

Levi's New Retail Experience Features a Tech-Fueled Merch Drop

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Key Insights:

- Experience showcases Future Finish, a new customization feature

Levi's offers multiple ways to customize its products, with techniques ranging from in-house tailoring, embroidered patches and denim finishing with lasers. To showcase these offerings in real life, the clothing brand has launched a customization-focused experience in Miami.

Levi's Haus Miami opened in the Wynwood Arts District on Dec. 5, timed to the city's annual international art fair Art Basel that has become an essential stop for fashion brands, too. Levi's launched the pop-up mainly to introduce consumers to Future Finish, the brand's newest customization feature that uses laser technology to print designs on denim in 90 minutes.

Levi's partnered with design and experience agency Jam3 to create the 43,000-square-foot pop-up, constructed using 12 shipping containers.

The pop-up has a two-level concept shop with curated, rotating items from clothing lines like Levi's Made & Crafted and Levi's Authorized Vintage. Purchases can be customized at tailoring and design stations.



Levi's worked with Jam3 to create an LED countdown clock for each drop.

Levi Strauss & Co.

The experience also incorporates technology into a drop experience for limited-edition products.

The exterior of one shipping container displays a digital clock that counts down the hours and minutes until a merchandise drop or workshop announcement. Once the clock hits zero, a drop code appears that acts as entry into the drop. Attendees can use the code to unlock product access on their personal devices.

After reserving the item and receiving a QR code, attendees can pay for the product on site and head to a shipping container to scan their codes and activate an infinity mirror-style carousel. The installation delivers their jeans, accompanied by a light show.

Adam Romano, creative director of Jam3, said his team and Levi's initially brainstormed ideas for various art installations as part of the pop-up, but eventually merged the concept with a merchandise drop. Romano noted that sneaker

drops are popular at events like ComplexCon and Coachella, which is why Levi's wanted to experiment with a denim drop at Art Basel. The 146-year-old brand is also experimenting more with technology—this year, Levi's hired its first artificial intelligence officer.

"We wanted to make this visceral experience to get people excited about the product, so we created a giant neon drop clock," Romano said. "We've built the drop framework and created the CMS for Levi's that allows them to schedule their own drops any time they want to release a new product."

For the opening weekend, Levi's collaborated with artists including Shepard Fairey, Gianni Lee, Omayhra Mota and Futura to release exclusive products as part of the drops. Levi's is also announcing workshops at the pop-up, which have been led by designers like César Pérez, Brick Owens and Duey Catorze. Consumers have to be onsite to win access to the workshops, where they can collaborate with the designers and tailors to customize items they purchase.

Levi's is also announcing the drops on its Instagram and Twitter pages. The items released in these drops will be available to consumers outside of Miami beginning next year.



The 43,000-square-foot pop-up includes a tailor shop.

Levi Strauss & Co.

Consumers can also customize their clothes at stations including the Design Studio by Future Finish, where brand ambassadors demonstrate the new customization feature. Future Finish, which debuted in July, provides consumers with more than 3,400 options for customizing men's 501 and 502 and women's 501 and 721 jeans.

The experience also includes a tailoring shop that offers basic alterations and free repairs, and a grab-and-go station with a "take-away" menu, offering options that take less than 10 minutes to create. The to-go offerings include button swaps, back tab and patch options, monogramming and predesigned graphics that can be printed on T-shirts.

The experience also partnered with progressive nonprofit Rock the Vote to encourage consumers to register to vote at the event; the brand previously urged Americans to vote in a 2018 politically themed campaign. Levi Strauss & Co. CMO Jennifer Sey explained why the brand chose to get political at our annual Brandweek: Challenger Brands summit in February.

Levi's Haus Miami is open seven days a week through the end of February. The brand plans to take the experience to more U.S. cities in 2020, but hasn't announced locations and dates.

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