WSN launches Gen Z event during Paris Fashion Week

By Olivier Guyot - May 9, 2022

The public event dubbed ‘DRP’ will be held from June 23 to 25 at the Grand Palais Ephémère in Paris, opposite the Ecole Militaire. The venture has been in the making for over two years. Its first edition orchestrated by the trade show organizer WSN Développement, will take place both in real life (IRL) and in the metaverse, targeting young fashion, video gaming, basketball, skateboarding, sneakers and Web3 enthusiasts against the backdrop of ‘drop culture’ (drops refers to collections with a limited number of pieces to ensure rarity) that, according to the organizer, has won over the Gen Z audience.

The new event will take place in the heart of Paris during Men's Fashion Week (June 21-26), two days before a Chanel event that will occupy the same venue.

"Our goal was to organize a cool event that has never been done before in Paris," explained Frédéric Maus, CEO of WSN. "Of course there have been attempts, such as Zalando, which wanted to relaunch Bread & Butter in a format open to the general public."

"Our idea was to offer a point between the festival, the event and the shop. And doing it during Fashion Week was important since this generation, highly tuned in to the fashion world, hears about fashion shows, but they don't have access to them. That's why we want to give them some type of access and a place. To do this, we have..."
have access to them. That's why we want to give them some type of access and a place... To do this, we have entered a relationship with influential industry players who federate communities around them," he added.

It's hard to speak about ‘drops’ without associating the word with the sneaker world. One of the driving forces of the event will be the return of the show dedicated to sneaker collectors, Sneakerness, after nearly three years of absence in Paris. It will occupy an entire area of the Grand Palais Ephémère.

Sneakerness alone should attract sneakerheads from all over Europe. Video games and Web3 will also be on the agenda with the participation of several e-sports teams, who will offer special products for the occasion. Three games will be unveiled during the event. NFT and metaverse players will be represented by the virtual fashion e-shop, DressX.

To validate the Gen Z seal, the DRP event will host a skate park together with the Cosanostra association and a 3X3 basketball court, while the Red Star soccer club will present its new jersey alongside Vice.

70 fashion brands to discover on site

As expected of a WSN Développement event, fashion will also make an appearance. It will take center stage at the Grand Palais with the attendance of 70 brands, young streetwear labels such as Daömey and Wasted Paris, and DNVB (Digital Native Vertical Brands) offering products designed especially for the occasion.

This first season will mainly showcase independent brands from Paris and surrounding regions, but the event organizer intends to attract more established brands in future editions.

"This year, many brands didn't have the opportunity to play the exclusivity game. But we are already in contact with brands that can come in and do product 'drops' or create an experience. It's a natural evolution. Brands think B2B and B2C. We must provide them with these platforms that allow them to connect with this audience of influencers. One of the central themes of the founders of Who’s Next was to provide a space for street-culture to emerge. DRP is part of this continuity."

Dropville, the event's counterpart in the metaverse

The event's unique trait is that it will also be held in the metaverse. Dropville was created as an online counterpart to the physical event, but will be available year-round. The 2D universe allows visitors to meet and participate in egg hunts that give access to product drops. The brands present in the physical DRP event will also be online and will give the community the opportunity to win products in the metaverse.
"It's a city you can explore in ten minutes," explained Boris Vey, partnership manager at WSN Développement. "There you will find the Red Star stadium, a nightclub, and a museum where there will be exhibitions. There will be games, egg hunts... it's gamification. Through NFTs, there will be the possibility to have access to physical events, including 100 tickets to Sneakerness."

With DRP, which combines the physical and digital spheres, WSN Développement aims to offer brands an interface to interact with the communities they intend to reach.

The event will be accessible from 15 euros per day, with priority passes set at 50 euros for people who wish to be the first to enter on the morning of June 23. The organizer expects about 15,000 people to attend the event.

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