

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Digital tools reinforce brand authenticity, sustainability for conscious consumers

June 30, 2021



Product authentication can boost consumer confidence about brand sustainability. Image credit: Save the Ducks

By KATIE TAMOLA

As ecommerce offerings are constantly revolutionized and people return to in-store shopping, contemporary consumers continue demanding authenticity and sustainability.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

During a webinar hosted by *Luxury Daily* on June 29, panelists discussed how brands must continue leveraging technology to assist consumers in making ethical choices. Brands should evolve and adapt to meet the new consumers' needs, prioritizing ethics, including sustainability and authenticity.

"The need for businesses to operate in an ethical and responsible way is apparent now more than ever," said Greta Moser, global director of product line management, brand protection and factory automation solutions at **Avery Dennison**, Lyon, France.

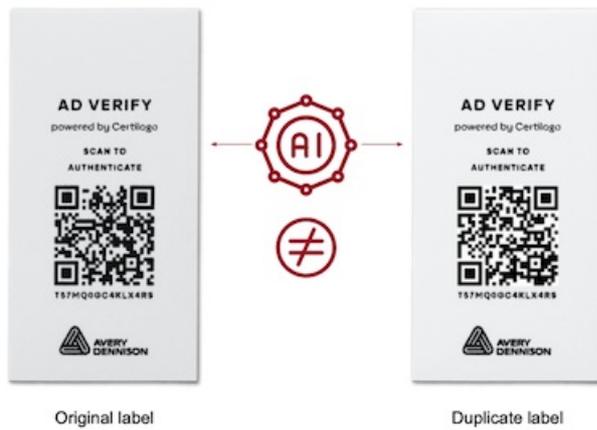
"Ethical fashion is fashion that aims to reduce the negative impact of people and animals on the planet, and can involve a lot of things like design, production materials, distribution, working conditions, exploitation fair trade, environment and animal welfare," she said. "What we are seeing from consumer insight statistics is that implementing and honoring pledges that protect people and the planet, not only strengthens trust and loyalty with the shoppers, investors and potential employees, but it also helps brands and retailers in their supply chain."

The webinar was sponsored by Avery Dennison

What consumers want

How a brand understands and maintains its ethics differs across organizations. Consumers appear to care more about sustainability than ever before, and these are the kind of priorities that brands are paying close attention to.

Consumers want to see that their concerns and wishes are heard, and brands are making clear efforts to respond.



Scannable labels from AD Verify simplify traceability. Image credit: Certilogo

Brands and retailers should take a holistic approach to fashion, according to Loris Spadaccini, director and U.S. general manager of [Save The Duck](#), a 100 percent animal-free outerwear brand.

Save The Duck was born around the idea of producing animal-free products in a category where animal use is immensely present. It is one of only two Italian certified B-corporations for its social and environmental performance.

During a time of vast environmental concerns, consumer prioritization of sustainability will not fade.

"There is no going back to what used to be," Mr. Spadaccini said.

Per Avery Dennison's Ms. Mose, today's consumers want easy and instant accessibility, and brands should continue embracing digitalization as a means of building that.

Another key concern of consumers and brands alike is product authenticity. When a customer purchases a fraudulent item, it offends the buyer and hinders the brand's sustainability and loyalty-building efforts.

Data from digital authentication platform [Certilogo](#) states that one in four products available to consumers right now is counterfeit, and nine out of 10 fakes are sold online.

The number of fake products sold grew to 27 percent in April 2021, bringing the distribution of fake items reached an all-time high. If this growth continues, experts believe counterfeiters will obtain one-third of the luxury market.

The presence of counterfeit products is a harsh reality that affects all luxury brands and demands a response. An alternative to digital tools that combat fraudulent goods is legal proceedings.



Gucci and Facebook have filed a joint lawsuit combating the sale of counterfeit Gucci products. Image credit: Gucci

This spring, Italian fashion house Gucci and social tech giant Facebook announced their joint lawsuit against the head of an alleged international counterfeiting business.

The lawsuit claimed that the defendant used multiple Facebook and Instagram accounts, eluding Facebook's enforcement efforts and policies, to sell counterfeit Gucci products. This lawsuit was the first of its kind for both Facebook and Gucci and the latest example of an online platform partnering with a luxury label to combat the distribution of counterfeit goods on social media ([see story](#)).

Need for authenticity

Since counterfeit goods are likely to continue permeating the luxury industry, brands must use tools and listen to consumers' needs to combat this issue.

During a *Luxury Daily* webinar in April, speakers from the ecommerce and brand protection industries discussed how shifts in consumer behavior have impacted authentication and anti-counterfeiting efforts. Consumer-facing technology such as smart tags has become a crucial element in protecting brands and shoppers from counterfeit luxury products ([see story](#)).

In an earlier *Luxury Daily* webinar in February, panelists spoke about how the ecommerce boom continues to gain momentum as consumers remain drawn to its convenience and safety. Technology continues to be an imperative tool for brands in growing relationships and gaining trust with consumers ([see story](#)).

On average, the cost of a well-made fake product is only 15 percent lower than a genuine product. Although brands are obviously negatively impacted when someone purchases a fake product, they have a chance to establish or maintain a consumer relationship.

Brands must respond to authenticity concerns and can do so with digital tools. AD Verify, a tool from Avery Dennison and Certilogo, allows consumers to use their smart phones to scan tags on products to ensure product authenticity.

"The moment in which consumers discover that they have bought a fake actually is a key moment of truth for brands, and brands can use it to turn it into an opportunity to reinforce trust, rather than lose it," said Rossella Munafo, chief marketing officer at Certilogo, Milan. "And our experience with consumers, suggests that transparency and authenticity, are more important than ever today, and consumers will be loyal to brands that they can trust."

© 2021 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.