

How Luxury Brands Can Leverage Interactivity to Engage Consumers

INTRODUCTION

Luxury brands like Lacoste, Dior, Prada, Chanel, Rodarte, Louis Vuitton, and others have harnessed the creativity of lauded directors and actors to create fashion films that highlight their brands and collections. Fashion films have historically been delivered in linear video, which provides compelling narrative, entertainment, and emotionality. However, this passive format limits viewer engagement and provides fewer opportunities to track data points that holistically evaluate viewer engagement, determining a campaign's effectiveness.

Interactive video for fashion film connects art with technology to provide a gamified,

user-guided experience that appeals to the luxury market's younger incoming demographic. With managed objectives in mind, brands can obtain more user data through interactive video that embeds alternative content like bonus videos, websites, images, and more. These features allow users to determine the storyline for the ultimate customized experience. When combined with the artistry of traditional fashion films, brands can cost-effectively implement interactive video to gain more comprehensive data that provide insights into consumer demand and trend forecasts.

TYPES OF INTERACTIVITY

Brands must understand interactive features and how their desired points of interactive content correlate. Although brands may not be developing interactive video in-house, knowing this information

and terminology helps effectively plan video and photo assets to create the interactive video and assists the creative agency's interactive production, ensuring brand objectives are met.

Branching



Quizzes

Hotspots



Forms

360-Degree Video



Switchable Video

Branching

- Controls story direction via consumer selection
- Used for customer engagement, recruitment, or storytelling
- Results in higher completion rates and satisfaction, which can be analyzed to understand preferences and predict demand

Quizzes

- Used for educational and internal business practices
- Can be embedded into video to test viewer knowledge
- Provides personalized viewing experiences based on viewer competency

Hotspots

- Clicks take viewers to external webpages or change certain aspects of the video
- Opportunities for shoppable moments
- Other uses include document downloads or additional video links

Forms

- For personal information, newsletter or email marketing sign-up, and scheduling appointments
- Placed anywhere within the video based on timeframe of user interaction

360-Degree Video

- Provides immersive viewing experiences
- Commonly used for real estate or interior design to view an entire property or interior space

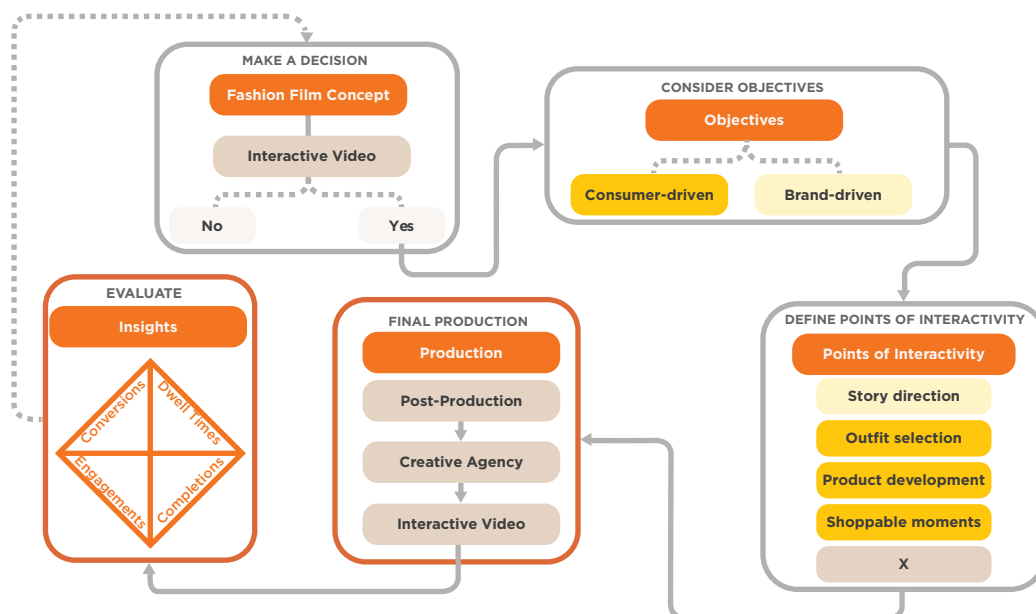
Switchable Video

- Viewers can customize camera positions, perspectives, main characters, and product choices
- Versatile and unique

INTERACTIVITY FRAMEWORK

This framework demonstrates how brands can create interactive fashion films using their existing preproduction processes by adding steps to the planning phase and making a minimal increase to the project

budget. Interactive video increases brands' online presence, ultimately driving brand awareness through an engaging consumer experience, coexisting with traditional fashion film to capture a different audience.



