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FASHION FILM & TRANSMEDIA

– an anthology of knowledge and practice

Fashion Film & Transmedia

– an anthology of knowledge and practice

Colophon**Title**

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Photo by Thomas Erland Pedersen, VIA Film & Transmedia

Introduction



Louis Thonsgaard

Film and transmedia currently broaden our understanding of the concepts of storytelling and branding in entirely new ways. We have just seen the beginning of what these areas have to offer when intertwined.

When bringing film and transmedia together in a fashion context, you get a particularly effective combination that provides a foundation for creative thinking and innovative business development. Our approach to this field has attracted international attention and we want to share our knowledge.

VIA Film & Transmedia is an education and research centre in Denmark where education, research and contact with industry go hand in hand. We offer unique educational courses in fashion film and transmedia in close relation to professionals and, at the same time, we produce new knowledge in collaboration with researchers and fashion industry businesses. We are proud to give our readers this special opportunity to obtain new knowledge in the field of fashion, film, and transmedia.

This anthology is not only a way of sharing our knowledge; it also should be seen as an invitation to collaboration with businesses, educational institutions, researchers, and anyone who is as interested in the field as we are.

I want to thank all who participated in making the anthology: researchers, professionals, businesses, lecturers, and students - and the editor. They all have participated in making this publication worth reading.

I also would like to give special thanks for support for this publication to our Executive Director Konstantin Lassithiotakis of VIA School of Business, Technology & Creative Industries; Dean Song Jing of Beijing Film Academy; Filmby Aarhus; Interactive Denmark and EU Interreg North Sea Region Create Converge.

Enjoy!

Louis Thonsgaard
Director of Education and Research
VIA Film & Transmedia
VIA University College

FASHION FILM & TRANSMEDIA – an anthology of knowledge and practice

From the Editor

This anthology has taken on the role of knowledge gatherer in the field of fashion film and transmedia. In its nine articles, experts share their knowledge and practices in this new crossover discipline. The anthology looks into how luxury fashion has been taking digitalised steps, it investigates a definition of fashion film and looks into potentials for fashion in a transmedia world. Furthermore, it explores an understanding of audience and genre in fashion film and addresses future perspectives. The articles are filled with examples and cases based on the experts' research or area of expertise.

The anthology is not an exhaustive project, but a collection of perspectives bringing more light and knowledge to this burgeoning field.

The goal of the book is, therefore, to give you insight and foresight into the fields of fashion film and transmedia to enable you to continue progressing in these fields or take it on for the future.

In-depth reading or fast track

The articles can be read in random order; however, the existing order takes you from historical perspectives within the field to more specific reading on fashion film or transmedia for fashion brands.

Every article is completed with a list of Takeaways. These are the essential points of each article and your fast track through the book.

Article line-up

The nine articles bring together new knowledge and practice within the fields of fashion film and transmedia. We look forward to seeing this crossover discipline evolve and intertwine further in the future and reach audiences in new and innovative ways.

Rina Hansen

is an expert in omnichannel. In this anthology, she contributes an article that supplies an overview on Web presence for luxury fashion brands. Gain insight into what has been the approach and tempi of digitisation of luxury fashion brands.

Marie Schuller

is contributing head of Fashion Film at SHOWstudio London. She has looked into the challenges of defining fashion film as an independent genre.

Paloma Díaz Soloaga

is a full professor of Intangible assets and Corporate Reputation at Complutense University in Madrid, Spain. In her article, she describes the result of a comprehensive analysis of 62 fashion film from 2006 to 2016.

Janet De Nardis

actress, professor at DASS, and journalist, contributes with a historical description of fashion films and fashion film festivals from an Italian perspective. She is the founder of the Roma Web Fest, and she brings an overview of the coming of fashion film in a country with strong roots in fashion .

Max Giovagnoli

is a transmedia expert whose article brings you closer to understanding the mechanism of transmedia. Transmedia is a somewhat fluid term that turns traditional communication and consumerism upside down. The term is put into perspective for fashion and brands.

Stine Johansen

from Brainstorm Crossmedia takes a further look at transmedia and fashion. She has both a technical and aesthetic approach to film. In a case-based article, she points to the future potential for fashion brands to work with transmedia.

Anja Bisgaard Gaede

of SPOTT trends & business (the editor) supply a pragmatic insight into fashion film and genres. It provides the knowledge needed to match genres and audience in a complex fashion film and transmediascape.

Sara Holm-Ingemann Nielsen

futurist, provides insight into future perspectives of fashion film and media.

Ellen Riis

is an experienced film producer and now head of the VIA Film & Transmedia course, The Fashion Experience - Film and Transmedia Storytelling. She offers insight into the experiences and perspectives for the unique educational programme.

CONTRIBUTORS



RINA HANSEN

Rina Hansen is marketing and omnichannel director at By Malene Birger. Previously she was head of global marketing and omnichannel at hummel, where she spearheaded the digital transformation and introduced business-to-consumer (B2C) e-commerce following the company's 90 years of dedicated business-to-business (B2B) sales. Prior to hummel, she worked in global sales and marketing executive positions for brands such as Burberry, Anne Klein and MCM.

Besides her practitioner work, Rina has a strong academic interest in the digital transformation of fashion companies and has researched this subject over the last 15 years. She has published her work in leading international journals and was recently awarded the world's first Ph.D on omnichannel for her thesis *Toward a Digital Strategy for Omnichannel*.

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MARIE SCHULLER

Marie Schuller is a film-maker and contributing head of Fashion Film at SHOWstudio. She studied film-making at the National Film and Television School and completed her MA in photography at the University of the Arts London. Schuller has worked for Nick Knight's award-winning fashion-film platform SHOWstudio in London since 2010. Her directing work has been exhibited internationally and she has been honoured with multiple awards throughout her career including numerous prizes at ASVOFF (A Shaded View of Fashion Film) and awards at FFF Milano (Fashion Film Fest), and The Book's Creative Awards. She directed campaign films for Givenchy, Versace, and Selfridges, amongst others.

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CONTRIBUTORS



PALOMA DÍAZ SOLOAGA

Paloma Díaz Soloaga is a full professor of Intangible assets and Corporate Reputation at Complutense University in Madrid, Spain. She is also the head of the Degree on Fashion Communication and Management and a Master in Fashion Trends Analysis at Villanueva, a private university depending on Complutense.

She has participated as academic expert in Madrid Fashion Film Festival and published the book *Fashion Brands Communication and Management* (2014). She focuses her research on fashion branding citing Fashion Films and Pop Up Fashion Stores in her latest works.

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JANET DE NARDIS

Janet De Nardis, the founder and director of Roma Web Fest, is an Italian journalist, television author, anchor-woman, and actress. She has been prominently featured in many commercials. After some years studying with an influential international film coach, she began to work in theatre and, later, in film and successful television series. She has worked for Rai, Sky, Class News, and Class CNBC signing television programmes. De Nardis also is a professor at DASS (La Sapienza University of Rome) in Web series and digital products.

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CONTRIBUTORS



MAX GIOVAGNOLI

Max Giovagnoli is the premier transmedia storyteller and researcher in Italy. He is editorial consultant for Italy's national television broadcaster and movie productions. His book on transmedia narratives, *Transmedia Storytelling: Imagery, Shapes and Techniques*, was the first (2005) ever published in Europe. Giovagnoli is responsible for film presentations at festivals such as Romics and Cartoons on the Bay. He also is the coordinator of the School of Cinema and New Media at the European Institute of Design in Rome (IED Rome, Italy). He has been a featured presenter for TEDxTransmedia, Rome Web Fest, and other major events. Giovagnoli was the first transmedia producer mentioned in the credits of a film in Europe.

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STINE JOHANSEN

Stine Johansen has worked within the field of digital media production since 2013 with a specialisation in storytelling across platforms and in project management. Currently, she works fulltime in the video agency Brainstorm CrossMedia while also lecturing at other venues on cross-platform storytelling and storyworlds. Stine has a BS degree in Medialogy and an MS degree in IT from Aalborg University. This combination shows her specific interest in understanding the overlap between technical and aesthetic subjects.

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CONTRIBUTORS



SPOTT TRENDS & BUSINESS

Anja Bisgaard Gaede is the founder of SPOTT trends & business. She has an MA degree in communication and specialised in fashion, consumerism and experience economy. She has also published the Danish book *Skab god kemi med dine kunder – oplevelsesøkonomi i detailhandlen* (Customer Chemistry – Experience Economy in Retail). Anja has worked over 10 years as consultant and presenter in the lifestyle industry. Now her and SPOTT's specialty is turning trends into business for Scandinavian clients. www.spottrends.dk

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ELLEN RIIS

Ellen Riis is an assistant professor at VIA University College, a film producer, and consultant in Denmark. Focusing mainly on television production and talent development within short fiction and transmedia production, Ellen Riis has more than 25 years of experience in the film and media business. She has an academic background in literature and media science, and a professional background in distribution, public relations, marketing, publishing, and production. She also works as an associate professor at the University of Aarhus.

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SARA INGEMANN HOLM-NIELSEN

Sara Ingemann Holm-Nielsen has a BA degree in media and communication from Malmö University. She is one of the co-founders of the multidisciplinary design studio Atelier Cph and has worked within the fashion, design, and interior scene for many years, researching new trends, consumer behaviours, colour forecasts, and the constant influence of new media. She has been closely involved in working with Scandinavian and international trend agencies on forecasting the future.

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Brand Barbara / Gongini / Photo by Mellanie Gandø / Supervisor Max Rosborg, VIA Film & Transmedia

RINA HANSEN

The Development in **Luxury Fashion** **Brands' Web** **Presence** and **Use of Interactive** **Media**

In this article, we address the issue of how leading luxury fashion brands have adopted the Internet and the contingent website, social media and interactive media opportunities for sales and marketing purposes over a six-year period.

A comprehensive analysis reveals that luxury fashion brands' Internet presence can be characterised (and indeed defined) by virtue of three strategic choices. These form the basis for a framework, which serves as a strategic tool in the design and assessment of Internet presence.

These discoveries lead us to reflect on the implications for the omni-channel reality, where fashion companies transform toward a consumer-centric approach.

RINA HANSEN

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Rina Hansen is marketing and omnichannel director at By Malene Birger. Previously she was head of global marketing and omnichannel at hummel, where she spearheaded the digital transformation and introduced business-to-consumer (B2C) e-commerce following the company's 90 years of dedicated business-to-business (B2B) sales. Prior to hummel, she worked in global sales and marketing executive positions for brands such as Burberry, Anne Klein and MCM.

Besides her practitioner work, Rina has a strong academic interest in the digital transformation of fashion companies and has researched this subject over the last 15 years. She has published her work in leading international journals and was recently awarded the world's first Ph.D on omnichannel for her thesis *Toward a Digital Strategy for Omnichannel*.

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Introduction

Since the appearance of Internet websites in the mid-90s, this medium has become a major outlet for e-commerce as well as branding and marketing to consumers. Apparel and accessories account for one of the largest categories sold online, enjoying double-digit growth rates year after year (FDIH. 2012, US Census Bureau News. 2012). Nonetheless, established fashion brands struggle to rethink their traditional sales and marketing strategy to include the digital channels in order to make the brands fit for the future. They are reluctant to do so due to the dilemma of maintaining exclusivity and brand control. The brands fear implementing interactive elements on their websites for customers and fans to interact with or customise products will make them lose control of their brand. This attitude is slowly changing as the majority of fashion brands are realising the importance of an Internet presence.

DUE, IN MANY WAYS, TO THE RECENT DECLINING SALES IN PHYSICAL STORES FOLLOWING THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN, FASHION BRANDS HAVE TURNED THEIR ATTENTION ONLINE, WHERE E-COMMERCE STILL PROMISES DOUBLE-DIGIT GROWTH (OKONKWO. 2009)

Interacting and shopping across channels are also precisely what customers expect from brands. Previous research in the context of online fashion shows that customers want a website experience that is engaging, memorable and interactive; in other words, they prefer a website that can offer social interaction, two-way communication and a personalised relationship with the brand (Riley and Lacroix. 2003, Seringhaus. 2005, Siddiqui, et al. 2003).

However, selling and branding fashion brands online requires a different set of tools and strategies than selling and branding commodity products offline. Fashion brands combine emotion, image and perception. Therefore, the challenge is how to convey these characteristics of intangibility, tangibility, and multi-sensory experiences online using Internet technologies (Bughin. 2009, Bughin and Manyika. 2007, Kapferer and Bastien. 2009, Seringhaus. 2005, Siddiqui, et al. 2003, Charlton. 2011).

With the help of Web 2.0 technologies, luxury fashion brands can create an immersive and innovative store environment online (Okonkwo. 2009). However, to-date, there is no luxury fashion brand website (including community using social media) which allows visitors to navigate through the store, see the current collection on the shelves and drag and drop them into the basket, all the while being advised by a real-time e-shopping assistant. Furthermore, there are no luxury fashion brands that actively use crowdsourcing on their website or on social media sites to its fullest extent.

The purpose of this article is to assess the extent to which the luxury fashion industry has availed itself of these opportunities through a longitudinal study of 15 of the most well-known brands over the years 2006, 2008, 2010 and 2012.

Based on this, we set out to develop a theoretically consistent framework for strategic choices regarding website design. (By framework we mean a coherent set of interrelated concepts with definitions of each concept and specific scales of characteristics for measurements.) Given the important developments, especially with Web 2.0 technologies, our framework has been especially developed to take interactive and social media into account.

Theoretical background

There is a fairly extensive tradition of studying websites. Since the late 90s, researchers and website developers have developed different types of frameworks for assessing, comparing and designing websites. The 1999 LSE/Novell framework evaluated the web presence of the top 10 largest companies (LSE and Novell. 1999), concluding that most of the websites were limited to provision of information, and only a few had capabilities for e-commerce. The more comprehensive CEH framework (see Elliot et al. (2000) for assessment of websites identified six categories (company information, product/service information, transaction processing, customer services, ease of use and innovation), where each identified five levels of excellence that would be useful for scoring the status of a particular website.

In a comprehensive review of website assessment frameworks between 1995 and 2006, Chiou et al. (2010) identified no less than 83 articles, and classified them in regard to which approach they had applied: an IS, a marketing or a combined approach. They found that while a combined approach in the period 1995-2001 was only applied in 27% of the studies, this figure increased to 55% in the period 2001-2006. We suspect that this figure grew because, in using a combined approach, it was necessary to integrate the vendor (brand) as well as the consumer perspective.

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In another attempt to provide a consolidated view of categories studied in web-assessment studies, Park and Gretzel (2007) classified all categories into 12 so-called unifying categories listed in order of frequency of use in the studies investigated by Chiou et al. (2010): ease-of-use, responsiveness, fulfilment, security/privacy, personalisation, visual appearance, information quality, trust, interactivity, advertising/persuasion, playfulness and technology integration. This is a very useful overview of the abstract concepts applied in assessment of websites, and we have built on these to identify assessment categories and sub-categories.

While the user and developer perspectives are well represented in the literature, there is little research on developing websites and online business strategies from a brand owner's perspective (Ghandour, et al. 2011), such as we are proposing to do here. The reason for the focus on owners is that we are interested in the strategic choices made (or to be made), when a brand owner decides on their Internet/website strategy. This can be either by design (because it is something actively pursued), default or as an emergent strategy (Mintzberg, 1978), that is, something which has come about as a result of serendipity or a series of incremental changes. Accordingly, we take a clear brand owner's perspective, analysing the potential advantages involved in particular strategic choices.

There are a limited number of empirical studies of luxury brand websites. However, three identified studies conducted by Siddiqui et al. (2003), Riley and Lacroix (2003), and Seringhaus (2005) show that luxury brands generally do not have interactive, entertaining or engaging websites, and therefore do not meet consumer expectations. A reason given by Kapferer and Bastien (2009) is that luxury fashion brands are facing the Internet dilemma: "A luxury product can communicate via the Internet, but should not be sold there" (p.207). Their viewpoint is that an Internet strategy is indispensable for luxury brands as a means of communication, advertising and as an experiential tool; however, if a luxury product is placed for sale on the Internet, it is no longer a luxury product.

Therefore, we need a robust well-researched framework, which will be useful for the assessment of B2C websites within the luxury fashion industry, and we believe that the Rayport and Jaworski's (2003) 7C framework is the best starting point. This is because it emphasises the specific role of website interface elements as a branding and sales channel between brand owners and current/future customers. In other words, the 7Cs are the interface categories through which vendors communicate with their customers when delivering a core value proposition the company wants to convey. Rayport and Jaworski's 7C framework has previously been applied to other industries. Begalli et al. (2009) conducted an empirical analysis of 272 high quality winery websites through an adapted version of Rayport and Jaworski's 7C framework. Lee, Oneng and Benbasat (2003) and Georgiadis

and Manitsaris (2005) used Rayport and Jaworski's 7Cs as a reference framework for interfaces for mobile commerce and user interfaces. Yang et al. (2008), extended the 7C to 8C and created a reference model for evaluating and designing effective Web 2.0 applications. Sabouri and Jalali (2009) also investigated the 7C framework as a reference model for evaluating the Web 2.0 properties. Most recently, Yang et al. (2008) presented the 8C framework as a reference model for analysing collaborative Web 2.0 applications, including online social networking Websites and online collaborative sites such as Wikipedia.

In line with these studies, we use the 8C framework as a basis, and study the following eight assessment criteria:

- Content (Branding/Operational/One-way)
- Community (Branding/Operational/Two-way)
- Communication (Branding/Innovative/One-way)
- Collaboration (Branding/Innovative/Two-way)
- Connection (Sales/Operational/One-way)
- Commerce (Sales/Operational/Two-way)
- Context (Sales/Innovative/One-way)
- Customisation (Sales/Innovative/Two-way)

In our discussion of the eight criteria/categories, we also provide our definition of the concepts, specifically indicating for each category: the extent to which that category is useful primarily for furthering branding or sales, whether the orientation is primarily operational or strategic, and whether the communication is predominantly a one-way or two-way process.

Methodology

The method for studying fashion brands' adoption of the Internet included a systematic observation of 33 leading fashion brands' websites and Internet presence over the course of six years supported by 16 in-depth interviews with fashion brand professionals.

Initially, the framework development of categories and subcategories was inspired by observation of the actual application of technologies adopted on websites, after which the applications were checked and validated by comparing them with previous observations of fashion brand websites in the literature (Riley and Lacroix, 2003, Seringhaus, 2005, Siddiqui, et al. 2003). As such, a predefined framework did not guide the observation of luxury fashion websites in 2006, but was found to fit into the Yang et al. (2008) 8C framework when studies were repeated in 2008, 2010 and 2012.

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The observations of luxury fashion brand websites were conducted over a two-week period in 2006 (of 25 brands), in 2008 (30 brands), in 2010 (33 brands) and in 2012 (15 brands) by one of the authors. In total, 15 brands were included in all four observations: Burberry, Chanel, Chloé, Dior, Donna Karan, Gucci, Hermes, Louis Vuitton, Marc Jacobs, Mulberry, Paul Smith, Prada, Ralph Lauren, Valentino and Versace. The remaining 10 to 18 websites studied in the three surveys were used to validate conclusions, such as whether some sub-categories were generally absent in all luxury fashion brand websites or whether a particular sub-category was best business practice, etc.

Finally, for the third survey in 2010, the CUBE framework was developed, and the 8C categories were theoretically defined in detail together with the definition of the sub-categories to be measured. The fourth survey, in 2012, was not only used as further evidence of the value of the CUBE framework and as an evaluation of it standing the test of a longitudinal study over several years, but also as an illustration of the ability of the framework to capture the changes taking place when the websites were maturing.

Findings

One of the unique aspects of this article is that it has been possible to validate the use of the eight categories and 29 sub-categories through a longitudinal survey during a period of six years of 15 luxury fashion brands' Internet presence.

Through our study we identified the development regarding three strategic choices:

- Only branding or enhancing with sales
- Only operational or enhancing with innovation
- Only one-way or enhancing with two-way communication

FOR ALL THREE BINARY STRATEGIC CHOICES, THERE IS A VERY CLEAR TENDENCY THAT INCREASING NUMBERS OF FASHION BRANDS HAVE ADOPTED THE ADVANCED FUNCTIONALITY OVER THE PERIOD.

All brands have the same basic functionality regarding branding, operational and one-way (except Prada in 2006, as they did not

have a website before 2008), and there was a clear growth in the number who expanded their website from branding to include sales, from being purely operational to also becoming innovative, and from being only one-way in 2006 towards becoming two-way, with the development from 2008 to 2010 and again from 2010 to 2012 being particularly noteworthy. In this latter period, luxury fashion brands were closing the previous gap between what customers expected from brands, and what their websites were able to offer regarding social interaction, two-way interaction mode and a personalised relationship with the brand (Okonkwo. 2009, Riley and Lacroix. 2003, Seringhaus. 2005, Siddiqui, et al. 2003).

Finally, we would argue that the lack of contact details and two-way interaction on websites and social media sites indicates that luxury fashion brands are still cautious about overly close interaction. Most of them have to continually control the images and messages they push out to their customers and fans as their number one priority. Consequently, interaction does not flow both ways; it is still predominantly a one-way interaction mode, dictated by brands that are afraid of what their customers and fans might say about them. This is in strong contrast to previous research findings on consumer's wishes and wants (Riley and Lacroix. 2003, Seringhaus. 2005, Siddiqui, et al. 2003) and is contrary to how consumers in general are empowered by interactive and social media. Consumers expect to define their own perspective on companies and brands, thus shifting the balance of power from company to customer (Bernoff and Li. 2008). Henceforth, luxury fashion brands have to do a better job at creating dream value by providing exceptional experiences online with the help of digital technologies and by interacting with consumers (Okonkwo. 2009).

Conclusion

Strategic choices are important because the purpose and objectives of different websites call for different assessment criteria when websites are multidimensional in nature (Ghandour, et al. 2011). Therefore, even though the assessment framework might be the same, it is not clear that having more is better than having less, it all depends on the strategic objectives of the website.

All existing frameworks for the evaluation of websites, including the 8C framework, which we have used here thus far, have been developed bottom-up, categorising functionalities/features that can be identified empirically through externally assessing company websites, identifying best business practices, and relying on rules of thumb and the opinions of a range of experts. These frameworks consist of independent categories that have been consolidated into a type of checklists without any kind of formal overall rationale, strategy or theory for choosing one category over others. Indeed, none of the reported studies presents a theoretical

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background for the identification/selection of the categories, nor have any explicitly discussed the strategic purposes for the website design evaluated. It is the ambition of this article to contribute to the development of a theoretically based framework evaluation of commercial B2C websites, which explicitly build on strategic choices in website design. We shall develop this for the luxury fashion brands, but we believe it will have value far beyond this industry.

To achieve this, we decided to start top-down by identifying the three key strategic choices that developers need to take as a starting point in developing and managing B2C company websites.

- Purpose (branding or sales)
- Mode of interaction (one-way or two-way)
- Orientation (operational or innovative)

Purpose – branding or sale

The first strategic choice relates to the purpose of a B2C website. In the early strategic literature, for example, the Value Chain, one of the five primary functions is called Marketing and Sales (Porter, 1985) and is identified as being the most important function for consumers. Early authors on e-commerce and e-business (e.g., Kalakota and Robinson (Kalakota and Robinson, 2001) made it clear that there was much more to the Internet than just e-commerce. Don Tapscot wrote in the foreword of his book,

“MOST MANAGERS STILL VIEW E-BUSINESS AND E-COMMERCE AS BUYING AND SELLING OF GOODS ON THE INTERNET...[BUT] IT IS MUCH MORE THAN THAT.”

The more is, first and foremost, in marketing. However, while marketing was not a separate topic in the early book by Kalakota and Robinson, Internet marketing became a standard topic in textbooks on e-commerce from the early 2000s (see e.g., Chaston (2001), Chaffey (2002), Laudon and Traver (2007).

Marketing/branding is particularly important when it comes to fashion brands which, from early times, have used their websites to support branding and other marketing activities by showcasing catwalk pictures, advertising campaigns, displaying videos promoting the brand, encouraging dialogue about the brand, crowdsourcing ideas and co-creating new products with customers and fans (Chernatory and Christodoulides (2004); Christodoulides and Chernatory (2006); Keller (2010); Aghekyan-

Simonian et al. (2012). Accordingly, we have identified the first strategic choice for B2C website within the fashion industry to be whether it focuses on branding (including marketing) on sales (including logistics in all dealings and CRM), or on both.

Mode of interaction – one-way or two-way

The second strategic choice is whether the mode of interaction is primarily a one-way, mass-marketing tool (e.g., Kotler et al. (2009)), which could include a personalisation or customisation of the messages to the consumer, but is predominantly distributed from the brand to the customers. The alternative is two-way interaction, whereby individual consumers are enabled or even encouraged to engage in interaction (Chaffey, et al. 2009). The choice between these two modes of interaction is crucial. On the one hand, one-way mass marketing can be analysed and controlled by the brand owner, and thus a high level of skills can be leveraged in this process and control of the brand is retained. On the other hand, the two-way interaction mode is increasingly becoming the norm rather than the exception when using the Internet for e-commerce, and the opportunity to provide feedback on the products on the website or social media platforms, and even to enable co-creation of ideas or innovations (Parameswaran and Whinston, 2007, Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004), has become increasingly commonplace.

Orientation – operational or innovative

The third strategic choice is less binary than the other two choices. On the one hand, we have the fairly standard websites allowing for different types of operational functionalities/features (e.g., displaying of product or company information and ordering of goods from a catalogue), while, on the other, we find innovative strategic functionalities/features (e.g., augmented reality, customisation of products and collaboration) closely linked to the overall strategic directions of the company.

In the discussion and in the following development of the CUBE-framework, the strategic choices have been shown as binary, e.g., either branding or sales. Obviously, it is possible to combine the strategies and build a website that supports both business strategies. One may, of course, also see middle forms, e.g., where the main purpose is that of sales, but where branding of own products is part and parcel of the sales process. However, when making strategic decisions and implementing them, there has to be clear objectives of, for example, a fully-fledged marketing effort for branding. Accordingly, when developing our CUBE framework below, we shall, for illustration purposes, treat each of the three dimensions as binary. However, we recognise that there are several intermediary steps or even a continuum on these categories.



