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## Decayenne



Holiday parties are a given, but it is actually social networking that will get fashion professionals through the season this year. Metier spoke to Alexander Eissing, Development Director of Decayenne about why the fashionable elite are on-line.

**Lynn Furge:** What was to original concept behind Decayenne as an exclusive networking site?

**Alexander Eissing:** Decayenne was established in 2001 as a way for a group of close friends who travelled a lot to stay in touch and coordinate activities. This core concept has not fundamentally changed over the years but has instead developed by allowing friends to invite further friends, seizing the opportunity to meet and interact with more like-minded individuals. Decayenne is a home for people who enjoy growing through interaction with their peers, sharing culture, business, and entertainment in the right environments.

**LF:** Why do you feel "invitation only" networking works for your members?

**AE:** "Invitation only" is merely a way to prevent an over population; we wish to keep the trustworthy environment of our close-knit community and believe that with too much quantity it is difficult to maintain this quality. With a limited number of invitations members are more considerate and selective regarding the decision of who to invite. At Decayenne members are responsible for their actions and vouch for the people they bring into the network, which helps to maintain a self regulating system.

**LF:** How do you promote the Fashion Industry through your business? Do you have a lot of fashion business members?

**AE:** About 10% of our members work in the fashion industry, they use the Decayenne forums, our market section and organize themselves in groups for online discussions and business. The most important characteristic of Decayenne is bringing members together to real world events, such as to the New York Nolcha Fashion Week, where our members have the opportunity to meet and converse in person. Fashion is something that is relevant to all our members; many are important customers and trendsetters in the market who are aware of good taste and style.

**LF:** During a holiday season, where most business decisions are put off until the next year, why do you feel it is important for people to network and stay connected?

**AE:** We do not necessarily see networking as a discipline of business. On Decayenne networking is a way of living and consists of many different aspects which do not mainly have a commercial nature. In our network the logical progression of sociable and honest interactions between members often result in lasting business relationships.

**LF:** Do you have any advice for members that are trying to navigate the site for business purposes? / What five key things do you think people should try to accomplish when joining a networking website.

**AE:** Behave just like you would in real life. It's not the best idea to run around the streets connecting randomly to strangers and hard selling your business. Decayenne members know that business is just another dimension of social interaction, just like friendship, things work differently in life as on networks. It is always advantageous if you are already well-connected and initially know some members in the community. We do not encourage connecting to members that you do not know directly unless there is a specific reason. However, it is very easy to meet and become acquainted with other members through special events or through the many tools and features on our website. Developing a good network and finding the right people is dependent upon your level of activity inside the community - what you will get out of Decayenne is relative to your input. A well-defined and detailed profile will also allow other members to find and contact you. It is not difficult to make use of the many different potential opportunities waiting inside Decayenne.

**LF:** What is the difference between Decayenne and FaceBook, MySpace etc. other than the obvious Invitation.

**AE:** Every network evolves out of the same human desire for communication but pursues different strategies and goals. We have a restrictive policy instead of opening the doors. We focus on our environment instead of diluting it. Every approach has its legitimacy and target group, we are not better, simply different. Our invitations are appointed to individuals who share our aspiration to grow through interaction with other members, exploring the world and enriching our environment with their knowledge, experiences and relations. At Decayenne we appreciate intellectual diversity and leadership; we encourage discussions and hold up humanistic values.

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