PROCESS

1. Decide

Interactive video should be viewed as a supplement to fashion film, like a strategic social media campaign. Once brands have a fashion film concept, they must decide whether to create interactive video during preproduction before developing a shot list because additional film and photography

shots may be needed. Cost and audience must be considered before reaching a final decision. Adding interactive film should constitute less than three percent of the overall production budget. The audience is likely established during the development phase for the fashion film.

2. Determine Objectives

Once a formal decision to proceed with interactive video for fashion film is made, brands should consider their objectives. In this framework, fashion film categories have been identified based on two criteria: consumer-driven and brand-driven.

Consumer-driven objectives aim to fit the needs of the consumers, categorized as entertainment or emotionality. Brand-driven objectives bring the consumer into the world of the brand, categorized as documentaries or compelling stories.

3. Define Points of Interactivity

Points of interactivity should be strategically aligned with the objectives of the fashion film to provide message clarity. Once this final stage is added to preproduction planning for the fashion film, the shot list can be fully developed. The defined points of interactivity will assist the film director and producers with compiling the shot list.

Consumer-driven: The appropriate points of interactivity include costume selection, product development, and shoppable moments to resemble brand interactions the consumer would have during an in-store experience.

Brand-driven: Story direction provides the best point of interactivity by creating a unique experience of the brand that engages the consumer. Documentaries are designed to educate.

Other: The “X” category is a placeholder for other points of interactivity brands may consider beyond the four outlined options (entertainment, emotionality, documentary, compelling story). Brands must define these points of interactivity in the preproduction phase to determine how to develop the interactive video.

DEFINE POINTS OF INTERACTIVITY

Story direction

Outfit selection

Product development

Shoppable moments

X

Points of Interactivity

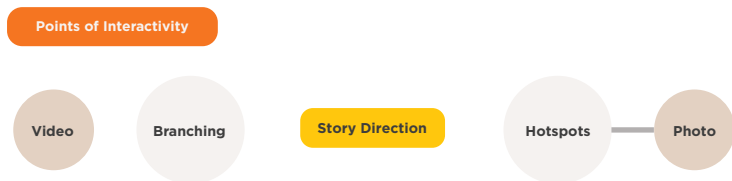
Consumer-driven

For consumer-driven options, outfit selection and product development interactive experiences can be created using branching and hotspots. Branching requires video assets to accomplish the points of interactivity. Hotspots like shoppable moments can be created using photos, though this is not always required. Photos work best for outfit selection and product development.



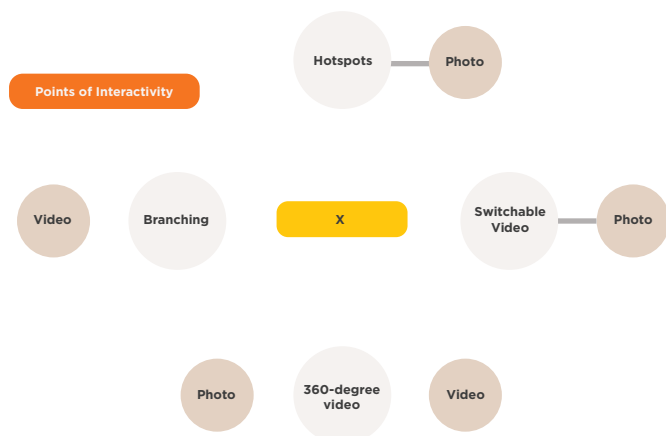
Brand-driven

Story direction points of interactivity can be accomplished through branching and switchable video using film assets. Branching requires multiple cuts of video from the same final cut. For example, if a brand is developing a documentary on its history, branching splits the documentary topics so that viewers can make their desired selection. Switchable video usually provides an alternative perspective for viewers. This type of interactivity requires two final cuts of the same video filmed in alternate views, creating a scenario where two videos play at the same time, giving viewers the ability to toggle between them by holding down a button on their keyboard.



Other

When defining points of interactivity, "X" provides brands an opportunity to utilize other interactive video features. 360-degree video, for example, can be made using either photo or video assets. This is important, as brands will need to create a shot list that captures all 360 degrees in preproduction.



5. Evaluate

Brands can evaluate the effectiveness of the interactive video using data analytics like conversions, dwell times, completion, and engagements. Data analytics provide insights that help brands better understand consumer preferences and behaviors in order to shape product development, manage demand planning, and formulate future interactive fashion film campaigns.

