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Saks gives fresh take on the modern woman in fall beauty catalog

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Cover of Saks' fall 2015 beauty catalog

By JEN KING

Department store chain Saks Fifth Avenue is helping define the fragrance that speaks to consumers' "inner essence" through the retailer's fall beauty catalog.

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The catalog itself is divided into five categories meant to outline different beauty personalities, and while its 59 pages are stocked with products, the retailer realizes that selecting the right items can be a challenge, especially in terms of fragrances. To aid in further discovery, Saks developed a fragrance quiz on its blog Saks POV to add a level of digitized service as well as increase interaction with its catalog.

"This time of year, our mailboxes tend to become even more crowded with offers and promotions," said Courtney Albert, management consultant for [The Parker Avery Group](#), Atlanta. "Having a digitized version of the beauty catalog allows the consumer to access it on-demand without additional clutter or searching through the bin.

"The digitized version also attracts and caters to a younger demographic that may not have an established purchase history to be included on the initial print distribution list," she said. "And the online version allows this group to access the information through the

channel they are most comfortable.

"Beauty items, especially fragrances, are a very personalized purchase. As we move towards holiday gifting, these items will be add on purchases for the buyer when holiday shopping for others. On the other end, it may inspire stocking stuffers and smaller gifts for others."

Ms. Albert is not affiliated with Saks, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Saks did not respond by press deadline.

Fragrances of fall

The Saks fall beauty catalog begins with a promotional offer for consumers who spend \$125 or more on beauty products. If spent between Oct. 1-10, the consumer will receive a large tote bag filled with travel-size samples and a personalized letter charm.



Gift-with-purchase promotion at Saks

On the following page, the retailer promotes other gifts-with-purchase that will assist consumers freshening up their beauty regimen for fall. In addition to a tiered gift card reward system on Oct. 1-2, Saks will also have gift-with-purchase options from brands such as Estee Lauder, Yves Saint Laurent, Lancome, Chantecaille and Giorgio Armani.

As with any beauty routine, the Saks fall beauty catalog begins with skincare that offers a weightless alternative to the heavy formulas of yesterday. Products in this section are made by Guerlain, Estee Lauder and La Prairie, among others.

Additional pages share scented candles by Le Labo, Hermes hand soaps and concealers from La Prairie.

The seasonal content begins on the 16th page of the catalog with text explaining that this fall sees a number of fragrance debuts that offer a "fresh take on femininity for the modern woman." For instance, the section's opening image is placed opposite the first fragrance by French couturier Alaïa ([see story](#)).



Opening page for The Modern Woman section

Within the section, up until the end of the catalog, fragrance is the main focus. Each page is assigned a descriptor, such as warmth or brilliance, radiance and poise, to describe the fragrance on display as well as the potential characteristics of the wearer.

For example, Balance is paired with Givenchy's L'Atelier de Givenchy range of scents, a line new to Saks. Many of the featured fragrances seen in the fall catalog are new to Saks, giving consumers more cause to purchase.

Each scent, such as Bulgari's Au The Bleu cologne and Marc Jacobs' Decadence, includes a brief description of its inspiration and the price. In the section below Saks' digital catalog, the retailer offers a shoppable thumbnail image that directs the consumer to the product's ecommerce page.

In addition to the adjectives projected on each fragrance, still imagery break up the pages with text reading that the modern woman "lives every night to the fullest," "is energetic and playful," "balances confidence with femininity" and "redefines classic elegance."

Additional fragrances seen in the catalog include scents by Chanel, Gucci, Guerlain, Prada, Valentino and Creed.

