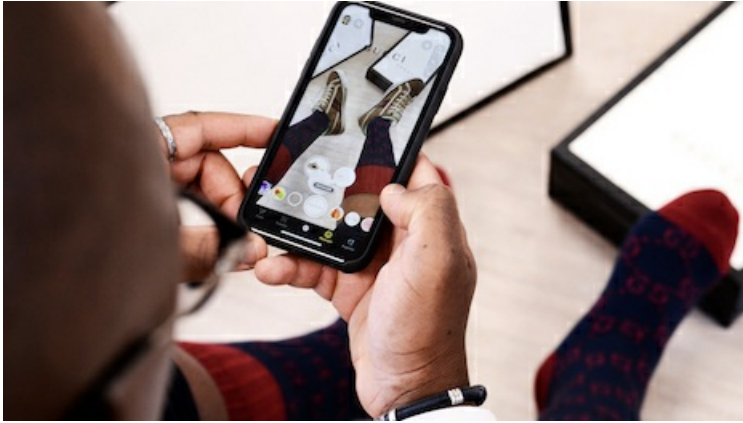


MARKETING

Gen Z shoppers find AR experiences, ads more personal: Snap

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Gucci is one of several luxury labels that have worked with Snapchat on AR campaigns. Image courtesy of Gucci

By SARAH RAMIREZ

Gen Z consumers are leading the drive towards more immersive shopping experiences, as they gravitate towards tools such as digital avatars and augmented reality.

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According to the 2022 Snapchat Generation Report, 92 percent of Gen Zers are interested in using AR for shopping. They also increasingly rely on visual communication forms to express themselves and engage with others.

"Gen Z has huge momentum to influence how brands are showing up and creating experiences for shoppers, and most importantly they are excited to see that evolve," said Sharon Silverstein, head of U.S. verticals at **Snap Inc.**, Los Angeles.

"AR can be an influential tool for shoppers, showcasing try-on capabilities that are unmatched elsewhere and brands need to invest in AR experiences to meet this highly influential generation of customers," she said. "AR is highly personal, accessible and fun so it's a natural format for Gen Z to enjoy."

Harnessing AR interest

When it comes to shopping, Gen Z is looking for fun and social experiences.

Fifty-five percent of Gen Zers believe AR is going to make life easier, and its applications are widespread.



Gucci and Harmony Korine collaborated with Snap Inc. on a pair of Spectacles, which bring AR to life. Image credit: Snap Inc.

More than four in 10 respondents like to experiment and change their looks or appearances. This group is twice as likely to buy items they have tried using AR, and 88 percent of Gen Z is interested in using this technology to try on makeup or clothing.

More than half of Gen Z also believes that AR experiences feel more personal, while almost half are more likely to pay attention to an ad that incorporates AR, such as filters or lenses allowing them to feel more connected to brands.

Marketers should take note, as 70 percent of Gen Zers who digitally interact with brands believe it is more important for brands to build connections with them. Fifty-two percent of respondents have also connected with others about the brands they like.

About six in 10 Gen Zers agree that connecting with their communities or loved ones helps them deal with stress, so communication is essential for this demographic and much of it is visual.

Ninety-six percent of Gen Z has used some form of visual communication when messaging friends, and three in five respondents use visual communication for more personal connections. More than half agree that digital avatars such as Bitmojis help them express themselves.

Compared to their millennial and Gen X counterparts, Gen Z is 1.2 times more likely to have created or shared their own digital avatar or Bitmoji. They are also 1.3 times more likely to have made their own GIF or meme to send to others.



Bitmojis are more popular with Gen Z than millennial and Gen X consumers. Image credit: Snap Inc.

Gen Z is also gravitating to positive spaces, whether in-person or digitally.

Two-thirds agree that they prioritize using social media apps that feel like positive environments. Half also have used social platforms to learn about recommendations or opinions from loved ones.

Luxury AR

Snapchat has positioned itself as a leader in AR, and luxury brands have taken notice.

Both luxury and mass-market brands have launched AR lenses on the social platform to create virtual try-on experiences.

In October 2020, French fashion label Dior introduced AR lenses for the launch of its new B27 sneakers. The brand, which was among the first luxury labels to have a business profile on Snapchat, encouraged users to virtually try on

the sneakers without needing to visit a store in person.

Dior promoted the AR lenses on its other social media channels, while Snapchat promoted the feature to users interested in luxury shopping and fashion resulting in millions of plays within days. Users interested in buying the sneakers were able to click a button and be taken to the Dior ecommerce site, completing the virtual trial experience ([see story](#)).

Italian fashion label Gucci also took its augmented reality service to Snapchat to let customers and prospects virtually try on its footwear and buy the merchandise if they chose.

The AR technology allowed users to explore how different models of Gucci shoes look on their feet. Consumers could pick the footwear on screen, point their mobile device's camera at their feet and virtually try on the chosen pair ([see story](#)).

Last year, Snapchat also partnered with Southern California-based online retailer Verishop to launch Verishop Mini.

Verishop Mini, which is accessible through Snapchat's rocket icon within chat and search, features a rotating selection of cult-favorite fashion labels. Additionally, users can virtually sample popular beauty products and accessories available from Verishop through Snap's new augmented reality try-on experiences ([see story](#)).

"Luxury brands have been influential in AR try-on experiences on Snapchat from Dior to Gucci to Fendi and more," Ms. Silverstein said. "AR tools for ecommerce are incredibly impactful for retailers, particularly because AR try-on technology can help reduce returns and is highly convertible.

"Snap has also made it incredibly easy to build and our try-on technology makes the shopping experience truly realistic," she said. "For retailers partnering with Snapchat to create AR try-on campaigns, we've seen businesses achieve a \$0.01 cost per product try-on.

"In leveraging these findings, luxury retailers can reinforce their AR strategy because it showcases how influential Gen Z is and highlights their impressive interest in AR shopping."