

RETAIL

Top 10 retail headlines of H1

July 26, 2019



A new beauty floor is the latest addition to the revamped Bloomingdale's flagship. Image courtesy of Bloomingdale's

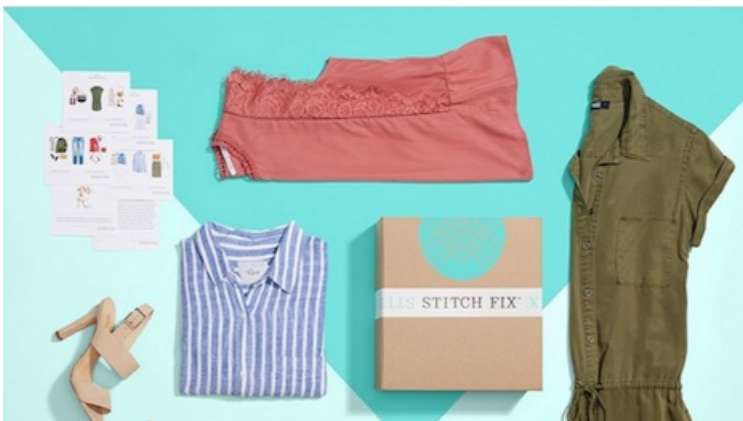
By STAFF REPORTS

Luxury retailers have been reorganizing and developing new strategies to gain better traction as modern retail becomes vastly different than the past.

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Mergers and acquisitions coupled with sales floor reorganization and experiential retail have been rampant strategies throughout the sector so far this year. As bricks-and-mortar footprints shrink, retailers look to extend relationships with shoppers in other ways.

Here are the top 10 retail headlines from the first half of 2019, in no particular order:



Stitch Fix was one of the top ten online apparel retailers in 2016. Image credit: Stitch Fix

Direct-to-consumer disrupts all sectors with new customer journey

The ubiquitous nature of technology today has allowed new companies to flourish and greatly disrupt luxury retail, but those who are seeing the most success embody a number of clear characteristics such as focusing on the customer relationship.

A new report from IAB outlines seven attributes of direct-to-consumer companies who are disrupting their respective fields, such as focusing on the customer relationship. Stitch Fix, Tamara Mellon, The RealReal, The Honest

Company and Drizly are a few of the companies IAB mentions who are coming to power as business operations fundamentally shift, but no matter what the sector, these companies share a multitude of characteristics ([see story](#)).



Sephora continues its mission in omnichannel retail. image credit: Sephora

Sephora grows its physical footprint, while other retailers close stores

LVMH's Sephora leaned into a heavier bricks-and-mortar presence with the addition of 35 new stores, as other retailers shrink their physical footprints.

Showcasing the growth of the beauty sector and Sephora's prowess at experiential retail in physical spaces, the cosmetic retailer has started rolling out the new stores this year. The year of new store openings began with its new Hudson Yards store in New York on March 13 ([see story](#)).



Saks Fifth Avenue's innovative store design. Image credit: Saks

Saks defines New Luxury with latest renovation rollout

Department store chain Saks Fifth Avenue concluded another phase of its flagship renovation process as it seeks to build what it believes is the New Luxury shopping experience, focusing on product assortment, a new form of heightened service and exclusive offerings.

Saks started off its new main floor opening with a series of more than 100 exclusives developed with brand partners to celebrate its emphasis on product. In addition to a one-of-a-kind escalator as a focal piece, Saks' flagship location is also grabbing attention with its impressive handbag selection ([see story](#)).



Michael Kors is breaking from using real fur. Image credit: Michael Kors

Could New York be next US city to ban fur?

Proposed legislation in New York would ban the sale of animal furs, as the movement reaches the fashion capital of the United States.

State and city lawmakers introduced anti-fur legislation that would ban the manufacturing and sale of animal pelts or apparel. In recent years, luxury labels have been more public about eliminating or reducing their use of real animal furs as consumers become more interested in sustainable fashion ([see story](#)).



Harrods is updating its tech rooms. Image credit: Harrods

Harrods aims to create UK's "ultimate technology destination"

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

Harrods moved its technology offerings from the third floor to the fifth, and the retailer 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](#)).

Bloomingdale's gives flagship beauty department an interactive makeover

Department store chain Bloomingdale's capitalized on the growing popularity of high-end cosmetics by unveiling a new beauty floor at its New York flagship.

The retailer has been undergoing an expansive renovation to maintain its position as a shopping destination in the ecommerce age. The refreshed beauty department has spa rooms, a fragrance hall, interactive displays and other services meant to entice in-store shoppers ([see story](#)).



Exterior of The RealReal's new Madison store. Image credit: The RealReal

The RealReal files for IPO

After discussions grew throughout this year surrounding luxury consignment platform The RealReal possibly launching an initial public offering, the resale platform officially filed.

In a statement revealing its plans for investors, the resale platform said that it intends to transform the luxury resale segment. The RealReal is boasting its tech and data offerings to investors, citing the up to 50 unique attributes for each piece that is consigned with its company ([see story](#)).



EBay is working with What Goes Around Comes Around. Image courtesy of eBay

EBay leans further into luxury with secondhand alliance

Online marketplace eBay ramped up its secondhand luxury offerings through a partnership with high-end reseller What Goes Around Comes Around.

Through the alliance, a series of limited-time curated collections will be available on eBay, with pre-owned merchandise from brands including Hermès and Gucci. eBay has been working to position itself as a go-to platform for high-end fashion through programs and product availability ([see story](#)).



Farfetch grew its brand partnerships in 2018. Image credit: Farfetch

Farfetch looks towards blockchain for "frictionless ecommerce"

Ecommerce platform Farfetch helped to form a new Facebook-backed blockchain initiative as a founding member of the Libra Association.

Along with other founding members such as Mastercard and Lyft, Farfetch will work to develop Libra Blockchain, which is used for both internal business applications and as a currency. Luxury companies have been tapping into blockchain to tackle everything from secure transactions to traceability ([see story](#)).



Net-A-Porter will feature eco-friendly fashion. Image courtesy of Net-A-Porter

Net-A-Porter debuts sustainability vertical as demand for eco-conscious luxury grows

Online retailer Net-A-Porter hopes to help shoppers indulge in sustainable fashion with the launch of a platform dedicated to environmentally conscious apparel and accessories.

Affluent consumers are becoming more interested in ethical and environmentally responsible fashion, but it can be challenging to know which brands are truly committed to sustainability. With the launch of Net Sustain, the retailer has designated 26 brands and more than 500 products that meet at least one of Net-A-Porter's sustainability criteria ([see story](#)).

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