

INTERNET

Zegna and Maserati pair up to highlight shared heritage

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By SARAH JONES

Italian menswear brand Ermenegildo Zegna designed a capsule collection of active attire with Italian auto company Maserati for its yacht team.

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Both brands are now selling the line on their Web sites, with Maserati touting the collection through an email blast. With this partnership, both brands are able to communicate their shared Italian history and heritage, while allowing Zegna to capitalize on Maserati's household name.

"Clearly, Zegna is trying to move its brand upscale by rubbing up against a current high-end brand," said Rob Frankel, branding expert at marketing consultancy firm [Frankel & Anderson](#), Los Angeles.

"This isn't anything new," he said. "Lots of brands try to leverage other brands' positions by aligning themselves with higher-positioned brands."

Mr. Frankel is not affiliated with Zegna or Maserati, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

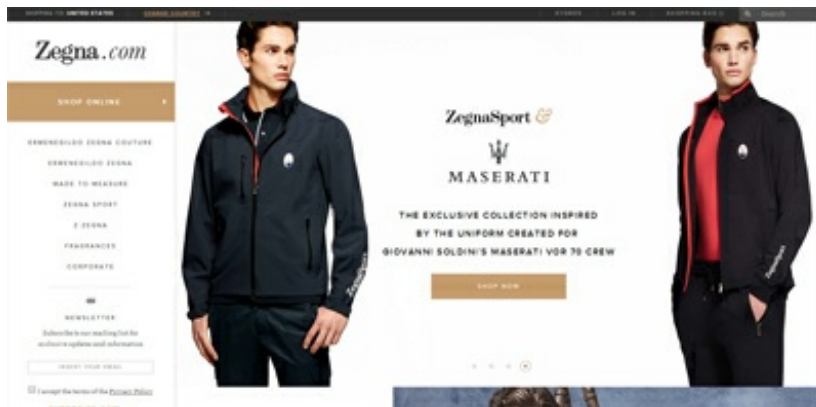
[Zegna](#) did not respond by press deadline, and [Maserati](#) was unable to comment.

Teaming up

Zegna served as the official outfitter for the Transpac yacht race in 2013, in which Maserati competed. The label's line with Maserati is based on the uniforms created for the sailing team to wear while they crossed more than 2,000 miles of ocean.

The capsule collection consists of the performance wear that the two brands designed together for the Soldini sailing team. The line includes t-shirts, jackets, shorts, pants and a baseball cap bearing both the Maserati and the Zegna Sport logos.

Zegna is featuring the line on its homepage in a slideshow.



Zegna homepage

Maserati distributed its email while all of the items were only available for preorder through its ecommerce site, trying to generate excitement among fans as they wait for the items to be released.



Maserati email

The email included a large image of the Soldini team's boat with the brand name Maserati on the side. Below the image was a message from the brand telling the consumer about the origin of the collection, and mentioning the innovative fabrics used in the collection, including Techmarino, a wool that regulates body temperature.

At the bottom of the email are selective images of clothing from the line.

The click-through brings consumers to the page on Maserati's ecommerce site with the full collection.

These two brands have collaborated before.

In November 2013, they paired up, with Zegna designing a limited edition Maserati Quattroporte concept car. The fashion house used unique finishes, materials and color schemes. The concept car is intended to be put into production.



Zegna limited edition Maserati

In a branded statement about the car collaboration, Maserati said that the two brands shared tradition and exclusivity.

Working together

Outfitting a team is one way for a fashion brand to reach consumers outside of its usual audience.

For example, French apparel designer Lanvin will serve as the official tailor to Britain's Arsenal soccer team to position its menswear as sporty and classic.

Lanvin Homme creative director Lucas Ossendrijver created a set of suits for the players to wear for all their official appearances. However, with this partnership, Lanvin may not be able to reach British soccer fans, since the audiences for high fashion and the sport do not overlap much ([see story](#)).

Also, aligning a brand with sports can help to showcase its innovative qualities.

For instance, Swiss watch manufacturer Ulysse Nardin celebrated the yachting and competitive sailing industry with the creation of a limited-edition timepiece commemorating the sailing competition that launched America's Cup.

The timepieces reflect the unique design of the schooner sailing vessel, "America", the namesake of the America's Cup sailing competition. Ulysse Nardin is able to tout its own innovations in watchmaking by paralleling its timepieces to advancements in sailing technology ([see story](#)).

Even though this partnership might slightly boost Zegna's brand awareness, it probably

will not do too much for either brand's online sales.

"I don't expect the either brand will notice any serious bump in sales, because merely aligning with another brand doesn't carry any brand strategy along with it," Mr. Frankel said.

"Look at it this way: If you go to the grocery store to buy carrots, you might notice cucumbers in the next bin," he said. "But unless you have a good reason to buy cucumbers, you're just buying carrots.

"You could assume the cucumbers are just as fresh as the carrots, and maybe even as nutritious. But unless someone has told you why you should be buying cucumbers, you're walking out with just carrots."

Final Take

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