

ADVERTISING

Bloggers provide unbiased, emotional connection to brands during Fashion Week

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By RACHEL LAMB

Luxury marketers who use bloggers during Fashion Week benefit from emotional and unbiased opinions, which could help to accentuate the brand image and align with a particular audience that comes built-in with the source.

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Brands including Prabal Gurung, Marc Jacobs and Rebecca Minkoff connected with consumers using bloggers before, during and after their Fashion Week shows. Since bloggers come in with a customer base, they serve as not only an acquisition tool for new customers, but also to reinforce opinion and brand image.

“Fashion blogging is probably one of the fastest-growing areas in the blogging realm in terms of persistent growth and reach,” said Ron Schott, senior strategist of [Spring Creek Group](#), Seattle. “Bloggers are amassing these huge followings who are not just visiting the site once, but are daily consumers of just about anything those bloggers publish.

“While you could go online and find photos from Fashion Week, you are not going to get the real feel of what it was like to be there,” he said. “That is what these bloggers bring to the table – a deeper connection to the content.”

Chit chat

Marketers are using bloggers in new and creative ways this season.

For example, Marc Jacobs latched on to The Man Repeller blogger Leandra Medine to live-host the Marc Jacobs Collection pre-show and show Sept. 10.



Marc Jacobs' email to promote Man Repeller live-stream

Consumers could watch the show with Ms. Medine on her blog and on the Marc Jacobs Web site. Both parties marketed the collaboration on their social media sites ([see story](#)).

“Bloggers are new media heavyweights,” said Daniel Plenge, director of digital at [Marc Jacobs Intl.](#), New York. “They are instantaneous, organic and fans are more apt to relate.

“It is incredible that these young people have found their voice, harnessed the power of words and images and created a booming market for themselves,” he said. “We are more than happy to support them.”

Meanwhile, designer Rebecca Minkoff hyped fans before her show with a social video starring bloggers Ms. Medine and model Hilary Rhoda.

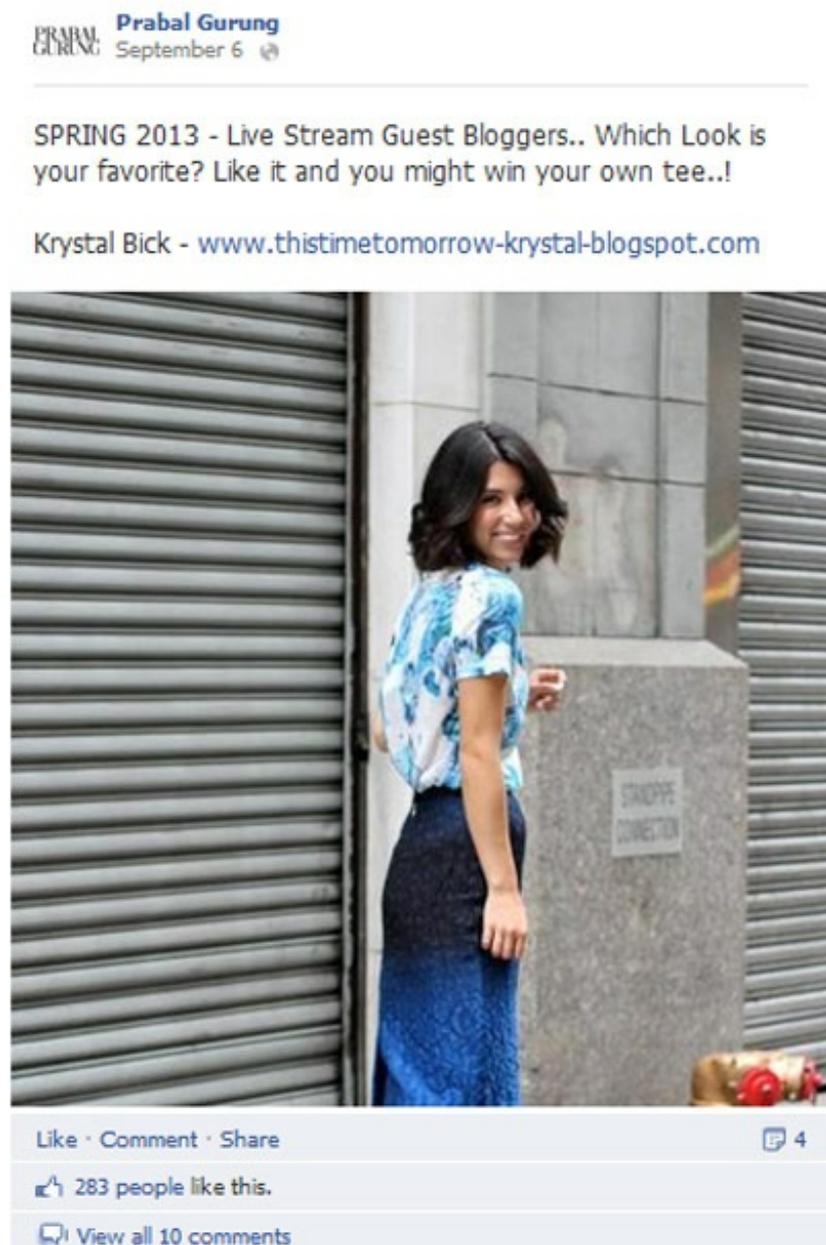
The three fashionistas starred in a film called “Fashion Week Boot Camp” that mimicked athletes training for a competition. Fake exercises such as “Can you tweet fast enough?” and “Posing 101” helped add to the video’s quirkiness.