Conversions: Conversion rates, or click rates, are the first data point brands can evaluate. Because interactive video converts at higher rates than other forms of digital advertisement, a brand can measure how successfully the content captured the target audience or built awareness by assessing how many clicks an interactive video receives. This information is essential in determining the interactive video's overall effectiveness.

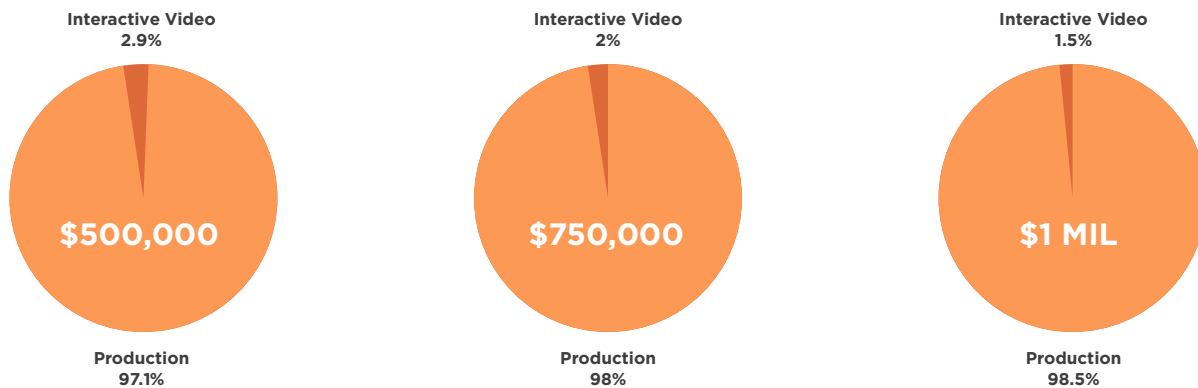
Dwell times: Dwell times tell brands how long a viewer spent with their video, a measurement of engagement. This can also include the time it takes the viewer to interact with the video, but in most interactive video experiences, a timer is added to time the video out if no point of interactivity is made. This information can be used to better position points of interactivity to engage viewers before they become bored or distracted.

Completion: Completion rates are the number of viewers who watched the interactive fashion film in its entirety, engaging in every possible point of interactivity. Completion rates are valuable for determining the overall performance of the interactive fashion film and can help brands to adjust points of interactivity that drive consumer engagement.

Engagements: Viewer engagements are the number of interaction points the viewer clicks and the options they select. Engagements can help brands with forecasting trends and demand based on the selections viewers made and allow brands to create future interactive fashion films based on behavioral segmentation. Brands can segment consumers based on usage behaviors or interest-based behaviors from these insights.

- Overall performance: Determined by dividing the number of completions by the number of conversions, overall performance helps brands evaluate the reach of the interactive fashion film. Since it is possible for viewers to click on the interactive video without completing it, this percentage will define how well the video performed with the intended audience.
- Average viewing time: The average time spent viewing can be calculated by dividing dwell times by conversion rate, allowing brands to determine timing for the points of interactivity. The time viewers spend watching between each point of interactivity is essential to adjust and plan duration periods in future interactive fashion films.
- Average interactions: Dividing the number of engagements by the number of conversions provides valuable information by evaluating the viewer's level of engagement with the interactive fashion film. Calculating average interactions determines the effectiveness of the points of interactivity.

BUDGET



Interactive Video Budget Allocation

Luxury brands can spend up to \$1 million on the production of fashion films. The cost of creating an interactive video, whether done in-house or through a creative agency, totals around \$15,000. This means that luxury brands can leverage interactive video for 1.5–3% of the overall production budget for a fashion film.

Budget planning for any film is a similar process. There are most likely fewer line items for fashion film production than a feature film, but the same structure can be used. Preproduction, or above-the-line, costs are budgeted for creative talent involved in the planning process of the film production as well as the models and/or cast and talent. The production costs, or below-the-line, items include everything necessary to create the film including set design, wardrobe, hair, makeup, salaries for support staff, lighting,

location needs, and more. Interactive video would be a postproduction expense that falls below the line.

This concept and research, as well as the visual framework components, were originally developed by Megan O’Neal Kirby (M.F.A., luxury and brand management, 2023). Kirby specializes in strategic planning, marketing, content development, and project management and works as a senior manager of multimedia at Purdue University Global.

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