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Louis Vuitton aims younger with streetwear and influencers

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Louis Vuitton works with YouTube influencer Emma Chamberlain

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

French fashion label Louis Vuitton is using a new form of influencer relationship to cater to a younger generation, as experiential leanings become more important to brands.

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Model Karlie Kloss was the special guest at Louis Vuitton's runway show during Paris Fashion Week, alongside 17-year old YouTube influencer Emma Chamberlain. The label is extending its relationships with the influencers through a series of content following the show, in the hopes of catering to millennials as well as Gen Z consumers.

"It's always best when reaching out to new audiences to look to those that are a reflection of that group," said Kimmie Smith, cofounder, creative director and stylist at [Athleisure Mag](#). "People regardless of their generational segment want to be able to connect with someone that is easy to understand."

"In watching the video, we know that Emma is an influencer who clearly has a following, but we also see that she is not someone who is in the fashion industry, so she is clearly sharing her awareness of the brand from someone who is being introduced to do it," she said. "The excitement, explaining it and the realization that she will be attending this show is something that Gen Z can learn from and 'join' her in her journey."

"In addition, Gen Z is able to hear from Karlie who is also educating them as someone who a number of Gen Z would be aware of as they have seen her in her career as well as her being the latest host of Bravo's 'Project Runway.' Together there is a great understanding, history and an authentic nature about hearing from the brand and then finally being able to see how these separate accounts converge to the show."

Ms. Smith is not affiliated with [Louis Vuitton](#), but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

The new fashion

While luxury fashion labels are flocking to a number of millennial influencers, the Gen Z YouTube star is not quite as popular for partnerships.

But as these younger consumers get closer to being able to afford luxury goods, these influencers hold a significant

amount of clout. Louis Vuitton is introducing its brand to these younger consumers, in addition to the still important millennial segment.

Louis Vuitton is sharing a variety of content with the women, including a film that features side-by-side interviews with the influencers discussing their relationship with each other and the brand and their experiences in Paris.

Ms. Chamberlain's interview appeals to the younger generation with a wide range of slang terms, known as Gen Z speak. The quirky film also features both Ms. Kloss and Ms. Chamberlain mimicking the catwalk in their own hotel rooms in Louis Vuitton clothing.

Along with a lengthy video posted on Louis Vuitton's YouTube channel, both influencers shared their take on the experience in their own styles. Ms. Kloss has about 742,000 subscribers, while Ms. Chamberlain has more than 7 million followers.

Louis Vuitton's video with the ambassadors

Louis Vuitton's millennial and Gen Z outreach also extends to its designs.

The film and influencer content surrounding its runway show comes as Louis Vuitton introduces its new men's sneaker line.

In addition to Gen Z becoming more of a point for fashion brands, streetwear and athleisure is becoming an integral part of high fashion, with brands such as Balenciaga and Christian Louboutin also releasing their own sneakers.

Designed by Louis Vuitton menswear artistic director Virgil Abloh, this marks the designer's first sneaker line for the label. The shoes are being launched with a series of short clips on Instagram.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

Setting the pace. @VirgilAbloh first sneakers for #LouisVuitton are the highly anticipated LV Trainers. Explore the collection via link in bio.

A post shared by Louis Vuitton Official (@louisvuitton) on Mar 22, 2019 at 7:10am PDT

Louis Vuitton's Instagram post

Louis Vuitton on the streets

The recent sneaker launch is not the first time the French fashion house has leaned into streetwear, as the industry as a whole moves in this direction. The brand debuted a fall/winter campaign for 2017 that included a streetwear-inspired aesthetic and hip-hop-tinged short film.

Louis Vuitton's campaign put the collection first and foremost, with little artifice or concept beyond a showcase of the clothing and the models. The clothes themselves are clearly modeled after the growing popularity of streetwear, with sneakers, caps and a monochromatic color scheme anchoring the collection ([see story](#)).

Mr. Abloh's true commitment to diversity has allowed his first collection drop to see significant sales numbers, before it even reached the brand's boutiques.

After creating buzz for Louis Vuitton on the runway, the designer brought his unique approach to marketing with a three-part campaign that focuses on personally important themes that are also present in his designs. The Boyhood series ushers in the menswear collection by showcasing infancy, childhood and adolescence, stages of development in which society's views of race and gender have not yet been imposed and kids dare to dream ([see story](#)).

With this influencer content, Louis Vuitton is bringing the same youthful streetwear aesthetic to its women's collection.

"Long-form content with influencers is different than a campaign because you get a greater understanding that is more immersive through what is seen as well as what is being said," Athleisure Mag's Ms. Smith said. "Campaigns tend to be images or perhaps a video where content has been planned and the influencer lends their face and person into the brand."

"This long-form content allows the brand to still be a player in the content, but it is through the eyes of the influencer and allows them to freely interact and presents an authentic look at how they are interacting with the content, which rings true," she said. "In this particular video, you have four major pillars that are showcasing the story of Louis Vuitton: Emma, Karlie, Louis Vuitton as a product as well as the show and Paris. All of this creates a coveted experience that encourages Gen Z to understand this is a brand that they should know, that it's a brand that they should aspire to have and to keep an eye out for it when they are shopping or walking around."

"As the more you know about something existing, you seem to find it even when you're not looking for it."