Photo by Camilla Gammelgaard Kristensen, Amalie H. Bredahl, Helene Sophie Højgaard Eckholdt, Ditte Marie Rothemejer and Joanna Mikkelsen, VIA Film & Transmedia

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We have discussed the eight categories, and for each of these, as part of the definition of the categories, we have indicated whether we predominantly see the concept as branding or sales, one-way or two-way, and operational or innovative. If we combine the three strategic choices, we get 23 or eight different combined

strategies, e.g., two-way, operational and sales, which we have chosen to label commerce, or two-way, innovative and branding, which we have chosen to label collaboration. We have illustrated the eight different combined strategies below in Figure 1 with the CUBE-framework.

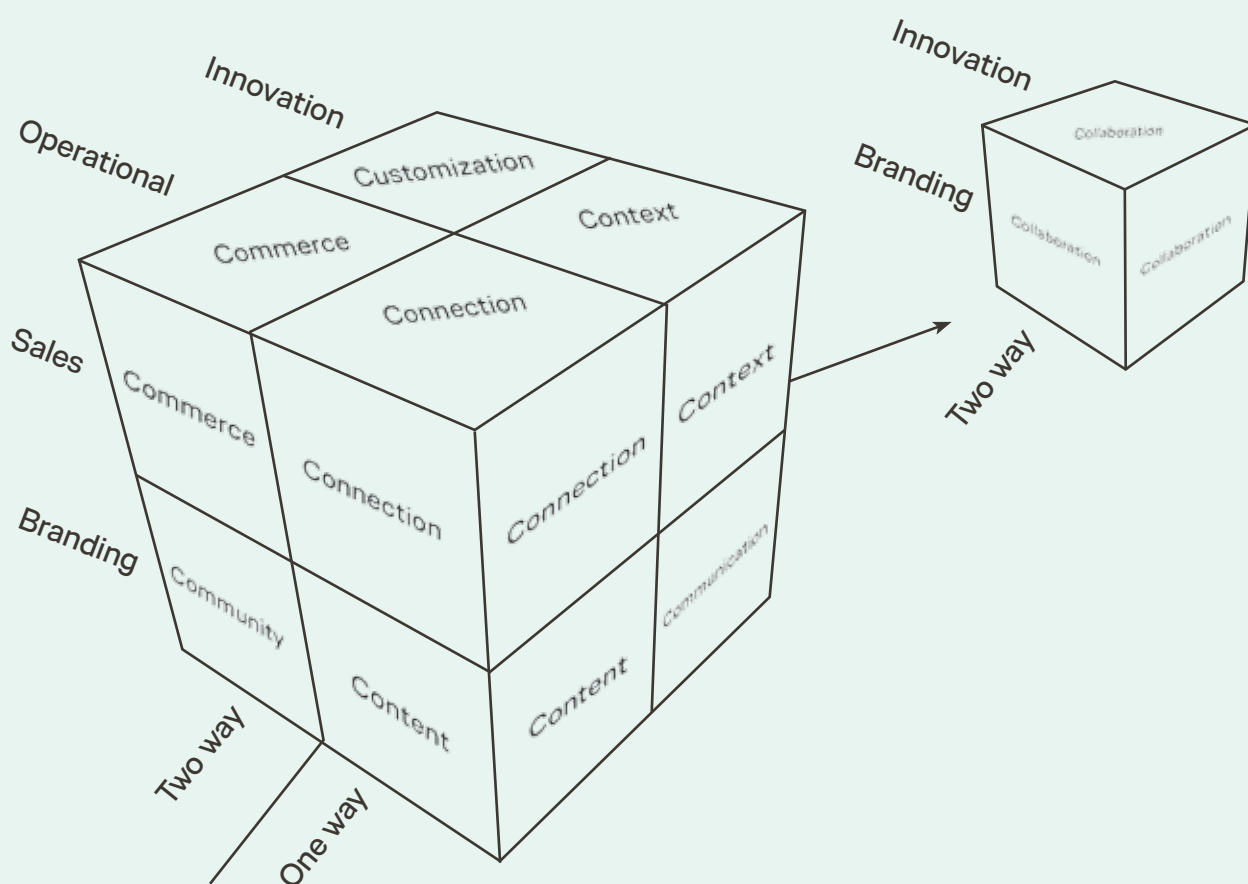


Figure 1: CUBE framework for assessment of websites – the hidden cube is shown next to the large one

More importantly, it has been possible to enter each of our eight categories into each of the eight small cubes within the larger cube. In the naming of the eight categories, we retained the names of the original seven concepts originally proposed by Rayport and Jaworski (2003), and added the category collaboration proposed by Yang et al. (2008) to complement the criteria given to the emergence of social media.

Implications for theory and practice

Probably more than most other industries, the fashion industry is very uncertain as to whether, and how, to apply the opportunities offered by the Internet, primarily because of the challenge of maintaining control of their brand. Fashion brands are confronting the dilemma of maintaining the exclusivity while at the same time opening up for real two-way interaction and involvement of its customers.

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However, our study shows that a company in the fashion industry must develop, implement and further innovate its Internet strategy in order to retain and further develop its brand.

Based on a thorough literature study, we identified a large number of different studies, all of which were created bottom up and that basically studied what web-designers did and what characterised successful websites. The closest to a theoretically based assessment framework that we could find was the classification framework of 8C of Yang et al. (Yang, et al. 2008), which turned out to be useful for intuitively characterising which categories were likely to be the most important. However, in order to apply this, we needed to develop a set of sub-categories or specific measurements. Therefore, we have extended the work of Yang et al. (Yang, et al. 2008) in the following manner. First, we have specifically chosen a brand owner perspective (instead of user or developer perspectives as applied in most studies), and identified the three strategic choices which, according to strategy literature, would be important in designing and analysing websites. Second, we have (partly) redefined the concepts (categories) to reflect the three strategic choices. Third, we have operationalised the 8C concepts through a set of two to six specific sub-categories for each of the eight concepts that might be observed when analysing the websites. Fourth, we have specifically modified the sub-categories to match the special characteristics of luxury brands. Fifth, we have carried out the longitudinal study of the status of the websites with four different surveys to document the robustness and value of the CUBE model. Finally, we have developed the cube framework to serve as a strategic tool in the design and assessment of websites.

In a practical vein, we partly documented the large development in the websites due to developments within Web 2.0 and social media, but also due to the developments in management thinking and strategies for reaching current and potential customers.

THIS DEVELOPMENT IN ADOPTION AND DIFFUSION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES CAN GUIDE OTHER BRANDS, BEYOND THE FASHION INDUSTRY, IN DESIGNING THEIR B2C WEBSITES.

We believe the CUBE framework has substantial practical value as a starting point for a theory on website and Internet presence. The illustration of the three strategic dimensions will hopefully serve to illustrate the main issues, and our operationalisation of the eight triplets using the eight C-concepts has proven useful in identifying and differentiating between the strategies of the different brands within the fashion industry.

Future research

While we have derived valuable theoretical and practical contributions for the website, social media and interactive media domain, we acknowledge that the research is closely related to the multichannel body of literature (see e.g. Keller 2010; Riley and Lacroix 2003; Seringhaus 2005; Siddiqui et al. 2003; Van Bruggen et al. 2010; Zhang et al. 2010), which is defined as selling and marketing through multiple channels (e.g. website, store, social media, catalogue, etc.). This is because the Internet presence cannot be seen as a separate entity.

RATHER, THAT THE MULTI-CHANNEL LITERATURE UNDERLINES THE IMPORTANCE OF PRESENTING A SEAMLESS INTEGRATION BETWEEN OFF-LINE AND ONLINE OPERATIONS TOWARD CONSUMERS, AS CONSUMERS DO NOT SEPARATE CHANNEL COMMUNICATION BUT PERCEIVE BRAND COMMUNICATION HOLISTICALLY.

The omnichannel literature takes this perception a step further by arguing that brands must transform their operations into being customer- rather than channel-centric (Brynjolfsson, et al. 2013). In stating this, I mean that they need to offer a coherent and seamless brand and shopping experience across channels (Hansen and Siew. 2015). Consequently, we hope to see future research apply or extend the cube model and its strategic choices to the omnichannel environment as well.

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Brand Yugen/Photo & editing by Shilo Duffy/ Styling Anna Osnes Gravgaard and Synne Haakanstuen/
Lighting Simon Dræby Carstens, VIA Film & Transmedia

Takeaway

- Luxury fashion brands have been slow to adapt to the Internet and its opportunities for sales and marketing purposes despite the industry's reputation for reinventing itself every six months.
- In contrast, consumers embrace digital technologies in a fast manner and expect that they can interact directly with brands and shop across channels.
- Selling and branding fashion brands online require a different set of tools and strategies than selling and branding offline. Fashion brands combine emotion, image and perception. Therefore, the challenge is how to convey these characteristics of intangibility, tangibility, and multi-sensory experiences using Internet technologies.
- With the help of Web 2.0 technologies, luxury fashion brands can create an immersing and innovative environment online.
- Apply the 8C framework for strategically assessing brands' web presence – also outside the fashion industry.
- Consider the three key strategic choices as a starting point in developing and managing B2C company websites:
 - Purpose (branding or sales)
 - Mode of interaction (one-way or two-way)
 - Orientation (operational or innovative)
- Apply the cube framework as a strategic tool in the conceptualisation and development of websites.
- Fashion brands must continuously develop, implement and further innovate their digital strategy in order to retain and further develop their brand.
- Don't just think about your web presence, but consider your entire omnichannel reality.
- Successful fashion brands in the digital era will reconfigure their reality to be consumer-centric.

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Note

For a previous and more extensive version of this article see Hansen, R., and Bjorn-Andersen, N. 2013, "Cube assessment framework for B2C websites applied in a longitudinal study in the luxury fashion industry," *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, (8:2), pp. 1-20.



Still from 'White', fashion film directed by Marie Schuller for Dica Kayek

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Defining Fashion Film

There is a general mood of confusion surrounding the topic of fashion film. It is a genre that seemingly defies definition and transitions fluidly between theatre, photography, music videos, advertising, and narrative film. To some, it is the ultimate modern perversion of video art; to others, it is an artistically rich and important tool of fashion communication. What it truly is, however, remains a question without an authoritative answer.

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Marie Schuller is a film-maker and contributing head of Fashion Film at SHOWstudio. She studied film-making at the National Film and Television School and completed her MA in photography at the University of the Arts London. Schuller has worked for Nick Knight's award-winning fashion-film platform SHOWstudio in London since 2010. Her directing work has been exhibited internationally and she has been honoured with multiple awards throughout her career including numerous prizes at ASVOFF (A Shaded View of Fashion Film) and awards at FFF Milano (Fashion Film Fest), and The Book's Creative Awards. She directed campaign films for Givenchy, Versace, and Selfridges, amongst others.

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A broad need for definition

It is just this absence of convention that seems to me to generate the most discussion. During my five years as SHOWstudio's head of Fashion Film, I delivered many speeches and sat on many panels discussing the medium. The one guaranteed audience question asked every time was how to define fashion film.

IT IS EASIER TO APPRECIATE ART
IF WE ARE ABLE TO EXPLAIN ITS
REASON, MESSAGE, OR AGENDA.

Personal taste aside, few will reject the artistic value of conspicuously technically skilful paintings. However, the more we move towards abstract art, the more the emphasis is put on the conceptual context, rather than on the content of the piece as an object. Also, it feels like fashion film - as a more obscure, experimental, and artistically diverse genre of film-making - is currently lacking an easily definable concept or consensus that creates a foundation from which we can read this young genre. For example, a century of iconic fashion photography has educated and shaped our reading of that art form, with new aesthetic developments measuring up to previous eras and styles. In comparison, we have not yet defined the UR - Fashion Film, the original style and direction of the medium. Fashion film as a genre is still in its infancy and practitioners experiment widely with no clear and definite aesthetic direction. But isn't just that the beauty of it?

Justification and understanding

Fashion photography is in many ways identical to fashion film and is seen by many - including, for example, SHOWstudio's founder and director Nick Knight - as the medium closest to fashion film. After all, each second of film is put together from 25 photographs and the addition of sound. Fashion film, therefore, is simply fashion photography in motion. So, why do people still question the point of a fashion film while photography is respected as an established art form?

As both a fashion film-maker and photographer, my personal experience shows that fashion editorials and imagery generally attract widespread positive reactions online and in print. The same visuals presented in motion are liable to provoke far more polarised opinions. During my tenure at SHOWstudio, I noticed that a photograph still will accrue more 'likes', 'shares', and 'clicks' online than a film - even on SHOWstudio's own social media, an online space that for the past 16 years has been the fledgling medium's hatchery and heartland. Another observation I made was that online commentators on our YouTube channel seemed preoccupied with the need to understand the films in order to

enjoy them. Pure aesthetics frequently caused people to question the 'point' of the film or resort to calling it 'pretentious'. A clear narrative structure, on the other hand, resulted in a more positive online response. This need for justification seems like an aspect that is native to fashion film only, not to fashion imagery in general.

A genre in its infancy

What many spectators forget is that the medium of fashion film is very much in its infancy. In the early 20th century, there were only a handful of photographers who specialised in fashion imagery and, for a long time, they too had to fight for their craft to be recognised and appreciated as an art form. Photographers such as Horst P. Horst and Edward Steichen worked in a fluid, young, and flexible genre that faced uncertainty and obscurity - much like fashion film today. What we now hail as the early beginnings of modern fashion photography did not enjoy clear definition at the time. It took decades and waves of iconic photographers such as Blumenfeld, Bourdin, Beaton, Penn, Newton, Bailey, and Avedon to mould fashion photography into the art form that we know today. As the medium evolves, so does the understanding of it; asked to describe 'fashion photography,' a millennial interlocutor is likely to consider the work of our current great photographic talents - Steven Meisel, Nick Knight, Tim Walker - without reference to their predecessors. Also, fashion photography's rapid development isn't restrained to purely artistic parameters: Within the past 20 years alone, the medium has moved entirely from analogue to digital, embraced the online revolution, and successfully adjusted to screen media.

JUST LIKE PHOTOGRAPHY,
FASHION FILM WILL HAVE TO
GO THROUGH STAGES OF
RE-INVENTION TO REACH
THE POTENTIAL IT UNDOUBT-
EDLY HAS, BOTH FROM AN
ARTISTIC AND A COMMERCIAL
PERSPECTIVE.

Fashion Film prior to the Internet

Looking at Erwin Blumenfeld's 'Experiments with Advertising' from the 1950s or Guy Bourdin's cinematic tests 'Compulsive Viewing' of the 1960s, it becomes apparent that artists even of that era were intrigued by the potential of filming fashion. Both projects feature visually stunning and experimental videos of fashion models

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moving for the camera. Both projects also show the distinctive style of the artist in charge: While Bourdin's films showcase his typical colour themes and his flamboyant hair and make-up styling, combined with surreal poses and quirky actions, Blumenfeld's camera tests demonstrate his keen interest in image manipulation and abstractions, using mirrors, reverse speed, and collage editing to create naïve yet effective cinematic effects.

However, both artists lacked a platform. The print and magazine set-up that dominated the way fashion was presented pre-Internet dictated and shaped the way we saw and understood fashion, championing first fashion illustration and then photography as the main method of fashion communication. It would take another half century until the digital revolution suddenly and drastically changed the status quo. Here was the Internet, a new platform that in all aspects offered designers and artists endless possibilities. It promised an inclusive, transparent, global, and immediate platform which could support almost any format.

THE INTERNET REVOLUTIONISED AND DEMOCRATISED FASHION AND DRASTICALLY CHANGED THE WAY WE COMMUNICATE AND UNDERSTAND ART.

Pioneering this trend is Nick Knight's SHOWstudio, known as 'The Home of Fashion Film' and founded in 2000 as a platform to showcase the new genre, which Knight believes is the most appropriate and suitable medium to depict fashion. The advent of the Internet has been utterly pivotal for fashion film: Guy Bourdin made films in the 1950s, but it took until 2003, when Knight edited the original cinefilm supplied by the Bourdin estate, for the never-before-seen rushes to launch on SHOWstudio.com and reach an audience. Equally, Erwin Blumenfeld's 'Experiments in Advertising' didn't see light until SHOWstudio launched an edited cut of the historic film footage in 2006.

Fashion film's rapid development

The Internet immediately established itself as the native platform for fashion film, enabling the genre to reach an audience and experiment with artistic and technological values. SHOWstudio's first live broadcast was called Sleep: On a December night in 2001, nine top models arrived at The Metropolitan Hotel to participate in a global, live fashion shoot - the first of its kind. The girls were

styled and groomed and were put to bed in separate hotel rooms. The public logged on through the night as the models' gentle slumber and gradual dishevelment was broadcasted live on the Internet.

However, a live broadcast in 2001 was essentially a slow and stuttering transition of grainy photographs that switched every three minutes. A decade later, SHOWstudio broadcasts daily HD live streams covering collections and photo shoots.

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES HAVE SHAPED NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR FASHION COMMUNICATION AND CATAPULTED FASHION FILM INTO NEW EXCITING TERRITORIES.

Alongside Knight, film-makers such as Solve Sunsbø, Daniel Sannwald, and Ruth Hobgen use CGI, motion control, 3-D scanning and advanced editing techniques to create inventive fashion imagery not imaginable a decade ago. In 2009, designer Gareth Pugh caused a stir by presenting a nine-minute fashion film instead of a runway show to surprised buyers, press, and guests during Autumn/Winter fashion week in Paris; a testament to the potential and power of the genre, proving that it can rival even the spectacle of a fashion show, a format based on decades of tradition. The changes and shifts of the past 15 years have enabled fashion film to gain momentum and find its place in the spectrum of fashion communication.

The main protagonist

Knight describes fashion film as a film that 'features fashion as the main protagonist'. 'If you asked me what makes a great fashion film, it's very easy to answer', says Knight in his 2013 SHOWstudio interview Thoughts on Fashion Film. 'Great fashion makes a great fashion film. The narrative is already in that piece of clothing. Every piece of clothing speaks'. Diane Pernet, the founder of the world's first and foremost fashion film festival, ASVOFF (A Shaded View of Fashion Film), names William Klein's 1966 satirical art house movie Who Are You Polly Magoo as the first real fashion film. Stefan Whelan, founder of White Lodge, a London-based production company specialising in fashion content, describes Tom Ford's elegant directorial debut, A Single Man starring Colin Firth and

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Julianne Moore, as the 'ultimate fashion film'. Opinions about what makes a fashion film remain divided and the need for definition continues.

No rules and no standards

Maybe there is too much emphasis on the question itself. Fashion film is clouded by obscurity, but this is a natural and much needed stage in the medium's development. It is down to designers, film-makers, and audiences alike to invent and establish fashion film so we can form the genre into a recognised art form and valuable tool of fashion communication.

NOW IS AN EXCITING TIME TO
MAKE FASHION FILMS. THERE
ARE NO RULES BY WHICH TO
ABIDE BY OR STANDARDS BY
WHICH TO BE MEASURED.

It's an unexplored and creative field of film-making with endless potential and the possibility to push fashion imagery into uncharted territories, using image manipulation, sound, narrative, CGI, and animation to elevate the way we communicate fashion designers' work.

Being a new medium, fashion film enables young artists to find a voice without having to labour in the shadow of iconic film-makers of the past. This has helped me as a young film-maker immensely as my early work didn't get measured on impossible comparisons in the field of fashion film; there simply isn't much work with which to compare it.

An obvious emphasis on styling, hair, and make-up in addition to imagery that is often visually or conceptually driven rather than supporting a storyline also results in fashion film differing from other film-making genres in the way the crew is structured. This structural shake-up enables a level of subversion and disruption to other norms of film-making: Artists can become film-makers without having run the conventional gauntlet which is built on a strict hierarchy and is hard to break into. There is, symptomatically, an unusually high representation of women film-makers in fashion film, as compared to other film genres.

An increased demand for fashion film content and a rising hunger for young film-makers has seen established agencies opening their books for film-makers specialising in fashion film over the past five years. Budgets for fashion films are increasing as are the number of platforms, with NOWNESS, Dazed Digital, i-D, and Vogue adjusting their online presence to include film. There also are countless festivals and competitions cropping up to promote the medium. Now is a great time to explore, experiment, and direct fashion films; film-makers can be among the first artists who shape this young medium and find a footing in this democratic, unexplored terrain.

A definition yet to come

The answer to the question of what constitutes a fashion film might remain elusive, but I would argue that this isn't what should preoccupy us. The genre will eventually define itself and establish parameters and qualities that feel native to it, accumulated from powerful and inspiring work that has yet to be made.

NOW IS THE TIME TO
EXPERIMENT AND INVENT.
ARTISTS, FILM-MAKERS,
AND DESIGNERS ALIKE ARE
FORTUNATE TO BE ABLE TO
PARTAKE IN THESE IMPORTANT
FIRST STAGES OF A NEW
MEDIUM.



Brand Pawaka/Photo by Anders Bachmann/Styling Julie Kaja Prezebe/Assisting Jian Zhi Zhang & Kara Smith, VIA Film & Transmedia

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Takeaway

- There is no unifying general definition of what a fashion film is because the medium is still moulding itself.
- This lack of understanding does shape the way current fashion films are seen and understood.
- Fashion film and fashion photography are different mediums but hold many interesting parallels that help contextualise fashion film's development.
- Fashion photographers experimented with film as early as the 1950s.
- The advent of the Internet has been utterly pivotal for fashion film and enabled the medium to flourish by offering it a platform. Continuous technological advances in relation to image manipulation, 3D, CGI, and motion scanning enables fashion imagery to enter uncharted territories.
- Now is an exciting time to make fashion films. There are no rules by which to abide or standards by which to be measured. Platforms, brands, budgets, and festivals are all adjusting to include film as the medium's momentum accelerates.
- Artists, film-makers, and designers experimenting now with fashion film will be instrumental in forming the genre into a recognised art form.

Links to Films

Compulsive Viewing: The Films of Guy Bourdin: http://showstudio.com/project/compulsive_viewing_the_films_of_guy_bourdin
Experiments in Advertising: The Films of Erwin Blumenfeld: http://showstudio.com/project/experiments_in_advertising_the_films_of_erwin_blumenfeld

SHOWstudio: Sleep: <http://showstudio.com/project/sleep>

Gareth Pugh A/W 09: http://showstudio.com/project/gareth_pugh_a_w_09

Nick Knight: Thoughts on Fashion Film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BOBZMS9Bhr0>



Brand: Vibe Johansen/ Photo by Anna Osnæs Gravgaard, Nynne Uhre Larsen, Lasse Lyskjær Noer, Mathias Laustrop Andersen, Anders Bachmann Poulsen and Simon Dræby Carstens, VIA Film & Transmedia

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She has participated as academic expert in Madrid Fashion Film Festival and published the book *Fashion Brands Communication and Management* (2014). She focuses her research on fashion branding citing Fashion Films and Pop Up Fashion Stores in her latest works. She has been visiting scholar from several universities such as Harvard, the Fashion Institute of Technology and UCSD and visiting professor in different Universities in Spain, Scotland and Italy.

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Modern fashion magazines, as we know them today, started in the last decades of the XIX century and the fashion ads in these magazines, with their images and proposals, have shown the way women should look and perform for decades (Stoll Dougall, 1994: 49). Fashion brands used to remain within the safe boundaries of editorials: a visual report where a model is presented wearing different outfits, following a specific theme or concept. Economic factors were the main reason behind these decisions: during the first decade of the XX century two editorial companies, Condé Nast and Hearst Corporation, found a way to capitalize the huge growth of the cosmetics and fragrances advertising industry. But the predominant role they allocated to photographers placed these professionals as a key agent in the origins of the entire fashion brands' system (Casajús Quirós, 2002: 133-147). They felt comfortable with static images where models and outfits were equally important to control.

Besides, although fashion magazines' advertising rates are expensive they are more accessible than those of audiovisual media such as television and film. However, these are not the sole reason for which fashion brands have chosen print instead of audiovisual advertising formats. The fact that target groups are heavily concentrated around fashion magazines, in addition to the quality and specialization of contents turns them into an ideal place for brand advertising (Menéndez Menéndez, 2009: 27-34).

IN RECENT YEARS, THE COMMUNICATION SECTOR HAS EVIDENCED THAT CONVENTIONAL FORMULAS SUCH AS ADVERTISING RATES IN TELEVISION, RADIO, MAGAZINES AND NEWSPAPERS, CINEMA, BILLBOARDS AND EVEN THE INTERNET, HAVE BEEN SURPASSED IN INVESTMENT BY UNCONVENTIONAL COMMUNICATION.

At the same time, traditional advertising had been undergoing a deep credibility crisis at the beginning of the new century but it dramatically improved during the economic and financial

crisis from 2008 to 2014. Furthermore, Integrated Marketing Communication research confirms that this lack of authority is motivated by scarce or nonexistent brand commitment and by limited interest in establishing an open dialogue with the consumer (Holm, 2006: 23-33).

Although it is true that traditional communication channels have demonstrated their effectiveness for years, brands have likewise realized they cannot ignore radical transformations in the current communications scenario. This is the case of fashion film that "as a new form of high gloss representation, [...] has challenged more traditional forms of fashion media" (Khan, 2012: 236).

On the other hand, quoting Uhlirova (2013: 147)

The designers' growing interest in the moving image was of course propelled by the technological possibilities – the now easily accessible electronic and digital production techniques and editing equipment – but also, and perhaps more importantly, coincided with the shift of the fashion show towards a theatrical spectacle, a multimedia, multisensory experience that was to forcefully impress upon the audience the concept and the creative process behind a collection.

For all these reasons fashion brands started to look for a different way to communicate with their customers and tell them something relevant that can't be transmitted on a piece of paper or across a fashion show. In the first decade of the XXI Century – besides some exceptions – fashion brands started to use audiovisual content more than ever as a strategic tool to express their identity.

But this does not mean that fashion didn't feel the attraction of moving image during the XX century. Uhlirova (2013: 140) identifies a film made by Georges Méliès for *Mysthère corsets* as one of the first fashion films ever. And Leese (1991: 9) cites *Fifty years of Paris fashions, 1859-1909* shown in London in 1910 as the first fashion film, even though we can say that because of the function and characteristics they both were conceived as commercial ads. Newsreels projections from the 10's to the 30's showing the latest collections from Paris mostly to the American customers could also be cited as a precedent of the fashion films. During those years newsreels genre did not change very much (Leese, 1991). Short films become more and more popular through the years. Some of them were mere exhibitions of a designer's collection, but other's main goal was to show new trends of each season or a product's manufacturing process. After the II WW some fashion films showed the revolutionary use of the new fabrics such as nylon or rayon. From the 30's to the 50's the Hollywood Golden Era have a strong influence on the fashion newsreels with many actresses starring as models and the more frequent use of narrative.

