

STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 16 MAY, 12:30pm

## A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE OF LUXURY FASHION ONLINE AS TRH THE PRINCE OF WALES AND THE DUCHESS OF CORNWALL VISIT YNAP'S TECH HUB

Today (16 May 2018), TRH The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall were given an exclusive glimpse into the future of luxury e-commerce during a tour of [YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP's](#) state-of-the-art Tech Hub in White City, West London.

The Tech Hub, which opened a year ago, is part of the Anglo-Italian Group's £1 billion investment in Technology and Operations. Over 500 technologists work at the hub, which is designed to accelerate innovation and deliver best-in-class technologies, creating a new London centre for digital expertise.

During the tour, led by Founder and CEO of YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP Federico Marchetti, in partnership with the [British Fashion Council](#), the Royal guests were shown how the world's leading online luxury fashion group is using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to design an unparalleled, personalised future shopping experience.

The Group's vision for the future of the homepage, individually tailored for each customer, was brought to life with concepts designed especially for Their Royal Highnesses. The prototypes, personalised based on Their Royal Highnesses diaries, featured a curated selection of luxury fashion, fine jewellery and watches suitable for their upcoming engagements. The homepages showed how data such as weather, location, purchase history and more could, at a customer's request, be used to recommend precisely the right products, services and content, creating the ultimate luxury shopping experience, all powered by AI.

The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall also witnessed the company's commitment to developing the next generation of technology pioneers. Both visitors joined a coding session with more than 60 local schoolgirls, aged 11 to 13, who were participating in a hackathon and fashion-related digital games as part of YNAP's partnership with Imperial College London.

With women making up two-thirds of its overall workforce, the YNAP Group is focused on encouraging girls to consider a career in technology and to developing digital skills through the lens of fashion. The partnership with Imperial College London aims to demonstrate just how rich the opportunities are in fashion technology to children in the local community.

**Federico Marchetti, Founder and CEO of YOOX NET-A-PORTER Group, said:**

"We are delighted that The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall visited our Tech Hub today to experience the game-changing innovations we will bring to online luxury customers thanks to our team here in London.

"We wanted to share with Their Royal Highnesses a very human side of technology. Today, our guests had the opportunity to see how artificial intelligence can be about warmth, beauty and craftsmanship. There is nothing more human than the desire for uniqueness. One of the great advances of digital technology is the power to personalise products and services on a vast scale.

"We also shared our vision for preparing the digital talents of tomorrow, when coding will be as essential as reading and writing.

# YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP

"That's why we were particularly proud to introduce our guests to 60 young women from local schools taking part in a hackathon today as part of our partnership with Imperial College London, one of our initiatives to help educate today's students for the future.

"It was a pleasure to see The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall learning the basics of coding alongside these students.

"YOOX NET-A-PORTER is a global group with combined British and Italian DNA. We are deeply committed to our people and our business in the UK. Our Tech Hub is a centre of excellence providing new jobs for Britain's best digital talent."

The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall also had the opportunity to view latest lines from British designers and sustainable brands, illustrating the British Fashion Council's Positive Fashion initiative. Product showcased by NET-A-PORTER included separates and accessories from pioneering British fashion designer Stella McCartney, eveningwear from Ralph & Russo and knitwear from Carcel, a sustainable brand launching on the site in June that offers training and job opportunities to female prisoners. MR PORTER highlighted the latest collection from its own label Mr P., alongside pieces from the highly successful Kingsman "costume to collection" range, inspired by the film franchise.

Their Royal Highnesses also viewed fine jewellery and watches including emerald and diamond matching necklace and earrings from Amrapali and luxury watches from Jaeger-LeCoultre, Panerai and British brand Bremont. The Group has pioneered the fine jewellery and watches category online, leveraging its first mover advantage to establish itself as the leader in online sales of hard luxury products. The success to date shows that many customers now have no hesitation in making these exclusive luxury purchases online.

-ENDS-

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# YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP

## NOTES TO EDITORS

### YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP

YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP is the world's leading online luxury fashion retailer. The Group is a Global company with Anglo-Italian roots, the result of a game-changing merger, which in October 2015, brought together YOOX GROUP and THE NET -A-PORTER GROUP; the two companies had revolutionized the luxury fashion industry since their birth in 2000.

YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP is a unique business with an unrivalled offering including multi-brand in-season online stores [NET-A-PORTER](#) and [MR PORTER](#), and multi-brand off-season online stores [YOOX](#) and [THE OUTNET](#), as well as numerous ONLINE FLAGSHIP STORES, all "Powered by YNAP". Through a joint venture established in 2012, YOOX NET -A-PORTER GROUP has partnered with Kering to manage the [ONLINE FLAGSHIP STORES](#) of several of the French group's luxury brands.

In 2016, YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP joined forces with Symphony, an entity controlled by Mohamed Alabbar's family, to establish a ground-breaking joint venture to create the Middle East's undisputed leader for online luxury retail.

Uniquely positioned in the high growth online luxury sector, YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP has an unrivalled client base of more than 3 million high-spending customers, over 840 million visits worldwide and consolidated net revenues of € 2.1 billion in 2017. The Group has offices and operations in the United States, Europe, Middle East, Japan, China and Hong Kong and delivers to more than 180 countries around the world. YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP is listed on the Milan Stock Exchange as YNAP.

For further information: [www.ynap.com](http://www.ynap.com)

Linkedin: [YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP](#) | Twitter: [@YNAP](#) | Instagram: [@YNAP](#) | YNAP [YouTube](#)

### About YNAP's Tech Hub

YNAP opened a new [Tech Hub](#) in White City, West London in 2017, part of a £1 billion investment in technology and operations which reaffirmed the Group's commitment to the UK. The office in White City Place is 70,000 sq.ft. and houses over 500 technologists with a further 100 jobs added by 2019. The office was designed by British architects, Grimshaw, and has a future-focused environment to reflect YNAP's unique position at the intersection of fashion and technology. The Tech Hub was designed to inspire and facilitate disruptive innovation such as the development of work on artificial intelligence and new mobile enhancements to the customer experience, creating a new London centre for digital expertise. See [link](#) for video of Tech Hub.

### About YNAP and Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionising the technology industry and will entirely transform the luxury customer's experience. AI elegantly allows us to better understand and serve our customers with precise and timely personalised recommendations of relevant product, content and services. YNAP has been exploring the opportunities AI can bring to its customers for some years and has run a number of increasingly successful tests. For example, YNAP is currently experimenting with a virtual personal stylist: a system that learns what types of clothes combine well for an outfit (drawing on the work of YNAP stylists) and can cross-reference suggestions with a customer's purchase history. Customers who search for certain products are suggested complementary products creating an outfit to their taste. The system could potentially help customer care and personal shoppers create and recommend outfits to customers based on, for example, location, trips and activity. In the future, YNAP aims to offer every customer an entirely bespoke version of its online stores based on the data they volunteer. Data from customers' diaries, purchase history and even open data such as weather and location could, at the customer's request, be used to recommend the right products, services and content for them or even for gifting to family and friends, creating the ultimate luxury shopping experience, all powered by AI.

Nothing replaces the human touch - this is about harnessing new technologies to enhance the customer experience. For example, YNAP is developing a system to provide the YNAP customer care team with AI technology to help them better serve customers by providing the right information and suggest best service actions based on customer history.

### About YNAP and Imperial College London

YNAP is committed to developing the next generation of digital talent by investing in education, sharing knowledge and working with its local communities. In the UK YNAP has partnered with London's renowned Imperial College London to teach local children aged 8-14 the basics of coding.

# YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP

The project, named Imperial Codelab Powered by YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP, aims to increase the number of children, especially young girls, who have access to coding classes and promote the opportunities that gaining digital skills can bring.

Students attend 15 hours of classes at Imperial each term and the initiative now reaches up to 150 young coders each week from over 150 different schools, of which 70% are female.

YNAP funds the initiative and in addition occasionally hosts standalone classes at its Technology Hub. Members of the YNAP technology team frequently volunteer their time to run the sessions and share their experience. Over 300 hours of teaching have been delivered to date.

## About the Tour

The tour was led by Federico Marchetti, Founder and CEO, YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP who greeted Their Royal Highnesses on arrival with Caroline Rush, Chief Executive Officer, British Fashion Council. Alison Loehnis, President of NET-A-PORTER & MR PORTER, Alex Alexander, Chief Information Officer, YNAP, and Deborah Lee, Chief People Officer, YNAP, led sections of the tour which included:

- A showroom of YNAP products highlighting British and sustainable brands and fine jewellery and watches
- Digital content from NET-A-PORTER and MR PORTER, personalised for Their Royal Highnesses, demonstrating the company's vision for the future of the homepage
- Hackathon and fashion-related digital games attended by over 60 local schoolgirls, part of YNAP's partnership with Imperial College London. Activities included learning to code a pattern onto a plain white t-shirt.
- Introductions to some of the employees behind YNAP's innovative technologies who run a variety of activities such as YNAP's 'Women in Tech' programme and the West London Coders programme, an entity set up for local entrepreneurs and technologists to share ideas and learn more about coding

