

MOBILE

Vera Wang woos upscale brides-to-be with iPhone application

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By ELIZABETH ZELESNY

Luxury couture bridal designer Vera Wang is showcasing the brand's iconic and elegant gowns via an iPhone application.

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Luxury Daily

The “Vera Wang Weddings” application allows users to browse a selection of couture gowns, watch videos of past collections, contact a bridal consultant and locate flagship salons and stores in their area.

“It is critical for luxury brands to have a deadly serious mobile presence with a heroic attention to detail,” said Brennan Hayden, vice president of WDA Mobile Marketing, East Lansing, MI.

“The latest mobile gadgets are moving mainstream faster than ever, in all areas of commerce and leisure, and brands will get left behind quickly if they wait,” he said.

Mr. Hayden is not associated with Vera Wang or the development of the application. He has commented generally on the importance of branded applications for luxury brands.

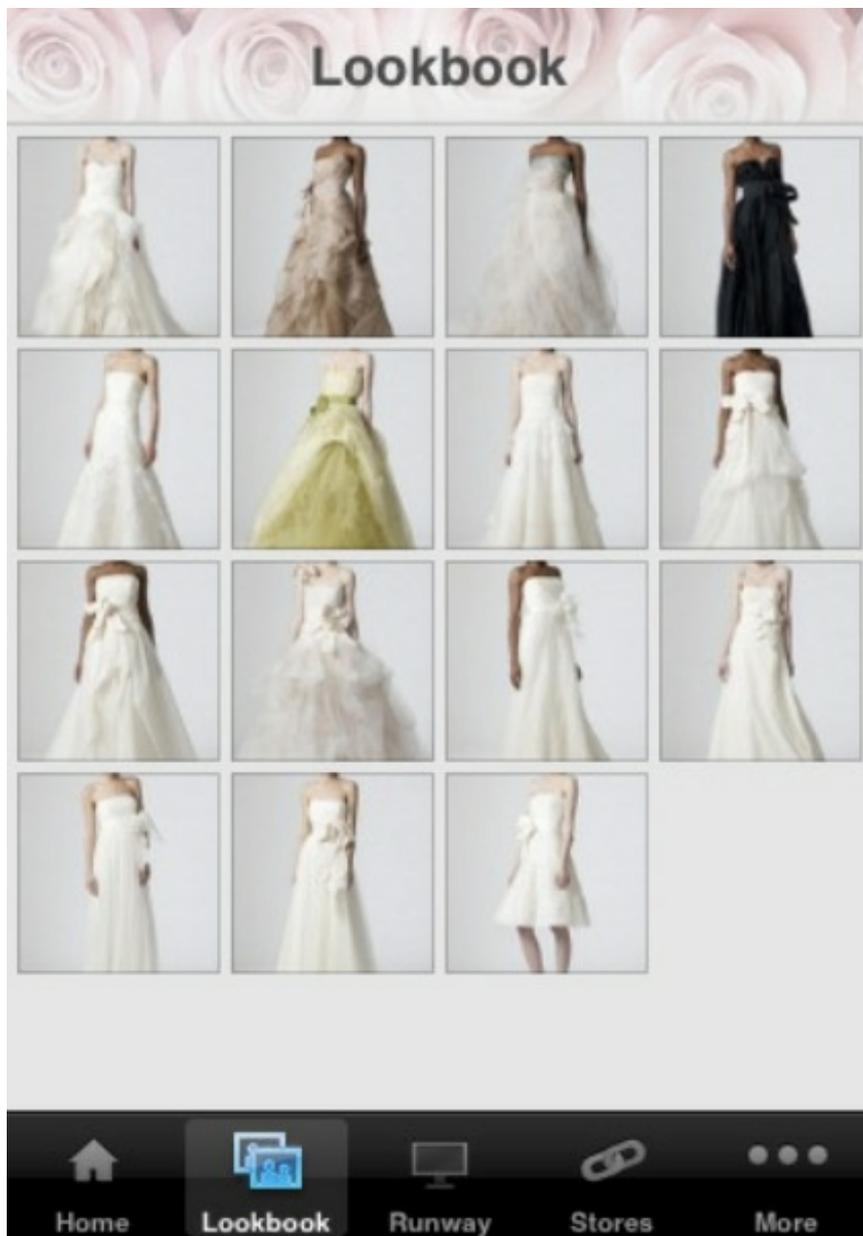
The **Vera Wang** application is available for free in Apple’s App store.

How it works

The Vera Wang weddings homepage has five clickable elements. It displays a menu with options that link consumers to different functionalities within the application.

The options are as follows: Home, Lookbook, Runway, Stores and More. Consumers can tap on one of the options and it transfers to the desired category.

Users can tap on the Lookbook category to browse through 15 couture dresses. Simply click on one of the gowns to enlarge the photo.