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It is necessary to mention the photographer Erwin Blumenfeld as the pioneer of the fashion experimental movies during the 50's and 60's. William Klein and Guy Bourdin also contributed with "short films as an extension of their photographic work" from the 60's to the 80's. And again some great fashion photographers like Richard Avedon, Serge Lutens and Helmut Newton made fashion films for commercial brands during the 70's and 80's (Mijovic, 2013: 145). In the two last decades of the last century television was more open to elaborate programs dedicated to fashion at the beginning of the new century, fashion designers incorporated audiovisual contents to their fashion shows and stores. At the same time, a more conceptual approach was present in the short films and documentaries with fashion as the center (2013: 146).

But the new version of fashion films that emerged in the first decade of XXI century –as a result of the digital revolution has created a different form of expression, art, branding and strong connection with communities- allow us to talk about a totally distinct phenomenon.

Some facts about fashion and branding

The fashion brands universe is atomized and there are tons of local and international brands competing against each other. In order to stand out, brands need a differential proposition. During the 80's emerged the lifestyle brand communication idea as a plausible way to tell a story that customers can quickly understand and feel identified with (Wickstrom, 2006: 2-4). Nowadays more than a logo to show, people look for a lifestyle to follow (Saviolo & Marazza, 2013: 60) and audiovisual, without any doubt, is the perfect language to transmit a lifestyle.

On the other hand, the amount of fashion related advertising videos has soared exponentially in the last six years. Whilst in 2009, videos or advertising documentaries were very few and in 2016 it is unconceivable for a fashion brand to ignore this promotion channel in its campaigns. Along with this trend the recent consolidation of collaborative video platforms such as YouTube and Vimeo –created in 2006 and 2004 respectively- has significantly changed the way fashion brands communicate with their audiences. This is not only due to technical possibilities but also to influencers that spread around their personal choices to others.

THE FASHION FILM CONCEPT IS USED IN THE INDUSTRY TO INDICATE CREATIVE AUDIOVISUAL PROJECTS PRODUCED FOR FASHION BRANDS.

The purpose of this article is to study fashion films in order to identify the main characteristics of this new genre that fashion corporations are using to communicate and build brands.

But there are some factors concerning the industry that must be analyzed before in order to understand the importance of fashion film. Fashion used to be a sector mainly based on brick and mortar retail, the initial intention was to sell clothes, shoes, bags and accessories. Physical stores were, during the XIX and the XX centuries, the main distribution channel to purchase clothes, but the end of the XX century saw the emergence of a new type of retail: flagship stores. Fashion flagships emerged as special stores, bigger and more singular than any other brand's store. Often designed by reputed architects and placed in the best city locations flagships intention was to create a lifestyle environment: a "brandscape" whose goal was to facilitate the customer to identify with the world of the brand (Wickstrom, 2006). They intend to attract attention through all five senses and hence become a stage that recreates each brand's exclusive universe. Theatricality used as a seduction tool to obtain a large scale sensorial impact: entering a Gucci, Armani, Carolina Herrera or Prada flagship stores, means access to extremely singular environments: the display of lifestyles. The products are not as important as the place itself and the broad variety of activities they offer related to culture, art, music, events or digital experiences to mention some.

Flagship stores started as a result of factors such as the importance of developing a whole concept in the stores to transmit the brand lifestyle to consumers to mention one. The growth of e-commerce was another reason. The internationalization of fashion brands was the third, since consumers travel, they encounter brands in other countries and need to understand in just one store visit what a brand is about to be able to follow and even e-buy their products (Manlow & Nobbs, 2013: 53).

EVEN THOUGH PHYSICAL STORES STILL MEAN THE 70% OR 80% OF THE GLOBAL RETAIL SALES (MCKINSEY, 2015), LUXURY FASHION BRANDS HAVE NOTICED A DECREASE AND STORES HAVE BECOME SPACES TO LIVE EXPERIENCES OR SIMPLY PRODUCT SHOWCASES, INSTEAD OF SELLING POINTS.

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Now they are placing efforts on interaction with clients and linking store contents to online social networks and channels, where users express opinions and participate in brand creation. In flagship stores consumers become “brand performers” or “actors” of a performance that, thanks to mimesis, lead them to get into a totally different world of exclusiveness (Wickstrom, 2006; 13). Ralph Lauren flagship store in New York is one of the best examples of this process.

Based on these evidences brands have discovered the advantages of fashion films and their power of seduction as they secure a more engaging and collaborative experience than television advertisements. However, the most interesting fact is that their main goal is not persuasion; thus, they are not oriented towards selling but towards branding. In fact, fashion films are a modern substitute of the use of retail experiences in terms of brand's image creation.

FOR ALL THESE REASONS, WE CAN SAY THAT FASHION FILM IS NOT JUST A NEW WAY OF ADVERTISING BUT A FORM OF BRANDED CONTENT (RAMOS & PINEDA, 2009: 729) AND AN ONLINE PROMOTIONAL SHORT FILM THAT FASHION BRANDS USE AS A PART OF THEIR ONLINE AND MARKETING BRANDING STRATEGY

(Mijovic, 2013: 176).

Objective, research questions and methodology

This article main goal is to describe the fashion films as a new format to create brands: to perform an anatomy of them, in order to identify its functions, characteristics and digital behavior. Even though we selected, reviewed and analyzed 62 fashion films this is not an experimental work but a theoretical work based on qualitative study.

The three research questions of this investigation are:

- Which are the main reasons for the emergence of fashion films?
- Is fashion film a distinctive way of communication for fashion brands? and,
- Which are the main functions and characteristics of fashion films?

To describe this phenomenon we have viewed 254 fashion films from 2000 to 2016, and selected 62 short films classified by brands, directors and years¹.

Our analysis has followed these steps:

1. Definition of the type of fashion film:
 - Narrative, non-narrative, description of a process: production, manufacturing, historic heritage.
2. Main objective of the fashion film:
 - Build brand, present a new product/collection/series, connect with the consumer, improve selling.
3. Pursue of aesthetic delight through:
 - Beauty or Ugliness.
4. Use of audiovisual platforms and/or social media:
 - YouTube, Vimeo, Twitter, Facebook.
5. Analysis of the brand's (product and or values) presence in the fashion film
 - Intrusive, manifest, deliquescent, non-existent.
6. Narrative analysis of each fashion film.

After this first analysis and based in our previous researches (Díaz Soloaga & García, 2013: 349-371) we proceed to the qualitative study of the main features of the fashion films. Working with the sample we identified five aspects that define fashion films features and goals:

1. Strong connection with experiential marketing
2. A new way to interact with the new digital consumers
3. Storytelling and serialization
4. Seek of aesthetic delight
5. Dematerialization of the products

Fashion film definition and main characteristics

A fashion film is a new form of communication mainly used by fashion brands that is the heir of audiovisual advertisements, film, short films, video clips and video art. It could be defined as a form of branded content (Del Pino & Castelló: 2015) and a consequence of the way consumers behave in the XXI century in response to the digital revolution.

¹Fashion film selection available in Complutense Brands Research Group Webpage <http://gestiondemarcas.ccinfi.es/>.

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Branded content exists since the 30's of the past century but now it has a very different appearance from the initial content sponsored by commercial brands. For the Branded Content Marketing Association, branded content, also called Advertiser Fund Programming, has a little bit of branded entertainment, native advertising, product placement, sponsorship and brand licensing (BCMA, 2015).

Conventional advertising is undergoing a profound crisis, both as a communication format controlled by the sender and in its functional structure –of advertising agencies and communication media–, however, this does not imply that persuasive communication is obsolete (Müller & Michelis, 2011).

Brands still need to create a strong image of their identity in their customers' mind. It must be mainly created through communication and it might include a reference to its heritage. Aspiration and desire "to belong to something" are a core aspect of the decision-making process of luxury products and for this reason fashion *Maisons* were the first that started to use digital communications in a different way.

WE ASSUME THAT FASHION FILM IS THE NATURAL EVOLUTION THAT FASHION LUXURY BRANDS NEED TO DO IN THE DIGITAL ERA, FORCED BY THE DIGITAL BEHAVIOR OF THE YOUNG CONSUMERS, AND DISTINCTIVELY OF EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING.

Referred to the form, the fashion film "has inherited the principles of the traditional fashion media – it celebrates fashion for its incessant creative energy, for its conceptual and artisan qualities, for its transformative potential in the arena of social identity, or as an instrument for the expression of individuality" (Mijovic, 2013: 183) but still there is something new in this communication tool that makes fashion companies use it as a form of building their brands in the digital era:

1. Fashion films are mostly produced by luxury fashion firms as a new form of experience through entertainment and seduction, as a manifestation of experiential marketing.

2. Fashion film establishes a new relationship with consumers, closer and more intimate than any other communication strategy, due to the digital formats' interactive possibilities.

3. Storytelling and serialization of fashion films are some of the most recurrent sources to build brand engagement.

4. Fashion film seeks an aesthetic delight, through the use of beauty, balance, surprise and harmony, as a way of achieving a profound impact on the consumer.

5. Fashion film dematerialize products and set them apart from their physical characteristics but paradoxically, fashion products can also become a real and subjective element with their own life and personality.

Fashion film and experiential marketing

Atwal and Williams (2009: 345) defined experiential marketing by its main objectives.

First, the focus is on customer experiences and lifestyles, which provide sensory, emotional, cognitive and relational values to the consumer. Second, there is a focus on creating synergies among meaning, perception, consumption and brand loyalty. Third, it is argued that customers are not rational decision-makers, but are rather driven by rationality and emotion.

Experiential marketing according to Pine and Gilmore (1998: 97) is configured through theatrical acts that showcase these experiences. For Hackley and Tiwsakul (2006: 63-75) there is a link between "the role that entertainment marketing techniques may play in facilitating consumer self-concepts and identity formation through brand exposure within dramatic portrayals of characters and lifestyles". Michault (2009) and Michault (2015) affirm that the concept of luxury has lost the sense of authenticity and therefore it pursues hyper-reality and is oriented towards experiences, luring consumers with interactivity, connectivity and a great creativity in terms of image. Chanel, Dior and Louis Vuitton have been pioneers in introducing the fashion film notion in collaboration with famous directors. But besides H&M, which has been using audiovisual commercials since 2006, no other mass market fashion brand has used fashion film until 2013 or 2014. Fashion films are definitely a typical branding tool for luxury brands and we will explain the reason why.

When applied to the digital world, experiential marketing is faced with the challenge of making the audience reach a kinesthetic experience, that is, enabling customers to experience senses in an unaccustomed manner, such as "touching" the quality of fabrics with sight or smelling, catching a scent visually (Schmitt, 2006). Nowadays it is not sufficient for luxury brands to create an aura of exclusivity.

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CUSTOMERS WANT TO BECOME PART OF A LUXURY BRAND'S UNIVERSE AND FEEL AUTHORIZED TO DO SO, SINCE CURRENTLY IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO BELONG TO AN ARISTOCRATIC SOCIAL CLASS OR TO AN ELITE GROUP TO PARTICIPATE IN THEIR COMMUNITY.

In addition to hiring prestigious film directors, famous actresses and using french visual references –mostly Paris–, music and language, there are two other constant features in luxury brands' audiovisual productions: a aesthetic reminiscent of their aristocratic values and showing the artisan manufacturing process. The screening of big budget short films is a strategy to encourage desires as well as to gain massive diffusion of contents that are prone to criticism and subject to widespread online sharing.

THE FACT THAT VARIOUS FASHION BRANDS HAVE THEIR OWN FACEBOOK PAGE AND ARE CLOSER TO THE CONSUMER THROUGH INTERACTION WITH CLIENTS DOES NOT NECESSARILY IMPLY PRODUCT DEMOCRATIZATION, QUITE THE CONTRARY.

The renewal in 2005 of Burberry's formerly decadent image and the creation of Burberry Prorsum have placed it amongst the most respected luxury brands in a few years. The British brand's main strategy has been to plunge into digital branding both on a commercial scale and on a content level. Actions such as the Art of the Trench platform; the promotion of video clips by emerging British music groups, the release of 3D runway shows and a Facebook forum to create debate around its digital content creation have all together helped to turn Burberry into a young, well-known, desired

brand. Burberry's prices have risen from those of an affordable luxury brand to premium luxury pricing. The democratization of brand information and its usage of fashion film have not resulted in the democratization of the brand, quite the opposite. Luxury brands plan to maintain expectation and speculation across viral marketing that caused by these new audiovisual contents. Short film series such as *Lady Dior*; teaser campaigns to announce releases and the fact of presenting these in prestigious festivals boosts expectation and encourages social media users to create related content.

A new way to communicate with the consumer

Branding, considered as the effort to create a brand across each and every possible point of contact of the company with the customer, has conceptually replaced traditional advertising. Branding holds a legitimate first place within intangible assets' management in business. In the case of fashion brands, this fact has been enhanced by the huge increase of e-commerce in its multiple versions: from online purchases in brands' websites to buying stock products of luxury brands as well as fashion buying across multi-brand channels. In any case for some brands online product, sales are high compared with a physical store, and there are few brands that do not currently sell products digitally. This phenomenon is particularly challenging for luxury brands whose experiential and symbolic functions are essential.

The evolution from the physical space to the digital milieu has required a profound change from a merely transactional, passive brand-client relationship to an interactive, holistic one. Internet navigation is mostly fragmentary, and users constantly jump from one content to another, seeking entertainment. At the same time consumers are also open to collaborate with the brands if these appear to be amiable and open. But luxury hasn't been benevolent and open for centuries so, why have they changed their behavior?

THE ANSWER LIES WITHIN THE MEDIUM ITSELF. INTERNET IS AN INTERACTIVE MEDIUM AND FASHION FILM IS THE PROPER WAY TO FACILITATE A USE OF INTERACTION WITHOUT BETRAYING ITS ESSENCE.

Although Internet is a medium that lacks the seductive dimension of the purchasing ritual at a physical store that allows users to acquire detailed information about products, however is a per-

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Photo by Shana Selina Adeltarocks (Creative Director), Jian Zhi Zhang (Photographer), Nanna Elker Rasmussen (Editor), Zulany Pacheco (Producer)/ Model Amalie Kardyb/&MM And Model Management/ Makeup-Artist Mette Svensk Rosenbom-Jessen/modelbooking

suasive channel itself due to its interactive nature. Features such as active search, participation and the ability to transmit information across different formats, allow consumers to get involved in a brands' universe, enjoy varied experiences around it and above all, feel an individualized and personalized experience.

At a time in which the luxury market must forcefully enter e-commerce, fashion brands are obliged to find new channels to transmit their values, since Internet's operational traits threaten the appearance of exclusivity and excellence attainable in physical stores. No matter how much Internet enables users to get involved with brands and allows the expression of opinions, the luxury world still cultivates an aspirational relationship with customers. For a luxury brand to remain considered as such it must never fall back to customers' interests, on the contrary it must encourage them to embrace their brand's own contents (Bastien & Kapferer, 2008: 37-40). These brands exert a successful seduction because it is elusive, unattainable.

Diane Pernet, founder of A Shaded View on fashion film, the leading festival for fashion films, states that luxury consumers are realizing much faster than most brands that fashion film is one of the best ways to capture and distribute the elusive power of fashion (Davies, 2010). By screening narratives that represent their core values, brands show their universe, tell their story and provoke clients; in some cases, across beauty, others through irony and appealing to connoisseurs of the brand. Sometimes brands even foster community creation and allow customers to become involved in the lifestyle proposed.

Buzz marketing around certain fashion film releases makes the consumer feel the need of more participation. The controversy created by the *Serie Oro* campaign of Loewe in 2012 is an example of this need to judge the brand. The video Lanvin launched for its autumn 2011/2012 campaign, quickly turned into a global *trending topic* in Twitter. This allowed users who had never heard of Lanvin to have a first contact with the brand through a social network. Surprisingly Lanvin and Loewe videos were viewed by millions of people and commented upon because of the extensive criticism they had received. For many real or potential clients, these campaigns meant a sort of "image devaluation" of prominent luxury brands.

TO TAKE THE RISK OF
INTERACTION WITH THE
CONSUMER MEANS THE
DANGER OF CRITICISM BUT
THE BENEFIT OF REAL TRUST.

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Fashion, as well as luxury is defined by its power of seduction (Lipovetsky, 1990: 37) and therefore its communication must be based on the classic rhetoric notion of *pathos*; presenting emotional arguments centered on stirring the recipient. The aim is to appeal to the viewer's imagination and desire, not to convince with rational arguments on product convenience. Above all, fashion films are about making the customer receive a personalized, customized message, even though the content is centered on values and ideals of collective imagination.

The ability of content sharing, fashion show's comments, ad campaigns and interaction with fashion brands, has turned consumers into valuable prosumers (Kotler, 1986: 510-513), i.e. consumers and producers of brand information. Some even influence the fashion sphere, that's why fashion industry is increasingly more alert to expectations and criticism of industry outsiders, such as bloggers and opinion leaders.

Currently, 81% of online shoppers have received advice from friends, 71% read forums and opinions of products available across the web (Baker Retailing Institute, 2013). Brands are doing a big effort to get closer to the consumer and at the same time keep their aspirational universe intact.

Storytelling and serialization

As Diane Pernet says: "What makes a good fashion film is what makes any good film" (BOF, 2012). So, in order to communicate, the narrative characteristics of film seem just as necessary as the expressive potential.

Mijovic (2013: 183) states there are three different types of fashion film: the "non-narrative", those that are a sort of magazine editorials with movement; the "conventional narrative", focused on fashion as an aspirational symbol and the "organic narrative" where clothing is the center of the plot and the features and movements of the garments are essential. But we annotate Mijovic, in the sense that even the non-narrative and organic fashion films may include storytelling and serialization.

AN EXCELLENT STORY IS THE KEY TO SUCCESSFULLY SEDUCE VIEWERS AND TO ENGAGE THEM.

In addition, for many directors and brands, storytelling has to adjust to a clear classic narrative line. Any fashion film over two minutes needs to have some form of narrative in order to keep the viewer engaged.

Fashion brands often hire film directors and photographers to produce their short films instead of industry professionals. They claim that the power and effectiveness of seduction results from empathy, from the viewer's immersion into an imaginary world, as is the case of classic films. This is clearly illustrated in the *Lady Dior* short film of *Chanel N° 5* in which Nichole Kidman wants to escape her select celebrity ambiance to live anonymously with the man she loves.

Fashion film main characters frequently are well-known public figures such as Marion Cotillard, Nicole Kidman, Natalie Portman and Riana that become brand ambassadors, mediators between the brand and its audience. They have an evident seductive and aspirational function.

As we mentioned before branded content is a thriving trend in the online marketing world that mixes advertising with entertainment in order to provoke an emotional connection with real and potential customers. In this case, products are not emphasized and sometimes neither is the logo or other physical attributes of the brand (Hudson & Hudson, 2006: 490). Persuasion is hidden behind exciting images and the suggestion of purchase is "fictionalized" through brand's stories. In a milieu such as Internet, where contents are actively searched, emotional connection is the key to consumption because luxury products cannot use the same mixture of communication channels as in a physical store.

One of the first fashion brands that started using storytelling as a narrative resource was Louis Vuitton in the late 1990s when it began selling travel guides. Although these did not have any direct relationship with classic products of Vuitton, they highlighted the idea of travel, a core value of the famous suitcase and handbags brand. In 2011, *Nowness*, the online fashion film website of LVMH turned these fashion guides into a series of videos with its own Facebook forum, *The Art of Travel*, in which anybody can embrace the "traveler spirit" of Vuitton and comment personal impressions. Although storytelling was formerly associated with folkloric narrations and popular stories, as a tool that is widely exploited by branding, it does not necessarily imply oral narration (Fog, Budtz, Munch & Blanchette, 2003: 28).

STORYTELLING IS AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION TOOL BECAUSE IT IS BROADLY SPEAKING AN EXTRAPOLATION OF A DISTINCTIVE HUMAN CHARACTERISTIC – NARRATION- TO THE MARKETING FIELD.

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Paul Ricoeur (1996: 147-148) would say that human identity is built through the narration of our own story, selecting facts and linking them according to a plot. The coherence of the narration thus creates a character's identity. This is one of the reasons for the deep enjoyment of video and film watching.

Mythos is a necessity of turning texts into interwoven narrations, organized by the classic scheme of presentation, climax and outcome. Even though fashion films do not strictly have to be based on myths, they are also narrations that have a function: to convey significance. They provide meaning to our identity and in the consumption field, they give sense to the act of buying a specific product. But still myths create and transmit narrative outlines and archetypes that become part of popular belief and which therefore, the receiver can recognize and understand almost automatically. Characters such as the hero, the villain, the adventurer or the innocent and values such as honor, revenge, liberty, rebellion or innocence lie underneath the stories that certain brands propose.

Karl Lagerfeld's short film presentations of Chanel collections always play around a plot based on rebellion, which is usually attributed to upper class youth. In the case of *Don't steal the jacket*, a short film produced by Bruce Weber for Moncler, children's innocence in stealing a jacket is portrayed as a serious crime.

These values previously mentioned are universally recognizable. In addition, if we take into account that branded content is shown through storytelling, the values presented in fashion films – and not merely the products – become another character in the plot. *Lady Dior* is a short film series starring Marion Cotillard, which Chanel launched in 2009 to promote the famous bag named likewise. The first film in the series, *Lady Noire Affaire*, directed by Olivier Dahan, is a story based on Hitchcock's movies in which Cotillard hires a private detective to find a lost lover. *Lady Rouge*, by Jonas Akerlund is a short film in which Marion performs a song by Franz Ferdinand. In *Lady Grey London*, by John Cameron Mitchell, she is a cabaret dancer who escapes from two of her devoted admirers. In the thriller *Lady Blue Shanghai*, by David Lynch, Marion arrives to the city to discover the whereabouts of her lover. Lastly *Enter the game* by Marion Cotillard and Elliot Bliss shows the same actress defying gravity, hopping across the surface of water and performing dance moves. In all the series' films Marion Cotillard carries a Lady Dior handbag of the same color as indicated in each film's title. The handbag plays a distinctive role in each short movie as does each city, all of them important locations for Dior.

Serialization is also another common resource among fashion films. To mention some: *The Art of Travel*, Louis Vuitton; *Lady Dior*, Dior; *Art of the Trench*, Burberry and *Women's Tales*, Miu Miu. On

the one hand, it allows the plotline to be developed in detail and on the other it attracts the support of viewers through the expectation created around each next episode release.

The majority of fashion films double the time of conventional video advertising but since they are distributed online, each viewer consciously decides when to see it. The full length of the 4 episodes of *A Rose Reborn* created in 2014 to Ermenegildo Zegna is 19:26 minutes, and the above mentioned *Don't steal the jacket*. Moncler's fashion film has a length of 28 minutes. In addition, fashion films' storytelling refers to the essential values of a brand so they manage to bring across the brand's aura by offering the viewer an aesthetic experience or a memorable intellectual thrill. Through these film stories, a luxury brand makes the customer yearn to participate in its exclusive universe. Therefore, fashion films are a strategy closer to seduction than to persuasion.

This is the case of the Salvatore Ferragamo 8 chapter's romantic comedy directed by Luca Guadagnino and actress Kaya Scodelario. The action happens in three cities around the world: the brand's base in Florence; Los Angeles, where Ferragamo dressed Hollywood starlets during the 1920s; and Shanghai, where the brand celebrated its 80th anniversary in 2008. Some episodes attracted over 100,000 views, a major improvement on the few hundred views that the brand previously received in traditional ad campaigns.

The viewer has a sense of belonging to a brand's universe mostly through stories that seduce. For this reason, as soon as we enter a luxury brand's website we encounter fashion films and videos of the latest runway collections. Suzy Menkes (2010) considers that a brand's short film productions are "a way to bring emotion and visual excitement to branding for the YouTube generation". In other words, it is a way to attract user's attention in a medium saturated with information and product exposition.

OVERALL, LUXURY'S DIGITAL
BRANDING IS FOCUSED ON
COMMUNICATING TO LARGE
AUDIENCES TO MAINTAIN
THE DESIRE OF DISTINCTION
THROUGH KNOWLEDGE.

The bigger the buzz around a brand, the more viewers will want to be informed about it and express opinion about its campaigns, collections and videos. The so-called *YouTube Generation*, which includes Internet and tech savvy youth users, with high spending

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power, searches of innovative content as well as products with quality and tradition. Strategies such as fashion film set sociological barriers rather than financial ones: immersion into a brand's universe creates specialized *connoisseurs*, aesthetic critics, users who are literate in certain brand values. Especially in the case of contemporary, niche brands such as Proenza Schouler and Thom Browne.

Above all, fashion films bring together all the contents that brands have placed in various digital platforms. The storylines or the concepts proposed tends to summarize the different collections, campaigns or news that are fragmented across different media and communication channels. After all, in an online medium full of active consumers eager to become brand ambassadors, any flaw or incoherence in brand communication implies a huge mistake in terms of brand reputation.

SINCE CURRENTLY BRAND PRODUCTS AND SERVICES ARE EXPOSED TO ABSOLUTE PUBLIC SCRUTINY, BRANDS MUST REINFORCE CORE IDENTITY VALUES, SO FASHION BRANDS HAVE DISCOVERED THAT SHORT FILM PRODUCTIONS ARE AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO TRANSMIT THESE CORE VALUES.

Storytelling is a suitable tool to convince viewers who view films voluntarily and therefore do not consider them to be intrusive like traditional media.

Aesthetic delight

The short film *L'Odyssée* by Cartier, released in March 2012 has had more than 18 million visits in YouTube in February 2016. It tells the adventure of a leopard-shaped jewel that comes alive and must travel the world to reunite with its owner. This iconic Cartier animal crosses different emblematic places: Russian Steeps, the Sahara Desert, the Black Forest, until it reaches Paris, the birthplace of the brand. The film's aesthetics mixes a XIX century setting with dreamlike universes, fantasy animals and iconic places. The values of excellence and grandeur that Cartier stands for acquire their maximum expression in this short film. The aesthetic delight thus becomes a total immersion into the brand universe, and tries to create the desire of possessing the same beauty.

In other cases, it makes the customer feel integrated in the brand creation process, sometimes even feeling ownership of the brand as happens with Hermes and Loewe to mention two international luxurious fashion brands. The same occurs in the previously mentioned *Art of Travel* by Louis Vuitton or in *Art of the Trench* platform launched by Burberry Prorsum, which shows videos of anonymous people wearing the famous trench coat alongside video clips of the trendiest music groups of the moment.

