

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Neiman Marcus, Hypebeast launch inaugural virtual showroom

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Neiman Marcus is showcasing 11 exclusive luxury sneakers through a virtual experience set in a digital retail space on Hypebeast.com. Image credit: Hypebeast

By NORA HOWE

U.S. retailer Neiman Marcus and digital streetwear and lifestyle publication Hypebeast have joined forces on a new virtual experience to showcase the fall sneaker releases from several luxury brands.

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The digital retail experience is part of Neiman Marcus' "Re-introduce Yourself" fall campaign, and invites sneaker-heads around the world to indulge in the world of luxury streetwear. In cultivating the digital campaign, Neiman Marcus and Hypebeast connected their individual influences on global fashion to provide shoppers and readers access to a reimagined retail experience.

"We always look for new ideas as we continue to focus on creating magic for our customers with one-of-a-kind experiences and products," said Lana Todorovich, president and chief merchandising officer at **Neiman Marcus**, Dallas.

"This opportunity is both innovative and exciting for Neiman Marcus and Hypebeast as it has not been done before," she said. "It has allowed us to reimagine what the future of ecommerce looks like while bringing the best of both worlds together and offering access to our top luxury brands who specifically created exclusive shoe styles for our customers."

Neiman x Hypebeast

The virtual showroom, which blends online shopping and editorial storytelling, highlights the latest fall footwear offerings from 11 brands: Alexander McQueen, Balenciaga, Balmain, Christian Louboutin, Dolce & Gabbana, Givenchy, Maison Margiela, Moncler, Off-White, Versace and Giuseppe Zanotti.

Each one-of-a-kind style is exclusive to Neiman Marcus for the campaign.

The digitally recreated retail store, inspired by a futuristic science lab and modern art exhibit, is the first of its kind for both Neiman Marcus and Hypebeast.

After going to the store's [website](#), customers are promoted to click to enter the showroom.

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A post shared by Neiman Marcus (@neimanmarcus)

Upon entering, shoppers receive welcome messages that provide more detail on the inspiration behind the campaign and what is in store literally.

After continuing past the welcome signs, customers land on a menu page where 11 designers are displayed as digital folders. Each style is displayed with accentuating lighting and compositional angles within a minimalistic CGI space.

Customers are invited to explore each pair with interactive navigation and annotations available for purchase calling attention to the sneakers' design details.

For the launch, the 11 styles have been released exclusively on Neiman Marcus' [ecommerce site](#). Additionally, select styles will be available at all 37 Neiman Marcus stores, where sales associates may offer distinct style advice.

The retailer will also roll out content on its own social platforms and through email marketing in an effort to expand the reach to its customers who will have access to these styles via multiple channels.



Alexander McQueen's men's tread slick canvas embroidered boots retail at \$1,290. Image courtesy of Neiman Marcus

"Streetwear culture has been important for years now and the world of social media has increased its prevalence even more," Ms. Todorovich said. "It has created a bridge that connects luxury fashion and retail with a larger customer base, and it has become a gateway to broader sense of what luxury means today."

Content will live across Hypebeast's platform and social media channels, including a homepage takeover and Instagram stories teasing entry to the showroom.

The entire virtual showroom experience and campaign launched on Sept. 21. The sneakers range in price from \$595 to \$1,290.

Media collaborations

Luxury brands and retailers have been leveraging the power of media outlets and lifestyle publications to reach new and younger audiences.

Earlier this year, Italian fashion house Gucci collaborated with Dazed to launch "Absolute Beginners," a series which granted various artists their directorial debuts.

Gucci and Dazed challenged a selection of nine artists, from models to actors, to get behind the camera and direct short films for the fashion brand. The artists developed their own screenplays and brought their visions for Gucci to life as directors.

The assignment for these first-time directors was to highlight the force of pop culture and innocence, the beauty in conviction and the power and vulnerability that kindles creativity all while focusing on the Gucci Jackie bag ([see story](#)).

More recently, LVMH-owned jeweler Tiffany & Co. recruited music legends Beyonc Knowles and Jay-Z for its latest "About Love" campaign.

To garner traction, the New York-based jeweler sponsored the September issue of *Harper's Bazaar*, which features Ms. Knowles on the cover.

As the "Halo" singer turned 40 on Sept. 4, the publication focused on her evolution as a cultural and musical icon ([see story](#)).

For Neiman Marcus, the collaboration with Hypebeast is just the start of its strategy toward becoming a multi-channel luxury retailer.

"We are experiencing extraordinary growth in our luxury business both in stores and online with men's as one of the standout categories," Ms. Todorovich said. "Our online business continues to grow and our customers are seeking retail theatre outside of traditional retail interactions.

"As this space evolves, so does our larger strategy as a multi-channel luxury retailer to provide the most unique and engaging experiences such as this digitally-led Hypebeast collaboration that impacts all of our channels whether in store or online."

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