

## **"ITALIAN HIDDEN GEMS"**

### **ITALIAN TRADE AGENCY and YOOX project To promote small and medium enterprises in China and USA**

ITA - Italian Trade Agency, the Governmental agency that supports the business development of Italian companies abroad and promotes the attraction of foreign investment in Italy, and YOOX, part of the YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP, have signed an agreement to encourage the development of e-commerce for small and medium-sized Italian companies in the US and China, by creating a specially-tailored platform within YOOX.

For a year now, ITA has worked on this multi-channel concept to develop more advanced commercial channels alongside its normal activities of promoting Italian products around the world, using digital resources, now gradually connected to offline businesses in a unified commercial statement. Digital provides new tools that are not yet fully utilized in Italy, given that companies that accept online orders account for only 10% of the total, while in France the figure is 21% and in Germany 27%.

ITA has identified YOOX - the world's leading online lifestyle store for fashion, design & art - as the perfect partner to promote and market one hundred Italian brands online. This choice is driven by YOOX's presence in over a hundred countries together with its experience in the two reference markets, where it opened its offices in 2003, in the US, and 2010, in China. The store's ability to localize content into eleven different languages, handle ten currencies, and provide 24/7 customer care plays an equally strategic role.

YOOX is the ideal environment in which to implement a comprehensive online communications and commercial strategy, integrated with key offline moments that will enable the selected brands to tell the story of their own excellence and open up digital distribution in China and the USA.

Due to a 45% increase in funds from the Ministry of Economic Development for the fashion sector in 2017, ITA has decided to expand its e-commerce actions for those companies that, although they represent the best of Italian creativity and know-how, still lack a digital presence abroad, especially in China and the USA.

Along with this new partnership, a digital window will be created on YOOX to showcase a hundred brands, both emerging and established, in clothing, footwear, bags, accessories, jewelry, and design objects, all identified as representatives of Italian lifestyle, creativity and culture.

To boost the awareness of this project, as well as increase traffic and sales, strategic online-to-offline activities will be executed so as to further support pureplay digital marketing in a cutting-edge omni-channel approach.

The idea is to help small and medium enterprises start internationalizing as well as transferring the know-how between e-tailers and businesses, so they can develop the skills needed to succeed in digital commerce.

*"The agreement signed with YOOX," says **Michele Scannavini, President of the ITALIAN TRADE AGENCY**, "perfectly matches ITA's strategy which focuses on developing the digital marketplace for Italian companies. Using intense training activities, drawing up distribution agreements with e-tailers, retailers and marketplaces, and promoting them in the most promising markets such as China and the US, we want to increase the number of Italian export companies and encourage further growth. Many of these are in fact "hidden gems" that find it hard, as small businesses, to embark on a digital internationalization process."*

*"The partnership signed between YOOX and ITA," emphasizes **Alessandra Rossi, President of YOOX**, and "represents a significant synergy within the Italian fashion system. Since its launch, YOOX has acted as a global launch-pad for brands seeking to approach e-commerce by offering effective, practical support to business dealing with the digitization process. Being chosen by ITA as a partner for the project is major recognition for us, demonstrating our shared Italian values."*

The deep knowledge of online shopping trends, combined with its proven ability to effectively leverage web marketing tools through a series of networked micro-actions will allow YOOX to proceed autonomously when it comes to looking out for and digitally promoting various brands.

The selected brands with in-season products will be grouped into six domains - Craftmanship, Style, Creativity, Innovation, Heritage and Design – comprising 40% for clothing, 25% for footwear, 23% for bags and accessories that do not use fur or exotic skins, 6% for jewelry products made without metal or precious stones, and 6% for design, objects and home accessories, excluding wood products and food.

Any company wishing to join the project, they have to be a member of the Italian National Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture (CCIA), qualify as an SME (Small and Medium-sized Enterprise), and have a trademark registered in China and the USA. Candidatures can be sent by email to [italianbrands@yoox.com](mailto:italianbrands@yoox.com).