

JEWELRY

UK jeweler Garrard strikes deals with Threads Styling, Dubai's Ounass to expand chat commerce, Middle East markets

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Garrard will promote its Wings collection on Threads Styling's chat commerce and to Ounass' Middle Eastern online customers. Image credit: Garrard

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Garrard has partnered with chat commerce provider Threads Styling and Middle Eastern luxury online retailer Ounass as the British jeweler expands its sales channels and markets in a challenging environment.

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The London-based Garrard will offer a selection of jewels, particularly its Wings and the new Aloria collections to consumers buying via online and mobile channels and also those located in the Arab world.

"Increasing our online presence is a priority for Garrard," said Joanne Milner, chief executive of Garrard, in a statement.

"Threads Styling and Ounass are trailblazers in their regions and opening up new sales channels in these important markets allows us to explore new ways to engage with new and existing clients," she said.

"As the world begins to adapt to its new circumstances, Garrard intends to emerge even stronger."



The Aloria collection is a reinterpretation of the Cullinan I diamond setting. Image courtesy of Garrard

Sparkling chats

Founded in 1735, **Garrard** has been jeweler to British monarchs, royals and aristocrats. It is known for the legendary setting of the Cullinan I diamond

the world's largest cut and colorless diamond which is now reinterpreted with the new Aloria collection, as well as tiaras worn at state occasions.

Now, the brand is targeting younger consumers and the online environment in which they shop. That is where Threads Styling comes in.

Founded in 2009, **Threads Styling** lets consumers connect with a virtual stylist through text, WhatsApp or WeChat by swiping up on Instagram.

The platform offers access to inventory worldwide from nearly 400 fashion and jewelry brands.

Fine jewelry and watch sales account for 20 percent of Threads' business, with continuous growth each year in that segment. A large chunk of Threads' audience is young.

"Our industry is continuously shifting and jewelry is a personal and emotional purchase that we cater to," said Threads founder Sophie Hill in a statement.

"Our business model has always been inclusive of delivering a tailored luxury customer experience to help our brand partners evolve their sales strategy in the new digital reality," she said.



Garrard Wings collection. Image courtesy of Garrard

Narrowing the gulf

While the Threads Styling partnership ticks off the social commerce box, selling via **Ounass** opens a new online market for Garrard.

The Dubai-based Ounass, launched four years ago, is known for its two-hour delivery service in its hometown and express delivery to other regions.

As the leading luxury online retailer in the Middle East, Ounass will offer Garrard access to shoppers in the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain.

Visitors to the online store will be able to browse and buy nearly 40 Wings jewels on the Ounass Web site, mobile app, VIP personal shopping service and through shoppable links on Instagram.

While Garrard has a vast repertoire of jewelry to push, the emphasis for now on both Threads Styling and Ounass is its Wings and Aloria collections.

"Our main focus is on the Wings collection, which has become a true icon at Garrard," said Garrard creative director

Sara Prentice in a statement.

"Beautiful and meaningful, the jewels chosen to appear on both Threads Styling and Ounass range from classic diamond creations to jewelry pieces set with vibrant pink and yellow sapphires, colorful aquamarine and enamel," she said.

"With these fresh, relevant edits, we have highlighted the breadth of this much-loved collection. The Aloria collection is also an important part of our offering on Threads Styling. These spirited jewels are colorful, often reversible and very versatile perfect for Threads' young, fashion-savvy audience."

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