

MARKETING

Gucci, Burberry lead luxury brands in digital acceleration: Altagamma

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Gucci has proven resiliency through the global pandemic. Image credit: Gucci

By NORA HOWE

The acceleration of the COVID-19 pandemic has given rise to innovative digital strategies within the sector of personal luxury goods such as the collection and systemization of data, more agile marketing models and increased attention to the authenticity of storytelling.

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In the era of COVID-19, Contactlab's study indicated a strong acceleration in the online presence of all brands, particularly through the development of tools to facilitate online shopping, virtual stores and sales assistants, adaptation of content through email marketing and an increased use of augmented reality. In partnership with the National Chamber of Italian Fashion, Altagamma has used this research to recognize Gucci, Dior and Moncler for success in customer relations and Burberry and Prada for exceptional digital offerings.

"The pandemic has led to an acceleration of online sales of personal luxury goods, which have grown by 12 percent to 23 percent of total sales in 2020," said Stefania Lazzaroni, general manager of Altagamma, in a statement. "Digital is turning from a channel for sales and communication into an environment in which today's younger consumers can live an immersive experience with the brand.

"With the Altagamma Digital Awards, created with Contactlab, we intend to monitor the evolution of the digital ecosystem of Personal Luxury Goods on the basis of a very broad set of parameters that offers an opportunity for comparison and analysis on which are the most useful and effective tools to manage social media and online activity," she said.

The winners were selected on the basis of data collected and analyzed in the 2020 edition of the Digital Competitive Map, a tool for evaluating the digital positioning of luxury brands developed by Contactlab, which this year measured the performance of 44 brands based on 271 parameters.

Winner's podium

Gucci was awarded "Best in Class Customer Relations," recognized for its navigation and user experience during online shopping, for the high quality and variety of digital content and especially for its desire to experiment and

innovate online. By utilizing augmented reality, eco-packaging, digital gifting with split payments, remote shopping capabilities and more, Gucci has become a benchmark for digital direct marketing.

Dior was awarded "Best Improver 2018-2020 Customer Relations," having worked to improve the user experience of both its ecommerce platform and its Web site as well as increasing the payment options available online. Additionally, Dior has introduced several innovative services such as the Facebook chatbot, a virtual perfume store, an app for virtual try-ons of make-up and augmented reality on emails through Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat and Web browsers.

Moncler tied with Dior for "Best Improver 2018-2020 Customer Relations," as it has enhanced omnichannel services by including store virtual appointments, expanding online payment and delivery and return options. It has also invested in the development of in-store digital services, focusing on a full mobile digital experience: digital data collection, mobile payments, endless aisle and mobile after sales.

Moncler has also strengthened the digital interaction with the consumer through digital postcards, livestreaming and digital appointments.



Burberry stands out as a benchmark for ecommerce. Image credit: Burberry

Burberry was awarded "Best in Class Digital Offer," standing out for the most widespread presence on ecommerce platforms, both directly and by online retailers and luxury online department stores. It has expanded its online range and offers the most extensive content localization online and through email marketing.

Burberry has also implemented its presence on social media platforms, including in Asia, and geolocated its Facebook account.

Prada was awarded "Best Improver 2018-2020 Digital Offer."

The acceleration of Prada's digital transformation and omnichannel approach over the past two years has resulted in a complete redesign of the site's customer experience on an international scale and in the opening of new ecommerce markets this year in Brazil, Singapore and Korea. The brand has also focused on localization and personalization of content and has further strengthened its digital communication strategy through the full use of social channels.



Prada earns its place as the most improved brand within the digital space. Image credit: Prada

The Special Award was given to Gucci for being consistent in digital excellence for the past three years.

Reigning supreme

Despite the pandemic and overall uncertainty throughout 2020, interest in luxury brands has continued to grow and some brands have exceeded expectations through digital optimization.

According to the [Lyst Index report](#) on the hottest brands and products in fashion, Gucci reclaimed the top spot since early 2019. The Italian brand's livestream event in July exceeded 35 million views, making it the brand's most watched digital ever ever.

Burberry proved good strategic progress, especially in four main areas: full-price channels year-over-year, growth in leather goods, increase in new and younger consumers and growth in the digital space. The brand's spring/summer 2021 show was available for all to experience virtually through Twitch and Tmall, generating 118 million views ([see story](#)).

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