## About the Brands highlighted on the Tour

### NET-A-PORTER

- **Stella McCartney**  
Founded in 2001, Stella McCartney defines her look as "sharp tailoring, natural confidence and sexy femininity", and her refusal to use leather or fur is just part of a commitment to leading "a responsible, honest, and modern company."
- **Ralph & Russo**  
British luxury brand, Ralph & Russo is loved all over the world for its bold and unapologetically glamorous silhouettes, and famously dressed Meghan Markle in her engagement portraits. Its first ready-to-wear collection launches exclusively with NET-A-PORTER for Spring '18, and each piece is made using the same exquisite craftsmanship, modern artistry and detail as its couture pieces.
- **Carcel**  
Danish design made with 100% natural materials and zero waste, Carcel go where the finest local materials meet the highest rate of poverty related crime, in order to provide better jobs, new skills and opportunities for women in prison. Each piece has the name of the woman who made the garment on the label and you can find her full story on their website. Launching on NET-A-PORTER in June.

### MR PORTER

- **Kingsman** – Kingsman is the 'costume to collection' label developed and inspired by 20th Century Fox films Kingsman: The Secret Service in 2015 and Kingsman: The Golden Circle in 2017. It is the result of the unique partnership between MARV and MR PORTER, now a standalone brand in its eighth season, fully exclusive to MRPORTER.COM.
- **Mr P.** – In November 2017, MR PORTER launched its own brand Mr P., a label based on year-round essentials alongside seasonal capsule collections under the guiding maxim: Easy pieces. Smart details. Enduring style. The creation of Mr P. has been informed by years of customer insight and the invaluable feedback and shopping patterns we've observed from our customer base since launch in February 2011. Mr P. just launched its third seasonal collection in April, with its high summer capsule to launch in July. The brand will be launching footwear and accessories for Fall/Winter 18.

# YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP

## FINE JEWELLERY AND WATCH BRANDS

- **Bremont** – British luxury watch brand founded by brothers Nick and Giles English. Inspired by the life of aviation and extremes, each watch assembled by hand in the UK. The brand was the first luxury watch brand to launch on MR PORTER in September 2013.
- **Jaeger-LeCoultre** – is one of the world's greatest watchmakers, and the quest for excellence has been its driving force since launching in 1833. The workshop is still situated in Le Sentier, Switzerland and its 150-year-old archives are a constant source of inspiration. NET-A-PORTER stock elegant and iconic timepieces from the 'Master', 'Reverso' and 'Rendez-Vous' ranges. MR PORTER stock sporty and iconic timepieces from the 'Master', 'Reverso' collections alongside the 'Atmos' 568 Clock.
- **Panerai** – Founded in 1860 in Florence when it consisted of a boutique, a workshop and a watchmaking school, Officine Panerai was for years the supplier of precision instruments to the Italian Navy, in particular equipping the commando frogmen. Today, Officine Panerai develops and produces its own movements and watches – combining Italian design and history with Swiss craftsmanship – in its manufacture at Neuchâtel, and these are sold worldwide through an exclusive global network of authorised dealers, and in its own-brand boutiques throughout the world.

## About The British Fashion Council

The British Fashion Council (BFC) was set up in 1983 to promote British fashion internationally and co-ordinate this promotion through fashion weeks, exhibitions and showcasing events. The BFC now supports designers beginning at college level and extending to talent identification, business support and showcasing schemes to help British designer businesses develop their profiles and business globally and promote British fashion and its influential role in Britain and London. The BFC Colleges Council offers support to students through its Foundation, BA and MA scholarships, links with industry through design competitions and Graduate Preview Day. Talent identification and business support schemes include BFC Fashion Film; BFC/GQ Designer Menswear Fund; BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund and NEWGEN which includes womenswear, menswear and accessories. The BFC supports Boden's Future British initiative. The BFC also runs and owns charities including the BFC Fashion Arts Foundation, the BFC Fashion Trust and the BFC Education Foundation. Showcasing initiatives and events include London Fashion Week, London Fashion Week Men's, LONDON show ROOMS, International Fashion Showcase, London Fashion Week Festival and the annual celebration of creativity and innovation in the fashion industry: The Fashion Awards.

Photos and video of the Tour will be made available to media on 16th May.