

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Ralph Lauren turns to QR code tech to track merchandise for authenticity, supply chain clarity

November 4, 2019



QR codes on labels of Ralph Lauren products help authenticate merchandise for consumers and aid in supply chain and inventory management for the U.S. fashion giant. Image credit: Ralph Lauren

By STAFF REPORTS

U.S. fashion marketer Ralph Lauren Corp. has stepped up its fight with fakes via the launch of unique digital identities that let smartphone-wielding consumers scan the apparel or accessory's QR code for its authenticity.

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Starting with the company's Polo label, the inclusion of Digital Product Identities also helps Ralph Lauren track merchandise across the supply chain to track orders and inventory. The unique QR code will appear on the label of each Ralph Lauren product.

"The launch of Digital Product IDs demonstrates how we continue to use technology to deliver more for our consumers and ensure the integrity of our products throughout their lifecycle," said David Lauren, chief innovation officer, at Ralph Lauren, New York, in a statement.

"The application of this technology means every Polo product will be born-digital,' which represents a new milestone in data intelligence innovation in our sector," he said.

Ralph Lauren is one of the United States' most visible homegrown fashion brands, known for espousing dual lifestyles: preppy and western.



No more out in the cold: Ralph Lauren digitizes down to a product level. Seen: Ralph Lauren outerwear. Image credit: Ralph Lauren

Code language

EVERYTHNG, a connected Internet of Things platform, and labeling technology firm **Avery Dennison** helped with this new QR code-based digital identification system. Other clients of EVERYTHNG include Mot Hennessy, Rebecca Minkoff, Diageo, ABInBev, Mars, Unilever and GE.

Ralph Lauren is phasing in Digital Product IDs across all its merchandise, with the product digitization currently available for certain products in select global retail stores and on the [RalphLauren.com](https://www.RalphLauren.com) site.

"Ralph Lauren is able to capture production information in real-time through the Digital ID for each item as they are commissioned in the factory," said Niall Murphy, cofounder/CEO of EVERYTHNG. "This gives them unprecedented visibility into production, and traceability from source," he said.

PRODUCT DIGITIZATION on a per-unit level helps combat counterfeits, grey market items and trademark infringement.

Scanning the QR code on Ralph Lauren merchandise also allows consumers to seek additional product details and styling recommendations.

An equally big benefit is the ability of Digital Product IDs to allow for real-time visibility to track the merchandise from its manufacturing birth to store delivery and end-customer purchase, thus improving inventory management.

"People are looking for an authentic relationship with the brand, and can interact with the Digital ID for transparency and deeper engagement," Mr. Murphy said.

Ralph Lauren's Every Moment is a Gift holiday campaign

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