

HOMI Milano: Reviewing the HOMILand VR Experience by Orwell and Cy_Bag Wearable Tech for User Engagement



Source: Homimilano.com

The FGRT team attended HOMI Milano, a lifestyle and technology trade fair for interior design, furniture, homewares, fashion, accessories, beauty and more. We focused our visit on the HOMI Smart section of the event, which brings together companies and designers specializing in digital technologies such as virtual reality (VR) and wearables.

- 1) We tried the HOMILand VR experience, a VR system developed by tech firm Orwell to simulate a virtual visit to a trade fair pavilion.
- 2) HOMILand VR can be used for brand engagement in brick-and-mortar retail.
- 3) We also saw the Cy_Bag, an innovative bag that incorporates wearable technology to help users organize and track the everyday objects they carry around, such as keys, payment cards and smartphones.

FGRT's London team visited HOMI Smart, part of the HOMI Milano lifestyle and technology trade fair for interior design, furniture, homewares, fashion, accessories, beauty and more, which took place in Milan, Italy, from September 15–18. We focused on VR and wearable technology during our visit, and experienced tech firm Orwell's HOMILand VR system and saw the Cy_Bag exhibit of fashion accessories that incorporate wearable technology.

Orwell's HOMILand VR Experience

VR firm Orwell invited us to the fair to experience HOMILand VR, the company's VR set prototype. Orwell developed the VR experience for the HOMI Smart section of HOMI Milano. The experience consists of a virtual environment created within an imaginary trade fair context that was inspired by the architecture of the pavilions of the Fiera Milano exhibition center.

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Orwell's HOMILand VR experience
Source: FGRT

Through the VR headset, the user is immersed in a virtual trade fair environment and is able to interact with the surroundings. The virtual pavilions were created in collaboration with interior design and homeware brands Alessi and Baci Milano, and users can play entertaining video games inspired by the product lines of these two brands as part of the VR experience. For example, in Alessi's virtual pavilion, the user can play an arcade game similar to pinball whose design and environment are inspired by Alessi's Circus line of housewares.

In the future, Orwell expects brick-and-mortar retailers to apply this concept to engage with shoppers in order to increase in-store footfall and brand loyalty. The company expects that the possibility of experiencing a fun and engaging VR environment will draw consumers into physical stores.

Orwell is a tech firm based in Milan that produces content for VR and immersive environments for contexts that include design, architecture, art and culture, trade fairs, and retail. The firm develops VR apps for platforms and systems such as Oculus Rift, Gear VR, Google Cardboard, iOS, Android and HTC-VIVE.

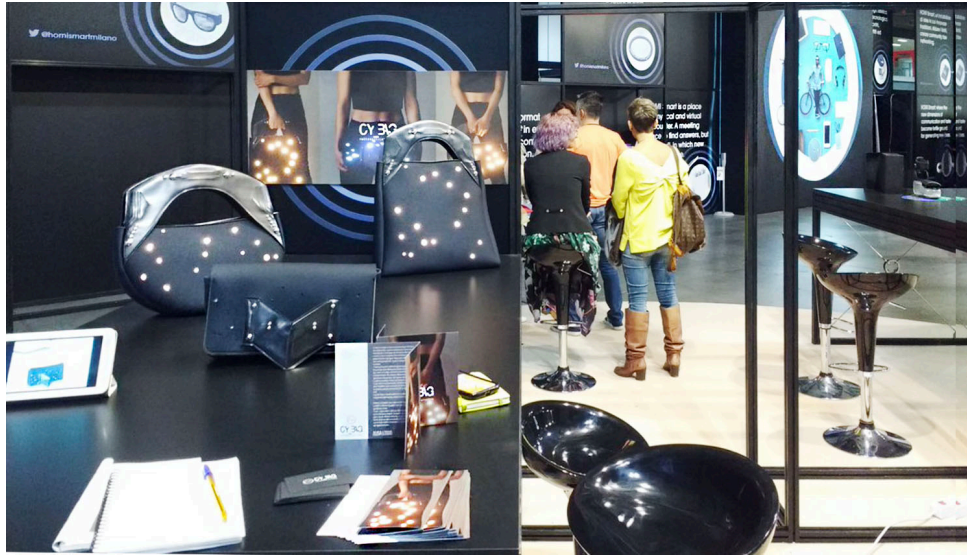
Wearable Technology: Cy_Bag Smart Accessories

Cy_Bag is a wearable technology project developed by university student Elisa Loddo of Politecnico di Milano, Italy's leading engineering school. We met Loddo during our visit to HOMI Smart.

The Cy_Bag—which is described as “the constellation bag”—is equipped with an interface that interacts with external objects. The smart bag uses radio frequency

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identification (RFID) technology to detect when an object equipped with an RFID tag is put into or taken out of the bag. LEDs on the surface of the bag turn on and off according to the presence of specific objects in the bag.



*Cy_Bags on display at HOMI Smart
Source: FGRT*

For example, a specific LED corresponds to the user's house keys, payment card or smartphone, so when that object is put in the bag, the associated LED is activated, and the user can see what is stored in the bag without opening it. At the same time, the LEDs on the bag compose a stylish design that is evocative of a constellation. Users can also track the bag's contents at all times through an app installed on their smartphone.



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