

Instagram communication strategies: a comparative analysis of fast fashion and luxury brands

Cristina Sánchez-Blanco

School of Communication, University of Navarra, Spain

csblanco@unav.es

Patricia SanMiguel Arregui

ISEM Fashion Business School, University of Navarra, Spain

patricia.sanmiguel@isem.es

Marga Velar

Universidad Carlos III, Spain

mvelar@gmail.com

Abstract

In recent years Instagram is presented as one of the most important social networks, according to the study Social Platforms 2017 (L2 Intelligence Report). Mainly marketing companies have analyzed this social network, but academic studies are still very limited (Wu, X., Zhu, X., Wu, G. Q., & Ding, W., 2014; Westerman, G., Bonnet, D., & McAfee, A., 2014; Wohlstetter, P., Datnow, A., & Park, V., 2008)

Some of these papers analyze the impact of Instagram on consumer behavior: the reasons for its use and relation to narcissism (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016); the relationship with the loneliness of the users (Pittman & Reich, 2016); or the influence on youth purchases of celebrity profiles on Instagram (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017).

The present study will focus on the marketing strategies of Instagram profiles of brands in the fashion sector with three objectives:

- 1) Identify best practices in Instagram, those that produce greater engagement, which are associated with sales campaigns and that maintain a greater coherence and connection with the web of the brand;
- 2) Analyze the differences in the use of Instagram of the brands Fast Fashion and Luxury Premium;
- 3) And highlight the process of professionalization that has taken place in this network, through the evolution of the tool and the profiles of the brands.

First of all, a brief review of the recent literature on this social network, in the field of social media marketing, is presented.

Secondly, a content analysis of the Instagram profiles of the most important fashion industry brands is presented. To this end, a total of 20 Instagram accounts have been selected with the greatest online presence: 10 fashion in the Retail - Fast Fashion field and 10 brands in the Luxury -Premium area. The paper analyzes its activity during the launch of the Fall/Winter 2017 collection (from August 1 to October 30, 2017) through both, a quantitative and qualitative analysis. First, the publications are analyzed through variables such as number of comments, number of likes and engagement. Second, it is observed the presence of this network in the web of the brands and the coherence with the contents that it projects with the rest of contents online. Through this innovative and complete method of analysis, we are able to identify and evaluate Instagram marketing strategies in fashion brands, offering professionals and academics the keys to an adequate use of this social network. The paper uses the methodology developed by the Digital Fashion Brands Observatory, a study method that combines a quantitative and qualitative analysis developed by ISEM Business Fashion School (Spain) with the aim to understand the digital strategies of fashion brands.

Keywords: fast fashion, luxury, online marketing strategy, digital strategy, and social networks

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