

ADVERTISING

Top 10 luxury branding efforts of Q4

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By JOE MCCARTHY

Luxury marketers sought global recognition with campaigns that added new dimensions without disrupting brand mystique in the fourth quarter of 2013.

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Aston Martin developed a highly-anticipated film series, Fendi transformed its brand image, Louis Vuitton showed prowess on mobile and Rent the Runway made its retail debut. Overall, leading brands evinced that the luxury market is performing strongly and can accommodate large-scale campaigns.

Here are the top 10 luxury branding efforts in the fourth quarter of 2014, in alphabetical order:



Armani's Armani Live real-time journal: Italy's Giorgio Armani generated interest in its

Armani Live in NYC digital real-time journal Oct. 22-29 and subsequent One Night Only event through a multi-faceted promotional campaign.

Armani Live is a real-time digital journal that includes editorial content, exclusive interviews, videos and photographs that give fans a glimpse into the world of Armani.

The Oct. 22–29 NYC edition of Armani Live was curated by Style.com’s editor at large, Tim Blanks, and was dedicated to Armani’s connection with New York. Readers could also experience Armani’s One Night Only event via Armani Live.

Sectioned off into tiles there were articles, image galleries, videos and diary entries for enthusiasts to enjoy. Topics ranged from an interview Mr. Blanks conducted with Giorgio Armani about New York, Mr. Armani’s diary entry about his downtown Manhattan office and an article titled “The Armani Experience” written by Cathy Horyn for the New York Times.



Aston Martin's Friday Films: Week after week British automaker Aston Martin reinforced its Friday Film tradition that explores the brand’s history, examines certain models, travels to exclusive events and discusses design aesthetics, while amassing a devoted social media following.

The Oct. 18 film bolstered the V12 Vantage S’s global media release by taking enthusiasts on a ride in the model at the Silverstone racetrack in Northamptonshire, England. The flexible and spontaneous nature of the Friday Films keeps the series interesting for brand loyalists who turn out in large numbers each week, providing the automaker with a clear gauge of what fans appreciate.

At the bottom of the screen, fans could watch the driver’s reactions and observe the speedometer that reaches a high of 134 miles per hour. Toward the end of the film, the driver praises the vehicle’s brakes and power.



Fendi's Bag Bugs: Italian fashion house Fendi promoted the release of its much anticipated “Bag Bugs” collection with a whimsical video featuring the furry purse accessories personified to appeal to a more entry-level audience for the holiday shopping season.

The Bag Bugs, which are peculiar monster-like creatures, lend themselves well to this film, which plays off of their personalities to show them endearingly and present them as both an amusement and a fashionable accessory.

The film differs from most other luxury film in that it focuses on quirk rather than quality and craftsmanship, which is an appropriate strategy to target an entry level audience who might be able to afford a Bag Bug because of its lower price point than a Fendi handbag.

In the video, the camera pans through a series of different backdrops with successive Bag Bugs driving cars, steering a boat and kissing each other. On each frame, a woman’s hands pop out of the backdrop to portray the Bag Bugs’ limbs or other elements, including an octopus.

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/85hnytlybgs](http://www.youtube.com/embed/85hnytlybgs)

The Fendi Bag Bugs are here!



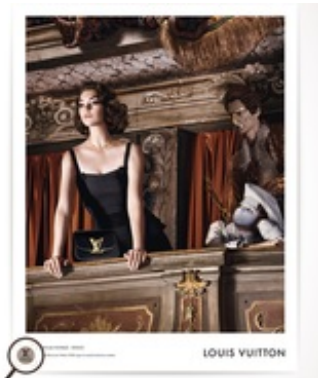
Cesere brothers' photography

Four Seasons Maui Artisan Showcase: Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea is showcasing the underwater photography of Dan and John Cesere as part of its ongoing Artisan Showcase series. The Artisan Showcase series currently rotates between 42 artists that are pulled from the local community. Six different media ranging from jewelry, ceramics, woodworking, glass, painting and textiles will be featured every day to ensure that the series remains as fresh as possible.

