

▼ DOW +0.7% ▼ S&P 500 +0.81% ▼ NASDAQ 100 +0.86%



BUSINESS
INSIDER



HOME > RETAIL

Welcome to the world of 'social commerce,' where brands like Mucinex use Youtube fashion shows to launch loungewear lines designed to break the internet

Catherine LeClair

37 minutes ago





The Zzzimono is one of five pieces of clothing Mucinex is releasing in its limited run "Sickwear" capsule. Mucinex

"Social Commerce" is an emerging marketing trend where retail brands use social channels to introduce consumers to new products online and inspire them to shop.

Cold and flu medication brand Mucinex is using social commerce to release its new capsule collection of loungewear via a YouTube fashion show where influencers will model the clothes.

The president of RB North America, Mucinex's parent company, said social commerce is already a popular marketing tactic in China, where she spent two years of her career as CEO of General Mills China.

Matt Weisbecker, CRO of Hispanic digital media company, said social commerce events can succeed because they create more personalized experiences for consumers than traditional ads, which encourages brand loyalty.

Visit Business Insider's homepage for more stories.

Anyone who's ever had a cold knows Mucinex. The over-the-counter decongestion medication is a stalwart staple of medicine cabinets everywhere. But on Tuesday, the brand will make its debut somewhere a little more glamorous than behind your bathroom mirror: the runway.

Mucinex is launching a limited-edition line of loungewear dubbed "Sickwear" — high-end clothes meant to be worn while you're home sick this cold and flu (and pandemic) season. The five pieces in the collection are adorned with healthcare-inspired touches like aromatherapy sleeves,

tissue pockets, and a built-in neck pillow.

The brand will kick off the capsule with a livestreamed fashion show on YouTube where the unisex collection designed by Steven Alan and Christina Viviani will be **worn by influencers** who boast millions of followers. Live from their own homes, the YouTubers will sport the Sickwear and give their audiences an up-close look at the products. Then, the products will be available on Mucinex's direct-to-consumer site for purchase.

This rollout taps into a form of marketing called "social commerce," where brands create shopping experiences using social media to engage consumers and generate exclusive-feeling e-commerce opportunities.

Social commerce is already a popular marketing trend in China where Cynthia Chen, president of RB North America, (Mucinex's parent company) spent two years of her career as CEO of General Mills China. In China, Chen says Douyin, the country's version TikTok, is "like Home Shopping Network."

"There are new uncharted channels we have not tapped into the United States," Chen told Business Insider in an

interview. "All social media can be a touch point for people to sell or promote their product. To me it's not the future, the future is already here."

At the time of the interview, Chen was wrapped up in Mucinex's new Sickwear Feelgood Hood, recovering at home from a root canal earlier that morning. The sweatshirt has a hood that features a built-in eye mask. Mucinex's entire fashion line is designed to be an extension of its brand identity as a product that aims to help people feel good when they're under the weather. It's essentially Mucinex as a lifestyle.

"Our brand is not just a medicine brand, it's a health and wellness brand," Chen said.

During the pandemic, many brands have used a lack of in-person events as an opportunity to innovate how they reach consumers by exploiting new channels. Earlier this year, KFC released a pair of Crocs that sold out in **just half an hour** and beauty brand Tatcha unveiled a new product **within the popular video game Animal Crossing**.

But social commerce isn't just a temporary solution to reaching consumers when large gatherings aren't possible, it's also a massive opportunity to reach new demographics even after large gatherings become normal again.

Matt Weisbecker, CRO of Hispanic digital media company **H Code**, told Business Insider that "Hispanic consumers in particular are spending more time on social networks than ever before." Weisbecker said that H Code's Intelligence Center conducted a study that found 67% of Hispanic consumers are spending 2 hours or more on social media each day and 93% are shopping online during their time at home. Social media apps like Instagram are developing new ways to make their content shoppable to capitalize on frequent users.

These pop-up swag drops are popular, but do these trendy releases actually help brands like Mucinex that are

pumping money into them? Weisbecker thinks so.

"These unique social commerce events offer a more personalized digital experience for consumers than traditional ads and could foster a more authentic connection between brands and consumers, encouraging brand loyalty," he said. "Especially if these brands delve deep into consumer groups, their nuances, and their current digital habits in order to execute and maximize this opportunity."

The Mucinex Sickwear collection will debut [on YouTube](#) and on the [Mucinex website](#) Tuesday night at 8 p.m. EST.

How valuable was this story for you?



This story is exclusively available for Business Insider subscribers. Thanks for subscribing, Cristina!