

RESULT-DRIVEN MARKETING STRATEGIES IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY: ATTRACTING AND CONVERTING CUSTOMERS

How can brands build marketing systems that increase sales and customer loyalty? Experts at the business conference of the 37th International Fashion Exhibition Central Asia Fashion Spring 2026 explored key topics including customer acquisition, retention, and LTV growth, audience engagement, marketing funnels, value propositions, and performance metrics in a highly competitive and overheated market.

Brand Manager of the Kazakhstani premium clothing brand ARGYMAQ, PhD in Art Studies and art manager Askar Mirzayev noted in his speech that one of the most effective strategies for the company has been collaborations: *«The name ARGYMAQ refers to the image of a strong and resilient steed that moves toward its goal no matter what, and this is the philosophy we associate ourselves with. We create products inspired by contemporary Kazakh culture and strive to be present in our customers' everyday lives, not only on special occasions. This is especially evident in segments such as chapans garments; we reinterpret this traditional clothing so that it can be worn not only for uzatu ceremonies, weddings, or anniversaries, but also in daily life—comfortably, with a modern and stylish look.»*



Brand Manager of the premium clothing brand ARGYMAQ, PhD in Art Studies, Askar Mirzayev

The clothing brand ARGYMAQ also offers high-quality gifts and souvenirs that resonate both with guests visiting Kazakhstan and with the local audience. The assortment includes ties (with which the brand's history began), shirts, T-shirts, sweatshirts, silk items, chapans made of wool and linen, jewelry made of steel and silver, headwear, and other products. The brand experiments with forms and products, but the key directions remain chapans and jewelry executed in a minimalist yet nationally recognizable style. *«We stand for national clothing becoming part of everyday culture, rather than remaining only a «Friday tradition».* That is why collaborations are one of the strongest tools for us. In particular, the partnership with the National Olympic Committee significantly increased interest in the brand. When people see a product — for example, sweatshirts — on influencers or bloggers, it creates additional touchpoints. The audience starts to take interest, come to the stores, and make purchases. At the same time, it is important to understand that such projects work not only as a direct sales tool, but also as an image-building story. Speaking about marketing effectiveness, the key metric for us is LTV — Customer Lifetime Value. It is important for us not just to attract a person, but to build a relationship with them so that they return again and again. We have already formed our own loyal audience. We also see differences between regions. In Astana, where the brand has been present since 2016, more classic items sell better — shirts

and ties. In Almaty, the audience is more open to experiments: there is higher interest in chapans, sweatshirts, and silk products. This is largely due to lifestyle and climate», - explained Askar Mirzayev.

The session moderator, founder of the communication agency YOS Agency and head of the national costume project Ultyyq Sezim, Oksana Shkrygunova, while handing the floor to Leonid Zherebtsov, asked for his opinion on Fashion Weeks as a marketing tool. The designer and founder of the Zherebtsov brand answered affirmatively: *«Fashion Week is definitely needed, because guests come from different countries, they start talking a lot about Kazakhstan, attention is formed, and the shows are covered by foreign specialized press. But it is important to understand that fashion is creativity. Like an artist or an actor, through collections and shows you convey your inner world — it is a way to tell about yourself. If we compare Fashion Weeks before and now in terms of results for the designer, there have been no major changes. On the local market, and in the post-Soviet space in general, it is primarily an image-building story. In Europe or Asia, however, it is already a business. There, collections are shown a season ahead, buyers attend, and orders are placed. For example, we are currently preparing a show of the «Autumn–Winter 2026/27» collection. Here, we don't have that volume of buyers or a pre-order system. Therefore, for us Fashion Week is more about brand awareness and PR than a business tool. There have been cases when collections sold out literally immediately. In principle, all my collections sell out completely. But it is important to separate: there is a basic line — more adapted to the client, with understandable shapes, sizes, and wearability. And then there is the runway — where we do something bright, sometimes even provocative. After the show, shoots immediately follow, and we have our own base of clients who want to stand out. We can repeat items and adapt them. Sometimes clients write on Instagram: «Can I buy the piece from 2014? », — and we can reproduce it with similar fabrics. By the way, I personally run the Instagram account and communicate with clients. People are surprised: «Is it really you replying? » I conduct the dialogue personally, and only when it comes to purchase do I pass it to my assistant. I think this is one of the reasons why the brand has lasted for 15 years. People come — and they see me. I personally work with them, understand their needs, lifestyle, and select solutions for them. »*