Some luxury brands such as Dior, Chanel, Hermes, Loewe or Louis Vuitton usually pursue beauty, elegance, charm, harmony and, sometimes, happiness, kindness, beauty and sophistication. Whether using a plot with characters or if describing the artisan process of the products, in both cases the main goal is to show aesthetics and authenticity.

SHOWstudio, the website owned by Nick Knight is a crucial reference point for the fashion film concept that offers an innovative creative territory for fashion brands. Since its foundation in 2000, SHOWstudio has acquired a prominent place as a fashion laboratory. It exerts a wide influence among artists, stylists, photographers and fashion editors alike. The other big fashion film website is Nowness, created in 2010 by LVMH as a space for expression for all luxury conglomerates' brands. These two websites are the basis of the fashion film experimentation and become a space of inspiration since a big part of the short films showcased could be defined as video art.

AN ADDITIONAL EXISTING TREND, NOT ONLY IN FASHION FILMS BUT ALSO IN OTHER FORMS OF POSTMODERN ART, IS THE USE OF UGLINESS, UNDERSTOOD AS DISHARMONY, DARKNESS, BIZARRENESS OR EVEN DEMONIC AESTHETICS.

Although the study of ugliness is not the purpose of this article, a few ideas about it can shed some light on the frequent use of this aesthetic trend. For Kuplen (2013) the use of ugliness and its apparent success when applied to fashion film is not due to consumers' attraction to ugly objects but due to cognitive reasons. Through beauty our mind and our imagination find a smooth way to acquire harmony and balance and in terms of an intellectual "game" it is an easy problem to solve. On the contrary "ugliness

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generates substantially rich and excessive imagination, which is more difficult for our cognitive abilities to process and to find a resolution for. But it is the search for a resolution which is the manifestation of the principle of purposiveness, the a priori belief that the world is amenable to our cognitive abilities" (Kuplen, 2013: 276). For the author, the ugly object surprises because of its presence, and not only does it captivate our attention but it also paralyses our senses, and keeps the remembrance linked to our memory. In other words, we usually keep thinking about something bizarre and ugly with the idea that we can find a kind of harmony in it. And, of course, we can find originality and creativity expressed through ugliness. We can find other explanations of the success of ugliness based on the skeptical postmodern society that in some ways is not confident with the traditional sense of beauty.

This is the case of Ruth Hogben, Nick Knight's assistant in SHOWstudio from 2005 to 2009. She has been working in collaboration with designer Gareth Pugh and created a whole world of inspiration for fashion films frequently inspired by darkness, demons, suffering, death and ugliness but with an aesthetic purpose. She is considered one of the main references in the field, setting a trend mainly represented by British designers like Gareth Pugh or Alexander McQueen.

Many other film makers and photographers have followed Hogben's works and his work based on transgression is now available in cutting edge magazines and trend forecasting magazines. Above all the goal is always to surprise and to create disruptive dialogues with the consumer or viewer, around the concepts of elegance, aesthetics, beauty and ugliness.

All in all, the pursuit of beauty and harmony is more common than that of ugliness or darkness. Most fashion films seek to impress their clients and viewers with a sense of balance and delight, even in the case of frequently used thrillers. In these cases, the character dress in a sophisticated and elegant way evocative of Hollywood movies from the 40's and the 50's. Some excellent examples of this phenomenon are the Prada fashion films *A therapy*, *Muta* or *First Spring*, *Walking Stories* made for Salvatore Ferragamo or *A rose reborn*, an Ermenegildo Zegna fashion film.

The leading role of products in fashion film

As applies to our research, it is relevant to indicate that dress and accessories played a key role in plot expression of mute film at the beginning of the XX Century. This trait has been reinstated by certain fashion films. For instance, some fashion brands place stylistic product innovation above any other value and regard fashion film as a tool to bring dress closer to a work of art. Such videos present the garments in a leading role in order to transmit abstract concepts. They want to convey the endless creation process of a designer's collection, its anxieties and absences.

Generally, these types of fashion film are a substitute for classic catwalks because their creators consider that filming specific characteristics allow a more effective transmission of the textures, movement and the creative concept of a collection. Whilst they do not ignore persuasion or sales promotion, they consider marketing does not have to be explicit so viewers can enjoy the intense seduction of an aesthetic experience.

Similarly, most luxury and premium brands film the creative process in order to highlight it and present the designer or manufacturer as an artist. Other brands present artisans in leading roles and focus on the product manufacturing process to show the high quality and expertise of its making.

IN THE LUXURY WORLD,
RATIONAL ARGUMENTATION
ABOUT THE CONVENIENCE
OF PURCHASING AN OBJECT
DOES NOT STAND A CHANCE.
LUXURY PRODUCTS DO NOT
COMMUNICATE FUNCTIONAL,
PRAGMATIC FEATURES; THEY
CONVEY SYMBOLS THAT REFER
TO ABSTRACT NOTIONS SUCH
AS EXCELLENCE, QUALITY,
SCARCITY, BEAUTY OR POWER.

Since luxury brands cannot resort to practical argumentation they must evoke an irrational appeal and seduction of their products. The aim is to attract, to provoke commitment and to create desire and all this is achieved via emotional values (Michaud, 2015).

One of the most paradigmatic examples of this fashion film perspective is the collaboration of the video artist Ruth Hogben with designer Gareth Pugh. This partnership, where Pugh presents his collections in an audiovisual format has been hugely successful, especially in the fashion film *Immagine 79*, where dress plays a leading role, but its beauty is eclipsed by a greater emphasis on its artistic dimension: movement, texture, light and color all blend to create a kinesthetic experience. The viewer can appreciate all the dimensions behind a specific design.

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Therefore, these fashion films exert a purely aesthetic seduction and prioritize perception instead of content.

RECENT TRENDS INDICATE THAT INCREASINGLY MORE FASHION FILMS PLACE TECHNICAL AND CREATIVE INNOVATION ABOVE THE FILM PLOT.

This might be due to that fact that contemporary luxury brands, mainstream brands and novel designers are communicating their values using this strategy, which was started by classic luxury brands. Lacking a strong heritage, a well-established name or iconic products, such brands can only distinguish themselves through creativity and technical innovation if they want to be recognized as “new luxury”, or so called technoluxury (Michault, 2009).

They frequently maintain a strong heritage and have a series of globally recognized iconic products that have been successfully commercialized for years. Their image is reminiscent of the classic french idea of luxury, based on the quality of the fabrics, the so called “Parisian style”, the music played with accordion, sophisticated surroundings, decoration and furniture that reminds Versailles, and emphasizes history as constituent elements in order to acquire a refined lifestyle.

As concerns the aesthetic aspect, Andre D'Avack, president of Chanel fragrances and beauty, recently said that Chanel wanted to add “a supplement of soul” to the message (Copping, 2010). The previously mentioned *L'Odysée de Cartier* film or the series *Secret Garden* by Dior, which takes place in Versailles, both evidence how classic luxury brands upkeep their nobility and splendor in their audiovisual productions, always focused on their iconic products. Considering the current market saturation of apparently identical products, filming the production process allows product differentiation through quality. Hermès and Loewe have both produced a series of videos, *Les Mains d'Hermès* and *Masters of Leather* which show craftsmen as artists and present their products almost like a work of art, with an exclusive symbolic value. Such brands strive to communicate personalization and taste distinction instead of aspiration.

On the other hand, there are fashion brands that lack a historic tradition and media recognition, and for this reason their audiovisual production emphasizes techniques, innovation and the transgression of contemporary art. Technoluxury or the combination of fashion with technology is evident in the contributions of Gareth Pugh or Nicola Formichetti to

SHOWstudio. In Hussein Chalayan's audiovisual projects we are closer to an art installation than to a fashion collection. The same feeling may be found in short films made by brands such as Martin Margiela, whose productions such as *Visions Couture* or *Untitled* exalt minimalism and got closer to the purity of forms and redefine luxury as an individual and hedonistic stance.

THESE CONTEMPORARY BRANDS ARE NOT RECOGNIZED FOR MATERIAL EXCELLENCE OR ARTISAN EXPERTISE SO THEIR FILMS EMPHASIZE THE CONCEPTS UNDERLYING FASHION COLLECTIONS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF UNFINISHED WORK.

Modern luxury places itself midway between classic and contemporary luxury identities. It has enough recognition to sustain an aspirational component and at the same time is sufficiently innovative to propose new aesthetic conceptions. Most are relatively young brands, focused on current culture and with core values centered on the concepts of minimalism, simplicity, liberty and power. Within this intermediate positioning, they generally tend to associate themselves with film directors, but their collaboration is centered on assuring coherence between the director's professional style and the brand's identity and not because of the latter's prestige.

In 2012 Prada and Polanski presented the short film *A Therapy*, which reflects the director's identity traits: cynicism, fetishism and psycho analysis. His leitmotifs blend well with Prada's image based on feminine power and an implicit criticism towards bourgeoisie. As a pioneer in the world of fashion film, Prada has turned towards terror-like contents (*Muta*, *The Woman Dress*), it has ventured into animation (*The Trembled Blossoms*), launched initiatives for novel directors (*Work in Progress*) and has even dared to produce purely expressive films of longer duration and with no explicit plot (*First Spring*).

Proenza Schouler contributes with independent film director Harmony Korine in false documentaries like *Act da Fool* which recreate the aspirations and lifestyle of marginal youngsters. Furthermore, brands such as Burberry or Alexander Wang unite with current youth music and trends. Others such as Raf Simons

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or Stefano Pilati, combine traditional catwalks with short films that showcase their collections from a different point of view. These brands, neither extremely innovative nor extremely traditional, choose to screen their production process in a symbolic way. *The Septemberists*, a fashion film by designer Thom Browne presents a metaphor of the fashion cycle by chronicling the processes of traditions in a small English village during a year. This modern identity perspective also includes low cost brands

with core values based on responding to customers' immediate demands. Their videos praise youth, show latest trends or position themselves regarding social causes. If they approach luxury as is the case of Swedish H&M's collaborations with different companies, they follow a pattern that is similar to classic luxury brands: choosing famous directors and a clearly defined narrative, i.e. the recent film collaboration between Marni and H&M by Sophia Coppola.

Conclusions

Coco Chanel says in the fashion film *The return*: "...a woman that has never been loved is lost, in fact as good as dead". We have previously explained that fashion film allows a new strategy for luxury fashion brands from the communication perspective: it opens a way to link brands with the new consumer's desires and behaviors.

HOWEVER, FASHION FILMS DO NOT ONLY BENEFIT LUXURY BRANDS BUT ALSO THE FASHION SYSTEM ITSELF, SINCE IT'S THE FIRST TIME THAT AN AUDIOVISUAL FORMAT SHOWS THE INCREDIBLE FASHION UNIVERSE TO THE WORLD, AND LET THE BRANDS EXPRESS A WHOLE WORLD OF HUMAN FEELINGS.

New technologies set a new and revolutionary paradigm in terms of knowledge access. But also, prepare us for a new relationship with brands since consumers are, more than ever, ready to listen and to collaborate with them. If fashion brands want to take advantage of this new scenario they must comprehend what luxury corporations' strategies, even though they are not using all the interactive possibilities of this new media.

As has been stated, people are open to commit with brands but only if brands speak their own language. Therefore, fashion film is a form of experiential marketing and in addition a magnificent tool for brands to communicate with people on the same level. The use of narrative tools to create experiences and link the consumer with the brand must be explored since there are market hints that show their acceptance. Brand personality was defined as a set of human characteristics associated with a brand (Aaker, 1997: 347).

IN THIS SENSE STORYTELLING AND SERIALIZATION ARE INDEED VERY USEFUL IN THE SENSE THAT THEY "HUMANIZE BRANDS" MAKE EASIER TO ENGAGE CURRENT AND FUTURE CUSTOMERS.

We consider that fashion films represent an extraordinary opportunity in terms of brand construction since they enable communications of a wide array of universal values and feelings: love, freedom, honesty, betrayal, loyalty, hatred, revenge, commitment, contradiction, confusion. All the deepest feelings and beliefs of mankind can be expressed in a story and in a brand: they are eager to find good stories to tell and people are craving them.

Although it is true that many fashion films continue showcasing the stereotypes of physical beauty, wealth, exclusivity and elitism, at the same time they are also a new way of expression of deep thoughts and reflections about the human condition, the meaning of beauty and elegance and, of course, an insightful reflection of our times.

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Photo by Julie Kaja Prezebe, Kara Smith, Synne Haakenstuen, Ragnar Roostalu, Shilo X. Duffy, VIA film & Transmedia/ Models Mathias Ørtenblad Nobell, Alexander Ørtenblad Nobell &MM - And Model Management/ Makeup-Artist Mette Svensk Rosenbom-Jessen

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Takeaway

Fashion films have emerged as a new and revolutionary tool adopted by luxury brands at the start of the XXI Century to construct their brands.

Fashion film become a new communication strategy for mainstream brands and discovers the profound connection with consumers through audiovisual narration.

At the beginning of the XX Century, short films become more and more popular through the years. Some of them were mere exhibitions of a designer's collection, but other's main goal was to show new trends of each season or a product's manufacturing process.

Brands have discovered the advantages of fashion films and their power of seduction as they secure a more engaging and collaborative experience than television advertisements.

Fashion film establishes a new relationship with consumers, closer and more intimate than any other communication strategy, due to the digital formats' interactive possibilities.

The screening of big budget short films is a strategy to encourage desires as well as to gain massive diffusion of contents that are prone to criticism and subject to widespread online sharing. Short film series such as Lady Dior; teaser campaigns to announce releases and the fact of presenting these in prestigious festivals boosts expectation and encourages social media users to create related content.

Branded content is shown through storytelling, so the values presented in fashion films –and not merely the products – become another character in the plot.

In an online medium full of active consumers eager to become brand ambassadors, any flaw or incoherence in brand communication implies a huge mistake in terms of brand reputation.

Fashion films do not only benefit luxury brands but also the fashion system itself, since it's the first time that an audiovisual format shows the incredible fashion universe to the world, and let the brands express a whole world of human feelings.

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Behind the scenes of 'Lotion Song', music video directed by Marie Schuller for Jike Junyi

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The “revolution” of fashion films in Italy

This article discusses fashion films, fashion film festivals and fashion bloggers from an Italian point of view. The Italian digital market has grown a lot in these last five years and this has given rise to new realities and crafts.

The Internet, technology, and innovation research have dramatically changed the lifestyle of Italians, and the fashion system is one area where there are many opportunities for professional growth and/or pure experimentation.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Janet De Nardis, the founder and director of Roma Web Fest, is an Italian journalist, television author, anchor-woman, and actress. She has been prominently featured in many commercials. After some years studying with an influential international film coach, she began to work in theatre and, later, in film and successful television series. She has worked for Rai, Sky, Class News, and Class CNBC signing television programmes. De Nardis also is a professor at DASS (La Sapienza University of Rome) in Web series and digital products.

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The phenomenon of fashion film

Fashion is not only about designing and manufacturing clothes, but also about the ever-changing maintenance of the image. In this context:

FASHION FILMS HAVE BECOME THE NEW FRONTIER OF BRAND COMMUNICATION, SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN THE CLASSIC CINEMATIC STORYTELLING AND THE EXALTATION OF TYPICAL BRAND COMMERCIALS.

Competition notices regarding these products very often define the term "fashion films meaning audio-visual products characterised by an element of fiction or emotional impact dealing with fashion."¹

Narrative or abstract, experimental or traditional, fashion film is a neutral territory where creatives are free to unleash their imagination, while the brands use them to make culture, and to grow in value by selling quality and aesthetics.

All across the world and indeed in Italy, the advent of YouTube and the rise of social networks have consolidated the union between the worlds of film and fashion. Brands, also from beyond the fashion industry, are increasingly attracted to, and exploit, the appeal of emerging young or popular characters, producing video content and using many different means of broadcasting.²

The first links

The '30s represent the period of greatest influence of cinema on fashion. In that period, owing to the talent of extraordinary costume designers and the affirmation of the Hollywood star system, cinema established itself as a worldwide point of reference regarding fashion.

Italian creativity linked these two universes, helping to sanctify gowns and divas, as well as establishing styles and setting trends which are still copied today.

Creating such masterpieces required a lot of culture and curiosity. The important thing is not to be overwhelmed by the brand as in the remake of the film *The Great Gatsby* (2013 directed by Baz Luhrmann), where the "branding of cinema" is clearly identifiable.

Fashion film today

Many film directors have attempted to plunge into the world of fashion, as did David Lynch for *Purple*, or the Italian director Luca Guadagnino for *Carine Roitfeld* (former editor-in-chief of *French Vogue*). The latter states: "The cinema of fashion is a way to go back in the future. The member of public who follows fashion has changed his point of view. Is no longer a mere short-term consumer goal but an "auto-branding": "I am Prada" and no longer "I have a Prada". The consumer has changed, and with it, the various practical items such as duration, budget and production".³

Today, generally, the youngest brands exploit the viral potential of fashion films, as in the case of the Mulleavy sisters of *Rodarte* that, from 2010 to date, have produced three short films in collaboration with director Todd Cole; or as in the case of the young French accessories designer, *Olympia Le-Tan*, who has invested in the fashion film by signing director Spike Jonze to realise *Auprès Mourir de Toi* (stop motion animation film translated: To die by your side).

The Italian fashion films

Unlike the rest of the world, since the very beginning of the fashion film phenomenon, it has been the major Italian fashion houses who have used fashion films. The brand which, more than any other, has made systematic use of the short films is *Miu Miu*, which during the 2012 Venice Film Festival, launched a project called *Women's Tales*. It involved seven stories about women told by women.

Prada is also very active in the production of video contents. After commissioning Roman Polanski for the short film *Therapy* starring Helena Bonham-Carter and Ben Kingsley, the Milanese has entered into a successful collaboration with Wes Anderson that began with a series of short films for the launch of the perfume *Prada Candy L'eau*. *Castle Cavalcanti* is an example of a real narrative short film presented at the Roma Film Festival in 2013. Directed by Wes Anderson and filmed at Cinecittà. The film, set in Italy in 1955, is about the incredible adventures of the American pilot of Formula 1 *Jed Cavalcanti*. During *Millemiglia* the pilot has an accident in an imaginary village of *Castle Cavalcanti* where he spends an evening filled with wine, spaghetti and card games.

¹ https://www.ansa.it/documents/1260560008679_Rapporto_Sistema_camerale_2009.pdf

² Among the Web sites on the phenomenon of fashion films:

³ *SHOWstudio.com, stylebubble.typepad.com, fashionista.com, runway.blogs.nytimes.com, jakandjil.com*

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Still from *The Masters*, fashion film directed by Marie Schuller for Selfridges

It is a tribute to the great Italian cinema of the 50s with multiple references to Fellini, De Sica and Pasolini. In 2012, Carlo Lavagna made a fashion film for Valentino, which was to express the subtle tasks behind the making of an haute couture gown. Valentino also commissioned a fashion film about his life, *The Last Emperor*.

Among the first to create fashion films in Italy has been Armani in collaboration with Luxottica. To celebrate 40 years of activity, Armani commissioned young talents of the best schools of the visual arts in the world with six shorts of the series *Films of City Frames* (2014). The fashion films are portraits of six cities and the people who live in them. Relationships, emotions and fragments of life of the protagonists are told through beautiful and metaphorical images.

In 2013, also Ferragamo presented *Walking Stories*, modern fairy tales created by Luca Guadagnino, which bring together eight episodes were launched over the course of a few months. The love plot at the very core of the story unfolds in three of the most important cities for fashion houses: Florence, where the Ferragamo family has its roots and its headquarters in Los Angeles, which consecrates the success of the brand with the Hollywood stars, and Shanghai - the symbol of its future.

Trussardi celebrates the fortieth anniversary with *Skywatcher* (2013) directed by James Lima, with illustrations by Yuko Shimizu. The protagonist of the film is a greyhound, the symbol of the fashion house, which comes to life in the boutique of Piazza della Scala and guides us in the night to discover the most beautiful corners of Milan.

Yoox (founded by Federico Marchetti June 20, 2000) also promotes itself with a short film entitled *Dinner party* (2013)⁴, which showcases the Italian lifestyle over the course a traditional Christmas dinner in which five couples represent five different styles and themes for Christmas gifts. The protagonists all wear the most famous brands on the market, which can be purchased directly from the video.

A Therapy (2012), one of the most iconic fashion films of all times, witnesses the collaboration between Prada and a star-studded cast including Helena Bonham-Carter and Ben Kingsley in the short film directed by Roman Polanski. This short film has opened the gate to fashion films as it portrays Helena Bonham-Carter dressed in Prada confessing her innermost thoughts and secrets to her therapist, Ben Kingsley, who seems to be mesmerised by the Prada coat Helena wears.

⁴ <http://www.cattolicanews.it/news-dalle-sedi-dallo-spot-al-fashion-film>

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The year 2015 played host to the remarkable fashion film, *Blowing Riccardo* by Riccardo Tisci, directed by Marie Vic.

Further international examples

Fashion films now pervade every artistic field. Established actors and supermodels wish to be protagonists in fashion films related to important fashion brands such as in the case of model Adriana Lima in a video directed by Vincent Peters for Vogue Italy. The list is long and other examples include:

- Rolling with Emilio Pucci Edward Housden for Emilio Pucci with Martha Rose-Redding, fashion silent movie, with a model-skater in a semi-abandoned track and skateboard made by Ecal with maison prints
- Gregg Araki for Kenzo A / W 2015 (women and men) With Jacob Artist (Glee), Grace Victoria Cox.
- Cara Delevingne appears in the latest fashion of Chanel film, although it said goodbye to the fashion world last month.
- Tom Ford and Nick Knight for Tom Ford 2016 featuring Lady Gaga, Mica Argal, Lexi Boling, Kayla Scott, Xiao Wen Ju and Lucky Blue Smith.
- Alexander Wang (2015) with the Japanese duo AyaBambi
- The Vietnamese Thi Huyen Trang Khieu, the Estonia Triin Villemsaar and Brazil's Mariana Braga, interpret the fashion movie of the advertising campaign for spring summer collection 2015 for Kor @ Kor.
- Une Incroyable Excuse, Danny Sangra for Balenciaga and MyTheresa.com

Marie Trestef, Ines Terlet and Jessica Cressy. Shot in the halls of ristorante Caviar Kaspia of Paris, in Wes Anderson style, is the debut film for fashion MyTheresa.com.

The rise of fashion film festivals in the world

In Italy, journalists, fashion designers and managers have, in recent years, been more accepting of the product "fashion film". Initially the products were difficult to encode, yet today, fashion films are increasingly present in the spaces dedicated to the fashion world.

At present, there is no real definition of fashion film, and consumers of such content receive this material mostly virtually and through spaces often related to advertising operations.

Moreover, there are no real publications on the topic, with rare exceptions such as the series of publications by a team of British universities (London Collage of Fashion, University of the Arts London, Nottingham Trent University and Central St Martin's School Of Art and Design) entitled *Film, Fashion & Consumption*, which began in 2012; *Fashion in Film - New Directions in National Cinemas* (Adrienne Munich, 2011); *Fashion's Double: Representations of Fashion in Paintings, Photography and Film* (Adam Geczy, Vicki Karaminas, 2015).

From London and Paris to the world

Nevertheless, in recent years we can observe the rise of "spaces" that try to value and classify these products: real and genuine festivals.

The first two festivals began in 2006 in London and Paris. The first, called "Fashion in Film", is held every two years, its first edition was held in the Central Saint Martins and then the festival subsequently took place in the most important museums in London and around the world (including, the Tate Modern, the Victoria and Albert Museum, BFI Southbank, the Barbican, ICA and The Horse Hospital in London, Museum of the Moving Image in New York, Arnhem Mode Biennale Arnhem and Det Danske Filminstitute Copenhagen).

"Fashion in Film" is basically a network based on a dual themes of fashion and moving image, and its primary mission is to promote fashion films through a dual-channel, educational and experimental, format. In direct contrast to this is the structure of the ASVOFF Festival (A Shaded View on Fashion Film) founded in Paris by Diane Pernet (fashion journalist, talent scout and famous blogger ashadedviewonfashion.com, former consultant of IQONS) which is the most famous fashion film festival in the world. The ASVOFF Festival is a project of identity, strongly recognisable, that is indelibly linked to the personal taste of the art director Diane Pernet, benefitting from collaborations and successful synergies with Art, Paris Premiere, Artdicted and institutions such as the Centre Pompidou.

According to Diane, the Internet and cinema facilitate the discovery of new talents, their appreciation, and the opportunity to network, such as traditional fashion shows transmitted online in real time.⁵

Blogs, e-commerce and social networks offer the possibility to communicate your ideas and visions from anywhere in the world. Fifteen years ago, this was simply impossible.

⁵ <https://vimeo.com/80785088>

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These first festivals gradually evolved and soon other international festivals were founded, including:

Berlin Fashion Film Festival
Madrid Fashion Film Festival
La Jolla Fashion Film Festival International
The Miami Fashion Film Festival
The Fashion Film Festival Melbourne
The Women & Fashion Film Festival New York
(offering a unique mix of mainstream and exploration of the feminine)
The Medellin Fashion Film Festival in Colombia
The Fashion Film Festival in Istanbul
Lahore Fashion Film Festival in Pakistan
The Bokeh Fashion Film Festival
The Tokyo Fashion Film
The Fashion Video Festival in Budapest
The Bangkok Fashion Festival
(two editions of which were promoted by ELLE Thailand)
Santiago fashion film
The BAIFFF (Argentina)
The fashion film Porto (Portugal)
The festival fashion film in Chicago
The Australian fashion film
The Lahore Fashion Film Festival

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Fashion film festivals in Italy

Festival of cinema and fashion

In 2010 Diane Pernet was the curator of the "Festival of cinema and fashion" held from 25th to 30th of May in Milan at Palazzo Morando in collaboration with Vogue Italy. This marked the beginning of the fashion film festival in Italy.

The Roma Web Fest

The "Festival of cinema and fashion" has not been repeated. After this experiment, the first festival dedicated to fashion films in Italy. Originating in Rome, in September 2013, the Roma Web Fest (RWF) is an international festival of web series and fashion film, founded and directed by Janet De Nardis. RWF has enjoyed incredible media success thanks to its character: not only does it have a category dedicated to fashion shorts, but it also explores the various sectors in which web-native fiction products are developed, such as web series, viral videos, etc.

Roma Web Fest wants to create greater collaboration and blend the worlds of fashion and cinema. During the three days of Roma Web Fest, important directors of traditional cinema are seated next to world-famous designers.

Thus the experiments of serial storytelling of the web series are compared with the innovation of fashion film. This is important in creating cross-contamination.

