

SOFTWARE AND TECHNOLOGY

## Hugo Boss looks to the future with Metaverse Fashion Week activation

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*The brand is tapping into growing demand, allowing consumers to venture into the Metaverse. Image credit: Hugo Boss*

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

German fashion house Hugo Boss is exploring the power of immersion per an engaging Metaverse Fashion Week offering.

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Presenting consumers with an aquatic-themed digital showroom, the group's Boss brand has created a shoppable space for those wanting to dive deeper into the Metaverse. With gamification features also available, [the virtual space](#) is a fully interactive experience, open from March 28 through March 31 for the duration of Metaverse Fashion Week.

"The metaverse is an immersive, virtual world where people can interact with each other and digital objects in a three-dimensional space," said Mathieu Champigny, CEO of [Industrial Color](#), New York.

"In this digital world, fashion possibilities are endless, and there are several reasons why it's becoming such an exciting place to explore," Mr. Champigny said. "The verse blurs the lines between fashion and technology.

"Fashion designers can use digital tools to create virtual garments that are not bound by the limitations of physical fabrics and materials, opening up new possibilities for sustainable fashion and reducing the environmental impact of the industry."

Going viral

Boss's virtual reality showcase is both a nod to the future of fashion and Miami the host city of the brand's latest event.

The brand is framing the Metaverse shopping room as an extension of the spring/summer 2023 fashion show. The digital space reflects the fashion show's aquatic colors and thematic elements, offering five looks from the event for sale.



*Boss is taking a look at the future of online shopping, while creating a highly engaging sense of place to keep customers entranced. Image credit: Hugo Boss*

The products are connected to the brand's [online shop](#) for purchase, bringing together traditional at-home shopping and the future of luxury retail's expanding options, as visitors are able to move smoothly from the experimental space and into the connected, familiar Boss shop as they see items they are interested in buying.

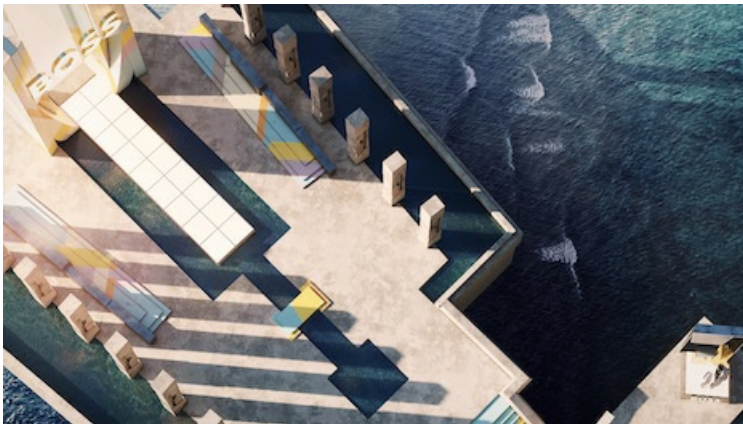
This is expanding the fashion's reach, as moving increasingly to the virtual side of business breaks down barriers and concerns that keep many from participating in the industry.

"The Metaverse allows people to experiment with fashion in ways that may not be possible in the physical world," Mr. Champigny said.

"Users can try on and customize virtual outfits and accessories without worrying about cost, availability, or environmental impact," he said. "This means that people can express their creativity and individuality without constraints."

Boss is fully invested in these perks, fusing the creative elements of fashion and the technical elements of AI within the space together.

This unity of the arts and sciences is further expressed through the color scheme. Light, oceanic colors such as urchin purple and seafoam hues contrast the concrete structure represented as the digital store, providing a visual nod to this dualism.



*The Metaverse space brings together the stark colors of the brand and the concrete and sea of Miami. Image credit: Hugo Boss*

The pairing also grounds itself in the physical world of Miami, pointing to both the natural and the urban faces of the city; the sea and concrete.

Building identity and giving viewers a sense of place is a powerful way to capture consumer attention as engaging marketing is proving especially resilient in the face of the pandemic and economic crisis.

This Metaverse offering uses this to the brand's advantage.

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"The big draw of immersive shopping is a better customer experience," said Jeremy Bailenson, professor of communication and founding director of the Virtual Human Interaction Lab at Stanford University, California.

"It's more engaging and informative for the shopper, and for brands, it's an opportunity to differentiate themselves from their competition and embrace innovative technology."

Many brands are exploring the interactive element of the virtual world, tapping into new software and modes of implementation to create a more captivated consumer base ([see story](#)).

"Remound Wright, one of my former Stanford students, has an incredible AR e-commerce company called **JUICE**, whose vision is to deepen reality, enrich imagination, and expand the limits of human experience," Dr. Bailenson said.

"That's a win for everyone especially iconic brands like Hugo Boss."



*The showroom in the digital world is highly interactive, providing games, shopping opportunities and room to roam. Image credit: Hugo Boss*

One of the ways that Boss is adding to the engagement factor of the experience is gamification, allowing consumers to collect objects and move around the space. Once they complete their "quest," consumers will receive a virtual fashion piece for their own avatar on the gaming platform Ready Player Me, modeled after a blue suit presented on the runway at the aforementioned show in Miami.

The wholehearted take on AI-assisted shopping opens up a new world of revenue channels and opportunities for further profits, as according to McKinsey's and Business of Fashion's joint State of Fashion Technology 2022 report, brands could increase earnings by 5 percent for the next five years due to metaverse-related opportunities ([see story](#)).

"It is a new economy for fashion," Mr. Champigny said.

"In this digital world, users can buy and sell virtual goods, including clothes and accessories," he said. "This creates new revenue streams for fashion brands and designers and allows them to monetize their virtual creations."

Meta kick

The AI showroom from Boss is situated on Spatial a cohost of the 2023 Metaverse Fashion Week.

This is the second year that the event has taken place, with multiple luxury brands taking it as an opportunity to find out how effective digital activations are with their own consumers ([see story](#)).



*Decentraland hosted the first Metaverse Fashion Week. Image credit: Decentraland*

The Metaverse platform Decantraland has dubbed this year's theme "Future Heritage," focusing on the union of fashion brands' history and where they are going next. The impact the technology will have on the industry cannot be overstated.

"Meta creates new opportunities for fashion brands and designers," Mr. Champigny said.

"In this virtual world, fashion brands can create unique and innovative designs that may not be feasible in the physical world," he said. "They can also reach a global audience and showcase their products in immersive and interactive ways."

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