Designer, founder of the brand Zherebtsov, Leonid Zherebtsov

The designer also shared with visitors of Central Asia Fashion a story that can be considered a mistake: *«I was one of the first to start making T-shirts with Kazakh phrases. They sold very well, especially abroad. The most successful case was the T-shirt with the inscription «Өзіңше». It wasn't planned as a hit at all — the idea was born spontaneously on a beach in Dubai. And suddenly — an explosion of sales! We were*

selling 20–30 pieces a day! The product began to be copied and sold at flea markets — it was on a massive scale! We expanded the line: caps, bags, and so on. And that’s where the mistake crept in: I decided to scale up production, ordered a huge batch of sweatshirts in Tashkent, invested a lot of money, but the demand had already passed. As a result, the warehouse was full. We sold them for over a year, with discounts, below cost price, and part of them were simply donated to an orphanage. The takeaway is this: you cannot immediately go into large volumes. You need to test demand first. Now we work differently: we make single samples, shoot them, post them, watch the reaction, and only then produce them. Yes, the client wants «here and now», but the risks of production are higher. Plus, we offer individual fitting: the client can come, try the item on, and adapt it to themselves — add volume somewhere, adjust the waist somewhere. It’s almost customization, but at the same price. »



Experts at CAF Shared Effective Marketing Strategies in Fashion

Chief Stylist of KTK, creator and Creative Director of the brands HOFS and Qupiya, Ruslan Yerimov revealed the secrets of marketing strategies on television: *«Television has a very high level of audience trust, and we work not on sales, but on perception. The main goal is trust. For example, most politicians come to us, and even details like the color of a tie matter. Grey, purple — these are not just aesthetics, they are signals. They can be aimed at negotiations, a certain position, or a clear message. Such things are read at the protocol level. Sales appeared later, when stylists began creating their own brands. That’s when the commercial component comes into play. In reality, everything is simple: we choose what suits the person and what can be bought. We review a huge number of collections, stores, and brands, primarily Kazakh ones. However, there is a problem: our market does not work like the global one. We do not create collections for upcoming seasons, so it is difficult to synchronize. For example, television is already purchasing clothes for autumn, while designers are still sewing summer. As a result, we often have to form solutions based on what is currently available. Purchases are made in advance, six months ahead, taking into account trends and seasonality. Shoes have a different story. There are very few shoe manufacturers in Kazakhstan — literally can be counted on one hand. Some work for special services, others make author’s shoes by hand. The problem is that this is a very expensive production due to costly equipment and the lack of own raw materials — neither quality leather nor materials for soles. But I chose this direction precisely because it is a free niche. We started as a craft atelier and created a niche brand with a very narrow audience. Currently, the client distribution is roughly as follows: 30% — Kazakhstan, 30% — Persian Gulf countries, 30% — Russia. We produce very little — about 60 pairs per month, and we sell almost everything. It’s a small volume, but it is manageable. This is a deliberate strategy. The brand was initially niche and cannot be scaled to a mass audience. In the plans are collaborations with Kazakh brands — not necessarily with an ethnic focus, but simply strong partnerships. »*



Chief Stylist at KTK, creator and Creative Director of the brands HOF5 and Qupiya, Ruslan Yerimov

Marketer, business and brand developer, head of the creative bureau S21 and owner of the luxury décor production company S21 Production, Alina Skalyga, spoke about two key areas in building marketing strategies: *«First is the production of luxury décor and working with premium brands in Kazakhstan. Second is marketing and brand development; we help create and grow brands—from fashion to restaurants and country projects. These two directions are closely interconnected. In marketing, we mainly work with the premium and luxury segments—this is my core specialization. It's important to understand that marketing is not about sales; it's about identifying needs and meanings. We first find a person's need, then extract the underlying meaning from it, and only after that translate this meaning into a form. That form can be anything: clothing, footwear, jewelry, a space, or even a club. Essentially, our work is a constant search for what meanings are important to people right now and which forms can best fulfill them. This is directly connected to décor as well. In the luxury segment, décor is not just decoration—it is a language of brand communication. Through it, we tell stories about a collection, changes, and the brand's*



Head of the creative bureau S21, owner of S21 Production, Alina Skalyga

mood. Luxury marketing comes with many limitations: you cannot compete on price, use aggressive tools, communicate too directly, or risk your reputation. That's why we focus on creating a «world». A brand is always a kind of universe that a person enters through the product, the boutique, the décor, and interactions with people. This is always a long-term strategy. If mass market operates on reaction and hype, luxury creates the future. »

