

Ms. Miller is not affiliated with Huntsman, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [Huntsman](#) was reached for comment.

Speedier suiting

Huntsman's Bespoke 100 is designed to deliver a two-piece suit in 30 percent less time than the typical bespoke process, without cutting corners.

For the service, Huntsman has curated a selection of fabrics that clients can choose from. The bespoke suits start at 3,500 pounds, or about \$4,500 at current exchange, making the cost more similar to an off-the-rack luxury suit.



Huntsman Bespoke 100. Image credit: Huntsman

While the suits are still measured, cut, fit, finished and pressed at 11 Savile Row, Huntsman is turning to certified bespoke ateliers around the globe to help speed the production of the suits.

"To meet the needs of the modern luxury consumer, Huntsman has embraced a new method of production by expanding its pool of tailors," Ms. Miller said. "These collaborations, progressively popular, allow them to increase output while reducing production timelines without experiencing an increase in fixed costs, still delivering a quality product."

Along with being available at 11 Savile Row, the Bespoke 100 experience is offered at the brand's New York boutique and through its trunk shows around the world.

Responding to interest from the U.S. audience, Huntsman grew beyond its existing appointment-only space on 57th Street in Manhattan in 2017, opening a three-floor pied-a-terre ([see story](#)).

Rather than supplanting Huntsman's traditional bespoke offering, Bespoke 100 is available alongside the Bespoke 1849 service, which has been unchanged since the tailor opened in 1849.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

Today Huntsman proudly introduces Bespoke 100, an exciting new bespoke offering. Watch the film to find out more and visit our website for information about all of our bespoke services and to book an appointment.

A post shared by Huntsman (@huntsmansavilerow) on Jan 4, 2019 at 4:35am PST

Instagram post from Huntsman

Huntsman has previously innovated the bespoke experience.

The label extended the traditionally in-store tailor experience to customers' homes with a new service.

Huntsman is partnering with **Toshi**, a fashion technology company, to allow customers to get their suits hand-delivered to them along with alternate sizes and other luxury assistant services. This move was a response to the growing mobilization and digitization of the retail experience ([see story](#)).

Modern minded

Savile Row's tailors are adapting to new generations' needs and wants. For instance, Gieves & Hawkes is using digital to broaden its consumer base, according to an executive from the brand speaking at Luxury Interactive Europe 2015.

Gieves & Hawkes has more than 400 years of history dating back to when it was two separate entities and still sees the majority of its business from loyal longtime consumers. However, as boomers fall out of the market and millennials make their entrance, all brands must adjust their marketing efforts accordingly ([see story](#)).

While bespoke tailors stand apart from the ready-to-wear business, they are still impacted by fashion's current need for speed.

The rapid pace of shoppers' social media discovery and fashion buying habits is hurting luxury brands that have longer journeys to market, according to a report from McKinsey.

From "sketch to store," "affordable" luxury fashion and premium goods take 46 weeks compared to 28 weeks for vertical companies that have no wholesale component. Those weeks can be critical as this time impacts brands' abilities to respond to emerging trends or keep popular items in stock ([see story](#)).

"Savile Row and fast fashion are at opposite ends of the spectrum," Ms. Miller said. "Traditionally, Savile Row tailors have their own look and you go to each tailor for that specific 'look.'

"That said, they are faced with faster fashion cycles and ready-to-wear, or off-the-peg, and must find a way to compete, without sacrificing their long-standing reputations," she said. "By engaging the support of additional tailors, located in various countries, Huntsman is opening up a new market, creating a new revenue stream."