Amazon Fashion brings Destination Denim to Berlin

By Matthieu Guinebault - 27 October 2019

From October 24 through 27, Amazon Fashion's European division descended on Berlin to spotlight 18 international denim brands. Dubbed Destination Denim, the resulting festival-like event aimed, among other things, to boost the American e-commerce giant's fashion credentials in the minds of consumers.

Some 100 journalists and influencers were therefore invited to Kühlhaus, a century-old cold storage warehouse situated in the east of the German capital. Here the visitors found themselves in a spacious atrium occupying three floors of the building, in which Amazon had installed "Infinite Rail": a cylindrical structure featuring 78 different jeans designs. Each piece was hung between two transparent panels, where Amazon app users could scan them with flashcode in order to be taken directly to the relevant product page.

Around this imposing structure, a number of stands had been set up by classic denim brands including Wrangler, Replay, 7 for all Mankind and Tommy Jeans. The last of these labels was offering vintage denim jackets from its archives for 50 euros, with profits going to the WWF. Customers could also personalize these pieces through printing and laser work, thanks to tools brought in especially for the occasion. Elsewhere, Hand & Lock was offering visitors the chance to participate in personalization workshops, which covered everything from patches to scratching.

The event went all out with its musical offering. Along with shows from Jorja Smith and Anne-Marie, the event was initially meant to open with a private concert from Rita Ora. When the British pop star fell sick, however, former One Direction member Liam Payne was called in to replace her. "Es ist besser" (it's even better) commented the younger influencers crowding around the event's entrance. These influencers were, incidentally, one of the biggest promotional draws of the event, providing a direct link to Berlin's young fashion scene, thanks to the presence of the likes of Eleonora Carisi, Belen Hostalet and Sabina Socol.
Despite the professional workshops and debates, featuring industry personalities such as Veronika Heilbrunner, Farina Opoku and Leyla Piedayesh, Destination Denim was above all conceived as a fun experience. The first floor therefore hosted a surprising 14-meter-long screen featuring a never-ending parade of virtual models wearing a range of different looks. Visitors could interact with these models, calling them out of the line-up, so that, here again, they could scan the pieces they were wearing with flashcode.

Indeed, flashcode was the buzzword of the event, which goes some way to explain the presence of a decidedly non-denim-oriented Samsung space at the festival. Flashcodes were also used in the Alexa booths that were dotted around the location, where Amazon's voice assistant helped visitors find the perfect pair of jeans on the e-commerce platform, even making suggestions of products that they could order. Visitors could also scan items in a boutique presenting the top products in the Amazon Essentials lines, as well as the products shown in the display cases that made up a kind of trend forum bringing together both big-name brands and Amazon's own private labels.
"We wanted to find a way to offer an exciting shopping experience to consumers," explained Amazon Fashion Europe Vice President John Boumphrey. "Which is actually what we always do, in fact. And we chose denim because it's universal. I wear it, and so do my parents and children." From London to Berlin, Amazon Fashion has been investing more and more in this kind of event in recent months. In Berlin, Destination Denim served to fill the void left by the absence of Zalando's Bread & Butter. As to whether there will be further Destination Denim events elsewhere in Europe, the American e-tailer is playing its cards close to its chest, but has not excluded the possibility.

By Matthieu Guinebault
Translated by Robin Driver

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