The Cesere brothers will display their work every Thursday from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. throughout the whale season, which is roughly from November through April. For this project, the brothers concentrate on

photographing and filming the native humpback whale and its environment. The photographers hope to raise awareness of the potential plight that faces the whales if their environment is further disturbed. Local artists who are interested in the Artisan Showcase can send an email with their work and a bio to the hotel. When a slot opens up, a selection committee reviews the candidates and invites certain artists for an interview.

Through this process, artists are able to gain exposure, while Four Seasons Maui gains a unique and culturally authentic experience for guests.



Louis Vuitton's Pass app: French fashion house Louis Vuitton layered its print campaigns with a new mobile application that brings together exclusive advertising content and mobile commerce.

Louis Vuitton's Pass app allows consumers to experience ads in new ways with behind-the-scenes content, featured product information and a store locator. The interactive elements of Louis Vuitton's Pass app engage consumers by curating a personal experience that fleshes out familiar ads.

Instead of disrupting the aesthetics of an ad campaign with a boxy QR code, Louis Vuitton will now include a branded icon that can be scanned by its new mobile app, Pass. By scanning the icon or the entire image from a particular campaign, the app directs

users to exclusive photos, video and the mobile commerce page that details of the merchandise featured in the scanned effort. This ability goes beyond just print advertisements to truly bring the Louis Vuitton world directly to consumers no matter their location or activity. For example, the app can be used on Louis Vuitton's Facebook cover image of the new "L'Invitation au Voyage Venice" campaign.



LVMH's training program:
LVMH Moët Hennessy
Louis Vuitton is looking
to better serve its
Mandarin-speaking
consumers traveling
abroad with a new
training program for
Chinese Americans.
The French conglomerate
teamed up with Parsons
the New School for
Design and the Chinese-
American Planning
Council to design a
program to teach recently
immigrated Chinese
Americans luxury retail
skills, which includes an
internship at a LVMH
brand store. Through this

program, LVMH will be able to connect with Chinese tourists in their native language and deliver enhanced customer service.

The LVMH "Fundamentals in Luxury Retail" program is a 10-week course that begins with classroom instruction at Parsons.

Those chosen for the program will be taught by both Parsons professors and LVMH managers and training professionals.

The students will learn about fashion history and consumer trends, retail operations, teamwork and communication

skills. After classroom instruction, the students will be placed in an internship at an LVMH brand retail store.

The first session will begin in March. LVMH has already begun its recruitment. The program is open to English and Mandarin-speaking individuals who are currently working a low-wage job, or are under- or unemployed. To be eligible, participants must have earned at least a high school degree or the equivalent.



Michael Kors

WatchHungerStop: U.S. apparel and accessories label Michael Kors furthered its "WatchHungerStop" campaign through a month-long initiative that included giving away T-shirts at five stores on World Hunger Day Oct. 16, stepped up social media efforts and encouraged consumers to make small donations when purchasing products.

T-shirt recipients were able to get their pictures taken in the Photo Stations at participating locations, which were then live-streamed on Times Square billboards and on the WatchHungerStop microsite.

Also on World Hunger Day, former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton was presented with the first Michael Kors Award for outstanding community service at the annual God's Love We Deliver Golden Heart Awards Dinner in New York. Designer Michael Kors and Vogue editor in

chief and Condé Nast artistic director Anna Wintour presented the award.

Last year, Mr. Kors donated \$5 million to the charity God's Love We Deliver to assist with a major renovation of its Manhattan headquarters. The WatchHungerStop microsite can be found at <http://www.destinationkors.com/watch-hunger-stop>. On the microsite, visitors can learn about the campaign's progress, read uplifting stories, watch videos and donate to the cause.