Rebecca Minkoff Fashion Week Boot Camp video

Also, after the runway show, Rebecca Minkoff posted reviews from bloggers on its Facebook page.

Prabal Gurung also leveraged blogger connectivity before its show. Consumers could “like” images of bloggers Krystal Bick from [This Time Tomorrow](#), Heather Clark of [Heather in a Candy Shop](#) and Alicia Lund of [Cheetah is the New Black](#) on the Prabal Gurung Facebook page.

The bloggers were all wearing looks from the new collection and the most-popular blogger chose one fan to win a brand T-shirt. Prabal Gurung also live-streamed the show on Facebook.



Prabal Gurung
September 6

SPRING 2013 - Live Stream Guest Bloggers.. Which Look is your favorite? Like it and you might win your own tee..!

Krystal Bick - www.thistimetomorrow-krystal-blogspot.com

Like · Comment · Share 4

283 people like this.

View all 10 comments

Ms. Blake in Prabal Gurung's Fashion Week contest

These efforts alerted consumers to the new collection and allowed them to engage with the brand on Facebook before and during the show.

“Bloggers are able to develop such strong and loyal connections with their audience that

their voice becomes more relevant and trusted than brands,” said Dalia Strum, president of Dalia Inc., New York.

“It says something about the blogger when they align themselves with a trend, product or even brand,” he said. “They are vouching for them and essentially giving their stamp of approval.”

Influencing influencers

Collaborating with bloggers is something that marketers have been doing for a while.

For example, Marc Jacobs collaborated with Adam Galla from [I am Galla](#) for last year’s Fashion Week. He was invited to the ecommerce and Web shoot to style and model pieces from the new Marc by Marc Jacobs line for men.

“His massive following of readers became more aware of our men's Marc by Marc Jacobs line,” Marc Jacobs’ Mr. Plenge said.

Bloggers are truly becoming some of the most influential people in the industry, experts agree.

“I do believe that fashion bloggers have the ability to move the needle in the fashion industry,” said Brittany Mills, director of client services for [B Culture Media](#), Atlanta.

“They have the ear of the fashion consumers online,” she said. “Trends and amazing looks spread like wildfire online via blogs, Tumblr and Pinterest, and usually start with an endorser from an influential blogger.”

Marketers are using bloggers throughout the year, not just at Fashion Week.

For example, Barneys New York is pushing foot traffic to its flagship Madison Avenue location in New York via a video series with the retailer’s creative ambassador Simon Doonan and Ms. Medine that shows what happens at the store behind closed doors.

The short video series seems to highlight the big personality behind the retailer and could make for an effective long-term video strategy ([see story](#)).

Meanwhile, Dolce & Gabbana launched a video series starring popular blogger Bryan Boy as an elusive employee that was set to convey the brand lifestyle and reveal the identity behind the mysterious [@IWork4DG](#) Twitter handle.

The label wanted to create a new method of storytelling including influencer Bryanboy as its muse. The 30-second videos were released every two days, which Dolce & Gabbana says increased its virality and built buzz ([see story](#)).

That said, there are some aspects that marketers need to keep in mind when working with bloggers.

“Marketers need to choose wisely because you are not only tying yourself to this person for the week, you are going to be tied to them for much longer than that after the fact,” Spring Creek Group’s Mr. Schott said. “There is something to be said for bypassing the

upper-tier bloggers and rather going with an up-and-coming personality that can give you more of a fresh audience and perspective.

“Also, you have to be willing to ride shotgun for a bit,” he said. “Bloggers are where they are because they have the ability to tell a story, usually without an editor.

“Do not expect them to be your mouthpiece – you hired them for a reason.”

Final Take

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