Oksana Shkrygunova asked the speaker whether local culture influences the décor of international brands. Alina Skalyga responded affirmatively: *«Yes, and it is very important. Right now, we are seeing a great synergy: international brands maintain their DNA while adapting to local culture. For example, the brand Hermès has a global theme for the year, but in each country, the designer adapts it to the local identity. The goal is to combine the brand's codes, the global idea, and the local culture. This is exactly what resonates with customers and creates an emotional response. Events such as brand openings and presentations are also critically important. You can create a perfect product, but if you don't communicate it properly, nothing will work. A brand opening is the first image-building «brick». The first impression shapes long-term perception. I would also highlight how important customer retention is in the premium segment, because the market is limited. There isn't an endless flow of new clients, and acquisition is very expensive. Therefore, retaining a customer is always cheaper than acquiring a new one, especially since clients tend to «migrate» between brands. The only thing that truly works is a strategy focused on building long-term relationships with customers. The key tools here are personalization, an individual approach, communication, and emotional experience. People come not only for the product, but also for the person, the attitude, and the feeling. »*



Founder of the communications agency YOS Agency, Oksana Shkrygunova

CEO of the Zhanna Kan Group (Damiani, La Perla, Constella, Zardozi) and founder of the media agency M-agency, Alihan Musatayev shared the company's effective marketing tools: *«In our case, it is primarily about building a community, since we mainly operate in the premium segment. There is no mass product as such, although within our multi-brand spaces there are more accessible brands. If we look at McKinsey statistics, 80% of revenue comes from 20% of loyal customers. That is why we create a platform for our clients and literally guide them within our ecosystem, connecting different projects. For example, if a person becomes a client of Zardozi, we can invite them to a masterclass or a closed meeting. In this way, we don't just sell a product — we give the client the opportunity to grow together with us. We are building not just a business, but an emotional and intellectual platform for client growth. We have very high event activity — sometimes two events a day: closed meetings, forums, and cultural events. The calendar is*

always fully booked. At the same time, we build cross-sales between projects. Speaking of specific tools, everything works in combination: participation in Fashion Weeks, collaborations with bloggers. However, we don't work with everyone — we only choose those who share our values. For the luxury segment, what matters is not a one-off integration, but long-term partnership. It is more like ambassadorship. Previously, we worked with bloggers on a one-time basis, but then we switched to a long-term cooperation model. We formed a pool of influencers and selected one key ambassador with whom we associated the brand. Now the next stage is working with young influencers. We are launching a contest, selecting ambassadors, and essentially creating an internal content team that will work with us on a permanent basis. Some people say this is already a content factory. »



CEO of Zhanna Kan Group (Damiani, La Perla, Constella, Zardozi) and founder of the media agency M-agency, Alihan Musatayev

Alihan Musatayev stated that in 2026 the company is primarily focusing on community development and increasing customer loyalty: *«We want to keep the client within our ecosystem and strengthen internal connections between the brands, including through bonus systems and cross-use of services. The strongest brand right now is most likely Constella. Over the past few years, we have built the system so that the business develops progressively: we are developing online channels, marketplaces, and strengthening our digital team. Online already generates traffic comparable to offline boutiques, and we plan to continue investing in this direction. We use local premium platforms and banking ecosystems. The second important focus, in addition to retaining the client within the entire group, is the development of the Kazakh-speaking audience. We are forming a separate team to work with this segment and strengthen our presence in the regions through online channels. This is very important because regions differ significantly in tastes and perception. Kazakhstan is large and very diverse, and this must be taken into account in the strategy. In fact, all the tools we are talking about have long been known. What matters is not just knowing them, but applying them systematically — working meticulously with the customer base, developing social networks, and building a community. Even seemingly simple things like book clubs or regular meetings can greatly strengthen the connection with the audience. »*

The speaker gave the example of the largest forum Be Woman, which unites women leaders of Central Asia: *«The event was born out of a specific task — to attract a new audience when opening a boutique in Tashkent. We organized a free event, invited international speakers, and in this way formed the necessary community. Later, the format began to scale: a request appeared in Almaty, international partners joined,*

and the reach grew. The key idea here is precisely collaboration and synergy. We do not compete, but rather strengthen each other by uniting different communities and organizations». Oksana Shkrygunova, concluding the session, emphasized that she considers collaborations to be the most important part of a marketing strategy: «I also strongly believe in collaborations. This is one of the most underrated tools that is finally starting to be actively used. »



Speakers of the CAF business conference (left to right): Oksana Shkrygunova, Ruslan Yerimov, Leonid Zherebtsov, Alihan Musatayev, Alina Skalyga, and Askar Mirzayev

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