

INTERNET

## Versace eyes millennials with Versus Web launch

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By ERIN SHEA

Italian fashion house Versace is targeting entry-level consumers with the launch of its new Versus Versace Web site that offers content and ecommerce.

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**Luxury Daily**

Versace counted down to Versus through its social media platforms to spread the word to its followers. With the launch of this rebranded collection, Versace can convert young consumers into brand enthusiasts at an early age.

“Engaging consumers at a young age is always an advantage for the brand,” said Dave Rodgerson, senior management consultant of retail strategy and change at [IBM Canada](#), Toronto.

“Their loyalties are still forming as they develop their personal tastes and style,” he said.

“Providing a place where consumers can come together and share their experiences is far more effective with this younger demographic and makes it more likely that they would associate with the Versace brand in the future.”

Mr. Rodgerson is not affiliated with Versace, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[Versace](#) did not respond by press deadline.

## Social crowd

Versace announced in November 2012 that designer J.W. Anderson would be working on the new Versus line.

The label has been building excitement for the rebranding of Versus through a comprehensive social media and digital campaign that counted down until the official launch and collection presentation May 15 in New York ([see story](#)).

To prepare for the new line, Versus teased images of the collection and Web site through its social media feeds by sharing images of its models and close-ups of products.



### *Teaser image*

On May 8, Versus launched a Google+ page where it began promoting a “hangout” session with Donatella Versace, chief designer of the Versace group.

The hangout video session took place live May 14 on its Google+ page. During the 27-minute session, Ms. Versace talked with Mr. Anderson and fashion bloggers from around the world about Versus.

### *Hangout Versus Versace with Donatella Versace*

The Versus Web site launched May 15. The site can be accessed at <http://www.versusversace.com>.



*Versus Versace homepage*

Versus promoted the launch on its Facebook page and Versace posted the link through its Facebook and Twitter to help direct Versace followers to the new line.



*Versace tweet*

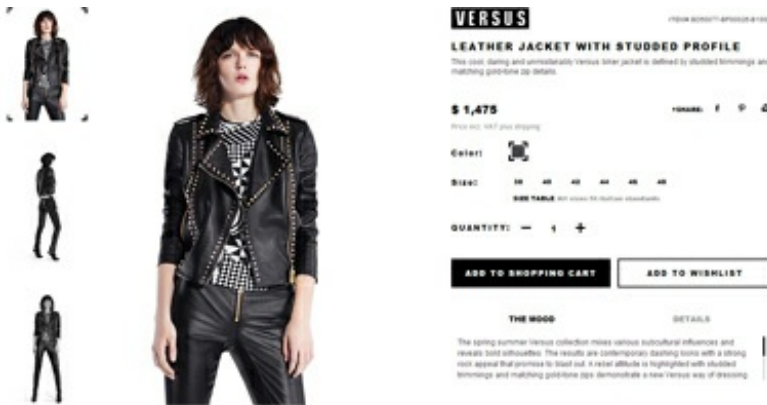
The Versus site offers an ecommerce option along with additional content to explain the Versus brand.

Through the site, consumers can shop girls' apparel, boys' apparel and watches, view the Versus film or learn more about the brand through a short article.

The 60-second film shows off the models in Versus apparel interacting with one another in a youthful way.

## *The new Versus Versace*

Also, consumers can browse through the looks on the site to view certain products and make a purchase. However, consumers are redirected to the main Versace site to complete the purchase.



## *Product page*

In addition, the site has another section under the “J.W. Anderson tab” that leads consumers to a countdown for the launch of the J.W. Anderson capsule collection.

The page offers a screen shot of a tweet from Francesco De Simone, creative director at Giorgio Armani, which mentions Mr. Anderson, Versace and performer Lady Gaga.



### *J.W. Anderson and Versus countdown*

To further celebrate the launch, Versace hosted a photo walk in New York and broadcasted it through a Google+ hangout session May 15.

Consumers for life

Luxury marketers in multiple product categories are targeting younger consumers to convert them to brand enthusiasts for life.

For instance, Mercedes-Benz USA is opening up the brand to a younger consumer group with promotions for its CLA model, which has a sticker price of less than \$30,000.

The CLA Project is part of the social video marketing efforts that Mercedes is using to push its CLA vehicle, which will be available in dealerships in September ([see story](#)).

Also, U.S. label Oscar de la Renta offers products beyond fashion to be a lifestyle brand and create a bond with millennials.

The fashion house known for its apparel, accessories and beauty lines has expanded to other categories with its first in-house home collection launched this year and a line of paper products sold through online stationery brand Paperless Post likely to remain relevant to young consumers ([see story](#)).

Luxury brands can connect with a younger demographic by speaking their language and communicating with them on the platforms they use.

“Versace's design does cater to a younger audience,” Mr. Rodgerson said. “They have successfully created the same look and feel for the site, whether your experience is on a PC or a mobile device, which is especially critical to the generation of digital natives.

“Versus provided a means to share the content which is a huge driver of customer loyalty,” he said.

“While these consumers certainly have the opportunity to add their comments through the social media links provided on the Web site, Versace may have missed an opportunity to collect those comments and share them actively through the Versus site.”

Final take

*Erin Shea, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

Embedded Video: [http://www.youtube.com/embed/f5VMtoYJO\\_E](http://www.youtube.com/embed/f5VMtoYJO_E)

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