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EVENTS/CAUSES

# Which high-end venues get the luxury seal of approval?

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The Raleigh South Beach

By JEN KING

Luxury brands extend their dedication to quality to every aspect of their business whether it be a window display, an advertisement or an event for their most enthusiastic consumers.



Sourcing a venue that evokes a brand's message, overall and for that specific event's callto-action, can be intimidating due to the volume of spaces available in metropolitan areas. Venues that recall sophistication, elegance and modernity are often booked for product launches and parties to celebrate a brand's accomplishments and happenings.

"An event is a reflection of the brand," said Jayna Cooke, CEO of **EventUp**, Chicago. "The brand is inviting people in and saying 'look who we are.' The venue is a large portion of that because it is essentially the largest part of the event.

"The venue is often the first impression that guests get for a brand," she said. "Venues set the tone for the entire event, therefore setting the tone for the brand.

"It depends on the brand but normally because they want to control the visual they look for large white spaces where they can bring in their own elements and make it 'theirs.'"

#### Party on

In-person branded events reinforce the connection between a brand and its core consumer group. Events give brands the opportunity to showcase to the consumer why their interest was piqued to begin with by creating a meaningful memory of a night out.

EventUp, an event planning service that connects hosts, either private clients or brands, to available venues suitable for their occasions' needs, has compiled a list of the top spaces across the country that have been booked by the luxury sector, ranging from real estate firms to legendary fashion houses and art fairs.

10ak



# 10ak

Located where New York's Meatpacking District meets Chelsea, 10ak has seen events organized by real estate brokerage Town Residential, W magazine and fashion designer Alexander Wang.

The Bazaar by José Andrés Beverly Hills



The Bazaar

Situated on the ground floor of the SLS Hotel at Beverly Hills, The Bazaar was rented out by Rolls-Royce for the unveiling of an automobile model.

The Continental Club



The Continental Club

With a speakeasy feel, this restaurant in downtown Los Angeles has been the site of events by national sports organizations such as the NFL and NBA as well as beauty marketer Estée Lauder.

The DL Rooftop



The DL Rooftop's main floor dining room

The DL's third floor events space is a spacious rooftop found on the corner of Delancey Street and Ludlow Street in New York's Lower East Side. Media conglomerate Condé Nast, market researcher Deloitte and real estate firm Douglas Elliman have held events in the space.

Game



Game

Booked by both Google and Twitter, Game is located in New York's Meatpacking District. Its menu, a gourmet twist on traditional bar foods, has been curated by Jesse Aghravi, Michael Tyler and Rufus Read.

Hudson Terrace



Hudson Terrace

Found near the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum on New York's Hudson River, this venue boasts a view of the river and surrounding Midtown. Hudson Terrace has been selected as event venue for fashion brands Fendi, Chanel and Calvin Klein as well as auctioneers Christie's and Sotheby's and media firm Condé Nast.

Hyde Sunset Kitchen



# Hyde Sunset Kitchen

A cross between a West Hollywood restaurant and a Hollywood lounge, this space includes a menu by Top Chef's Chris Crary. This space was the venue for a Tacori jewelry launch.

Opia



#### Opia

Found on the corner of Lexington Avenue and 57th Street in New York, Opia marries the "mysterious cool of New York and the à la mode sophistication of Paris." This has resulted in the space being booked for events hosted by fashion houses Christian Dior, Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Hermès, beauty brands Lancôme and Guerlain, retailer Bloomingdale's, automaker Mercedes-Benz and watchmaker Tag Heuer.

The Raleigh South Beach



The Raleigh South Beach

Located on Miami's South Beach neighborhood main drag of Collins Street the hotel has been selected as the venue for Mercedes-Benz's Fashion Show Swim edition.

SLS Hotel South Beach



SLS Hotel South Beach

Also found in Miami, the SLS Hotel South Beach is considered the best property to stay at for the annual Art Basel art fair with events in-house and nearby.

Union Square Penthouse



The Union Square Penthouse

The Union Square Penthouse overlooks New York's prime neighborhoods such as Times Square and Wall Street with views stretching all the way to Brooklyn and New Jersey. The space has been the site of events organized by the Human Rights Watch, credit company American Express and fashion brand Armani Exchange.

Up & Down



## Up & Down

Part lounge, part karaoke bar, this nightclub venue in New York's Meatpacking District has been the location of parties thrown by media group Condé Nast, real estate firm Douglas Elliman and Du Jour magazine.

For more detailed information regarding the venues listed above, visit EventUp's Web site.

## All for the experience

Although digital marketing works to establish the consumer's interest and is the starting point of the path to purchase, an in-store event goes beyond this to forge a personalized relationship.

Research conducted by Wealth-X suggests that 68 percent of luxury industry insiders believe digital marketing is not an effective method to reach ultra-high-net-worth individuals.

While social media accounts and content rich Web sites can bolster brand awareness, they do not lead directly to sales or client acquisition for the wealthiest clients. To reach these important clients, providing unique experiences to the right people is still the best approach (see story).

Venues outside of the typical centers of luxury should be on the radar of event planners working with luxury brands.

"New York, Los Angeles, of course [see a high number of events,] but we have also seen a lot of activity in San Francisco, and other more remote areas in California," Ms. Cooke said. "Brands are starting to focus on making their event more of a destination.

"Chicago has also started hosting more luxury events due to the fact that it is central to

New York and Los Angeles."

Final Take Jen King, lead reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

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