

INTERNET

Chanel captures lifestyle of “Café Society” in high-jewelry effort

July 23, 2014



Chanel's Café Society high-jewelry collection

By JEN KING

France's Chanel is positioning high-jewelry as an approachable addition to every jewelry box by showing its pieces at different times of day.

Sign up now

Luxury Daily

Chanel's latest high-jewelry collection “Café Society” was introduced to newsletter subscribers on July 21 as well as on social media in the days before the email blast. Chanel's collection pays tribute to the 1920s era of café society, an elite social group that frequented fashionable spots such as nightclubs and cafés.

"Seeing products on real people and as a part of larger story is a lot more powerful than on mannequins or in displays," said Andrew Higgins, digital strategist at [Pixlee](#), San Francisco.

"Telling a story around Chanel's jewelry and building a lifestyle around their products helps add a layer of connection between the brand and consumer," he said.

"Consumers buy products because of how they make them feel and what they want to say about themselves; adding a lifestyle proponent to the brand helps to shape that conversation for the customer."

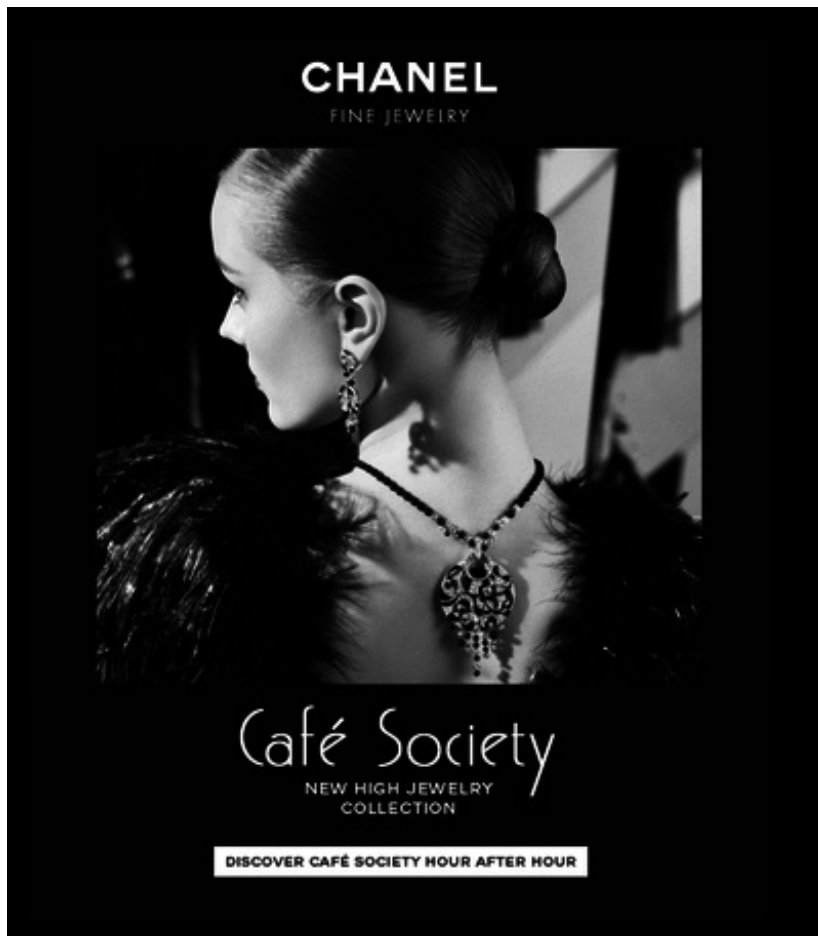
Mr. Higgins is not affiliated with Chanel, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Chanel did not respond by press deadline.

A day in the life

Chanel is exposing its consumers to a day in the life of a Café Society member with an email blast that features a GIF animation of the front and back of a model wearing a necklace from the brand's latest high-jewelry collection.

Copy was kept to a minimum, letting the animation's movement catch the subscriber's attention. The text included in the email read "Café Society" in large stylized font and a prompt to "discover Café Society hour after hour" in Chanel's traditional lettering.



