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What's the latest trend in fashion? Fashion is finally happening online. And it's about time.

Compared with other industries, it has taken fashion a long time to realize the power — and the possibilities — of the digital space. Finally we can covet the belongings of others and make wish lists of stylish things we plan to buy. We can discover emerging musical artists while browsing trench coats and watch fashion shows in real time. Almost anything is possible as long as you have the content.

Some of the most compelling content created for the web is being developed by luxury brands. According to DigitalFire, luxury brands are utilizing social media tools like Foursquare, Tumblr and Instagram to create revenue generating campaigns, stay in touch with their clients and keep within the latest technological marketing developments. While not all brands are encouraging “likes” — Prada has been infamously invisible on social media circuits — there is some cutting edge creativity happening out there.

Brands aren't the only ones winning. Just as bloggers debunked the myth that only mainstream media could report on fashion, the digital evolution launched the era where the average person can be a trendsetter or style maven. These days you don't have to be a celebrity to be an influencer. You just need to be visible.

Whether it's content or cardigans you're searching for online, here are a few top picks:

Dealuxe

Dealuxe prides itself on being the “ultimate shopping site” and why not? Created by Joanna Track, the founder of Sweetspot.ca, this shopping destination boasts a large, well-curated collection of the latest contemporary fashions for style-savvy women. Dealuxe's offering includes apparel, shoes, outerwear and even beauty. Check out the Magazine section for beautiful editorial, articles and spreads by the occasional guest editor. Dealuxe offers free shipping and returns in Canada, a major bonus. www.dealuxe.ca

The Peacock Parade

For those who don't mind deadlines, there's The Peacock Parade. This site combines the members-only, time-limited daily sales concept with an impressive selection of high-end designer apparel and accessories.

Look for Chanel jewelry, Givenchy scarves or Tom Ford sunglasses alongside sales like Ted Baker, Danier or Rich & Skinny and enjoy free shipping here, too.

But it's the merchandise by Canadian designers created exclusively for The Peacock Parade that sets them apart from similar sites. Last fashion week they launched their Off the Runway concept with Montreal womenswear designer Denis Gagnon. It allowed members to order pieces from the designer's collection mere moments after it appears on the runway. What will they think of next? www.thepeacockparade.com

Fashionstake.com

Say no to fashion sameness. Fashionstake.com accuses us of dipping into the same collective fashion pool as it invites us to discover their designers.

The labels on Fashionstake are by mostly small, independent designers. (Not

FASHION'S DIGITAL
EVOLUTION

LET'S DEMOCRATIZE FASHION

DESIGNERS

SHOP

HOME

Gifts under \$50: Looking for fashionable gifts that won't break!

SAY NO TO FASHION

LUXURY BRANDS ARE LEADING THE CHARGE WHEN IT COMES TO COMPELLING ONLINE CONTENT



Guest curators comprised of everyday, stylish people share their picks from the site. Shoppers can vote in the voting booth and win daily prizes for voting for the most popular item.

And Fashionstake.com taps into the street style trend with Street Swag, which features candid shots of stylish folks plus tips on what to buy to recreate the look.

www.fashionstake.com

WhatImWearIn

While there are a few style-sharing mobile apps out there, WhatImWearIn appeals to those who are already comfortable in their style.

It's less a “does this work?” confessional as much as it is “this is my style, working” brag session. Users are looking to share and be inspired by others. To that end, the app allows you to follow others — who become your “muses” — and to search your muses based on brands they wear or their occupation.

It also connects to Facebook and Twitter allowing you to share with your entire following. <http://whatimwearin>

The Coveteur

Who knew pictures of other peoples' belongings would so easily charm us?

The Coveteur launched in early 2010 to become an appealing peek into the lives and closets of others. The site's photographs are cleverly art directed, each featuring a single item staged in the subject's home or office.

The home page quotes Dries Van Noten: “It's more interesting to have just a picture of a small detail - then you can dream all the rest around it. Because when you see the whole thing, what is there to imagine?”

Featured subjects are from the fashion, beauty and design business with the occasional actor or musician. It's voyeuristic fun, but for the real story go behind the scenes on shoots with The Coveteur blog.

www.thecoveteur.com

Leesa Butler is the founder and executive producer of The F-list, a blog and newsletter about fashion in Canada. For more on fashion's digital evolution go to www.f-list.ca.