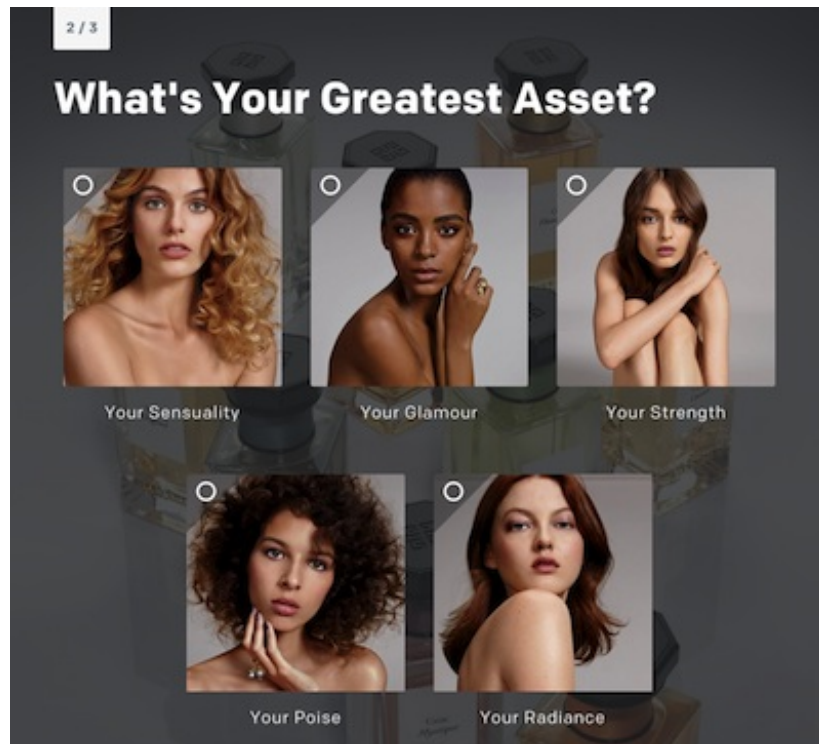


Chanel Chance featured in the Saks fall 2015 beauty catalog

Saks' fall beauty catalog wrapped with a section on skincare and cosmetics represented by products from Burberry, Dior, Christian Louboutin and Lancome.

On the Saks POV blog, the department store reinforces that its catalog “urges [the consumer] to define [her] signature fragrance for the fall.” Within its quiz, Saks broke down five fragrances seen in its catalog by the beauty personalities highlighted.

Questions include floral note of choice, with options including peach flower and rose, and greatest asset, using the words placed alongside the fragrances as descriptors such as glamour and poise. Lastly, the quiz asks the user to define her style essence with choices such as fresh, elegant or playful.



Saks' fragrance finder quiz for fall 2015

Each season, Saks explores its beauty offerings in an interesting way to boost consumer interest.

For instance, Saks invited consumers under the beauty “big top” at its New York flagship on June 25.

During Saks’ “Cirque de Beauté” summer beauty spectacular consumers witnessed “age-defying feats, irresistible indulgence and gifts galore” as the retailer presented its personal care offerings. Saks often reinvents its beauty marketing platform to rejuvenate interest in its range and its brand partners’ latest collections ([see story](#)).

Interactive reads

Luxury marketers have expanded beyond branded magazines that feature interactions such as shoppable content and video, to also include cataloging that engages the consumer. By becoming more engaged as they browse product offerings for the season, there is higher likelihood that a purchase will be made.

For instance, online home furnishings store LuxDeco is communicating a lifestyle behind its product selection with the launch of its first print Style Guide.

The seasonal publication features tips and inspiration for home makeovers and key items to transform living spaces, presented as more of a magazine than a catalog. Bridging the print medium with the ecommerce retailer, each page is scannable via an accompanying brand mobile application, driving consumers back to LuxDeco's Web site for more information and purchasing ([see story](#)).

Added interactions can result in the consumer spending more time with the brand's materials and its offerings, possibly resulting in a purchase.

"Since the results can be shared on social media platforms, it encourages others to take it- which is highly likely because of the popularity of 'personalized' quizzes," Ms. Albert said. "The results can introduce new products and categories to consumers.

"Luxury beauty products can be entry brand purchases for younger consumers with not as much disposal income," she said. "One feature missing from the quiz is a direct link link to the product page or an 'add to cart' feature from results page of the quiz; this is a missed opportunity to drive consumer towards purchase."

Final Take

Jen King, lead reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/5Fj7Q8ssc68>

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