

## **The Professionalization of Fashion Bloggers: a comparative analysis between Italian and Spanish cases**

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### **Abstract**

After ignoring the rise of fashion bloggers as new actors in the fashion scene, over the last few years a number of contributions have explored this topic (Rocamora, 2011, 2012, 2013; see also Berry 2012; Chittendon 2010; Connell 2013; Kretz 2010; Lewis 2013; Rocamora and Bartlett 2009; Pedroni, 2014; Sádaba and SanMiguel, 2014; Mora and Rocamora, 2015; Findlay, 2015). These works analyse the role of fashion blogs, their legitimation in the field of fashion media and their influence on the consumer decision-making process.

Also, in previous works of the same research team, the evolution and categorization of the fashion bloggers has been analysed to conclude that blogs have gained a more institutionalized and normalized role in the field of fashion. Despite the presence of many aspirational bloggers, the field has left its “innocent stage” and become highly professionalised and institutionalised, but there are significant differences by countries.

In this paper, we aim at going further with the analysis of the field of fashion blogging and its evolution. It is discussed how the process of professionalization is taking place, by considering bloggers’ relationship with brands, the transformations of blogs towards a business model, together with bloggers’ view of the future. Differences among countries are also analysed.

The methodological approach is twofold: a comparative analysis between Spain and Italy is carried out through a both quantitative and qualitative analysis. The results of a survey (220 participants, 110 in each country) and 88 qualitative interviews to both Spanish and Italian fashion bloggers are discussed.

Findings will contribute to understand the process of professionalization of fashion bloggers and to conclude that the “golden era” of fashion blogging (a mythical period of prosperity and abundance) is over, even if the scenario varies by country. After the emergence of fashion bloggers, a more institutionalized social field has emerged and it works as a part of the contemporary fashion system.

### **Keywords**

Fashion bloggers, professionalization, digital influencers, field of fashion blogging