Each year, around 200 fashion films are selected from all over the world and, at the first stage, viewers can vote for their favourite online, choosing the winner of the "online audience". Afterwards, one Italian and one international winner are chosen by a jury (which changes every year) consisting of fashion journalists, fashion designers and film directors.⁶

Milano fashion film festival

Following the success of the RWF in 2014, the Milano fashion film festival was founded and directed by Costanza Cavalli Etro. In its first edition 72 Italian and international fashion films were screened, and the winners were awarded the works of Maestro Barnaba Fornasetti. More than 300 films by young talents and more than 110 films by big fashion houses were submitted (free) to the contest.

The jury was composed of Claudia Donaldson, Tim Blanks, Luca Guadagnino, Jane Reeve and is headed by Franca Sozzani, editor of Vogue Italy. Half of the 72 films selected were part of the "out of competition" category: participation of the big names of the fashion world, in fact, was not intended as competition, but instead was aimed at helping to promote emerging talents. According to jury member Franca Sozzani, the material submitted to the festival was heterogeneous, characterised by different languages, which is a sign that the aesthetics are changing direction, that despite living in a globalised world, each country maintains its own aesthetics.⁷

In the second edition of the Milan Festival, there were 600 submissions from 45 different countries, in 13 categories, and its founders decided to introduce online voting.

The winners of this edition were Blowing Riccardo for Riccardo Tisci, Clelia Birtwell for Valentino, Legs are not Doors for Proenza Schouler (which was also chosen the Best Fashion Film 2015), and Pippin and the Pursuit of Life by Maaïke Fransen (which won many awards).

ASVOFF Rome

In 2014, Diane Pernet returned to Italy, this time to Rome, with an initiative dedicated to fashion films: ASVOFF Rome. The exhibition at the Temple of Hadrian called "Diane Pernet, Shadows of an Icon", curated by Christian Segnanfreddo and Federico

⁶ <http://www.lanciatrendvisions.com/it/article/intervista-a-diane-pernet>

⁷ Read more about The Roma Web Fest in this article's appendix 2.

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Poletti, was organised in collaboration with Altaroma and Bulgari. The exhibition reconstructed the figure of the artist through photographs and newspaper clippings.

During this edition of ASVOFF Rome, Diane launched a video contest: film and video makers were asked to produce short films of one minute, drawing inspiration from the colourful gemstone of Bulgari. The winning video, *The colour of My Life* by Vincent Gagliostro, won the Grand Prize along with participation in the celebrations of 130 years of Bulgari together with other great directors of international renown. Two other prizes were also awarded:

Art Direction Prize: *Notre Amour* by Franck Glenisson;

Jury Prize: *State of Flux* by Karine Laval.

Italy, the star in South America

Italy was the star at the Santiago International Film Festival Fashion (SFFF 2015), held in the Chilean capital from 12th to 14th November at the Centro Cultural Gabriela Mistral. SFFF is the first international festival in this field taking place in Chile. A total of 33 shorts were screened, seven of which were Italian: *The heart-breaking Tale* by Bruno Miotto, *Three Rivers* by Marco Prestini, *The Waiting* by To Guys, *One to Twenty Nine* in French by Dennison Bertram, *Embodies* by Pia Bolognesi & Giulio Bursi, *8 Ways to Get Rid of Hiccups* by Marco Adamo Graziosi & Maria Host-Ivessich and, finally, *Ricordati* by Luca Finotti. The initiative was sponsored and co-organised by the Italian Institute of Culture (IIC) in Santiago, Chile.

The Oscars for fashion film

FASHION FILM FESTIVALS HAVE BECOME IMPORTANT FOR THE FASHION BRANDS BECAUSE THEY CREATE A PLATFORM FOR A PROFESSIONAL AUDIENCE OF EXPERTS, CRITICS, AND JOURNALISTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD.

Finally, through the promotion of the fashion film festivals, fashion films are disseminated and broadened.

The Roma Web Fest is increasingly a point of reference for the fashion industry in Italy, because it brings the brand to public attention in new ways.

This is the power of storytelling, the ability to convey emotions and to fascinate, not only through style but also poetry. The festival is important because it is a meeting place, a showcase and a selection of the best products. It's important to have an Oscar of the fashion film, because behind every fashion film there is a huge amount of work done by many people and allows them to learn about the trade, and, just like the Oscars, reward the best artists. Moreover, attention to the fashion film increases the professionalism of the technical and creative aspects, enhancing the sector.

Potential for higher ROI

CURRENTLY THE LINK BETWEEN FESTIVALS, BRAND AND ROI IS GROWING. STILL THE LINK HAS NOT EXPRESSED THE FULL POTENTIAL, BUT THERE ARE GREAT PROSPECTS AVAILABLE, PARTICULARLY IN RELATION TO THE USE OF THE MEDIUM ON THE INTERNET.

Today we have witnessed a transformation of communication, which has also affected other forms of advertising (commercials). Advertising is the soul of trade and therefore there is an important link between the fashion film and ROI of a brand. Everything will depend on the quality of the products and how they will be transmitted in future. It would be important to also aim for greater trans-mediality with more traditional media such as TV.

Fashion bloggers – the phenomenon

Speaking of fashion and film festivals devoted to this form of expression, one cannot overlook the phenomenon of fashion bloggers, or the "online judges" of all that is fashionable online and the absolute protagonists of the front rows of fashion shows around the world.

In recent years, the fashion world has seen the birth of a new communication phenomenon: the fashion blog. In a short period of time, these virtual spaces have attracted a huge and loyal audience, ensuring that the most influential fashion bloggers play a leading role in online communication linked to fashion. Fashion bloggers are an important resource for fashion brands, so that more and more often the most popular bloggers appear alongside the celebrities invited to the fashion shows, the presentation party and the coolest events.

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As with fashion shows, at festivals dedicated to fashion films, among them designers and actors, fashion journalists and directors, we find the new star of fashion: fashion bloggers.

Sitting in the front row, with smartphone in hand, fashion bloggers are always attentive to the details of each fashion film, and are the first to post online comments.

The first fashion blog that we recall is The Sartorialist by Scott Scumann, an author whose intuition revealed the potential of the outfits posted online. In fact, he posted online, and thus immortalised, the most extravagant looks of people he encountered in the street. Then, in September 2003, Kathryn Finney The Budget Fashionista - was invited to the New York fashion week and the effect of this new form of communication on the fashion companies has been huge. This is where the fashion, dedicated by fashion bloggers or young girls immortalising themselves wearing their outfits, starts.

In fact, when we talk about fashion blogs we talk about many different containers. Each blog shares the author's experiences of everyday life that, in a way, highlight every outfit.

The key to success lies in the originality, in the combination of colours, clothes and accessories suitable for the audience as well as in being fortunate to please the viewer who will be able to ensure the collection goes viral at just the right moment. Followers are not merely spectators, but close collaborators involved in commenting photos with praise or criticism.

Beauty and fashion blogs populate the web and a growing number of young "fashion posers" with attitudes of models give advice on cosmetics to be used, rather than on outfits (combination of clothes and accessories) to wear.

Authors of these blogs become style icons and an inspiration for the visitors of the blogosphere interested in fashion.

FASHION BLOGGERS HAVE
BECOME EVER MORE POWER-
FUL WITH THE ADVENT OF
INCREASINGLY "IMAGE
FRIENDLY" SOCIAL NETWORK
PLATFORMS SUCH AS TUMBLR,
INSTAGRAM AND PINTEREST;

the same process is happening with the proliferation of mini-fashion films (often developed in just 14 seconds, to be posted on Instagram). Almost all of these curators of image started their "careers" as outsiders, or people from outside the fashion industry.

Fashion bloggers offer genuine marketing work and, through brand reputation, they have subverted the hierarchy with which the press offices collaborated with fashion magazines: even before the show or the event is over, every outfit and detail has already been around the world is on the web.

In this way there is no control over how the brand image is conveyed and the contact with followers is direct.

According to Wikipedia, as of February 2014 there were around 172 million blogs (on various topics), 75.8 million and 1.3 million on WordPress Technorati. These numbers are, however, clearly understated and have certainly grown in the last year. One must also take into account the fact that many platforms, such as "Blogger", do not provide statistics.

Fashion bloggers in Italy

And what about Italy? Although in the US blogging was born in 2003, fashion blogging came to Italy only in 2009, and from that moment, new blogs have been appearing everywhere, catering for fashion addicts living on fashion and the web.

The most famous Italian fashion blogger is Chiara Ferragni (1987), of The Blonde Salad, which, with over 12 million pages visited per month (eight million euro earned in 2014), collaborates with some of the most famous brands ranging from Louis Vuitton to Superga. According to Forbes, she is among the most influential woman under thirty in the world.⁸

⁸ <http://www.artmoodon.com/2014/09/fashion-film-festival-locchio-aperto-sul-mondo/>
<http://www.mysocialweb.it/2014/09/19/chiara-ferragni/>
<http://www.impulsemag.it/fashion/chiara-ferragni-2014-fatturato/>
<http://www.consumatrici.it/30/09/2015/spettacoli/moda/00035574/chiara-ferragni-ho-fatturato-8-milioni-di-dollari-con-vle-scarpe-fumettose>
<http://espresso.repubblica.it/visioni/2014/07/22/news/chiara-ferragni-la-regina-dei-fashion-blogger-1.174077>

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Chiara created a line of shoes and bijoux, a capsule collection for Yamamay; she has published a book and appeared in a film. The starting point of this amazing success was her collaboration with the communications company owned by her former boyfriend (Riccardo Pozzoli) and consistency in posting every day, even when she was unknown to the public. Moreover, from the very beginning, all photo comments on her blog were translated into English in order to make them accessible to an international audience.

The runner up in the ranking of the most popular blogs is that of TV presenter Alessia Marcuzzi (1972) called The Pinella, followed by Irene Colzi (1987) with Ireneccloset and Francesca Blasi (1993) with Curly Brown.

Italian fashion blogs are very popular abroad, so much so that Mariano Di Vaio and Riccardo Pozzoli were awarded at Stylight Fashion Influencer Awards in Berlin (respectively as "best male bloggers" for MDV Style and "best business blog" for The Blonde Salad).

Through MDV Style (started in March 2012), Mariano collaborates with major brands and magazines at a national and international level, and their blog has more than 2 million fans on Facebook, nearly 100,000 followers on Twitter and almost 3 million on Instagram.

Owing to his online entrepreneurial skills, Riccardo Pozzoli (who in 2009 together with Chiara Ferragni founded The Blonde Salad blog) has 200,000 followers on Twitter, almost a million fans on Facebook and more than three million followers on Instagram (January 2015).

In a short time, from initially being simple fashion enthusiasts, the bloggers have soon flooded the catwalk front rows, displacing those who work in the sector. From fashion bloggers to influencers, today they themselves are a brand.

Though the experts were originally somewhat suspicious about the phenomenon, today they are all convinced that bloggers do increase sales.

Almost all major companies of the fashion industry employ corporate communication managers who are responsible for corporate communications, by selecting the "publishers" - that (according to research engine Technorati) have exceeded the limit of two million in the online active presence count.

In Italy, fashion bloggers sit in the front rows of the most prestigious fashion events and the Italian National Chamber of Fashion shows much consideration for them.

It is certainly an interesting phenomenon as it changes the approach towards fashion. It is often about people without a particular cultural fashion background who are not constrained in any way; neither by knowledge nor by interests.

There are true Titans among bloggers. Girls or boys who, in whatever way, have managed to dictate their own style. They are true originals who have invented a new way of communicating.

They have become crucial figures pursued by the brands worldwide. For them the figures are key element.

The more sharing, the higher the number of followers and visualisations, the more "like" comments, the more they are pursued by the fashion houses worldwide.

The fiercest criticism of these new gurus of fashion related to the fact that they lack specific standpoint, and speak always and only about themselves, with their comments often appearing naive or enthusiastic.

What appears clearly, is that blogging is going through some profound changes and bloggers, and therefore the "fashion guerillas", must find a new balance in the relationship with the fashion houses: on the one hand the exchange of reciprocal visibility, on the other, the risk of overexposure in the media.

According to Dutch/French trend forecaster and owner of Trend Union Lidewij Edelkoort, the "generation like" has its judgment capacity limited to "like", and it seems that fashion critic on social networks has been reduced accordingly: bloggers do not choose on their own, they are dependent on the exhortations of the big brands.

The hope is that over time some "posers" will become not only "insiders" - full-time employers of fashion companies, but also fashion experts.

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Still from 'Three Women Arrive', fashion film directed by Marie Schuller

Takeaway

- The fashion films have changed the way we communicate the fashion brand.
- Through the fashion film, cinema and fashion come together in a new identity.
- Thanks to the fashion film, fashion adds new emotions and transmits a new, and technologically renewed, image of the Brand.
- With fashion film, the creative among all the visual arts can find a common place of expression.
- The fashion film festival becomes the meeting place for all the fashion market and the branding world.
- The fashion film festival allows technological experimentation and an innovative approach to storytelling.
- The fashion film festival draws a new path for the creation of communities that identify themselves with stories and characters.
- In the fashion film, festival is born and consolidates the new star system, in a liminal space between the virtual of social networks and the real moments of fashion runways.
- The fashion bloggers are influencers and "online judges" of all that is fashionable on web world, and protagonists of the front rows of fashion shows.
- The fashion blogger, with incredible media power, influences fashion through their outfits. They become the new brand icons around the world.

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Appendix 1

The temperature of the Italian fashion industry

A document on the progress of Italian fashion between 2009 and 2013 published by the Research Department of Mediobanca - analysis and research centre specialising in economic and financial studies - shows that the turnover generated by "personal luxury goods" in 2012 represented 11.4 percent (89.5 billion euro) of total Italian manufacturing, while its distribution affected the trade turnover in Italy by 8.6% (74.8 billion euro).

The sector is distinguished by the strong presence of women, much stronger than in other sectors: 55.7% of the employees in the fashion manufacturing industry are women, which is nearly twice the average of 27.5% of women employed in the Italian manufacturing industry, while women in the fashion business constitute 71% of the employed, compared with an average of 49,3% the use of women in other sectors of employment.

The most recent simulations show that the Italian Textile & Fashion industry will end the year 2015 with sales up +1.1% on an annual basis. The turnover of the sector will therefore rise to 52.6 billion euro, earning about 570 million compared to the figures in 2014.

Over the course of the year, the growth trend of exports continued, while the rate of growth decreased due to several factors: the escalation of the crisis in Russia, the downsizing of the competitive advantage associated with euro becoming weaker as a result of write-downs made by other countries (China in particular), the weak growth of the EU (which absorbs nearly 55% of Italy's export sales). Italy's major partners, namely Germany and France did not shine neither (+1.9% and -2.8% respectively, in the period January-August 2015), while Russia suffered a fall of -32.1%, with the only previous fall in 2009. Conversely, ISTAT data show that in the first eight months of 2015, the United States, the United Kingdom and Hong Kong marked double-digit growth rates (respectively +20.9%, +10.1% and +15.2%), while exports to China grew by +9.5%.

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Appendix 2

The Roma Web Fest

The www.romawebfest.com website and its social media have brought together new talent: creative, designers, filmmakers, photographers and agencies.

The technical and narrative quality of the films is growing every year and the competition between emerging talents and established filmmakers proves that talent is much more a prize than a famous name.

The competition is free and the winners are awarded works of art (offered by major galleries), as well as gifts from the sponsors of the festival. The festival takes place in the extraordinary setting of the MAXXI - National Museum of XXI Century Arts.

2013 Winner

- Best Fashion Film - Prada wears the Devil
directed by Alex Tacchi

2014 Winners

- Best Fashion Film - "Sabbia" per Pomellato
- School Section - Joyeux anniversaire
(AMFI - Amsterdam) directed by Caroline Koning

2015 Winners

- Best Fashion Film - Mirror by Trussardi,
directed by Chiara Battistini
- Award public network: Little Steps by Nicole Toscano
- Award "Tribute to The Great Beauty":
Love is not thinking by Francesco Meliciani

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Appendix 3

Italian schools that teach how to make fashion films

Recently, in a very short time, many schools and post-graduate courses dedicated to digital phenomena related to the fashion industry have been founded in Italy. The interest is due to the huge success of the phenomenon of fashion films and fashion bloggers, as well as to an obvious predisposition for the subject matter, having its roots in the ancient tradition which made the “Bel Paese” (beautiful country) style icon recognised all over the world.

Students of the fledgling courses, in addition to traditional subjects, also study the phenomena of the moment

- 1) The fashion revolution that is based on three principles:
 - a. Traceability: knowing where, how, and by whom a garment is made.
 - b. Respect for the environment: to produce in an environmental friendly manner and with technologies that respect the health of the worker, the consumer and the ecosystem.
 - c. Respect for the workers: to produce in a manner that respects the rights and health of the workers.
- 2) The Charity Fashion Live: events and designers offering ethical fashion, as in the case of the Italian-Haitian designer Stella Jean, that produce high-impact creative fashion using conventional processes and collaborates with African and Haitian artisans respecting their communities, local cultures and territory.
- 3) Fashion films and digital products for marketing
- 4) Fashion blogger phenomenon.

Among the main schools are

Sapienza University (fashion post-graduate course)

IED – istituto europeo di design Milan

IED – istituto europeo di design Rome

Accademia del lusso Milan

Accademia del lusso Rome

Istituto marangoni Milan

- Polimoda, international institute fashion design & marketing



Still from 'Menswear for Women', fashion film
directed by Marie Schuller for Barbara Casasola



Still from 'Menswear for Women', fashion film
directed by Marie Schuller for Barbara Casasola

MAX GIOVAGNOLI

Transmedia storytelling for fashion and brands

Welcome in mediasphere, where stories are like pollen, floating all around us and inside us. Stories and brands, trends, habits, conflicts, experiences, ways of being. A new ecosystem, rich and complex, tough but enticing. A “transmediaverse” where audiences stack up pieces from all the messages and products, the works and the experiences shared in the global flux, and reconstruct their invisible scripts with the five senses which nature gave them. How? Look around you: screens, devices, texts, brands... Transmedia is everywhere, even if we don't perceive it most of the time.

MAX GIOVAGNOLI

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Max Giovagnoli is the premier transmedia storyteller and researcher in Italy. He is editorial consultant for Italy's national television broadcaster and movie productions. His book on transmedia narratives, *Transmedia Storytelling: Imagery, Shapes and Techniques*, was the first (2005) ever published in Europe. Giovagnoli is responsible for film presentations at festivals such as Romics and Cartoons on the Bay. He also is the coordinator of the School of Cinema and New Media at the European Institute of Design in Rome (IED Rome, Italy). He has been a featured presenter for TEDxTransmedia, Rome Web Fest, and other major events. Giovagnoli was the first transmedia producer mentioned in the credits of a film in Europe.

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New stories are there, available 24 hours a day and ready to be told, crossed or matched, both in the real world and in the digital one. This is the reason why, even as we celebrate its 42nd birthday this year, transmedia storytelling looks inexhaustible and is still the best weapon available for the future of brand and fashion narratives.

In the space of a few generations, we have technologised those bards and shamans whose narratives were created and shaped over five millennia of history. In order to imagine things differently, we have made stories and media compete with our imagination, more like storytellers than artists, filmmakers, designers, producers or professionals. And now? Transmedia is not just about telling stories simultaneously on multiple platforms, spreading multi-layered plots and managing complex characters – it's about our way of perceiving and imaging our emotions and interpreting the reality. How? Through using the brands we love, the places we own, the products we buy, the devices we keep in our pockets, the trends we share and all the other spaces of presence and identity we endeavour - day after day - to be part of the global game of communication. In this perspective, a branded series as well as the launch of a movie, a fashion show, a social media campaign or an urban experience can all be part of the same, amazing, multiplatform campfire. An example?

One of the first transmedia branded series for television and web in Europe was my *Monster Café*, in 2008. *Monster Café* was a multi-trend series and transmedia experience. The project comprised a TV series (12 15-minute episodes), a web-series (12 2-minute episodes), an online puzzle game and social network activities on Facebook and twitter, plus an app for smartphone, an art book and an online comic book. The *Monster Café* in Rome, a stylish bar partnered by the Italian brand Ducati, was the location and the “cove” of a strange group of friends, biking enthusiast and bon vivants, taking part in the project. Seven characters with seven different ways of expressing energy and feelings in their life and relationships. Motorcycle maniacs and easy riders, fashion and luxury lovers in times of crisis, all facing ordinary challenges and dreams. Moreover, during the transmedia rollout of the project, the premiere of the series was promoted with an exclusive fashion party starring Moto GP champions and movie stars, to publicise the 12 brands (food & beverage, clothing and sportswear) involved in the experience.

Each story is set in an envisaged universe, and each universe is ruled by laws.

THE USE OF TRANSMEDIA MULTIPLIES THE IMAGINARY OF THE TALE AND DIVIDES IT INTO MANY TECHNOLOGICAL AND NARRATIVE STORYWORLDS.

It asks authors, directors and audiences to interweave their visions, to share their perspectives, to engross themselves in small parts of the plot and expand the narration across the media. Transmedia aims to spread all the possible relationships among the channels and the assets of these media systems and, at the same time, build hooks, bridges and links across all the artworks, the brands, the products and the consumption strategies used for the involvement of the audience. Therefore, does it also lead to a new way of behaving and expressing ourselves? Yes, indeed.

In the fashion world, for example, editors, directors and stylists co-operate in developing and communicating brands and trends using transmedia storytelling with the aim of merging tradition with innovation. How? Perhaps by “Deodorising” their local approach and looking for genre narratives and cross-cultural ingredients.

“Milking” suggestions and keywords from diverse imageries. Creating media plans, production pipelines and platform action charts for multiplatform publishing projects, or working with non-profit associations in transmedial edu-related marketing campaigns. In all these actions, using dramaturgic fixed rules is of crucial importance, to the point that such usage has to be enhanced by the identifiable cultural symbols and key-tools of collective imaginary in order to grant its due success.

In his essay *L'Imaginaire* written in 1940, Jean-Paul Sartre analysed the forms of interpretation of reality and the fictions of the human mind, making a distinction between perceive and imagine. The use of these two “monads” of fantasy today is a basic reading key for the creation of actual and fictional worlds, for branding and fashion, in particular. According to Sartre, in fact, knowledge is shaped slowly in the perception phase, while with imagination it is immediate. In contrast to perception, in imagination there is a sort of essential poverty. Perception and imagination operate creating a continuous dialogue between the rational mind and the emotional, enhancing or stigmatising the different components of the tale. But... what if you are managing multiple channels, multi-layered tales, complex sagas and not just traditional advertising campaigns or press contents? Fashion brands, stylists, filmmakers and designers are “falling in love” with transmedia because it offers them an amazing opportunity to turn this

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cultural pattern and this old consumerist behaviour upside down: first imagine, and then perceive. How can this be achieved? By using wearable devices to tell stories, for example. Creating synergistic narratives to enact the design of clothes and suits. Inventing virtual relationships using responsive accessories. Creating moving experiences for brands and fashion shows simultaneously, in multiple locations. Focusing on the audience's choice excitement. Imagining expanded, interactive environments to empower communication and the marketing of models and products.

All these activities influence the promotion and distribution mechanics of the fashion world today. The aim is to allow multiple transmedia audiences to talk to each other as much as possible, to provoke a more active and privileged contact with the brand, to overcome the limits of traditional stories and transform them into real multi-sensory experiences. Is this a revolution in the "rhetoric of lovemarks", as Kevin Roberts has it, that defines the fundamental relationship that exists between the brand and the consumer's emotional archive? Yes, probably. The traditional brand-consumer relationship can be easily developed into "communities of users" interested in interacting with all the media involved in a transmedia communicative system; merging fashion imagery with marginalised subcultures and indie developers' movements of the global media flux, for example.

Creating transmedia campaigns means dealing with the creation of imaginative universes, and creating new worlds – original or pre-existing ones – is always equivalent to creating "complex systems of reference," i.e. having the potential to enrich the traditional narrative through further semantic stratum¹. It is a double process that all creative people use daily in their work on a single medium, but which gains a more engaging and systematic meaning if you are developing tales distributed on multiple media simultaneously. As transmedia expert, Christy Dena, states, in fact:

"TRANSMEDIA PROJECTS
APPEAR TO ASK AUDIENCES
TO BE MORE ACTIVE WITH THE
WORLDS THEY EXPERIENCE."

For instance, the audience has to move from watching television to visiting a website, or from reading a graphic novel to watching a movie in a theatre or from speaking to someone on a phone to running through the street on a mission". But... what if the author is a fashion stylist, a fashion movie director or a fashion house? They could arrange strong communications shifts creating transmedia

events in their flagship stores, for example. And linking them to urban games and experiences. Perhaps organising virtual quests, fashion shows or multisensory paths through networks of atelier, studios, museums, etc. In my opinion, fashion stylists and editors would learn a lot in terms of audience engagement and future lifestyles through studying interactive design, game design and experience design. An example?

My newest transmedial project, MU, is a webmovie based on a trilogy of novels and structured into a rich, transmedial bouquet. The story tells the adventures of three tough guys living in a run-down orphanage built in the site of the Aquarium of Rome, 20 metres under an artificial lake, in the middle of a cold winter. The transmedial bouquet comprises a graphic novel, three novels, a game app, the official website, a web series (8 x 8-minute episodes), a feature movie and an innovative alternate reality game. But it is not just a question of channels and products. The story of MU, in fact, was created and developed to promote the creation of an independent, new fashion house narrated in the movie and focusing on streetwear (clothing & accessories) and gadgets. A roadshow in 20 different locations and a massive social media campaign have also been created to spread awareness of the brand among the teen demographic of the transmedia generation.

In order to devise and envisage solutions that are effective, satisfying and shareable among all the media audiences involved in their projects/campaigns, transmedial stylists, filmmakers, artists and designers have to pay a great deal of attention to the emotional processes of the human mind. Ultimately, transmedia audiences do not simply search for the creation of credible and exciting universes and narratives, but must also ensure that they are evocative and resonant. In this respect, there are two basic components of the emotional outbreak. The first is the use of emotional repertoire shared with the audience, while the second is the emotional labelling, i.e. the power to "tag" in order to recognise and reproduce the emotions of the tale's protagonists with multiple audiences. Transmedia storytelling has not been created to simply promote a product, but rather to become part of it. Participative projects and campaigns can easily enhance the value of a product. Multi-layered narratives can empower a brand's overall image and knowledge, including its consumers' "historical" expectations. Transmedia franchises can create new brand experiences and forms of brand activation for fashion, cinema, design and art, since brand stories are often aimed at involving users in order to change their consumer behaviour with the help of their "user journey" in the multiplatform communicative system. And this is probably the best lesson to learn for authors and directors, brands and licensors, particularly for products and experiences dedicated to young targets and transmedia audiences of today and tomorrow.