Body of Chanel's Café Society email

The brand's effort on social media is nearly identical in terms of copy but features a different image of the same model seen in the email. A click-through on both land on Chanel's Web site where content for Café Society automatically loads.

Chanel's Café Society page opens to a black screen with "One day in Café Society" centered with a prompt to scroll down to navigate below it. Scrolling raises up a description of the collection that explains that the collection is "dedicated to audacity and inspired by freedom" while balancing between "the comfort of established rules and the reckless pursuit of novelty."

"This site aims to put the product in the background, which in a sense can hinder direct e-commerce, however by doing so it makes the product more approachable since it is

focusing on a lifestyle rather than just a simple item 'view' and 'purchase,'" said Olivia Holland, strategic planner at **Vertic**, New York. "Also, with this approach, users buy into a lifestyle rather than a product, which ensures longevity and loyalty amongst consumers.

"The most successful brands create an emotional connection to their consumers, rather than just a product push," she said.

The first hour to be presented by Chanel is 00:00, or midnight. The image from the email appears once again as a model in a feathered dress admires the front and back of her necklace in a mirror.

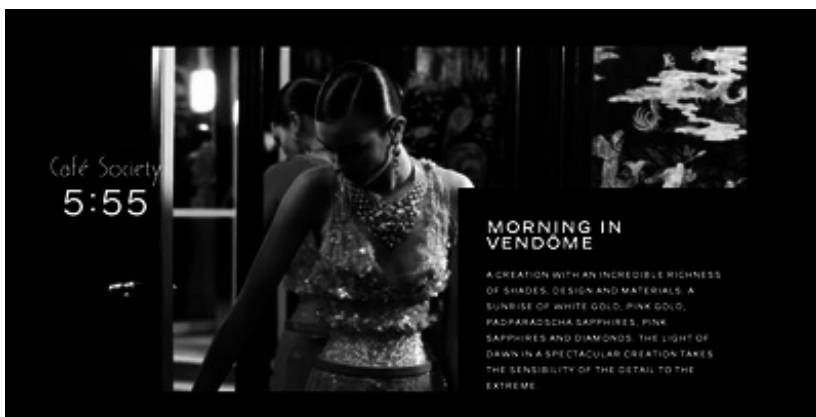


Midnight portion of the Café Society timeline

Tiles below continue to show the necklace and earrings suite from different angles in both still images and GIFs. When the consumer continues to scroll through, a text box labeled "Midnight" appears to give a description of the pieces seen in the section.

Chanel's Midnight suite in the Café Society collection features black onyx and diamonds to celebrate the "witching hour" through "spellbinding" shapes.

Next the timeline speeds up to 5:55 a.m. for "Morning in Vendôme." A GIF shows the Morning in Vendôme suite on a model wearing a formal cocktail dress as she walks up the steps with her shoes in her hand and closes the door behind her, clearly coming home from the previous evening.



Morning in Vendôme section

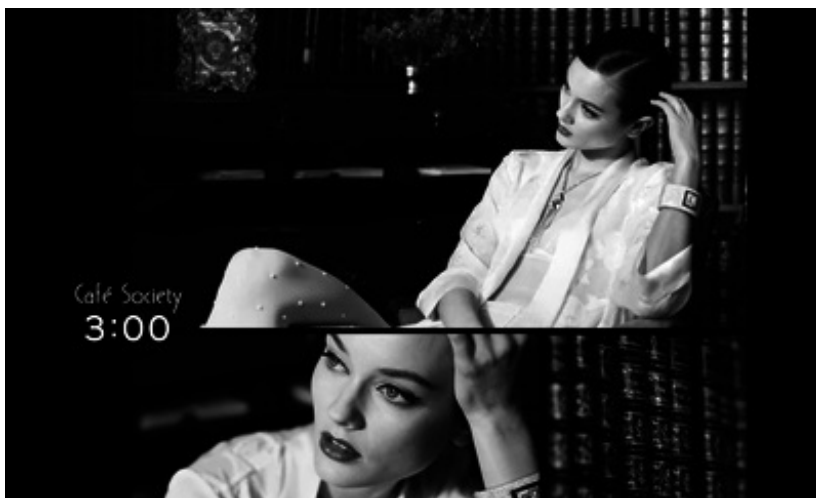
The suite includes earrings and large necklace of white and pink gold, padparadscha and

pink sapphires and diamonds.

