THE CHANGING FACE OF FASHION

New York, London, Paris and Milan it’s that time of year again where anyone who’s anyone flocks to the 4 biggest fashion capitals in the world to see new launches for the season which is six months away. It’s the industry’s biggest trade show where press/journalists are frantically taking notes to be the first person to release a report, buyers are sat looking at what they could be stocking in their stores in six months times and even big named celebrities take front row, just to make the show seem that little bit more desirable.

But this year, things have been a little different at the New York and London shows. There has been a lot of talk about the new ‘Shop the Catwalk’ or ‘See now, buy now’ trend which allows people to see it on the catwalk and buy instantly on the website. This new trend completely flips the traditional organisation on its head where fashion tycoons would show their new styles, but only release them in the market months later. So what exactly has changed for Fashion and why is it happening?
New York & London Fashion Weeks have come and gone, but nobody can stop talking about the new ‘show-now, shop-now’ trend being used in several of the shows to grace the catwalks. 10 years ago, you couldn’t even catch a live stream of the catwalk online or see updates from your favourite journalist tweeting her favourite looks but now, the power of online media can make you feel you’ve got a front row seat.

Tom Ford & Tommy Hilfiger are among those that have followed British fashion house, Burberry in making new styles available to buy immediately off the catwalk. Tom Ford, who’s collection was billed as ‘season less’ and ‘immediate’ said, “In a world that has become increasingly immediate, the current way of showing a collection four months before it is available to customers, is an antiquated idea and one that no longer makes sense”.

Catwalks aren’t what they used to be about; Couture, 1 of a kind pieces

Chanel Show: Not your traditional catwalk, Chanel are one of the biggest designers to change the face of catwalks
Fashion catwalks used to be about unattainable pieces of fashion, and it is now all about accessibility and reacting to the fast fashion us consumers have become hungry for. Natasha Pearlman, Editor of Grazia magazine, told BBC Radio 4’s Today Programme, “You’re responding to what the consumer wants. The consumer drives the profits and the more people you’re talking to, the more products are available to them, the more exciting it is”. You can listen to the podcast here to hear more from Grazia editor, Natasha and Creative Director of Norton & Sons, Patrick Grant who had a less keen opinion on the new trend.

UK high street giants, Topshop & Jigsaw also have their own catwalks in London, showing the blend between luxury and high-street fashion really does exist. And now, once the big name designers have shown their collections at Fashion Week, it only takes a few weeks before the High Street reacts and offers exactly what the consumer is craving. Guests at the Ralph Lauren show were taken straight from the runway into the store to see & shop the collection.
THE DESIGNERS

Designers are still pushing their brand identity, with lavish garments and collections that consumers wouldn’t even consider wearing. But they’re not doing it because they think consumers would wear them, they’re doing it because it helps them to establish their selves in the market and makes them unforgettable.

Celebrities are dominating the fashion media, from magazine covers to collaborations.

See Now Buy Now: You don’t need to be at the catwalks to be able to see the clothes anymore. You can even shop the collection as soon as you’ve seen it straight on your phone.

Leading the world: Tom Ford & Christopher Bailey are changing the world by adopting the see now, buy now trend on the catwalks.
Luxury brands have been suffering as Chinese consumers cut back on spending and terrorism stops people from visiting the biggest fashion capitals in the world, strengthening the marketing for fast fashion on the high street and the see-now, shop-now trend. Tom Ford, who showcased an Autumn/Winter 2016 collection rather than Spring/Summer 2017, said, "Showing the collection as it arrives in stores will remedy this, and allow the excitement to drive sales and satisfy our customers’ increasing desire to have their clothes and they are ready to wear them".

Graduate Fashion Week brings hundreds of talented designers together for the industry to see.

It's safe to say that anyone can be a designer now, with millions of brands everywhere, compared to twenty years ago when there were around 400+ brands in Europe. Graeme Moran, Head of Content for Fashion & Features at Drapers magazine said, "The rule book is being ripped up. Normally fashion weeks are geared towards those in the industry, but now the public are being invited to see what is on offer. The big designer brands will be watching to see how much of an impact this new approach has on sales".
If it wasn’t in Vogue, it didn’t exist and it wasn’t even considered at the big fashion houses as a key element to the season. Gone are the days of having to wait for your favourite glossy magazine to feature the latest designs, although newspapers and magazines are still as keen as ever to fill their pages with celebrities on the front row.

Then came along the internet, and independent bloggers and ‘influencers’ who are changing the face of fashion in their audience’s eye, and now play an ever greater role in telling consumers what is hot and what is not. Alongside independent bloggers, come celebrities and when Brooklyn Beckham revealed on his Instagram feed that he would be photographing Burberry’s latest fragrance ad campaign, emotions were mixed as people couldn’t quite believe that celebrities could have such an impact in the fashion industry. Burberry boss Christopher Bailey said, “Brooklyn has a really great eye for image and Instagram works brilliantly for him as a platform to showcase his work”.

Celebrities are dominating the fashion media, from magazine covers to collaborations. Bloggers or influencers are becoming brand ambassadors in the fashion industry with millions of people flocking to their sites to see the latest trends. UK blogger, In The Frow has a total fan base of over 1.6million. You will find her in the front row of catwalks or showing off her latest fashion buys on YouTube.
Social Media is the biggest changing face of fashion purely for its power to influence people into buying fashion labels. Burberry teased people about their upcoming show through the popular networking app, Facebook messenger. Burberry invited you to save the date and take a look at their journey towards the new collection, before watching a live stream and shopping the collection straight after. Having a personal interaction with a fashion brand makes it resonate with the consumer and influences their purchase behaviour.

“The question is no longer if and when luxury brands should embrace the digital opportunity, but how they should go about doing it” - McKinsey
VQ are a young British audio brand who believe in the fusion of sound & style. We believe that colour and design are an important part of who we are, so we take our inspiration from traditional and non-traditional areas of technology, including Design, Fashion, Music and The Arts. Our Bardot DAB Radio is an icon of fashion, featuring a premium leatherette in classic 1960’s monochrome style.

Christmas 2016 will see the launch of a brand new partnership with VQ and an iconic international fashion brand featuring a range of new patterns on award-winning audio products. Keep a look out for launch details, coming soon.