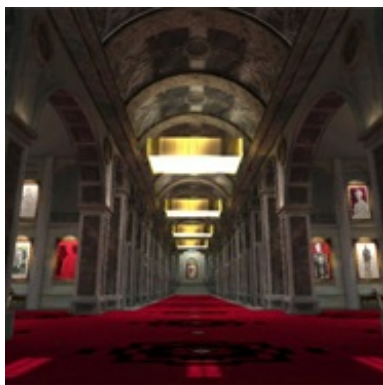


MOBILE

Prada flaunts arts affiliation via first mobile app

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By TRICIA CARR

Italian fashion house Prada is showcasing new collections and its art collaboration with illustrator Richard Haines in a virtual palace via its first mobile application for the iPad.

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Portraits by Mr. Haines and digital replicas of new Prada accessories are featured in the Il Palazzo app created by James Lima, who worked with the brand on its first animated videos. The project is the next step in Prada's seasonal series that aligns the brand with artistic talent and, therefore, an affluent lifestyle.

"Decades ago, the fashion houses did not see Russia, India or China as an important market for luxury goods, but instead they focused on Europe, the United States and Japan," said Isabella Lin, content director at [Appitalism](#), New York. "Prada did international expansion, and nowadays it is moving into the mobile world.

"This app is both a platform for business and a platform for information and entertainment – it is a soft sell," he said. "Prada believes in this information age, and mobile apps are the most efficient speed tool in this day.

"Prada does not just want build an app, but it wanted to build the best and most unique free app on the market. Prada wanted it to be social and to provide advertising that had real

value for loyal customers.”

Mr. Buckingham is not affiliated with Prada, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Prada could not comment directly on this matter.

Palace fit for Prada

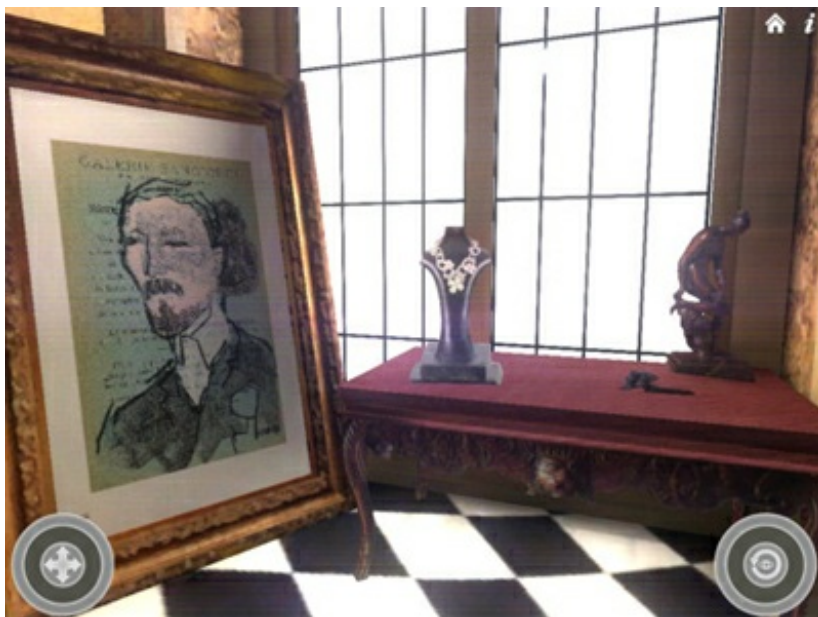
Il Palazzo is available for free in the [App Store](#). It is compatible with the iPad.



Prada app opening screen

Users can take a tour of a virtual palace.

Inside it are Prada items and portraits by Mr. Haines. These same portraits were featured in a handmade book created by the artist.



Palace room

One collection featured in the app is the winter Portrait Sunglasses collection.

PRADA
EYEWEAR



SPROG-DELUXE



SPROG

Portrait Sunglasses collection

The Bloom Jewels collection is also shown. It will be available later this month and includes necklaces, bracelets and earrings.



Bloom Jewels collection

The Il Palazzo app is part of a multi-platform project by Prada. The label will continue to update the app with additional features in the coming days.

Overall, the fashion house is looking to capture the mood of its seasonal collections through multichannel, art-driven displays, per Prada.

Fashion is art

Earlier this year, Prada created another campaign to align with graphic artists called Prada Parallel Universes. It featured products from the spring/summer 2012 collections in digital drawings and animations that were shared on a microsite and social media.

The campaign presented digital animations by graphic designer and artist Vahram Muratyan. These images contained drawings of Prada's spring/summer men's and women's accessories such as handbags, shoes and glasses.

Teaser images were released via Facebook beginning April 24 with a vague explanation, which seemed to be a tactic to create interest for Prada's design inspiration ([see story](#)).

Moreover, Prada likely chose to extend its latest campaign via mobile to reach affluent consumers who are using the iPad.

Both recent campaigns are left up to interpretation in terms of the label's intentions.

Consumers are likely immersed in the brand world in a way that is unique to Prada.

But the mobile element of the Il Palazzo efforts could strengthen the brand among its

target audience, especially on mobile where a brand-specific strategy is necessary to stand out.

“Prada's mobile strategy appears to be a branding exercise to convey the luxury side of the brand, associating the opulence and exclusivity of Palazzo-living with the Prada name,” said Cheryl Sansonetti , marketing manager at [5th Finger](#), San Francisco. “It is a rare glimpse into this regal world through your mobile device.

“Prada is making an aggressive first step into the mobile world with its initial entry being multi-platform,” she said. “It is not afraid to be creative, and that has the potential to serve it well in future endeavors.”

The label may need a few additional enhancements to the app to make it user-friendly, but its entry into mobile shows that it is headed in the right direction.

“As simply a branding effort, the opportunity for Prada to show off its product was missed,” Ms. Sansonetti said. “With a less than ideal user experience and generally underwhelming visuals, Prada is not likely to get the branding it was hoping for.

“Importantly, the company has achieved experience in creating mobile content and it has told its consumers that Prada has a mobile presence,” she said. “Prada has set the stage for future efforts by gaining an understanding of who its mobile customer is and how best to reach them.”

Final Take

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