¹ The imagery-making process is based on different level of meanings and creativity linked to universal and individual experiences and emotions at the same time.

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Takeaway

- Transmedia is everywhere, even if we don't perceive it the most of the time.
- Transmedia is about our way of perceiving and imagining our emotions and interpreting the reality.
- Transmedia multiplies the imaginary of the brand and spreads it using technological and narrative storyworlds.
- Transmedia turns the traditional, cultural pattern of consumption first image, and then perceive upside down.
- Transmedia can create moving experiences, choice excitement and expanded environments for fashion and brands.
- Transmedia is a revolution in the old "rhetoric of lovemarks" shared by brands and consumers.
- Transmedia needs effective production pipelines, platform action charts and marketing strategies in order to succeed.
- Transmedia projects ask audiences to be more active in the worlds they experience.
- Transmedial directors, stylists and designers have to pay great attention to the emotional processes of the human mind, to properly use transmedia storytelling.
- Transmedia franchises can create new brand experience and new ways of brand activation for fashion and design.

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Still from 'Jokes', fashion film directed by Marie Schuller for Dice Kayek

STINE JOHANSEN

Transmedia and Fashion - case studies and potentials

The use of transmedia content strategies is, to an increasing degree, being implemented outside of the film and games industries where transmedia has played a large part in both the marketing and storytelling aspects of media productions for more than a decade. A new digital user culture gives rise to a closer relationship between brands and their customers. This relationship is explored in this article in reference to fashion brands. The reflections presented here point towards a specific potential for fashion brands to explore digital user cultures.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Stine Johansen has worked within the field of digital media production since 2013 with a specialisation in storytelling across platforms and in project management. Currently, she works fulltime in the video agency Brainstorm CrossMedia while also lecturing at other venues on cross-platform storytelling and storyworlds. Stine has a BS degree in Medialogy and an MS degree in IT from Aalborg University. This combination shows her specific interest in understanding the overlap between technical and aesthetic subjects.

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General reflections

The following are a collection of reflections inspired by research conducted for the case analyses of the luxury brands Chanel and Burberry. These reflections are discussed with the purpose of highlighting potential uses of transmedia in the fashion industry from this point in time.

Roots in identity

Much like the strategy employed by Apple following the release of the iPod, it can be noted that successful transmedia campaigns in the fashion industry have their roots in the identity of each brand. Furthermore, the identity of the brand can be directed towards the values of its users advantageously. The products of any brand have, as is exemplified in Case 1, Burberry, become less important to users compared to what is signified by wearing the brand. In order to successfully conduct this type of campaign, a process of clarifying unique qualities and values can be carried out, and the results of this process can then be applied to each geographical or product-oriented extension of the brand.

Transmedia coherence

Many brands, including the luxury brands presented above, have existed for several years, providing them with a story to tell. This story can be translated through different storytelling techniques; through users being present at different digital and physical platforms, transmedia has proven a useful tool. In addition to the many storytelling techniques available to brands, the particular stories can differ. A story can have its starting point in a key product of the brand, a key character either founding the brand or having been part of the brand's development, or certain design characteristics such as shapes or colours.

When noting that transmedia is useful due to the multiplatform presence of users, a direct coherence to the importance of identity in these campaigns can be seen. The identity of the brand and that of its users should overlap in some ways, meaning that the identity of the brand is partly shaped by its users and vice versa. For this to work, the message of the campaign, while shaped to match the platforms on which users are present, should be simple, authentic and unique. As different brands target different audiences, the choice of which platforms to use must also be made.

Ideas in the mind of users

Another aspect of the overlap between brand story and user identities is exclusive to brand stories; that is, telling a brand story means working from already perceived ideas in the minds of users.

THIS MEANS THAT, SINCE USERS ALREADY HAVE THEIR OWN CONCEPTION OF A BRAND, THE STORY MUST BE DEVELOPED FROM THAT, AND NEW STORY ELEMENTS ARE CONCEIVED AS EXTENSIONS TO THE ALREADY EXISTING STORY.

Storyworlds create depth

Creating a story or storyworld, which is translatable to different platforms, allows for depth in the user experience compared to launching separate elements with different messages. However, at the same time, this sets high demands for designers and marketers because the message should remain coherent while being presented in different packages.

Furthermore, creating digital experiences for different platforms such as smartphones or tablets allows the user to enter pre-purchase experiences with a lower barrier compared to only focusing on regular personal computers.

Primary and secondary worlds

Combining physical and digital experiences, marketers might let themselves be inspired by Tolkien, who introduced the concepts of primary world and secondary world of an audience. In other words, for a story to connect with users, aspects of it must be recognisable (the behaviour of characters, the laws of physics and so on). By anchoring a story in the real world through a brand, utilising the possibility of combining physical and digital story elements can make the overall experience stronger.

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PUT SIMPLY, A PHYSICAL MANIFESTATION OF THE STORY CAN CREATE A SUSPENSION OF DISBELIEF IN REGARD TO VIRTUAL EXPERIENCES. IN THE CASE OF THE FASHION INDUSTRY, THIS PHYSICAL MANIFESTATION IS, ABOVE ALL, THE PRODUCT.

When Burberry creates Burberry World Live, they combine all of the above ideas. A comparison to Apple might again be made in terms of ensuring a similar customer experience no matter the geographical location, but still taking into account the importance of individuality and identity of fashion.

Luxury brands and accessible content: A contradiction?

It seems, however, that a contradiction exists in the apparent usefulness of transmedia and the fact that luxury brands often want to be perceived as exclusive and unobtainable. In contrast to high street fashion such as H&M or Forever 21, luxury brands need a higher level of control in terms of the information produced throughout their campaigns. Burberry launched Art of the Trench as a type of social platform; however, the platform was only available to photographers, and the photographs had to meet a certain standard in order to be published online. In this way, the brand not only creates social interactions around the brand but also simultaneously ensures its exclusivity. The main point of this is that even luxury brands have gained the possibility to invite users into their brand stories through digital platforms. Working with transmedia strategies and storyworld creation might even provide the luxury brands in particular with a method of sending an even clearer message to an audience of why they are unique, as well as being trendsetting.

The simple story

A key phrase throughout this text is that, for a story to be effective, it should be simple. How, then, does a brand condense up to 100 years of history into a simple, short story? How can a brand know the key features and characteristics to emphasise? The videos in the series Inside Chanel presented, in short, Coco Chanel's journey towards creating an international luxury brand.

However, upon reviewing comments on YouTube, it becomes apparent that the producers have chosen to exclude the part of Coco's story that took place during World War II. Comments such as the following show that users might perceive missing information as an attempt to cover up parts of the story:

"Good, but it glossed over the fact that she lived with a German general in Paris in the Second World War."

YouTube User: Sean John (2015)

This comment was posted on Chapter 6 of the story Inside Chanel, and it shows part of the risk of compressing a brand story. Jeff Gomez, owner of Starlight Runner Entertainment, points out in an interview conducted by Frank Rose in 2011 that every IP has a unique core from which a story can be constructed (Rose, 2012, p. 246). However, developing this core is, as several points above show a tendency towards, a process where a world is kept true to its own physics and visual identity but where the actual content can change according to brand owners, audience and perhaps also B2B clients.

Future Potentials

What is entailed in the future of transmedia in fashion? While the above shows that a clear potential to communicate a message of a brand in terms of values and identity, it might be hypothesised that a stronger coherence between brand and product will occur. As shown by the case studies of both Burberry and Chanel below, the product can enter a central position in stories connected to the brand.

Furthermore, when reviewing campaigns of other industries such as the Old Spice Guy, a potential which seems untouched as yet by the fashion industry is the possibility of creating narratives which have the ability to develop according to user reception. The narrative of Coco Chanel is simple and strong. However, Chanel could move towards developing a world in which the brand story has not yet finished developing.

Burberry, in the meantime, has developed a storyworld, yet this storyworld is dependent on already existing interpretations of a classic England. The storyworld might benefit from fictional events through which a development of the storyworld might occur. This could eventually lead to more interactions with users as a sense of an epic journey (epic in the narrative sense) or mystery to be explored.

This leads to another aspect regarding where fashion brands might move to in a transmedia perspective. Chanel and Burberry provide examples of successful implementations of stories distributed through different media. However, the movement of the users, or the "culture" formed as a result of users experiencing

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the media, could be further developed in a directional sense. While having different touch points allows for users to engage with a brand story in different structures, the story parts could offer users the possibility of continuing the story on other platforms. Both Burberry and Chanel might benefit from creating a stronger path for users to enter into their storyworlds.

User-created transmedia experiences

Considering the user path, it might also be speculated that a user's role could become even more elaborate in creating transmedia fashion experiences. Being able to choose a direction of a set of experiences or the course of a story makes the user aware of his or her actions and puts focus on our individuality rather than only viewing users as observers of a brand story. This sense of individuality is especially prominent when discussing fashion.

Involving users more actively might additionally push the industry towards what has already began being implemented in the Nordic Fashion Association; that is, a sustainable production of fashion products, and translating that sustainability to the content of the stories in transmedia strategies.

Secondary products

While the above reflections represent the thoughts of this author, there are clear signs that the fashion industry, similar to nearly every other area of commerce, is moving towards selling a specific story, atmosphere or value rather than a specific product. The product itself now appears to take a secondary role in the hunt for customers.

One question is whether or not the product and the brand story will be even more closely connected in the future, and if the user's role could be further determined by his or her own sense of personality and individuality.

In closure, the discussion might be opened according to future trends that might influence the path of the industry towards multiplatform content strategies. Reviewing Gartner's Hype Cycle of Emerging Technologies conducted in 2014, many of the current technologies being categorised as 'innovation triggers' revolve around the concept of a smart society where big data might nudge/help/guide citizens towards better lives (Gartner, 2014). The reason for the nuance in the choice of words in this context is that there are ethical discussions parallel to the development of the technologies. These will not be discussed here.

CONSIDERING THE AMOUNT OF DATA USERS MIGHT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE ABOUT WHERE THEY ARE, HOW THEY FEEL OR WHAT THEY WANT, THE FASHION INDUSTRY HAS A POTENTIAL TO SYNCHRONISE WITH ITS USERS TO THE EXTENT THAT ANY BRAND STAYS TRUE TO ITS VALUES AND CORE STORY.

Case Studies: Burberry and Chanel

Throughout the following section, two cases, the implementation of multiplatform content strategies by the luxury brands Chanel and Burberry, will be briefly presented as well as a short comparison of them. From this, a brand working within the Danish fashion industry is presented and discussed in terms of its potential use of transmedia strategies in the last section of the article.

Case 1: Burberry

Short Summary

Burberry has created Burberry World from which all content is created. Burberry do not use linear storytelling in the traditional sense of characters and world events. Instead, the brand focuses on constructing a recognisable space with unique characteristics. The trench coat is their key product, and the social platform Art of the Trench is an example of how a luxury brand can employ user-created content and still be perceived as exclusive.

The Brand and Organisation

Burberry is a luxury fashion brand founded in 1856, England. The trench coat (worn by British soldiers during World War I amongst others) is an essential item to Burberry. Following the war, the brand became an official supplier to the royal family in England particularly its outerwear products.

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In 2006, Burberry was only growing at 2% each year. The new CEO, Angela Ahrendts, noted a lack of focus, or “centralisation”, of common visions and goals for the brand’s global managers. Of the 23 licenses globally, each was handled differently. The selection of outerwear only represented 20% of the entire business. This prompted a thorough reorganisation of the entire company, with Christopher Bailey setting the design agenda for all future actions in regards to products and marketing. (Ahrendts, 2013).

Narrative Elements

A coherence exists between the focus of Burberry on the trench coat and the roots of the brand in England. Being an iconic form of protection against rain, the trench coat characterises a stereotypical English ambience. This atmosphere has, at the same time, been made the foundation for the concept of Burberry World.

IN A TRANSMEDIA SENSE, THE CREATION OF A STORYWORLD MAKES IT MORE EFFICIENT FOR BURBERRY TO MAINTAIN A CERTAIN SUSPENSION OF DISBELIEF FOR EVERY PIECE OF CONTENT DISTRIBUTED TO USERS – EVEN THOUGH THIS CONTENT IS PRESENTED THROUGH DIFFERENT COMMUNICATION FORMATS.

While Burberry do not tell a structured story containing characters and a well-defined conflict, they do offer a sense of the brand identity through storytelling techniques – examples are given below.

Communication Platforms

Burberry has created both static platforms as well as time-constrained events. Note that every example briefly touched upon below narrows the users’ perception of Burberry to being highly rooted in England. Burberry carries out the vision by utilising a number of different experiences – sound/music, photographs, videos and physical events. (Davis, 2014).

As an example, Burberry uses the music industry as part of their storytelling media. In 2013, they released a music video featuring the band Coastal Cities (“Nothing Ever Changes”) as part of a campaign for sunglasses. The band members are all British and within the age range of Burberry’s main target group (below 30). (Coastalcitiesband, 2013).

In cooperation with Google and Grow, Burberry launched the campaign Burberry Kisses in an attempt to reach an audience at an emotional level. The story of Burberry is nuanced, portraying romance across great geographical distances. More specifically, the campaign sought to promote Burberry beauty products. (Art Copy & Code, 2015) (Think with Google, 2015).

The campaign had users from more than 215 countries. The Kisses campaign is now often featured in physical retail space. (Art Copy & Code, 2015).

In 2009, Burberry launched the site The Art of the Trench (a subpage to the brand’s website). In 2013, the website had had more than 2.5 million visitors. The platform offers a social aspect on the brand, offering street style photographers the chance to share their unique styling of the trench coat. The unique property this platform offers to the story is the users’ opportunity to mark part of the visual identity (and story) of Burberry. (Quevilly, 2011).

Binding every part of the campaign together is the concept of Burberry World. This world is nuanced by every specific digital campaign, but has been physically manifested in stores and at runway events. (Bailey, 2012) (Burberry, 2015) (Davis, 2014).

Burberry World Live transforms some of Burberry’s physical stores (called ‘flagship stores’) to also be a platform for events, bringing all the digital experiences together. The events are highly sensory in that even the typical rainy English weather is replicated by golden glitter falling from the ceiling. (Bailey, 2012) (Carr, 2013)

Aftermath

While a few of the brand’s global facilities have closed (amongst others New Jersey and Wales), the original facility in Yorkshire has been expanded by more than 1000 employees throughout a period of two years, and a second headquarters building was opened in 2013. At the end of 2012, the revenue and operating income of Burberry had doubled over a period of five years. (Ahrendts, 2013).

An interesting development for Burberry is the release of a beauty line with Burberry Kisses, which shifts the focus from being on the key item, the trench coat, to other products. Burberry’s open story-world might assist the brand in marketing the new products while keeping in line with a specific atmosphere and creating certain associations within users. (Quevilly, 2011).



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Case 2: Chanel

Short Summary

Chanel uses a character-based type of transmedia storytelling in campaigns. The character Coco Chanel drives the story in linear formats such as short information videos categorised in a timeline and a documentary as well as in social media contexts where quotes by Chanel are popular. Chanel focuses on creating transmedia content on digital platforms – however, Chanel inspires some aspects of events such as runway shows. The purchase experience in stores is strictly traditional and does not incorporate transmedia elements.

The Brand

Chanel is a luxury fashion brand founded in 1909, France. The brand was rated the 6th most valuable in 2013 compared to being the 4th in 2012. (Cabon, 2014). With Karl Lagerfeld as Creative Director, Chanel has worked towards maintaining the brand's mystique while still managing the users' increasingly digital presence.

Narrative Elements

The main focus of the branded identity of Chanel is centred round the founder of the brand, Gabrielle Bonheur Chanel, also known as Coco Chanel. All parts of a continuous Chanel campaign are driven by Coco as a main character.

The conflict within the story lies in Coco's visions inside a society which is hesitant to change.

Certain characteristics are applied throughout all instances of Chanel's digital and physical presence: Black/white contrasts, tweed and pearls. These characteristics are both adapted to the ways of communicating as well as being redesigned with each coming season.

Communication Platforms

Chanel utilises a number of touch points throughout the customer experience of pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase. (Cabon, 2014).

The media platforms utilised by Chanel in the pre-purchase experience(s) are heavily coupled with the narrative elements noted above. Where it could be argued that social media platforms such as YouTube and Facebook do not possess the characteristics of a luxury brand, both provide a basis for social interaction between users – an interaction on which the digital campaigns are heavily reliant.

A campaign called Inside Chanel was launched in 2012, and it contains several chapters, all beginning with the words "Once upon a time..." The graphics of the video are entirely black and white, in line with key characteristics of the products of the brand, and authentic archived footage provides a reliable insight into how Chanel became the brand of today. It can be noted that the videos have received some criticism from users regarding the portrayal of Coco Chanel and her actions during World War II. (Chanel, 2014) Chapter 12 of the series featured a tour guide through the streets where Chanel was originally founded. Anchoring the story at a specific place allows users to move from the digital platform to their own reality, binding those two worlds and sending an enforced message. (Chanel, 2014).

One of Chanel's 'flagship stores', located in New Bond Street in London, was originally designed by Peter Marino with Coco Chanel's Parisian apartment as his main inspiration. (Cabon, 2014).

The Haute Couture shows similarly reference Coco Chanel's life. The FW 10 show featured a large Venice Lion replica (from one of Coco's favourite places). (Cabon, 2014).

Aftermath

Arguably, due to the simple and powerful story of Chanel's campaigns, the brand was Luxury Marketer of the year in 2013 in front of Cartier and Burberry, amongst others. In 2015, the brand was rated the 85th most valuable brand globally by Forbes. The videos in the Inside Chanel series alone have up to 3.5 million views. (McCarthy, 2013) (Yurtbay, 2015).

An interesting thing to note about Chanel is the brand's ability to make most users almost worship Coco Chanel, posting quotes by her and expressing their love for her as an individual rather than merely loving the products produced by Chanel.

Comparison of Chanel and Burberry

In order to clarify unique qualities of each case presented above, a short comparison is made.

The biggest difference in terms of narrative elements lies in the fact that Chanel bases its storytelling content on a main character, Coco Chanel, while Burberry focuses on England as a type of character with certain qualities such as rain.

Focusing on either a person or geography has consequences in terms of which platforms might prove useful to utilise. While Chanel chooses to create short stories with structured narratives, Burberry chooses to incorporate the users' senses with more experimental, interactive experiences.

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In terms of the user experience, the Chanel experience leaves users more as observers rather than participants, in contrast to the highly interactive Burberry platforms. This can be explained by the narrative focus on either a character-driven and linear story or an open world ready to be explored. A comparison might be drawn to the storyworld by H. P. Lovecraft, as explored by Van Leavenworth, where the storyworld is defined as a “shared mental model of an indistinct world that is unified by a specific thematic focus” (Leavenworth, 2014, p. 333). A key concept here is the fact that the audience and the author(s) share a mental conception of a fictional world, one that is initiated during the first exposure to that world but which can change over time. However, from a production point of view, the storyworld is created without narrative content such as characters or events.

Core and connection

The brands are similar in the sense that they incorporate main products or key features of these products in their strategy. Chanel focuses on a specific colour scheme, and Burberry chose to return to the trench coat – an essential key to the brand’s original success.

However, where one of Burberry’s visions lies in coupling the digital and physical worlds (especially concerning their flagship stores), Chanel uses the digital platforms more as a way of communicating the story digitally while maintaining a classic purchase experience in stores.

What seems to work in both cases is the balance between having clarified the core of the brand and its connection to its audience.

Potentials in the Danish Fashion Industry

For the purpose of discussing the potential use of transmedia strategies in the Danish fashion industry in specific terms, the brand Hummel has been chosen. Hummel has transitioned through several stages of its brand development and, for this reason, proves an interesting starting point for a discussion on decision making in terms of transmedia content strategies in the Danish fashion industry.

A Short Backstory

Hummel was founded in 1923 in a backyard in Hamburg, and the brand quickly became successful due to its unique outer

soles of rubber. The brand was originally called Mesmer & Co. by its founders; however, it was officially changed to Hummel-Hummel in 1939, inspired by a German greeting of the time. The name was changed again in 1956 after being bought by Bernhard Weckenbrock, and it finally became a Danish brand in 1979. (Hummel, 2011).

Hummel sponsors many football teams globally (as well as some handball teams) which, based upon their website as well as Facebook page, seems to be a main source of exposure. Similar to Burberry, Hummel has gone through a process of unifying content distributed by brand units located around the world. While the products produced by Hummel, as well as the signature chevron design, are present in the content on both social media and also the brand’s website, it seems as though the unique quality of Hummel as a brand is not presented in simple terms at the website or on social media pages. What, aside from a shift in the late 1990s from exclusively being worn by sports teams to being a fashion brand, separates Hummel from other sportswear brands? (Hummel, 2011) (Sarquah, 2010).

Reading the ‘Long Description’ of the brand on its Facebook page, the reference to “Hummel” (German for “bumblebee”) becomes more clear. Describing the company as a bumblebee, a creature breaking the rules of what is or is not possible, the premise of a story actually exists. However, upon scrutinising the history of Hummel, it seems that the bumblebee name was chosen as a way of shortening an existing name. A question might then be asked: Why initiate the association between the brand and a bumblebee? (Lunde, 2010).

Hummel has already partly answered this question in the description with the concept of ‘Company Karma’ – this is not stated in specific terms and is therefore inferred here. A wish exists for Hummel to “give something back to others in need”. Like the bumblebee (and Hummel), sports teams such as the Tibetan football team were struggling to keep up with teams in the same league. With Company Karma, Hummel presents a set of values determined by a desire to help the less fortunate.

Transmedia Benefits in Constantly Evolving Industries

To continue this reflective process, we might remind ourselves of the strengths of transmedia storytelling which are, in reference to Henry Jenkins, the potential to experience narratives in depth and through different formats as well to reach out to available readers. Furthermore,

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A SENSE OF DIRECTION OR MYSTERY CAN BE PRESENT IN ORDER TO LEAD USERS TOWARDS THE NEXT PIECES OF CONTENT.

Christian Stadil, current owner and chairman of Hummel, states in an interview distributed through the brand website that, when working with brands, an owner should expect the ownership to only be temporary. The brand will develop after being passed along to new owners. As such, having a transmedia strategy might prove beneficial since a core aspect is to develop a storyworld from which story events or certain characteristics might be drawn. In short, this lengthens the viability of campaign material and can streamline future development processes. However, the storyworld behind the brand should also be capable of following trends within the fashion industry in order to keep the brand modern and attractive to new customers.

To return to the former question of the importance of Hummel's comparison to a bumblebee and the concept of 'Company Karma', the following is a summation of what works and what does not work from a transmedia perspective:

What works:

- 'Company Karma' has the potential to become a unique story for Hummel. The concept might be angled towards athletes who have not yet experienced a breakthrough – a number of Hummel's market competitors (such as Nike or Adidas) use famous athletes for exposure and press attention. Hummel might be able to differentiate the brand by exclusively bringing in people who have not yet "made it".
- The design criterion presented by Christian Stadil, "Only change one thing", makes it possible for Hummel to maintain a visual identity for all products as well as making sure that branches of Hummel do not deviate and create differing customer expectations.

What does not work:

- Other than the key feature of chevron designs on products as well as the bumblebee logo, the visual identity of Hummel differs from platform to platform. With a developed storyworld, Hummel would be able to work with scenery and visual metaphors, which would complement each other rather than being tied to current trends.

- While the backstory of Hummel is explained both on Facebook as well as on their website in an interactive timeline, it does not seem to be incorporated in marketing actions.

From the above, developing a transmedia strategy would force Hummel to streamline the brand content more extensively while keeping resonant with current trends as well as the brand story. Building upon existing activities within the company, a potential for a simple and impactful story can be seen. This could be enhanced further by defining properties of the visual space within which Hummel operates.

Conversation Strategy as Brand Activity

A key component of transmedia strategy is the 'conversation' it can create between audience and brand. This does not only refer to social media platforms where an actual conversation might occur but also provides an invitation for users to create story content or be involved with choosing the direction of story content. (Rose, 2012)

While this might be perceived as a strategy too complex to employ for small brands who, unlike Hummel, do not have global exposure, thinking in multiple platforms does not necessarily encompass costly implementations. Instead, the main factors are uncovering the brand's core narrative components and reaching out to users through platforms that are of relevance to them. The task here is to distribute different content across different platforms and to direct users from content piece to content piece. An example could be Chanel's video on YouTube which, rather than ending in closed fashion, could indicate an upcoming event or direct users towards the website on which it has been placed in the context of other videos and photographs.

Corporate responsibility and sustainable production methods are aspects of which consumers are increasingly aware. As such, the story content of brands targeting consumers in this particular area of the world could benefit from joining the uprising wave. Hummel has been performing activities relevant to this since Christian Stadil transformed the brand. However, in regard to creating story content based on the set of values employed by the brand, this has not been done to the maximum possible extent. (Pasquinelli, 2013)

To end this discussion of transmedia potentials within the Danish fashion industry, a key takeaway could be that a specific terrain for stories exists in Nordic countries – partly due to consumer awareness and partly due to political activities. Hummel has been used as an example of a Danish brand partaking in relevant activities but lacking the concept of a storyworld which could unify the content produced and distributed to a greater extent.

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Takeaway

To conclude this article, seven key points can be mentioned from the above reflections and discussions:

- Examples of successful transmedia fashion campaigns show a continuously shifting focus between the identity of a brand and the identity of its consumers when developing a content strategy.
- Users are, to an increasing degree, present on multiple platforms. This culture has created a special potential for coherent transmedia storyworld creation.
- Manifesting a brand story in the physical world as well as the virtual, or digital, can help create a suspension of disbelief in terms of the storyworld of a brand – making the storyworld seem more real and relevant to users.
- Large brand stories might require certain story elements to be cut. This should be done carefully so as to not make the brand appear untrustworthy.
- Fashion brands have the potential to further develop the storyworld framework of their campaigns in relation to what users might control. Examples of fashion brands allowing user created content to be generated already exist. However, the user-generated content might be given a larger role in terms of the storyworld.
- Creating a storyworld rather than separate linear storylines makes it easier to develop future branding content because the storyworld can be transformed to match cultural changes as time passes.
- The products of the fashion industry have been pushed aside in favour of brand values and brand identities. It can be speculated whether or not the product and brand identity will correlate to a higher degree in the future as the brand identity might not be able to stand alone.

