

RETAIL

## Selfridges leverages digital creativity in expansive effort

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*Selfridges collaborated with digital artist Jon Emmony for its swimwear campaign. Image credit: Selfridges*

By SARAH RAMIREZ

British department store chain Selfridges is looking to bring the future of fashion to shoppers by working with digital artists on a new multichannel initiative.

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Through "The New Order," the retailer is enhancing the concept of creative collaborations by merging physical and digital shopping. Luxury retailers are turning to more experiential offerings as they work to lure consumers away from their screens and inside stores.

"Selfridges is demonstrating its understanding that fans and engagement are no longer the sales criterion," said Rebecca Miller, founder/CEO of **Miller & Company**, New York. "Attention and reaction are now the standards, creating a new art form for selling."

"Visual customization has become the primary vehicle in our decision-making process," she said. "Caution must be exercised so as not to extricate human interaction with one another in favor of reality's innovation."

Futuristic fashion

Selfridges' New Order spans digital content, including social videos, and a seasonal in-store makeover.

The retailer worked closely with a selection of artists, including Jon Emmony, Filip Custic, Ines Alpha and Jamee-Maree Shipton, to create unique campaigns. The collaborations will be launched through September.

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Join us on a journey as we invite some of the most boundary-breaking digital creatives to imagine a new wireframe for the future of fashion. Our latest swimwear campaign was created by @jonemmony and features @agentprovocateur @frankiesbikinis @ralphlauren @zimmermann @paulsmithdesign @vilebrequin @seafollyaustralia . . . Digital Artist & Photographer @jonemmony Online Imagery Photographer @thechrissutton Digital Fashion Director @nabilaliffi Head of Art Direction @jenna\_murray\_ Senior Creative Producer @studio\_tui Creative Producer @georgia\_benney Styling @mollydonovan @rubenmoreira @elvijav Senior Casting Manager @affaosman Fashion Marketing Lead @v\_meekings

A post shared by Selfridges (@theofficialselfridges) on Jul 4, 2019 at 1:07am PDT

### *Selfridges swimwear campaign by Jon Emmony*

Mr. Emmony was the creative force behind the first film and worked with photographer Chris Sutton for Selfridges' swimwear campaign. The team used digital elements, such as augmented reality, to create a colorful, surreal backdrop for the models posing in swimwear from brands including Agent Provocateur and Calvin Klein.

One woman is shown poolside, dipping her hand in a digital stream. In other instances, frames freeze and the models are transformed into metallic, 3D figurines.

In the buildup to the future campaigns, Selfridges has launched a microsite for New Order, which includes interviews with the other creatives. Each featured artist discusses his or her views on digital art media, technology and other related topics.

The microsite also has an educational element, as Selfridges encourages consumers to actively participate in what it terms the "digital revolution." Among the suggestions are trying virtual reality experiences in London, following virtual influencers on social media and reading books such as "New Dark Age" by James Bridle.



*New window display as part of the New Order campaign. Image credit: Selfridges*

On Aug. 22, Selfridges will also be unveiling new window displays at its Oxford Street location. This will be the first time passersby will be able to shop digitally rendered products directly from the windows by scanning a QR code.

Selfridges worked with motion graphic designer Christina Worner and Digi-gal founder Cat Taylor to digitally dress the window mannequins by 3D scanning apparel and accessories. Future window displays at Selfridges may incorporate holograms and other technology.

Inside, shoppers will have to use their smartphones to fully experience an installation from Mr. Emmony, which spans five floors. Snapchat makeup filters and 3D digital cosmetics are also available in-store.

"Harry Gordon Selfridge, the founder of Selfridges, enjoyed illustrious success due to his relentless innovative marketing schemes transforming the department store into a social and cultural landmark making shopping a pleasure and an educational experience," Ms. Miller said. "Today, Selfridges carries on this tradition by once again augmenting reality, transforming a mere shopping moment into an adventure of curiosity and creation reflective of their customer's desires and offerings through a series of artistic virtual experiences."

#### Retail technology

As shoppers come to expect more in-store technology, Selfridges and other retailers are working to keep up with the demand.

For instance, British department store Harrods is giving its Tech Rooms an experiential update, looking to build an interactive, educational environment for digital devices.

Harrods has moved its technology offerings from the third floor to the fifth, and the retailer has just opened the first stage of the revamped department. Recently, the retailer has been updating its flagship store with a push towards retail theater ([see story](#)).

Last summer, Chinese ecommerce giant Alibaba opened a concept store that offered shoppers and luxury retailers a look at a new frontier for fashion retail digitization.

Dubbed "FashionAI," the temporary pilot boutique harnessed artificial intelligence capabilities for a stress-free shopping experience. For instance, clothing was equipped with intelligent locks that communicated with the smart mirrors to show product information for each garment, as well as offer other clothing recommendations ([see story](#)).

"Retailers understand that digital transformation has changed business as usual," Ms. Miller said. "Incorporating digital strategies are important to align with the changing ways customers shop using beacons, digital signage, QR codes and AI-driven personalization designed to create a positive customer experience.

"Virtual reality and augmented reality are also facilitating more experiential interactions with consumers," Ms. Miller said. "It is important for retailers to demonstrate their evolving understanding of ecommerce and in-store transactions by developing strategies that incorporate both worlds."