

MOBILE

Balenciaga reaches fashionistas on the move with Style.com ad

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Balenciaga Nude Marble Work handbag

By SARAH JONES

French fashion house Balenciaga is appealing to the fashionably informed readership of Style.com with an advertisement on the publication's mobile Web site.

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Luxury Daily

Forgoing using its latest campaign imagery, the ad chose to focus on the brand name against a white marble background. Balenciaga's effort was placed during New York Fashion Week, at a time when many of Style.com's readers are anxiously awaiting new runway images, allowing the brand to reach an audience for which its brand name may be enough.

"Marble seems to be the common thread across their new campaign," said Jon Nolz, vice president, product management at [Hipcricket](#), Bellevue, WA. "Although, I question how well it works for a mobile ad, as it doesn't inspire consumers to take action, nor is there a call to action to understand what you are tapping to.

"Balenciaga is solely relying on the brand awareness they have previously created through their campaigns."

Mr. Nolz is not affiliated with Balenciaga, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Balenciaga did not respond by press deadline.

Streamlined approach

Balenciaga's ad ran on the News section of Style.com in the banner position. It features a marbleized background with the brand logo spelled out in white font.



STYLE.COM



News



Balenciaga ad on Style.com

Marble is one of the codes of Balenciaga, and serves to create more of a branded image within the ad.

The ad does not include a call-to-action for the consumer, but those who click-through are brought to Balenciaga's mobile-optimized Web site homepage.

Here, central to the page is the brand's resort 2015 campaign. Consumers are invited to "discover" the full images for the campaign, which features models lit by a pink cast in a grey room.



Landing page

A tap on each campaign image pulls up a zoom feature, allowing consumers to see more details of the apparel and handbags the models are wearing.

Sliding across the featured tiles on the homepage, consumers can also read about the brand's new SoHo store and access a store locator.

The spring 2015 collection is also featured. Within a dedicated page, consumers can watch a packaged video of the runway show and browse all of the looks from the line up.

Below the top slideshow are links to shop various collections within Balenciaga's online store, including handbags, women's ready-to-wear and menswear.

"If other consumers have the same experience on their mobile landing page as I did, they will not have much interaction due to the amount of frustration I felt trying to navigate the site," Mr. Nolz said. "The way the mobile site is anchored, a user doesn't realize they can swipe to the left to get to more info – it's only obvious one can scroll down.

"If brands are going to invest in mobile, they have to make it simple and easy or they risk losing their customers."

Staying up-to-date

Other apparel brands have turned to Style.com during runway show season to reach its fashion-forward readers.

British apparel and accessories maker Burberry is appealing to the fashion hungry readers of Style.com's mobile-optimized site with an advertisement promoting its autumn/winter 2014 handbags.

The banner ad sends consumers directly to a product page for the collection, bypassing any content in favor of simplified commerce. Placing this ad during fashion month will help reach fans following the runway shows closely, an ideal audience for Burberry ([see story](#)).

Are luxury mobile ads effective without a call to action? There are two schools of thought on this, but the emerging debate is whether the luxury brand's name is draw enough to encourage click-through on mobile ads.

With the limited space on a mobile ad, luxury marketers should only keep crucial information to not overwhelm or confuse consumers. Although a call to action may not be absolutely necessary, marketers should make their mobile ads appealing enough so that consumers want to find out more ([see story](#)).

Balenciaga's effort is more likely to drive general brand awareness rather than purchases due to the way the landing page is designed.

"This mobile ad is definitely working to build brand awareness for Balenciaga as it will be challenging for the consumer to complete a purchase based on the user experience that has been put forth on the mobile site," Mr. Nolz said. "It seems as though they have tried to replicate their Web site on their mobile site – which is a recipe for disaster for any brand."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/zlePZCr83Kk>

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