

OUT OF HOME

Fortnum & Mason, Harrods extend store influence through flower show

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Fortnum & Mason at RHS Chelsea Flower Show

By SARAH JONES

Both Fortnum & Mason and Harrods are participating in the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in London to create an immersive branded experience outside of the store.

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Harrods will be hosting a conceptual Fragrance Garden, while Fortnum & Mason will be serving guests Champagne, canapés and afternoon tea from two different outdoor eating areas. Despite the event being months away, both retailers are already drumming up interest among their consumers to ensure ample traffic once the show begins.

"Retailers are always looking for unique ways to reach out with their brand beyond the walls of their physical store," said Dave Rodgers, a retail business development executive at [Microsoft Canada](#), Toronto. "For Fortnum and Mason, the ability to stage an Oasis at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show is a natural connection. Events like this are very well suited to hosting an elegant dining experience.

"For Fortnum & Mason, the event frames their brand with a unique opportunity to share their products and engage customers in an unforgettable experience," he said. "Anyone that shares in this experience, or has the opportunity to see the Fortnum & Mason presence

at the Chelsea Flower Show is likely to come away with a positive impression which will serve the brand well.

"With respect to Harrods, their participation in the event is quite creative. Fragrances very frequently find their inspiration from botanical sources. Most retailers look to their fragrance and cosmetic business as the way they define a customer's first impression of the store and place that department at the main entrance. From this perspective alone the association between the Flower Show and Harrods is a natural.

"Harrods hasn't rested on that as a reason to connect with the event, they've used it as a way to showcase their vision and capability to create an engaging customer experience. What's really impressive is the way they've hit all the marks on this. They do indeed celebrate perfume through the installation they've created at the event and they've engaged the audience with many, if not all, the senses."

Mr. Rodgerson is not affiliated with Fortnum & Mason or Harrods, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Fortnum & Mason and **Harrods** were unable to comment directly before press deadline.

Flower power

The Chelsea Flower Show will be held from May 19-23 at the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

At the show, Harrods will unveil its first conceptual garden, created in partnership with designer Sheena Seeks. Through the medium of flowers, Harrods celebrates perfume's collision of nature and science.

One side of the garden will feature flowers housed in oversize scientific beakers and test tubes, representing the 19th century technique of enfleurage, in which flowers' scents were captured in wax. The adjacent side will show the flowers reappearing and emerging as paper blossoms.

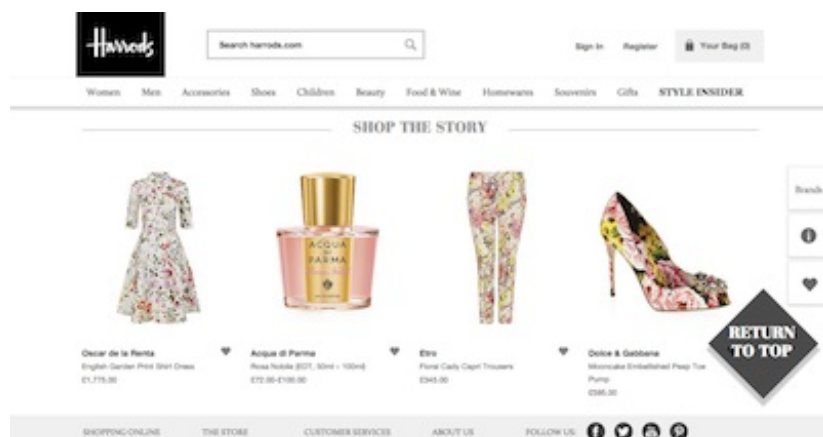


Rendering of Harrods' Fragrance Garden

Consumers can interact with giant screens, using their phones or tablets to unlock an augmented reality experience that animates images.

Along with Harrods' announcement, the retailer shared an edit of floral items, including

an Oscar de la Renta dress and Dolce & Gabbana pumps, as well as Acqua di Parma's Rosa Nobile and Penhaligon's Elizabethan Rose.



Screenshot of Harrods Style Insider article

In a brand statement, Deb Bee, Harrods director of creative marketing, said, “We’re delighted to be exhibiting at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show for the first time, in 2015. We are committed to giving our customers an innovative experience and creating a concept garden in collaboration with an award-winning designer is an ideal platform from which to do this.”

Fortnum & Mason will have prime placement within the flower show within the President’s Marquee, a space designed for the queen’s visit to the grounds. Here, consumers can book a private corporate dining experience for up to 110 guests.

In a secluded area of the show grounds, Fortnum will also set up the Chelsea Oasis, which can be booked for parties of two or 40 with the same price per head. Groups of 10 or more will get a private table, while smaller parties will be on shared tables within the space.



Page from Fortnum & Mason Chelsea Flower Show brochure

Fortnum & Mason is offering a range of packages within its Chelsea Oasis. “The Monarch,” priced at up to \$961 per person depending on the day, includes entrance to the

show and an introduction by a horticultural expert, a hot breakfast, a four-course lunch that begins with a glass of Laurent-Perrier Champagne, the retailer's traditional afternoon tea served out of a silver tea pot, musical entertainment and access to a complimentary bar serving wine, beer, tea and coffee all day.

For about \$300, consumers can attend a Last Night in Chelsea event hosted by the retailer on Friday, May 22. Guests can savor hot and cold canapés as well as chef table offerings including smoked salmon, antipasti and desserts while enjoying entertainment and an open bar.



Page from Fortnum & Mason Chelsea Flower Show brochure

In 2014, Fortnum & Mason partnered with the Port Eliot Festival in Cornwall, England, to reach foodies outside of its store.

For the festival, which ran from July 24-27, Fortnum & Mason offered dinner service, a pop-up bar and special hampers created with festival-goers in mind. By bringing the in-store food experience to an outdoor venue in the countryside, Fortnum & Mason will be able to connect with consumers outside of the London area, who may be more inclined to visit on their next trip to the city ([see story](#)).

Experiential marketing

Trade shows can provide an opportunity for brands to give consumers hands-on interaction with their products.

During Architectural Digest's Home Design Show last year, a number of brands took the opportunity to align themselves with a cause.

Barneys New York, Roche Bobois, Ralph Lauren Home, Diane von Furstenberg and Calvin Klein participated in Design Industries Foundation Fighting AIDS' Dining By Design event, for which they each created a design installation. For these brands, this event balanced philanthropy with the opportunity to have an artistic display at a large home interior show ([see story](#)).

When brands can incorporate digital displays into their show appearances, the technology can make an impact.

"What impresses me the most is Harrods use of digital signage at the event," Mr. Rodgeron said. "In doing so they have created a means to connect an external event with an online experience which in turn leads consumers back to the physical store.

"This is a sign of an organization that not only understands omnichannel, they are confident enough to implement a strategy that embraces it fully," he said. "This is one of the rare examples that I have seen where a retailer has leveraged technology in context, to engage consumers and drive business both online and in-store in a way that complements both entities."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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