Next, the timeline shows 12 o'clock in the afternoon with a woman wearing a bracelet and ring adjusts her hat. The text box, labeled "Broadway" explains that the pieces of this suite represent the geometric patterns of New York's streets, skyscrapers and the lights of Broadway.

At 3 p.m., the consumer sees a Café Society model reclining on a chair in a library for "Charleston." Two GIFs show the model's pensiveness while a third still image shows her with a happier expression.

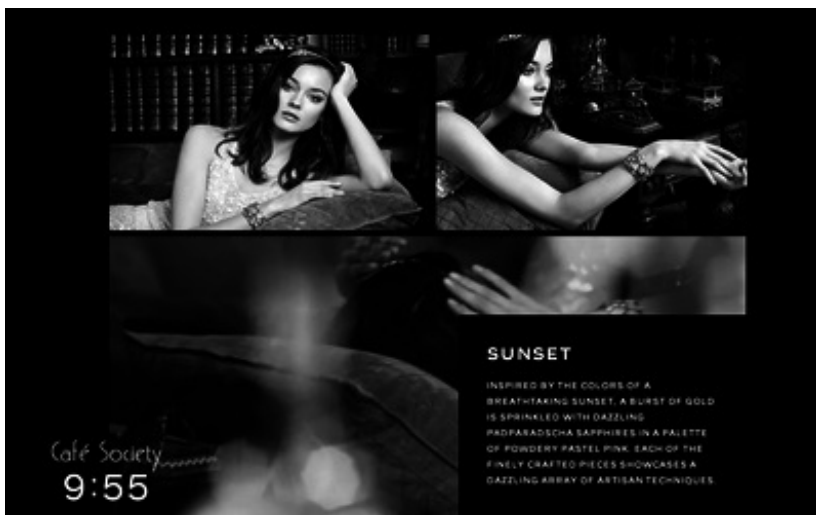
Chanel's Charleston pieces are designed to "slip on like a flapper dress, draping like a supple second skin," according to the text box for the suite that appears with the third image.



3 p.m. for a Café Society member

At 6 p.m., the model looks out the window while the curtains flow lightly in the breeze. The suite, titled "Symphony" includes diamonds of various sizes to represent different musical notes such as a half note or quarter note.

Lastly, at 9:55 a.m., a model wearing a diamond headband and bracelet is shown on a couch in the library seen in the afternoon section. The "Sunset" suite includes gold with padparadscha sapphires in powdery pink hues.



9:55 p.m. Sunset

When the last section is viewed the consumer can continue to scroll, but the timeline continues again, symbolizing the passage of time but not how the day is spent.

In the archives

Jewelers source inspiration from a multitude of places. Since vintage aesthetics are a popular style for many consumers, jewelers have reinterpreted their own Jazz era pieces to accommodate current trends.

For example, jeweler Tiffany & Co. pushed its '20s-inspired jewelry lines through advertisements on The New York Times' desktop and mobile sites on the day that Baz Luhrmann's "The Great Gatsby" hit theaters ([see story](#)).

Chanel often looks back to various aspects of its heritage to maintain relevancy. Most recently, the French atelier explored aspects of its fashion designs through eyeshadow palettes inspired by its iconic use of tweed fabric to appeal to both established and aspirational consumers ([see story](#)).

Exploring a collection gives reason for consumer interaction.

"Where they could have improved was to add more customer voice and participation to the initiative," Pixlee's Mr. Higgins said.

"Taking the opportunity one step further from allowing customers to just see the campaign, would be to allow them to participate through social media, user-generated content, or some sort of call to action in the Chanel's Café Society digital campaign," he said.

Without proper interaction, a initiative may be misleading.

"The point and click is a bit misleading, as a user may think they can click on the picture to further engage with the scene," Vertic's Ms. Holland said. "I think by adding an additional layer of engagement opportunity for the user, or a deeper level of immersion, it could have really taken this site over the top."

Final Take

Jen King, lead reporter for Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/_sywayJZj_A](https://www.youtube.com/embed/_sywayJZj_A)

© Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.