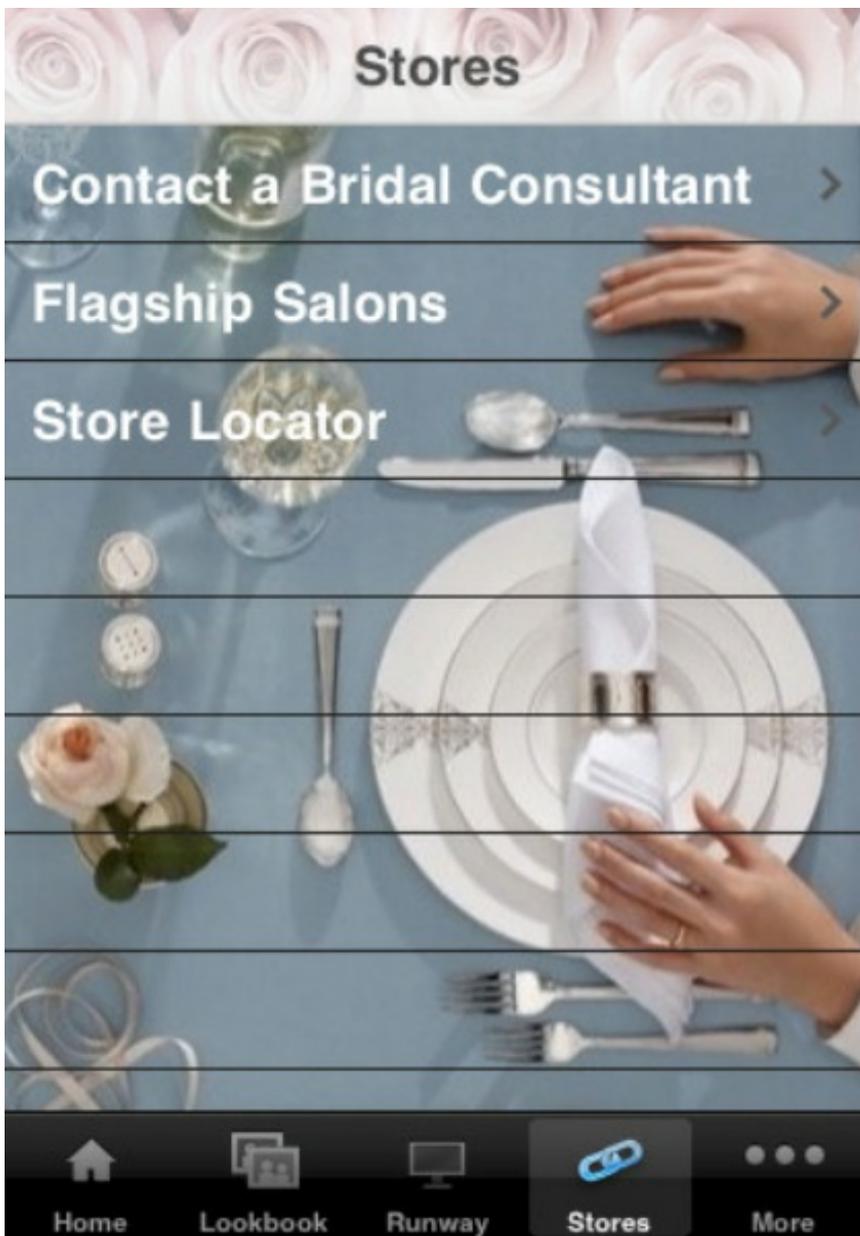


Screengrab of the Lookbook category

Consumers can click on the heart icon at the bottom of any section to favorite an item.

The Runway section directs consumers to videos of past Vera Wang lookbooks and bridal shows.

Users can contact a bridal consultant via the Stores category. Consumers can also locate flagship salons.



The Stores category of the application

In the More option, users can catch up on the brand's latest events and news and sign up for Vera Wang's mailing list to receive exclusive updates.

If consumers tap on the heart icon while looking through the sections, they can view their selections via the favorite's category in the More option.

Top Users

Users can earn points every time you use the Vera Wang application. The more engaged consumers are, the more points they will earn.

Affluents can log in to their Twitter and Facebook accounts via the accounts section of the More option.

Users can earn more points by commenting, posting photos, sharing items to Facebook and Twitter, and listening to music.

These points will add up and consumers can be made into a top user, and the top 50 users are displayed in the top users section of the More option.

Logistics of the mobile strategy

It is extremely important for luxury brands to have a mobile presence. The iPhone is an ideal platform for brands to showcase their collections and engage consumers before they take a trip to the showroom.

“Apple’s product-building tools make it nearly impossible to build an ugly experience,” Mr. Hayden said.

“So it is a safe environment for luxury brands, who like to be very careful about their associations and cringe at what passes for brand messaging on some mobile services,” he said.

By incorporating social media presence via the application, Vera Wang draws awareness to itself, which in turn, generates traffic to the showrooms and Web site.

Mr. Hayden believes luxury brands should have a strong mobile presence, but also keep in mind that it properly reflects the brand.

“While it is often true that it is better to do nothing rather than to do it badly, luxury brands don’t have the option of choosing: They must go mobile now, and it must be excellent,” he said.

Final take