

# **Haute Couture as a Marketing Strategy**

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# Luxury Product Pyramid

These categories represent the different product levels within a designer brand. Each level in this pyramid corresponds to different levels of exclusivity, accessibility, and price point, moving from high-end, exclusive pieces at the top to widely accessible items at the base.

**Haute Couture** — hand-crafted, high-fashion garments created by prestigious designers that are custom-made to fit individual clients and are produced in limited quantities; there are specific requirements to quality as haute-couture

**Ready-to-Wear** — clothing that is mass-produced in standard sizes and available for purchase in retail stores or online.

## Accessories & Cosmetics

Brands' most profitable category, offering more accessible and affordable options for a broader audience.

Different brands use haute couture in various ways: 1) certain designers focus on serving affluent clients directly, 2) some prioritize artistic expression, and **3) others aim primarily to drive sales of their other product lines.**



# Haute Couture to Promote Other Product Lines

“The market of haute couture is growing [for] luxury companies as a way to increase the perceived exclusivity and allure of the brand, deepen their relationship with clients who are opinion leaders, and create marketing content.” (Vogue Business).

This “dream factor” created by haute couture entices the average consumer, encouraging them to buy into the brand through more accessible products like fragrances and accessories.

Most fashion companies actually lose money on their couture shows, so these events are only valuable if they attract enough attention to keep the brand in the spotlight. This visibility fuels demand for the brand’s more accessible products, which are crucial for profitability.

# Viktor&Rolf Haute Couture Spring/Summer 2023

Viktor & Rolf Haute Couture Spring/Summer 2023 showcased at Paris Fashion Week featured gravity-defying optical illusions, with dresses worn by models in upside-down, sideways, and unconventional positions to evoke a sense of surrealism.



# Fragrances by Viktor&Rolf

Viktor&Rolf use their haute couture shows and creative vision as a strategic marketing tool to elevate their brand and drive fragrance sales. As co-founder Rolf Snoeren explains, “You can have a great show and be very good at it. But it’s a whole thing around it to make a business. It’s like a puzzle” (BOF). The success of their fragrance “...proves that you can be creative and do well commercially” (BOF).



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# Haute Couture on the Red Carpet

Celebrities wearing haute couture at major events is a key marketing strategy for luxury fashion brands.

- designs generate extensive media attention and enhance brand prestige
- association with influential figures boosts the brand's reputation
- celebrities create an aspirational connection, making even more accessible products appealing
- increased visibility from haute couture boosts demand for ready-to-wear collections, accessories, and fragrances



Boone, Amy. "Haute Couture: Art as Marketing." *Medium*, This Tailored Life, 28 Dec. 2015, [medium.com/this-tailored-life/haute-couture-art-as-marketing-e8e5622e7da5](https://medium.com/this-tailored-life/haute-couture-art-as-marketing-e8e5622e7da5).

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Lily-Rose Depp in Chanel Haute Couture Spring 1992 runway for the 2019 Met Gala



Zendaya in custom Maison Margiela Haute Couture for the 2023 SAG Awards



Harry Styles in custom Gucci Haute Couture for the 2019 Met Gala



# Haute Couture in Museums

These museums act as marketing tools for the brands, boosting the brand's visibility and fueling demand for their more affordable products by creating allure and desire.

Dior is a brand that has cultivated its allure through curated museum exhibitions showcasing its haute couture. A prime example is La Galerie Dior in Paris, the world's largest museum dedicated to a single designer, where Dior's vision is presented as a masterpiece of art.



Boone, Amy. "Haute Couture: Art as Marketing." *Medium*, This Tailored Life, 28 Dec. 2015, [medium.com/this-tailored-life/haute-couture-art-as-marketing-e8e5622e7da5](https://medium.com/this-tailored-life/haute-couture-art-as-marketing-e8e5622e7da5).

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