

EVENTS/CAUSES

Neiman Marcus activates attendants at SXSW with discussions, music

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Neiman Marcus storefront

By KAYSORIN

Retailer Neiman Marcus Group is bringing attention to successful women with its second annual Make Some Noise brand platform activation at SXSW in Austin, TX.

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Make Some Noise will run from March 18-20 and include events such as panel discussions, live music and parties. By engaging consumers in discussion and appealing to contemporary issues, the brand is ensuring that it stays relevant.

“The campaign celebrates women on the rise, women making a difference and women shaking up the status quo,” said Ginger Reeder, vice president of corporate communications at [Neiman Marcus Group Services](#), Dallas. “We have dressed women of style for over 100 years, and we know that style breeds confidence.

“We learned last year that this initiative can align the entire Neiman Marcus brand, not just our contemporary customer,” she said. “It is not only relevant for our next generation of Neiman Marcus customers, but our core customers as well.”

Turn up

The Make Some Noise activation will begin on Wednesday, March 18 with a party

featuring performances by Grammy Award-winning artist Jess Glynne and DJ Jilly Hendrix. The event will also include live mural painting and an ice cream demo.

On Thursday March 19 there will be a discussion of gender in the media during the day and a performance of live music at night. Friday will feature a panel discussion on new roles for women, an exclusive chat with actress and philanthropist Rosario Dawson and another performance of live music in the evening.

“Clearly Neiman Marcus is making a statement,” said Gustavo Gomez, director of research and methodology at [Envirosell](#), New York. “They want to bring awareness to the situation that women still face in the world, empower their customers with knowledge and make a difference.

“By participating in SXSW they are targeting an audience that is young, connected, creative and with either good incomes or the potential for them in the future, in other words, current and future customers,” he said. “They are taking advantage of the social and cultural capital the event provides.”

Make Some Noise will be hosted at a house located at 78 Rainey Street in Austin, Texas where Neiman Marcus has created a shoppable showroom in which consumers can digitally purchase products specially selected by the department store chain. The showroom will allow Neiman Marcus to facilitate purchases during the SXSW festival.

Neiman Marcus also created the hashtag #NMMakeSomeNoise to allow participants to share their experiences on social media. This will allow the brand to increase its publicity during the event.

Last year’s launch of Make Some Noise was a huge success, hosting two of the top 50 shows at SXSW according to Rolling Stone magazine. The retailer hopes that by continuing the project it will become a regular feature at many events.

“Our goal is to embody Make Some Noise in every facet of our business over the next three years,” Neiman Marcus’ Ms. Reeder said. “We plan to activate the platform at key cultural events over the next three years.

“SXSW is the largest music festival of its kind in the world,” she said. “It is a key cultural event.”

Timely matter

The department store chain is well aware of the importance of keeping up with the times. While this is the first event of this kind it has hosted, Neiman Marcus often introduces new technology to improve consumers’ experience.

For example, it recently changed the apparel shopping experience for consumers with a new digital mirror that remembers users.

The Memory Mirror takes a 360-degree video of a client modeling a particular outfit, allowing them to see clothing on themselves from all angles as well as save and share the

visual. This interactive digital touchpoint will alter the in-store experience for Neiman Marcus' consumers and further empower sales associates to provide customer service ([see story](#)).

Additionally, the fashion retailer finds creative ways to use technology to spur conversations. Neiman Marcus Group gave consumers a new way to pay with the launch of a brand-specific mobile wallet.

Neiman Marcus worked with Capital One to create a mobile payment solution that enables consumers to store credit card information within its application for iPhone, allowing them to use their phone's screen as a form of payment when in-store. This claimed to be the first mobile wallet released that was created specially for a retail card partner ([see story](#)).

These important advances improve the consumer's experience making it more likely that he or she will stay loyal to the brand. While supporting social causes helps the brand gain publicity, it does not necessarily increase purchases.

"Some customers let causes determine consumer choices but others won't change brands just because the brand supports a cause," Envirosell's Mr. Gomez said. "The event and the curated shopping experience that goes with [Make Some Noise] allows Neiman Marcus to showcase their product and not only depend on the hollow effect of the event."

Final Take

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