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Making business out of fashion film

– a guide to match of genre and audience by using discourse analysis and emotional segmentation

Like fashion itself, today's fashion film is diverse, and the film genre has become a central element in the communication strategy of international brands. However, there are a wealth of approaches and directions for fashion film. This article examines these directions (genres), and provides an overview of the diversity as well as an exploration into what is important if you also focus on return on investment when using fashion film as part of the marketing mix.

At the end, the article lists directors and relevant sites within the area of fashion film as well as links to the mentioned films.

ANJA GAEDE

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Anja Bisgaard Gaede is CEO of SPOTT trends & business. Anja has an MA degree in communication and specialised in fashion, consumerism, and experience economy. She has also published the Danish book *Skab god kemi med dine kunder - oplevelesesøkonomi i detailhandlen* (*Customer Chemistry – experience economy in retail*). Her specialty is turning trends into business for Scandinavian clients.

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Making meaning and business

This article will look into the genre of fashion film and, from a semantic perspective, generate models to gain meaning and an overview of the diversity and creative hooks. Another layer is added by matching the genres with relevant audiences. When fashion film is a central element in the marketing mix for fashion brands, it (in many and most cases) also becomes relevant to ask how cost and effort can benefit the bottom line. Moreover, in order to turn fashion film into a bottom line success, one needs to be aware of the right creative strategy for each customer type. This article will explore that by integrating emotional segmentation.

Discourses in fashion films

A definition of the genre fashion film is fluid because fashion film has arisen out of a mix of other genres: Films, commercials, branding and documentaries. Nonetheless, one can say fashion film follows the “rules” of film in general. They adopt storylines and narratives, effects and plots, but they also derive from the commercial genre in terms of the commercial intent, product placement, length and distribution. Therefore, they are a mix, which can have very different purposes and expectations according to the business perspective. In light of the complex medium, we apply discourse analysis (a light version¹) in order to understand the different genres in relation to each other and to be able to frame and divide the films for further analysis.

Discourse analysis investigates how ideas or objects are linked together (Scollon & Scollon, 2004:viii). It is furthermore an analysis which investigates patterns (links and overview) within a domain (fashion film) (Jørgensen and Philips, 1999:9ff). “A discourse is a certain way to talk about and understand the world (or slices of the world).” By applying a light version of discourse analysis one can understand and create meaning within the field of fashion film. Discourse analysis is dynamic and in principle never exhausted, because the discourses are affected by outside changes and the perceiver (Jørgensen & Philips, 1999:9ff). However, that also makes the discourse analysis a relevant tool to analyse the diverse and fluid domains such as fashion film.

By creating discourse directions and fields where fashion films can be placed, you obtain a tool with which to comprehend the changing plots and formats of fashion films.

The result of the discourse analysis is the fashion film map, which is explained in depth in the next paragraph.

The fashion film map

The fashion film map outlines (not exhaustively) the different discourses in the latest (or benchmarked) fashion film today, and puts them in relation to one another. This creates a framework for analysing new fashion film, but it also offers direction for the best emotional segments. More on this later in the article.

The four discourses

The fashion film map outlines four discourses for fashion film: artistic, abstract, commercial and concrete. They are placed on a continuum with opposites in each end. When placed on top to each other they create four fields where fashion films can be moved either closer or further away from the discourse depending on the plot, style, product placement etc. The following describes the four discourses:

Artistic

Artistic fashion film has a high degree of creativity and its defining ideas lean heavily on the art world, free from convention and rules. Materials, angles, lighting, subject, and story are challenged and put together in new ways, often with surreal results. The target is often to associate the brand/product with art.

Abstract

A fashion film with an abstract approach has a high degree of sophistication. Often the visual impression and the narrative are open to interpretation. The brand and products are ambiguously presented or omitted completely and the genres are challenged. This results in new and innovative approaches to fashion film.

Commercial

The commercial angle of a fashion film offers clear product placement, a strong focus on the product, and brand names are visually shown. The viewer is left with no doubt that they are watching a commercial film. It can combine genres, yet the genres used must be very conventional.

¹ Light version means that this article uses the term discourse in a simplistic way. First of all, the field of fashion film is not exhaustively investigated and the use of discourse is more in a thematic way. However, discourse is a more open and dynamic term than themes, which makes it more relevant in terms of the field: fashion film.



Photo by Helene Sophie Højgaard Eckholdt, Ditte Marie Rothemejer Græm Sørensen, Camilla Gammelgaard Kristensen, Mathias Laustrop Andersen, VIA Film & Transmedia

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Concrete

Many brands take the traditional route, producing visually driven videos closely linked to their print advertising campaigns. The concrete fashion film is very focused on giving the viewer a clear image of the brand and products and is heavily dependent on a classic narrative setup. It might even give advice or tell/show how to use the product.

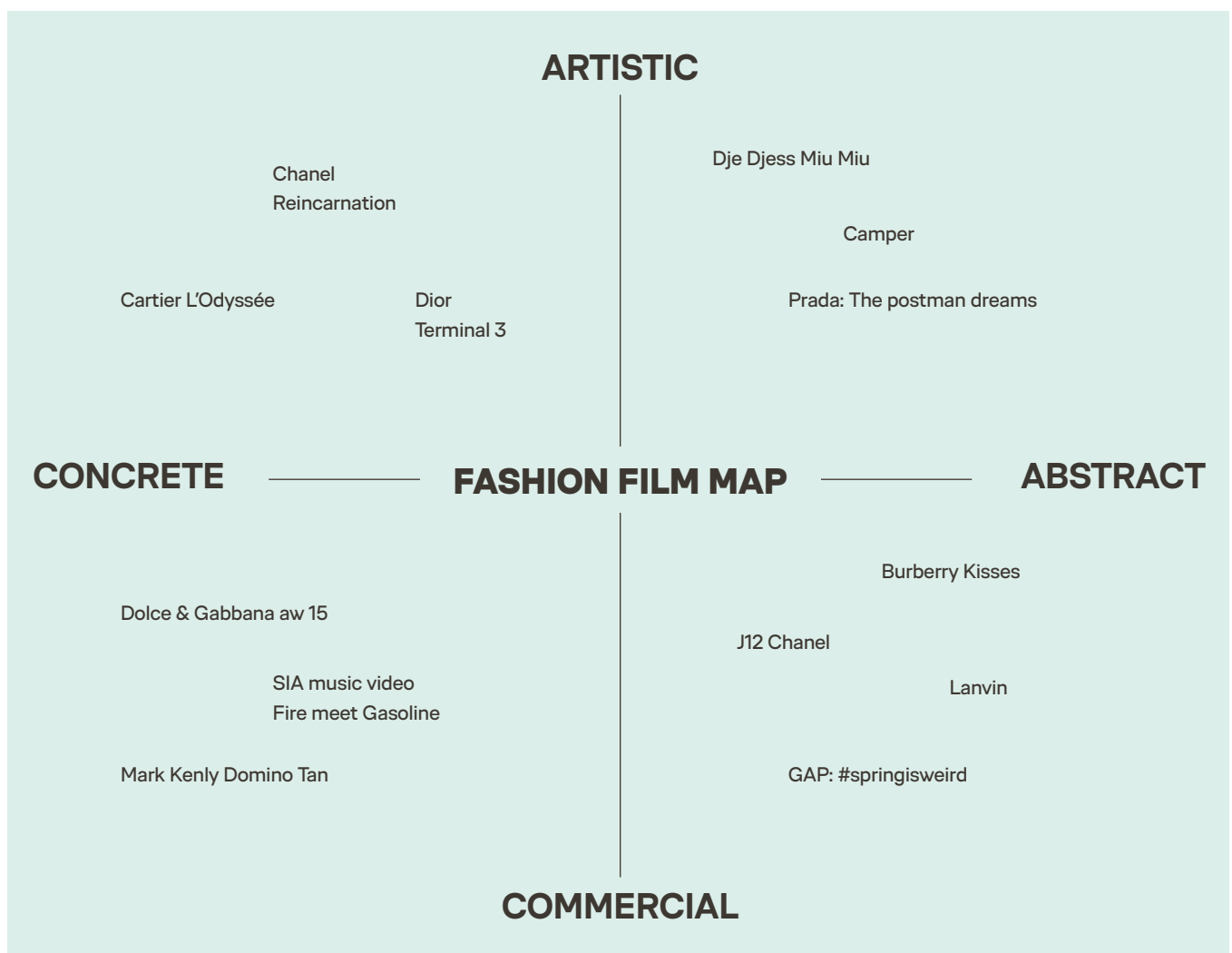
The fashion film map below places recent fashion films in the different fields depending on their characteristics.

The fashion film map gives overview of the different discourses in selected fashion film. The map supplies a tool for analysing future fashion film.

From discourses to match of audience

The fashion film map provides an overview of different discourses in selected fashion film, but how do you know if a particular genre (discourse) makes a good fashion film? And good in terms of what? This calls for a supplementary question: Which discourse matches which audience? Thus making it a good fashion film for a specific audience. "Good" meaning the ability to be emotionally preferential for the audience and, in that way, make way for business potential.

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Viral ability

Directors agree that the way of measuring a fashion film's success is by its ability to go viral. The social media agenda has also changed the landscape for fashion film and, according to director Luca Finotti, it is the film's main purpose.

"ALL THE FILMS ARE MADE TO GET THE INSTANT ATTENTION OF THE VIEWERS, SO AN IMPORTANT TREND FOR FASHION FILM IS ITS ABILITY TO GO VIRAL," SAYS LUCA FINOTTI.

Luca Finotti has directed films for Adidas and Moschino. In these films, Luca Finotti used effects such as glitch, data mosh, colour block and stop motion.

"These effects are just few of the recent trends to make a good film interesting and heightens its ability to go viral," Luca Finotti explains.

Surreal and unexpected

According to Kati Chitrakorn of BOF (BusinessOfFashion.com) the recent and most successful fashion films attracted audiences with surreal storylines and unexpected plot twists. These characteristics place them on the fashion film map somewhere between artistic and abstract. Examples of these films are Romain Kremer's film Campers ss15 campaign, Autumn de Wilde's The postman dreams for Prada and Miu Miu's Dje Djess film. In the case of the Camper film, no shoes/products are shown and the Miu Miu film even used a specially invented language, making it impossible to understand the lines. The interpretation of the viewer is free and sophisticated, which is why these films are placed in the field between artistic and abstract.

Emotional audiences

However, from a business perspective, these perspectives and evaluations of fashion film are too narrow. Surreal storylines, and unexpected plot twists will increase the film's ability to go viral, if it is exposed to a young avant-garde audience. If fashion film is a

future medium for fashion brands and they incorporate it in their marketing mix the genre needs to be matched to the brand's different customer types.

Emotional segmentation

Segmentation of customers is not a new thing, but what is new in this segmentation model is the segments are based on emotional preferences comprehended through brain research.² Accordingly, the customers/audiences are not segmented based on traditional lifestyle demographics (age, gender, job, education etc.) but rather on their emotional preferences. Furthermore, the findings are not exclusively based on quantitative (subjective) questionnaires. The underlying research takes on a neuropsychological approach, bringing in some of the newest brain research that provides answers to which we have not previously had access (because of our previous limited knowledge of the brain's functions). This said, this research could be arguing for and against depending on epistemological stance, since it has a predominantly positivistic approach. Nonetheless, it sheds new light on understanding the preferences of audiences (and customers) in terms of what works, because it makes emotional meaning for different groups.

The emotional way to business

At SPOTT we work with brands in the lifestyle industries, and we found this new research relevant. One of the main reasons for this is that lifestyle consumerism is based on fulfilling emotional needs as opposed to physical ones (Forbes, 2015). Therefore, it gives advantages to segment customers and audiences according to emotional preferences. In other words, you are able to take your starting point in emotional preferences and develop your product, direct your film and trend research accordingly. This reversed way of developing products gives you, according to the research, clear directions for meeting specific emotional preferences. Moreover, when we consume based on emotional satisfaction the calculations, business-wise, add up.

The four emotional segments

In short, the segmentation model divides consumers into four segments. Originally, Dr. Hans-Georg Häusel worked with seven limbic types (segments). This has, however, been shortened to four segments to enhance the pedagogical understanding. With reference to the image of the model the four segments are spread between four values: extrovert and introvert, individual and community. These are the underlying preferences of the persona.

² The referred research is made by Gruppe Nymphenburg by Dr. Hans-Georg Häusel published in books like *Limbic 2007* and *Emotional Boosting 2013*.



Photo by Bine Bach Damsgård/ Supervisor Max Rosborg, VIA Film & Transmedia

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Behind the scenes of 'Lotion Song' music video directed by Marie Schuller for Jike Junyi

Inside the ellipse-shaped circles is a dotted circle. This describes preferences in the persona of the segment. The little symbol to the far left means "predominantly/most of". This is important since this does not exclude anything. For example, in the dotted red circle it states: young, so this means in this segment there are predominantly young people. However, it does not mean there are exclusively young people. There can also be older people, but they make up the minority. In addition, when you work with lifestyle products on a larger scale you need to work from preferences of larger groups (which is possible with this theory). In the ellipse circle, the lifestyle concept is described. This describes which lifestyle products the segment would find preferential (based on the persona). The following describes each segment briefly.

The red segment

The red group are primarily young people. Their emotional preferences are for new and unique things, experimental and sensational things. They love change and to be the first to try new products, but they also move onto the next new thing quickly. They need frequent emotional stimuli. Moreover, it is a general perception that young people use YouTube as their primarily search engine more frequently, making the film video very important. Therefore, in terms of genre and discourses in fashion film the red segment will prefer the abstract and artistic films, because they evoke curiosity, surprise and experiment genre wise (e.g. new or complicated).

The yellow segment

The second group is the yellow group. These are predominantly women who are passionate, emotional, and socially and community oriented. They like harmony, style, concepts, and new details (though not completely new things), they have an extrovert lifestyle and love posting their good life on Facebook and Instagram. In terms of fashion film, they would prefer both combination of concrete, artistic, commercial, and abstract. Films with a combination of concrete and artistic discourses often use a recognisable genre (e.g. fairy tale) but add new artistic details. An example of that is Chanel Reincarnation. However, the commercial genre is also of interest. Of significance to the yellow segment are the social, feminine and community oriented touch points. A recognisable personality (celebrity etc.) and harmonious elements are preferred over the experimental and sensational.

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The blue segment

The blue segment comprises the rational, analytical and power-orientated people – predominately men. They buy products that empower them and make them feel more successful and a better performer. They love results, numbers and concrete evidence. They have an introverted lifestyle and only show their professional side on their favourite social media: LinkedIn. In terms of fashion film, this segment would be relevant for classic menswear brands and here the concrete and commercial genre is of interest. However, the commercial message is of great importance. For the blue segment, fashion films should relate to efficiency, and illustrate how the wearer will be empowered or gain success. They could also focus on special performance enhancing functionality (if the collection has that). The film will not be meant as entertainment, but as an element on the road to more success.

The green segment

The last segment are the green people. They are predominantly older people. They are traditional, reliable, and don't like a great deal of change or surprises. They like things to be just as usual. That is also why they still like traditional print media/ advertisement and newspapers. This makes it difficult to target this group with the film media. However, as today's demographics get older (within one-two decades) the film as a preferred medium for information and inspiration will increase. In the longer perspective, it will be relevant to make fashion film target this segment. In doing so, it will be important to lean upon a concrete discourse. This segment prefers to have things explained in detail and build the plot upon traditional genres, and focus on showing them how to do things. For example, how to get a certain look.

Why the sharp differentiation?

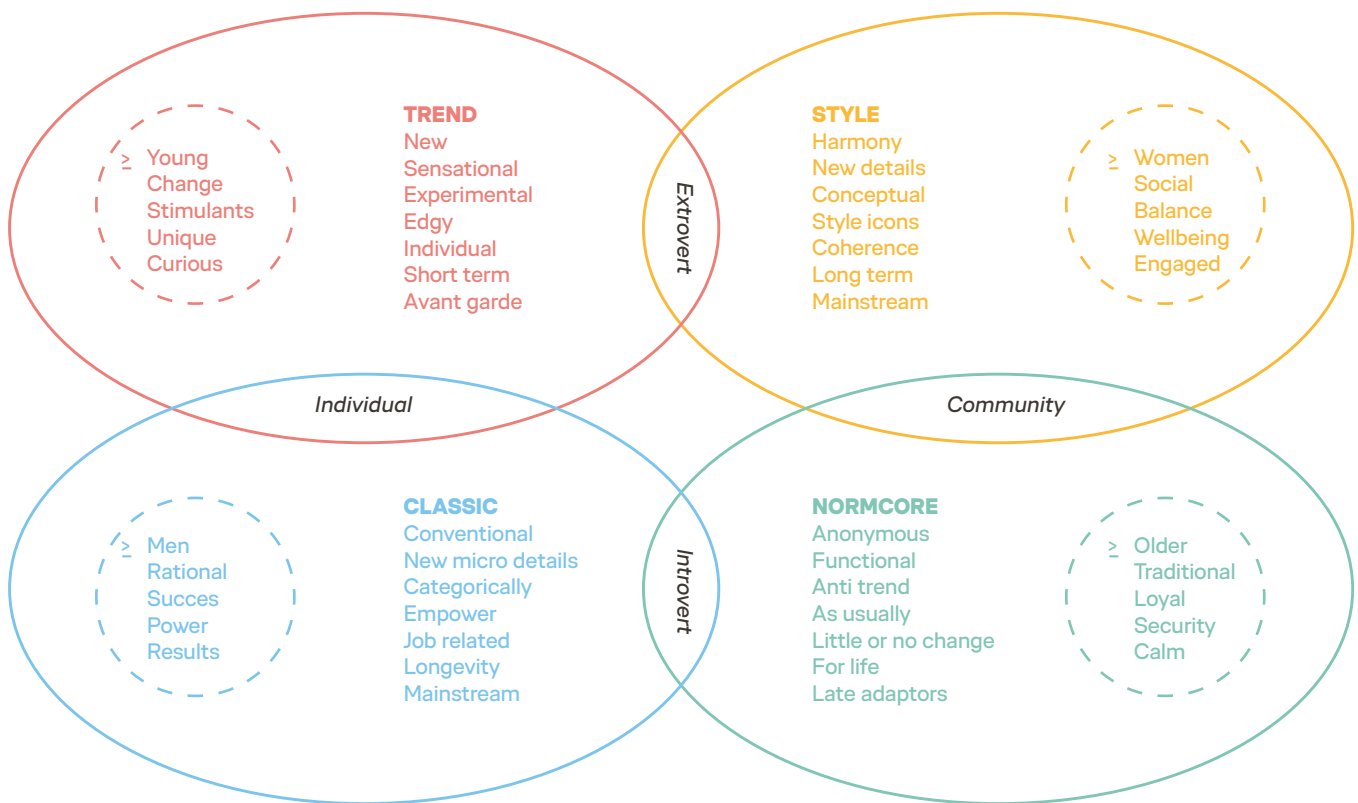
Most of us don't like to be put in a box. However, these boxes are highly defined in our physicality. Accordingly, the answer to the headline question lies within the physicality of our brain (for the most part). The difference between a young brain and an old one is the capability to process more (a lot more) stimuli. That is why we learn more slowly and take up new things at a slower pace as we get older. Our brain simply "works" more slowly and gets overstimulated more easily as it gets older. The physiological explanation to this can also be found in the levels of different hormones that affect our reward system and stress level (dopamine and cortisol respectively). Our gender hormones also cause the differentiation between the yellow and blue segments. It is high levels of them that give us different preferences (Häusel, 2013 and Forbes 2015). Therefore, the emotional segmentation model takes into account our (universal) physiological fundament hence giving us a more reliable tool from which to work.

A final note on emotional segmentation

The research also shows that people can be a little bit of all segments, but we are predominantly one of them. This means that it is important to know who your customers are (or which customers you want to target) when they are subjected to your product. Moreover, the important thing is that measures and strategy (for the fashion film) are in line with the intended emotional segment. For example, you do not expose a red movie to yellow women.

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Emotional segmentation & lifestyle concepts



The model shows SPOTT's interpretation of the research on emotional segmentation performed by Dr. Hans-Georg Häusel of Gruppe Nymphenburg published in *Limbic* (2007) and *Emotional Boosting* (2013) and kundemagnetne.dk

Match the fashion film to an audience

So back to the fashion films. The emotional segmentation can help a director to understand which elements go to which target groups. In other words, if the success criteria for the film is to hit the red, young segment it is crucial to create a one hit wonder that has the elements of newness, surprise and experimentation. However, if your target audience is the yellow women you cannot rely on surreal storylines and plot twists to work. You need to push other emotional touch points such as feelings, harmony, social focus, wellbeing etc. Future fashion films, which match their emotional segment, will have a higher chance of success (and make business).

The idea

A match of style and target group is the firing ramp for a fashion film. However, today and in the future the idea is still crucial to keep the film flying. According to director Alison Chernick, who has created a fashion film about the designer Martin Margiela, fashion film often has an advantage in relation to creation of the idea because of the fashion people:

"FASHION DESIGNERS TEND TO BE INTRIGUING CHARACTERS WITH BIG PERSONALITIES SO CREATING A FILM AROUND THEIR STORY, IF DONE RIGHT, CAN BE VERY SATISFYING."

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In the case of Martin Margiela, there was no footage of him, so we found other ways to tell his story. This challenge ultimately proved rewarding and played upon his absence”.

Luca Finotti also argues that the idea is the main objective in a good fashion film.

“A GOOD FASHION FILM, AS A GOOD TV SPOT, NEEDS TO LEAVE YOU, IN 30/60 SECONDS, A GOOD MESSAGE, A SMART MESSAGE AND A POSITIVE OVERVIEW. STYLE, COLOURS, STARRINGS, TECHNIQUE CAN ONLY HELP THE IDEA TO BE AT ITS BEST,” LUCA FINOTTI STATES.

Burberry Kisses

A good example of an idea targeted at the yellow women is the campaign Burberry Kisses. The idea behind the campaign was to enable people to send digital kisses to anyone anywhere in the world. The message was told in a short film, where models dressed in Burberry trench coats show the viewer how it is done. This campaign entailed interaction and emotional connection, which strengthened the idea and gave it mainstream viral ability. Burberry Kisses has been placed between abstract and commercial. Abstract because of the level of innovation in the campaign idea and commercial because of its commercial heritage. However, the abstract discourse is stronger than the commercial.

L'Odyssée

Bruno Veillan, the director behind one of the most expensive fashion films the L'Odyssée for Cartier, also focuses on strong emotional connection to which he adds a lot of audacity. “I sincerely believe in the virtues of artistic encounters and audacity, as always. Audacity in the idea as well as in the visual approach. This brings sincerity and emotion into fashion films,” he claims. The film is a spectacular fantasy of a leopard's journey redolent with jewels, adventure, danger and beauty.

On the fashion film map, it is placed between artistic and concrete. The film is artistic because of its sublime footage, advanced techniques and creative ideas. However, the film is also concrete because of its clear fairy-tale reference and product placement.

GAP: #springisweird

12 films of 15 seconds, a lot of GAP styles and a modern love story are the ingredients for the GAP#springisweird fashion film campaign. They borrowed from the series' concept of releasing the 12 “episodes” over a period of time and, in total, created a three-min long film about a young couple's love story. The result is innovative because it creates a new genre for fashion film: microseries. Therefore, the GAP film is placed within the field of abstract and commercial on the fashion film map (with a stronger commercial discourse than the abstract).

Concrete & commercial

Dolce & Gabbana's autumn 15 film and SIA's music video Fire Meet Gasoline have been placed in the field of concrete and commercial on the fashion film map. The Dolce & Gabbana film is a very classic fashion film. The film is a visual treat that showcases the brand's styles on beautiful, sexy models in matching surroundings. However, in terms of successful fashion film, one might question whether the (old fashioned) idea has potential in the future. In terms of emotional segmentation the Dolce & Gabbana film is actually in the green segment because of its traditional approach and lack of emotional touchpoints.

A more future-proof approach to the field of concrete and commercial has been taken in the SIA music video. The singer has teamed up with former model and lingerie brand owner Heidi Klum, making the video as much a commercial for the lingerie brand as a music video. The result is a merger of two strong genres making it a new example of how to do both concrete and commercial fashion film in the future. The new “category” makes it interesting for the red segments and the two mainstream genres also broadens its audience to the yellow segment.

Making business out of fashion film

The importance of film and fashion film will increase in the future. In order to make it a prosperous element in a brand's marketing mix, it is, from our point of view, important to consciously and strategically choose discourse and emotional segments accordingly. This article has provided a basic insight into how to accomplish this.

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Takeaway

- This article gives an overview of the diversity of fashion film. It also offers a focus on how to enhance business out of fashion film.
- By applying a light version of discourse analysis, one can understand and create meaning in the field of fashion film
- The fashion film map outlines four discourses for fashion film: artistic, abstract, commercial and concrete.
- If fashion film is a future medium for fashion brands, the genre needs to be matched to the brand's different customer types.
- Emotional segmentation sheds new light on understanding the preferences of audiences (and customers).
- The emotional segmentation model divides consumers into four different, coloured segments.
- Therefore, the emotional segmentation model takes into account our (universal) physiological fundament, thus giving us a more reliable tool from which to work.
- It is important to know which segment your customers are when they are subjected to your product.
- In terms of genre and discourses in fashion film, the red segment will prefer abstract and artistic films.
- Of significance to the yellow segment are the social, feminine and community oriented touch points in fashion film.
- For the blue segment the fashion film will not be meant as entertainment, but as an element on the road to more success.
- As today's demographics get older (within one-two decades), the film medium for information and inspiration will increase and be relevant for all four segments.

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Film samples

Luca Finotti for Moschino: <https://vimeo.com/119351348>

Luca Finotti for Adidas: <https://vimeo.com/85712405>

Miu Miu women's tales

<https://youtu.be/ZMEByBDPPJM> "DE DJESS" directed by Alice Rohrwacher.

