

MOBILE

Gucci bolsters mobile presence with Foursquare addition

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By RACHEL LAMB

Italian fashion house Gucci is expanding its mobile horizons with a new Foursquare initiative meant to drive consumers into its retail locations.

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Customers can receive mayoral statuses for numerous check-ins and unlock limited-edition badges from Gucci locations and events around the world. Gucci's enhanced mobile presence is meant to engage potential and current customers and ultimately drive them in-store.

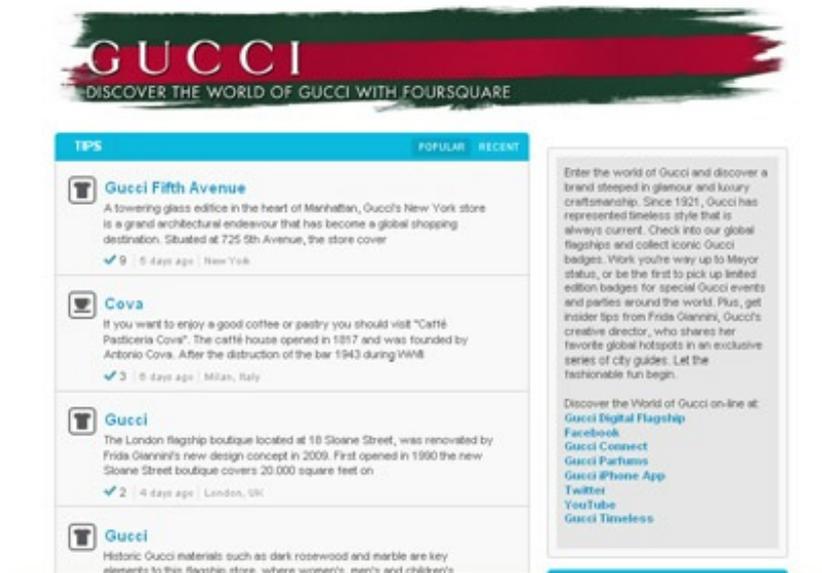
"Affluent Americans are more likely to carry a smartphone or iPad, appreciate extraordinary customer service and show willingness to spend more on products and services when value is established," said Jeff Hasen, chief marketing officer of Hipcricket, Kirkland, WA. "By adding a mobile component, what was previously a passive activity becomes interactive and engaging.

"Beyond selling a product or service, the goal is to build loyalty that leads to repeated business and referrals," he said.

Hipcricket is a mobile marketing service provider. It is not associated with **Gucci** and Mr. Hasen agreed to comment as a third-party expert source on mobile marketing.

Gucci's mobile initiatives

Gucci's [Foursquare page](#) has its retail location information for cities all around the world.



Gucci on Foursquare

Consumers can read tips from Gucci icons such as creative director Frida Giannini who reveals her favorite places and hotspots from around the globe.

For example, one of Gucci's tips promotes Le Baron de Paris, a nightclub in Tokyo where Gucci had an afterparty and was for an awards show last year.

Following the brand on Foursquare is a way for Gucci loyalists to have exclusive experiences such as brand badges and a chance to be the mayor of a specific retail location.

Users can also find Gucci retail locations or places that the brand recommends and add them to their Foursquare "To Do" list.

Gucci, which is a user on Foursquare, has already checked-in at flagship stores in London, Milan and Paris, as well as various hotspots that employees of the brand enjoy visiting.

Brand loyalists have already claimed mayorship in these places, as well.

Gucci also has a mobile application available for iPad and iPhone ([see story](#)).

The mobile application is packed with exclusive content, including videos, images and music playlists from Ms. Giannini.

Exclusive video content from the iPhone application

More mobile moves

Although having Foursquare and a mobile application is a giant step into mobile marketing, there are other ways that luxury brands can use mobile to their advantage.

Most affluent mobile subscribers carry smartphones, so using every mobile opportunity can be extremely advantageous to a luxury brand. These could include applications, the mobile Web or text messaging.

“It is important to remember that a campaign with a simple SMS call-to-action often leads to a consumer joining a mobile loyalty club that provides ongoing benefits to a luxury brand,” Mr. Hasen said.

Implementing a commerce-enabled mobile Web browser could be a great way for smartphone users – other than those who have an iPhone – to buy Gucci products online.

Furthermore, iPhone users who choose not to download the application can buy Gucci products via mobile device.

“Quite simply, many luxury brand customers lead on-the-go, connected lives that put the mobile device within a few feet of them wherever they travel,” Mr. Hasen said. “Mobile is often the only effective way to ensure you are reaching an affluent consumer when he or she is out and about and more likely to purchase.

“Also, because the price of goods and services is higher, affluent mobile subscribers often want to go further than a traditional ad,” he said. “An example would be a consumer seeking to learn more about a product or service through a video or Web site delivered via mobile.”

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