How Fashion Brands Talk to Their Customers on Social Media
Transformation
understanding companies
Fashion companies are figuring out their voices.
Drivers of SMM adoption
1. External pressure from competitors and consumers

"You have to be there [in social media] for sure, because everybody is using social networks. So, each company has to be there."

"There is no reason not to be there [in social media] while everybody is there."
2. Perceived importance

“"It is really important to follow their [customers’/audiences’] passion or their way to think. It is a new way to involve them in our brand.”

“I think that social networks are becoming increasingly important especially in the group of younger people.”
3. Changing and shifting target market

“So, if you are—if you want to be younger, you have to—to be **closer to young people**, you have to use the way of communication **they use**, so you have to be on social networks. You have to have an official [social media] page, like all brands are doing.”

“Our objective is to **change** to international account, international strategy, because [now] our Italian market is not the most important for us. Especially for Facebook, the biggest part of our fans now are Italian, then the second are American. [Now] our most important market is America. We try with active campaigns, we have to interpret to **think like an American** and to try to **learn** to write [in] social media.”

*Drivers of SMM adoption*
4. Need for integrated marketing communication

“...because we have an integrated work, of every kind of communication online... There was only the Facebook account and the old website that was not good... and then after four years we have a very digital strategy.”

“Fashion brands should not forget the physical stores and must achieve an equilibrium between online and offline media.”

Drivers of SMM adoption
Perceived benefits
Brand awareness
Virality & eWOM

Perceived benefits
New ways to communicate with customers
“It is fundamental to be in social -- social pages, if you want to communicate to young people, if you want to be appreciated, if you want to be close to the people. Press is not close to people. You just have a newspaper, a magazine, they just watch the pages. Whereas on social pages, you can interact... you can be engaged, you can share, you can like.”

Perceived benefits
Customer service and support
Perceived risks
Choice of brand ambassadors

Perceived risks
Brand image
Aspirational followers

Perceived risks
Measuring ROI
Data-mining effort

Perceived risks
What do companies usually do in social media?
Representation
Engagement
Listening-in
Representation (Transaction)
Public relations
Promotion & Sales
Representation/engagement
Engagement
(relationship)
Personalize customer experience
Call to action
Engaging with competitors/partners
Listening-in
(Market intelligence)
What are fashion companies actually doing in social media?
**SMEs & Non-luxury**

- Brand awareness.
- Promotion and sales (e.g. link to online catalog).
- Public relations (e.g. offline social meetings and events).

**Luxury**

- Branding.
- Product sneak-peeks.
- Links to online shop.
- Show live-streaming.
- Offline events.
- Brand values and culture ("Made in Italy").
What are fashion companies not doing in social media?
What do consumers recall?
The language of fashion in social media
How do consumers respond?
(engage? eWOM?)
Pass-on eWOM engagement >40%
Pass-on eWOM engagement

22%
Endorsing eWOM engagement >60%
Endorsing eWOM engagement

51%
Overall eWOM engagement
Concluding questions
Is there a "one-size-fits-all" social media marketing approach?
What is the marketing role of social media in fashion?
What is the value (if any) of
How do social media responses translate to sales?
Other things I (deliberately) left out
Data mining
Valuable vs “unimportant” followers
Conversations
What do we really mean by engagement?
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