Camper ss15 campaign by Romain Kremer: <https://youtu.be/n7l642aQWIY>

GAP#springisweird

<https://youtu.be/EE12XmmSSjO>

Miu Miu autumn 15 campaign by Jamie Hawkesworth

<https://youtu.be/Nt8ZrWY2Cmk> Philip-Lorca diCorcia Terminal 3 DIOR: <https://youtu.be/-49SXvpg2wQ>

Francesco Carrozzini SIA music video & Heidi Klum: <https://youtu.be/fNdeLSKSZ1M>

Karl Lagerfeldt Reincarnation Chanel: <https://youtu.be/wO4-TV6Zckc>

Baz Luhrmann Chanel The one that I want:

<https://youtu.be/8asRWe5XNw8>

Bruno Veillan Chanel J12 <https://youtu.be/MIMauDEmpS8>

Bruno Veillan Louis Vuitton <https://youtu.be/zTtpFmgBmTI>

Bruno Veillan L'Odyssée Cartier <https://youtu.be/yaBNjTtCxd4>

Autumn de Wilde Prada

<http://www.anonymouscontent.com/commercials/anonymous/autumn-de-wilde/commercials/prada-battlefield/>

Autumn de Wilde Prada: the postman dreams: <http://thepostmandreams.prada.com/en>

Hunter by Mat Maitland <https://youtu.be/hDeVtyB3G6U>

Burberry Kisses Christopher Bailey <https://youtu.be/LRiZMVEIhas>

Mark Kenly Domino Tan: <http://markkenly.com/home/>

Dolce & Gabbana <https://youtu.be/6G9fpTZfKYQ>

Lanvin summer 2015 campaign: House and Holme, Ronnie Newhouse and Stephen Wolstenholme

<https://youtu.be/vEY5T5ngR7M>

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Links

Showstudio.com Nowness.com

Bof.com

Vimeo.com

Wgsn.com

Quad.fr

alisonchernick.com anonymouscontent.com Wieden + Kennedy wk.com

Directors

Bruno Aveillan

Tarik Malak

Timothy Douglas

Luca Finotti

Alison Chernick

Gia Coppola

Maria Gordillo

Michael Pitt (also actor) Mat Maitland (visual artist) Autumn de Wilde

Romain Kremer (art director) Philip-Lorca diCorcia Alexander Betak

Karl Lagerfeld

Baz Luhrmann

Sources

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Dr. Hans-Georg Häusel 2013, Emotional Boosting,

Anja Gaede, 2009, Skab god kemi med dine kunder, Oplevelsesøkonomi i detailhandlen, AAU forlag.

Marianne Winther Jørgensen og Louise Phillips, 1999, Diskursanalyse som teori og metode, Roskilde Universitetsforlag.

Dr. David Forbes, 2015 The science of why.



Behind the scenes photo by Helene Sophie Højgaard Eckholdt; Ditte Marie Rothemejer Græm Sørensen, Camilla Gammelgaard Kristensen, Mathias Laustrop Andersen, VIA Film & Transmedia

SARA INGEMANN HOLM-NIELSEN

Future trends within fashion film

How films are continuing their rise as a digital storytelling medium, both for e-Commerce, social media content and to improve the consumer knowledge and awareness of a brand or product. Is transmedia moving to a stage of virtual reality?

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As if fashion and new trends were not complex enough, the speed of change is more rapid than ever, due to changes in consumer behaviour and the fashion industry itself (Vejlgaard, 2008). The changes have accelerated, meaning fashion brands do not only have to focus on design and production for next season's many collections, but are also fast becoming new media houses, communicating their message on multiple platforms where moving images and fashion films have sought a new status. The change from multimedia, to cross media and transmedia has resulted in a growing focus on creating informative and visual content to engage and involve the new consumer. As part of this new relationship between the consumer and the brand there is a need to improve goods, services and knowledge about the brand or product. However, the best way to implement this in the future fashion brand strategy is to create a dynamic narrative that captures the attention of the audience and consumer. The fashion film, the educational movie, the moving gif on Instagram or a reality check on Snapchat are ways of using the many new transmedia platforms. Fashion is a visual medium that is forever seeking new channels in which to communicate its message. The new expectations for fashion and film, and the possibilities within the merge, are unlimited and we have only just seen the beginning.

In this article, the aim is to clarify some of the tendencies within the future of fashion film in a new media scape and focus on the creative visual and narrative content that builds a future proofed fashion brand. To understand this, it is important to clarify how the web is changing from Snapchat and Instagram to interactive 3D technology - the live-streaming runway as the ultimate direct-to-consumer branding tool to a virtual reality experience. However, the focus will be on the status of fashion film anno 2016 and to give perspectives and forecast of what the future might hold.

The history of being connected

We are seeing a tendency towards fashion brands moving from merely creating campaigns and editorials to integrating fashion films as part of their interactive marketing tool. The exciting new time for fashion film as a new form of communication for brands and designers needs to be put into a historical context. Fashion film has still the status of being a new movement, but it has been around since the birth of the fashion system we know today.

The first experiment with the medium of film dates back to the beginning of the last century. In 1913, couturier Paul Poiret was the first person from the fashion industry to utilise film for the purpose of advertising. As an avid amateur photographer, Poiret filmed mannequins wearing the collection at a garden party and used it two years later as a promotional tool when the collection was

presented to the American market (Evans, 2007). Citing recent examples that have made an impact on how fashion and film is a merging genre, Gareth Pugh screened an 11-minute film of his designs in Paris in 2009 (Showstudio 2009), instead of staging a runway show. In a Scandinavian context, the Danish brand Mads Nørgaard experimented with the film trilogy *The Copenhagen Experience* (2007) using the medium to explore the mood and look of each Mads Nørgaard - Copenhagen collection (*The Copenhagen Experience*). The trilogy payed attention to the things that inspired and moved the brand, bringing together artist, culture and youth to create the unique energy of the city which inspired the collection.

Fashion films are still experimenting with formats and recently the luxury e-commerce platform Net-a-porter revealed a new online experience in collaboration with the New York-based video platform Cinematique, which provides cloud-based, interactive online experiences. The result is an online service that promises seamless shopping from a film, where the viewers can touch the moving images, and be led through a personal boutique, sharing and purchasing items at Net-a-porter. Burberry has also played a relevant role in pushing the boundaries for expanding their brand DNA. The essence and strategy has been to boost the company's extended brand value by delivering newfound relevance such as Burberry Acoustic, Art of the Trench and Bespoke. In 2015, the British fashion house became the first luxury brand to collaborate with DreamWorks Animation's newly formed technology company NOVA to launch an interactive marketing campaign featuring new 3D technology (*The Retail Bulletin*, 2015). The NOVA media visualisation platform has pushed the boundaries for what is possible in digital animation and how to connect this to interaction and engagement with Burberry's customers. These are all lifestyle projects that were not designed to make money, but instead created to engage with the consumer and spread awareness. Burberry is one of the most successful brands using the digital channels as a way of delivering unique experiences, yet also creating an online community and becoming visual to the masses and newly emerging markets (Swinton 2013). Burberry has positioned itself as one of the leading fashion companies when it comes to explore the new transmedia platforms and have, with their many digital activities, demonstrated a clear move from being a fashion design company to a media content company (Swinton 2013).

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BURBERRY HAS POSITIONED ITSELF AS ONE OF THE LEADING FASHION COMPANIES WHEN IT COMES TO EXPLORE THE NEW TRANS-MEDIA PLATFORMS AND HAVE, WITH THEIR MANY DIGITAL ACTIVITIES, DEMONSTRATED A CLEAR MOVE FROM BEING A FASHION DESIGN COMPANY TO A MEDIA CONTENT COMPANY (SWINTON 2013).

Exploring new media forms

Fashion is always seeking out new channels and forms of media to communicate their message with the audience and consumers. This varies from fashion photography, fashion films, live streaming, video tutorials, 3D technology and animation to multiple digital platforms. According to the recent Protein Audience Survey 2015, it is no longer enough for the consumer to consume all forms of information on various digital platforms. Instead, the new consumer attaches great value for fashion brands to be transparent, honest and responsible and also have a collaborative and interactive way of communicating (Protein, 2015). The London-based trend agency Protein, describes the group of new consumers as: "They're their own content curators and editors, filtering the web to discover nuggets of information that will help them improve their lifestyle and wellbeing" (Protein, 2015). There is no doubt that the new consumers are constantly rebalancing their media consumption. The consumption of content is being polarised between long form features, informative editorials to visual posts, videos and cloud-based sharing platforms. All resulting in a changing media landscape in which the fashion brands have to manoeuvre.

Fashion brands need to be present in the materialised relations between people and technologies. To understand this material culture, Professor Maria Bakardjieva states that we also need to understand uses, interactions, and the thoughts and feelings that these relationships evoke (Bell, 2007). With the digitalisation

and the democratisation of the Internet, the relationship has minimised the so-called digital divide, from local to global, and even a new class system based on access of information. The Internet has become a dailyness and everydayness, which have had a remarkable impact on the democratisation of the fashion industry and particularly the luxury segment (Bell, 2007). It is therefore becoming even more important to re-focus media and create content that serves media in new and exciting ways by merging different types of media customised to the different consumer needs. Transmedia that tells multiple stories in various forms on every channel has suddenly become ever-present and has buried buzzwords such as multimedia and cross media (Moloney 2014).

New media has given rise to a new dynamic narrative

The real boom in the use of film in fashion advertising started after affordable HD cameras came on the market in the early 1980s. Before this, the production costs were considered a luxury that hardly any fashion brands could afford. Distribution was limited to cinemas with the machines to project the films. Instead, some of the traditional film content such as sound, aesthetics, the editing and the narrative methods were used in other media forms, exemplified with fashion photography and campaigns. With digitalisation, technology costs fell and distribution became virtually free through the Internet. Therefore, film directors and independent filmmakers were no longer dependent on major studios to produce their films. This breakthrough allowed fashion films to become ascendant. From the high watermark of 2000 until now, there has been an adjustment period from the traditional media and films to the widespread virtual world with which we are now familiar. This digital immersion, where the audience can fully engage with various digital devices and platforms, is becoming an even more integrated practice for many brands, but there is still a difference as to which channels they perform best in when it comes to interacting with the consumers. According to Luxury Society, the fashion brands with the highest performance on Instagram in the first quarter of 2015 were Michael Kors, Dior and Burberry while Coach, Gucci and Bottega Veneta, with Chanel ranking best on YouTube. In general, interaction rates for brands were performing better on YouTube and Instagram with lifestyle and national heritage content as the best performing content (Luxury Society).

When content creators and filmmakers experiment with high-performing content, new digital formats and moving images in their many ways, it also changes the way we tell stories. It simply opens the door for more exploration and information and



Photo by Julie Marguaritna Bonde/ Supervisor Max Rosborg, VIA Film & Transmedia

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creates a deeper relationship and engagement with the content (Cinematheque 2014). To successfully create a narrative for fashion brands, there has been a tendency to employ actual filmmakers, scriptwriters and film directors to produce the content and stories as a next step to engaging with the viewers. Some high profile examples in 2015 have been the collaboration between Kenzo and the cult icon Gregg Araki who did the AW15 campaign film "Here Now", which more a film than an advertising campaign. Miu Miu's "Subjective Reality" short film by Gordon Von Steiner showcased a series of Miu Miu-clad models in everyday scenarios, with models strolling past walls covered in graffiti and stopping for something to eat at a local burger van. In addition, Dior's "Secret Garden" campaign film by Steven Klein featuring Rihanna made a huge impact as one of 2015's best fashion films. The different fashion brands experiment with all types of narrative style from documentary, artistic, abstract, experimental, commercial to Dior's more glossy and conventional fashion film starring Rihanna. According to Dazed and Confused, the variety explored how fashion brands are tapping the medium to express themselves in a more innovative way than ever before (Dazed & Confused, 2015).

A visionary future for moving images

There is no doubt that fashion loves film and film loves fashion. It creates new dimensions to a one-dimensional product. Although runways are still the primary tool for designers and fashion brands to show their collections, fashion films are becoming more important than ever (Dazed & Confused, 2015). The relationship has endured, blossomed and become one of the most influential partnerships as it can provide a scope for designers to create an aesthetic universe that sum up the DNA and brand identity – even be an extension of the brand and tell backstage stories, brand history or focus on the inspiration of the new collection.

FASHION FILM IS STILL A VERY EXPERIMENTAL GENRE, BEING HIGHLY PROFESSIONALISED AND AT THE SAME TIME DEMOCRATISED WITH CROWD-SOURCING PLATFORMS AND CHEAPER TECHNOLOGIES.

Fashion film is still a very experimental genre, being highly professionalised and at the same time democratised with crowd-sourcing platforms and cheaper technologies. Transmedia is still an unfolding process, which leads to constant experimentation and exploration with new creative content, narratives, lightning, montages, documentaries, hand-held camera and even 360-degree camera systems for the new virtual reality of which we will experience more in 2016. Techcrunch forecast for 2016 predicts that virtual reality will emerge. In the next few years, dozens of different virtual reality devices are set to be released and an entire new medium of online advertising will be introduced (Techcrunch & Forbes). Moreover, video advertisements will start dominating advertisers' options. Channels such as YouTube and platforms like Facebook are already offering space for video adds, but in 2016 Google will get on board to include more multimedia in the search results. This is clearly a sign that the trend with moving images will rise and continue in 2016 as more consumers are using, consuming, engaging with the moving media format.

When focusing on the new consumer, it was previously important to own, but today we strive to share. The new consumer finds it important to share knowledge and experiences. The limitation of financial options combined with the infinite potential for connection has led the consumer to question their priorities. New platforms and services are helping to facilitate the collaborative mind-set, which will definitely affect the way fashion brands think in new innovative ways to communicate their transmedia content. If you share everything, everything moves forward. Everything will connect and that is better for everyone. For the new consumer, it is not important to seek riches in goods but instead strive to improve their abilities and knowledge. When these tendencies are translated into film content, the focus will change from products and goods to knowledge, interaction and engagement (Protein, 2015).

The future is touchable and in the palm of the consumers' hands. We, as viewers, audience and consumers are evolving, interacting, sharing, caring and being critical at the same time. For fashion brands, it is necessary to combine knowledge of emerging technologies, the cinema production, the interactive social experience and the new expectations as video consumers, in order to be able to create the new wave of experiences for the Now Economy in 2016.

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Takeaway

- In the future virtual reality will play an important role in expanding film as a medium
- In the future interactive marketing will be a relevant tool
- In the future digital natives will lead to more innovation
- In the future the ability to design experiences that engage with a variety of senses will be connected with traditional storytelling techniques
- In the future the new consumer is described as content curator who filters the web to discover new information that will improve their lifestyle and wellbeing
- In the future, the Now Economy will lead even more fashion brands to use film as a reflective part of the brand to interact with the consumer.
- In the future fashion brands and designers will explore and experiment even more with moving images as a medium striving to stay connected with the consumers.
- In the future fashion brands will have to re-focus (trans)media
- In the future transparency, honesty and responsible communication will be important buzzwords
- In the future sharing is important. When everybody connects and shares it will help pushing everything forward

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Photo by Song Ziti, Liu Xiangyuan, Liu Zhao, Dao Chengyuan, Yang Bowei, Beijing Film Academy/Supervisor Cao Ting



Brand Pawaka/Photo by Anders Bachmann/Styling: Julie Kaja Prezebe/assisting: Jian Zhi Zhang & Kara Smith, VIA Film & Transmedia

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Fashion films many faces

Using the still image as its starting point, the genre 'fashion film' has developed in step with the media. Today we perceive the genre as extensive, co-creational and diverse, not only in terms of content but also of form and, not least, duration, from the most artistic, almost installation-like - and often longer - films to the shorter and more commercial (Instagram-directed productions, for example). From films with well-known actors in a consciously developed universe and with a strong narrative - often from global brands - to more still photo-inspired productions, where the choice of both model and location are staged by a photographer who tells the story.

Common to all of them, however, is that they work with substance and aesthetics, with colours, with scenography and production design, as it is exploited in the filmic media. The genre fashion film is dynamic, it is vibrant and accommodating, and it does not thrive on being too precise. This is both the joy and the challenge, when one wishes to establish a study program that focuses on fashion film and transmedia, which builds on professionalism and education - hand in hand.

An obvious opportunity

Since spring, the 2014 VIA Film and Transmedia has been developing a study program based on fashion, film and video and the platforms on which these are communicated. This is in the semester: The Fashion Experience. The semester is part of the Professional Bachelor's program at VIA Film and Transmedia, which concerns itself with storytelling and production for transmedia platforms. Based on a great desire to collaborate with fashion design, which is also part of the VIA study programs, and an interest in combining excellent craftsmanship with the glamour of fashion, the Director of Studies and Research at VIA Film and Transmedia, Louis Thonsgaard, decided that a course should be developed targeting the fashion industry's use of visual aids and media. The filmic expression is today used in countless contexts, which further supports the need for an educational foundation.

A broad interest and curiosity

Development work kicked off with research and fact-finding via the gathering of information from a variety of interests in the film and fashion industries (articles that have also been included, in an edited version, in this publication). The prerequisite for developing a course of study has also been a close collaboration with the business sector. Leading Danish brands, stakeholders and collaborative partners have been presented with the concept of a study program on fashion, film and transmedia. At all times, the

idea was received with welcome interest. Brands, including ECCO, Hummel, Pilgrim and Jack & Jones personally approached the school for the opportunity to collaborate.

A need for new competencies

It was noted in the preliminary research in particular, that while there was untapped potential in the new digital media, it also presented many challenges. Developments in digital visual media have progressed rapidly, and there is a need for competencies that are up-to-date with these developments and that can help to release potential. There is a need for the generation of 'digital natives' to be educated with a focus on fashion and transmedia, so that they can contribute with new competencies and help to coordinate the impression between the various digital platforms. Transmedia producers possess the latest knowledge and understanding of how brands, storytelling and worlds can unfold into specific productions across media. They have the competencies to know from where the latest trends have emerged and are ready to react in the here and now in visual media. The need for professionals who can produce material for, for example, pre-visualization is great. Pre-visualization is about presenting how the idea looks, how it should feel, how it should be communicated in the film/video before it has been made.

Based on the development work and the completion of the initial group on The Fashion Experience, it has become clear to us that it is possible to create workplaces and new collaborations in the field between fashion, film and transmedia. Finally, we train students in strengthening areas of business and perhaps even help them to develop new business models.

The content of The Fashion Experience

After one year in development, The Fashion Experience became an international semester lasting 16-18 weeks, which trains in all phases of fashion film and photography work. The semester is targeted at students, who have completed two years of related studies, both Danish and international (for more info on these conditions, contact the study administration office). This means that the group of students is very diverse in terms of experience in film production, communication and media or fashion.

In The Fashion Experience, the students work with idea development, branding, customer collaboration, concept development and the overall treatments¹. They also receive assignments in casting models and learning about collaborating with a modelling agency. On shoots, they work with location

¹ Treatment is a description of the film project's premise, content and form and comprises both visual and written examples. It is used to introduce and sell the film prior to it actually being produced, i.e. it is a part of pre-visualisation.

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scouting, make-up and styling, lighting, visual composition, production management, managing a budget and technical choices in terms of equipment. After shooting, the students are involved in editing, colour correction, after effects and special effects. After completing the film or photo, the students continue to work with the distribution of the material. This takes place through contact with marketing departments, fashion magazines

and social media. Alongside the actual production, the students also gain a comprehensive insight into the system and conditions of the fashion industry as well as the methods used to select target groups and genre. The students are taught through lectures and workshops by professionals from both the film and fashion industries. The following provides insight into the structure of the semester.

Structure and modules

The Fashion Experience semester is broken down into three modules:

Module I

My Fashion Experience

The students' first task is to make a personal film, 'My Fashion Experience', which takes the student's own fashion item as its starting point, and which they must place in a filmic framework inspired by a known or iconic reference. This could be a favourite scarf from H&M, a vintage fur or a nightdress, an expensive wristwatch or the humorous choice of a partner's dog, which is often worn like a piece of jewellery. This is a tough challenge for those students, who are new to camerawork and editing, but they are supported by their more technically experienced colleagues, while the students with fashion industry experience inspire the technically strong ones.

They work within a short timeframe, and what is important is that the students also stand in front of the camera and learn how it feels to be directed and how the experience of technique and the circumstances of production affect the final result. The finished product is a good introduction into talking about style, narrative and competencies, and is often used subsequently when guest teachers need to know a little about who is in the class.

The classic fashion film

Following on from My Fashion Experience is a course in what we call the classic fashion film, where it is the brand and the individual style of fashion that is central - often with a carefully selected model, a supporting location or production design in a studio and with clear attention given to the material itself, its substance, cut and style, but also with an original take on movements, on narrative or perhaps on a certain colour. The staging and direction of the model within a very restrictive framework is important. The focus is on how

to succeed in getting a model standing against a grey or white wall while looking interesting and involved. For example,

WHAT IS NEEDED IN TERMS OF DIRECTING PEOPLE AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE BRAND BEFORE THE DESIRED RESULT CAN BE ACHIEVED. THE BRAND IS DEFINED BEFOREHAND, BUT IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENTS THEMSELVES TO CAST THE MODEL AND FIND A LOCATION AND FILMIC APPROACH THAT MATCHES THE BRAND.

The students work with professional fashion film photographers and directors, who, prior to the production, will hold lectures and workshops for the students. For example, the students take part in a lighting workshop, where they gain insight into how lighting can be narrative and co-creative. For example, how to capture the light's magic with a camera, how to use reflective light consciously, and how to take exterior conditions into consideration in one's lighting. These are subjects that are handled completely hands-on and which can be used in all filmic contexts. Furthermore, the students receive theoretical knowledge of fashion and consumerism in the fashion industry. They learn about

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emotional segmenting, and the mechanisms, communication and marketing of the fashion industry. This therefore requires the students to work analytically and make use of many tools in their implementation of the production's treatment.

Module II

The narrative fashion film

In module II, the students work with 'the narrative fashion film'. Here, the focus is on working with the brand inside a storytelling framework. In the narrative film, the students will also be working for a client. This means that they must present a professional brief. This often starts up a thought process about how a location can be part of the narrative, or how the situation could bring the characters into play. The students are often challenged to the limit in terms of developing an idea and its progression, and there are often long and difficult production days, when everything has to fall into place with the actors, the story and location (for example weather-related challenges).

Previous students have worked with complex embellishment and designs from the avian world, a basketball team, a fishing boat, Dalmatian dogs and stuffed penguins. The sky is the limit, and the development of ideas is often inspired by music or by a creative, analytical approach to the brand and the material. Lectures and workshops are run by instructors who have experience in producing fiction themselves.

The result is submitted and evaluated in relation to the brief provided in dialogue with the client. Often, the finished result can be used in a professional context, but under all circumstances, client contact is essential learning and provides essential experience.

Module III

Transmedia fashion

Using the still photo as starting point, we introduce a more in-depth study of transmedia. Together with an experienced fashion photographer and a practical scenographer, the students take their first steps in the direction of thinking about fashion and brands in a transmedia context. They work with the so-called 'editorials', which are photos used by fashion magazines where the aesthetic and the universe it is wrapped up in are more of a focal point than the fashion brand itself. This requires the students to work with telling a story, which takes a specific set as its starting point. The set could be two wildly different classic chairs, a collection of old, used, antique carpets or some old paintings in attractive frames. Based on these artefacts and within the clearly defined financial and stylistic framework, a still life is developed. The distribution of the finished material is important, and the development from a specific set and defined framework to idea and forward to the launch is central.

Transmedia production

Guided by one of Europe's leading transmedia producers, the students continue to work with branding and concept development. They will produce worlds that can be expressed via countless platforms. The concept of transmedia is used as a general description of how one expresses the world in a variety of formats, relevant to the various digital and analogue platforms. It is a concept which is dynamic and currently the most appropriate one we have when talking about the connection between the individual forms of expression that have originated from the world and its stories. The students will therefore work with user journeys, flowcharts, rabbit holes and personas – all of them concepts for the comprehensive, preparatory and executive decision-making work that is involved in a transmedia production. They develop strategies for interactive design and to exploit the connection between the digital and the physical world on social media in an online framework.

The students must therefore prepare a transmedia treatment and produce visual tests, prototypes and examples of elements in the world. Once again, the students will collaborate with specific brands, which will make their products and materials available, and it is in this part of the program that all the learning and insight from the preceding modules is gathered together.

Ready for the future

After completion of each of the three modules, the students must complete a 10 ECTS graduated exam, comprising the submission of the complete production package, which always consists of a minimum of a 90-120 second film, an Instagram version of max. 60 secs and a number of still photos, supplemented by a theoretically based report, which also contains the student's own reflections about their work and the teaching.

Experiences from the first year with The Fashion Experience have been inspiring. The students work within a very controlled framework, and when their imaginations are let loose and the technology is utilised creatively by talented photographers, lighting technicians, musicians, and production designers, the results are often surprising and always interesting. There is a need for young creatives with digital insight in the fashion industry. In the digital industries, the fashion angle is an eye opener and a playground for new worlds and new narratives. Film and video media is here to stay, and those who master the understanding of a correlation between content and platforms are guaranteed both attention and steady work.

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Takeaway

- There is a need for the generation of 'digital natives' to be educated with a focus on fashion and transmedia, so that they can contribute with new competencies and help to coordinate the impression between the various digital platforms.
- The semester The Fashion Experience is targeted at students, who have completed two years of related studies, both Danish and international.
- It is important that the students also stand in front of the camera and learn how it feels to be directed and how the experience of technique and the circumstances of production affect the final result.
- In the narrative film, the students will also be working for a client. This means that they must present a professional brief
- Using the still photo as starting point, we introduce a more in-depth study of transmedia
- Transmedia is a concept which is dynamic and currently the most appropriate one we have when talking about the connection between the individual forms of expression that have originated from the world and its stories
- In the digital industries, the fashion angle is an eye opener and a playground for new worlds and new narratives.



Brand Rains/Behind the scenes photo by Helene Sophie Højgaard Eckhardt, Jakob Gjerluff Ager VIA Film & Transmedia/
Nannan Wang, Liu Zhao and Dao Chenyuan, Beijing Film Academy/Mode Wu Zheng Ou, Beijing Film Academy

Moving images and transmedia are on the rise, particularly in the fashion industry. Fashion film and transmedia are beginning to intertwine and reach audiences in new and innovative ways.

Fashion Film & Transmedia is an anthology of knowledge and practice in the field of fashion film and transmedia. It is a field yet to be defined and yet to mature; it is, however, a field with many possibilities. This book aims to bring this field even further.

This is a book for professionals, students, and anyone interested in the fields of fashion film and transmedia and how they intertwine.

By reading Fashion Film & Transmedia you will gain insight into fashion and fashion film from a historical perspective, you will acquire models and tools to navigate and understand fashion's digital side, and you will learn about some of the first examples of fashion film and transmedia from experts in the field. The book will also bring future challenges into focus.

The book's nine articles range from case description to academic paper to essay. Each article is completed with key learnings and can be read chronologically or randomly for easy access.

The authors and experts of the anthology are

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