

IN-STORE

Bloomingdale's incorporates mobile touchpoints throughout renovated Silicon Valley store

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Exterior of Bloomingdale's Stanford store

By SARAH JONES

Department store chain Bloomingdale's is opening its first fully mobile store in Palo Alto, CA, Oct. 10 to appeal to the "digitally sophisticated" tech community in Silicon Valley.

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Luxury Daily

Featuring smart dressing rooms, mobile checkout, consumer-facing tablets and sales associates armed with mobile devices, the store in the Stanford Shopping Center heightens the omnichannel experience for shoppers. This neighborhood is a good testing ground for new retail technologies, which Bloomingdale's may want to carry over to other locations.

"The timing was right for the this particular store opening and we are expanding the concept to other stores," said Jack Hruska, executive vice president of creative services at [Bloomingdale's](#), New York.

Touch to shop

Bloomingdale's worked to achieve a slimmer, more efficient space with its renovation of

the Stanford store.



Interior of Bloomingdale's Stanford store

The Palo Alto location will be the smallest full-line Bloomingdale's in the brand's portfolio and sets the template for future expansion. As technology continues to transform the shopping experience, many brands are finding that they can do more with less.

Previously, the store was 220,000 square feet. Now, the space totals 125,000 square feet ([see story](#)).



Interior of Bloomingdale's Stanford store

To expand on the 68 designer shops and 100 news brands carried in-store, there will be touchscreen tablets in the men's and women's shoes, handbags and home departments. Using these devices, consumers can browse all of the products Bloomingdale's carries across stores and online, searching by brand or style.

There are also options to get more information about an item in-hand by scanning or inputting the product number, which pulls up merchandise details and guides. From the tablet, the user can share favorites with friends or a sales associate.



Interior of Bloomingdale's Stanford store

Prompting repeat visits, the shoe and handbag departments will feature teasers of items coming soon.

Wall-mounted tablets are also included in the dressing rooms, to allow shoppers to get more information, read reviews, see available sizes and colors and get ideas of other garments and accessories to complete an ensemble. Through these devices, consumers can also call for sales associate help without leaving the room.



Interior of Bloomingdale's Stanford store

The lighting in the fitting room can be adjusted via touchscreen mirror controls to provide the best viewing of a particular look.

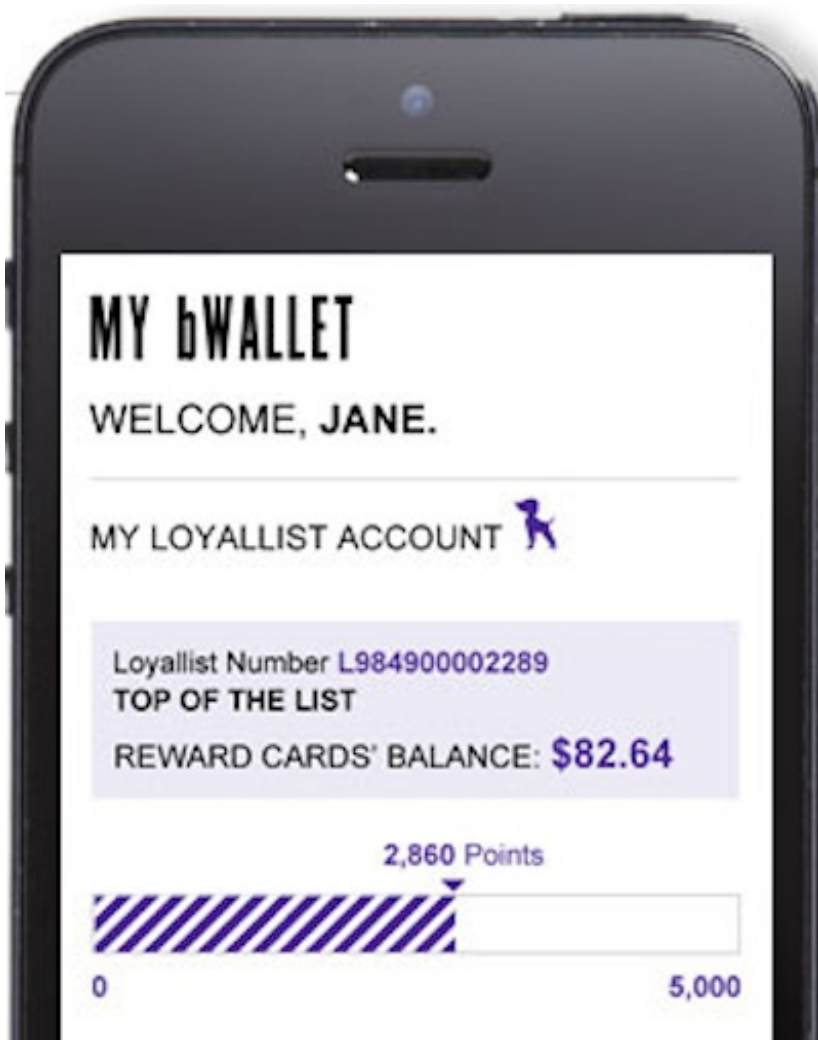
Recognizing the importance of personal devices to its consumers, Bloomingdale's has also installed communal charging stations within the fitting rooms.



Interior of Bloomingdale's Stanford store

All sales associates will have mobile devices on their person, allowing them to look up product inventory and availability, as well as call, email or text consumers. In addition to being used as a research tool, the mobile devices will be able to complete transactions as another point-of-sale.

Adding to the omnichannel shopping experience, consumers are encouraged to use bWallet, a recently launched tool similar to Google Wallet, that compiles all of a user's rewards cards and special offers in one place. bWallet syncs across devices through a login, allowing consumers to access the same profile through the Bloomingdale's mobile application, desktop or mobile device.



Example of bWallet

Digital service

In response to how smartphones have altered the way consumers shop, a new report by Forrester Research indicates that 66 percent of luxury consumers are more willing to interact with a sales associate equipped with a mobile device.

The “A New Generation of Clienteling” report discovered that some consumers do not feel that sales associates are the best source of product information. With the role of sales associates changing, bringing mobile technology into stores may help re-establish trust while creating an enhanced experience for consumers ([see story](#)).

Enabling consumer research, both Printemps ([see story](#)) and Galeries Lafayette ([see story](#)) created apps that allow consumers to map their paths through the large stores.

Luxury retailers need to focus on information to selectively target consumers within an omnichannel marketing and commerce strategy, said a former Saks Fifth Avenue executive at Luxury FirstLook: Strategy 2014.

Across the board, said Denise Incandela, consumers give better customer service scores to retailers' ecommerce sites than their bricks-and-mortar stores. Knowing that consumers are shopping more across channels, retailers have the opportunity to make their in-store experiences more valuable for consumers, and more reflective of the online experience, which is very customer-focused.

In order to create a more seamless shopping experience for consumers, retailers should develop a plan to share inventory across channels. This means a customer shopping in-store can see what is available online and an online shopper is able to view what is available in a physical store ([see story](#)).

While some retailers' solutions have been solely initiating mobile POS or adding an app, Bloomingdale's top-to-bottom digital strategy for this revamped store reflects what consumers are looking for from an omnichannel perspective.

"It is an expression of our brand that will entice our customers," Mr. Hruska said. "We hope to strengthen the merchandise assortment and our relationship with customers and the community.

"We want to have many ways in which our customer can shop at Bloomingdale's and it starts with the store experience," he said. "We want to make it easy to satisfy shoppers on all fronts."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/XtNWKyqLvk4](https://www.youtube.com/embed/XtNWKyqLvk4)

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