Rent the Runway retail debut: Rent the Runway jumped from its online-only foundation Oct. 17 with a new showroom in Henri Bendel's New York flagship store that provides consumers with a guided and efficient way to find the right outfit.

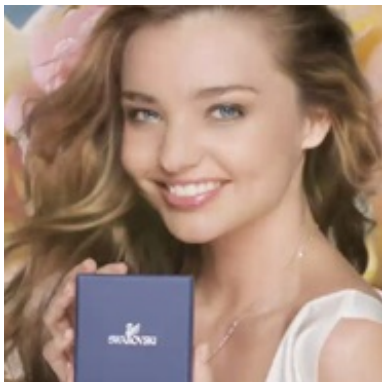
The 1,400-square foot, second-floor showroom features a rotating collection of the retailer's 175 designer brands and lets consumers work directly with Rent the Runway Go-To Girl personal stylists.

Consumers can now travel to a showroom to try on dresses prior to renting them. Also, Rent the Runway Go-To Girl personal stylists will be able to work directly with consumers, whereas only

distanced interactions were possible before. Consumers can book appointments and create style profiles at www.renttherunway.com/henribendel.

Style profiles include information such as size, shape and style preferences.

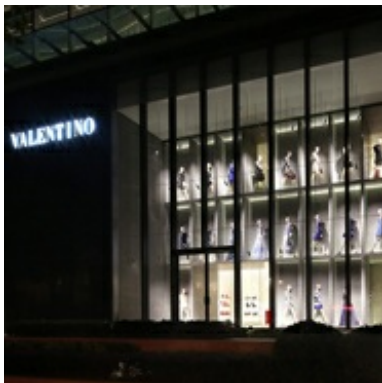
Go-To Girls will be able to view the style profile prior to appointments to learn about the customer. The stylists will provide one-on-one consultation while customers try on dresses and search for an outfit. Each fitting room contains a scanner and iPad so that stylists can upload dresses to a customer's "virtual closet." Notes can be added to each dress in the virtual closet and the closet can be viewed at any time.



Swarovski's global campaign: Precision-cut crystal maker Swarovski initiated a 25-country, multichannel campaign featuring supermodel Miranda Kerr and original music by singer, song-writer and producer Pharrell Williams that aims to spread awareness and enliven

the brand's image.

The campaign's print advertisements began in November followed by a television commercial that aired in France, Italy and Hong Kong. The campaign's use of vivid images, music by a well-known producer and pliable content allows it to seamlessly travel from one country to another. In the commercial, Ms. Kerr wears select pieces of jewelry such as bracelets, a necklace and earrings and dances to music by Pharrel Williams. Red, pink, yellow and white flower petals fall all around Ms. Kerr and the background changes colors and textures. Swarovski has added social components to the campaign since its debut.



Valentino's Shanghai unveiling: Italian fashion house Valentino took an unconventional approach to promote the opening of its new store location in Shanghai by unveiling an exclusive collection Nov. 15 that will be available at this location months before it hits the shelves in other stores.

The Maison's creative directors, Maria Grazia Chiuri and Pierpaolo Piccioli, designed the Shanghai collection that premiered Nov. 14 on the Bund and via a live-stream on its Web site. By live-streaming the show, Valentino gave consumers around the world the opportunity to participate in the opening of its newest flagship even though they cannot be there in person.

Leading up to the live stream, the brand posted a video series titled "L'Unico" on its Facebook page to take viewers behind-the-scenes as the tailors created dresses from the Shanghai collection. The first of three videos begins with the tailors going to work, walking through the streets of Rome.

Once inside the atelier, the tailors get to work sketching, creating patterns, cutting fabric and sewing. The video then shows a model walk in the created dress in front of Ms. Chiuri and Mr. Piccioli, as they inspect the creation before locking up for the day.

Final take

Joe McCarthy, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video:

[//www.youtube.com/embed/NbAryOMUuz0](https://www.youtube.com/embed/NbAryOMUuz0)

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