

ADVERTISING

## Elle Dcor, Sotheby's Realty align to enhance knowledge via native content

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*Elle Dcor's January/February 2016 cover*

By JEN KING

Brokerage firm Sotheby's International Realty is providing affluent readers of Elle Dcor access to high-end real estate content in a native advertising push.

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Led by media agency SwellShark, Sotheby's will launch its partnership with Elle Dcor on the Hearst-owned title's Web site beginning on March 1. The creative campaign uses Elle Dcor as a starting point and includes innovative content elements that will then be expanded across Hearst Magazines Digital Media portfolio for broader reach.

"Hearst's strategy around branded content is perfectly aligned with what Sotheby's International Realty is looking to accomplish with this effort," said Todd Haskell, SVP and chief revenue officer of [Hearst Magazines Digital Media](#).

"Our editorial insights and publishing tools combine for a best-in-class reader experience that reflects the deep knowledge of the Hearst editorial teams," he said. "Through this partnership, we have developed engaging reader experiences that we know will perform well on-site and across social platforms while reinforcing Sotheby's International Realty's unique brand identity."

### Home sweet home

Upon its launch, the partnership between the three brands will serve as an example of how native advertising can be leveraged by luxury brands with their marketing campaigns.

For Elle Dcor, the partnership marks the first time the publication has partnered with a real estate firm. Pairing with Sotheby's is fitting as the title concentrates on interior design and dcor and may serve as inspiration for new or prospective homeowners looking to outfit their new homes with the latest trends.

Sotheby's will provide Elle Dcor with exclusive, curated content, including videos, articles and image galleries. For 2016, Sotheby's International Realty is betting on content marketing to reach and engage potential buyers of its luxury properties.

"We are proud to be the first real estate partner to work with Elle Dcor in this capacity," said Wendy Purvey, CMO of [Sotheby's International Realty](#). "Our wealth of extraordinary property provides consistent content that aligns with the Elle Dcor audience."



*Sotheby's property in West Vancouver, Canada*

Sotheby's announced its plans in earlier this month to both create and curate content across channels, with a particular focus on video, exposing more consumers around the globe to its brand. Following the launch of a content-rich Web site in 2015, this editorial approach plays into consumers' tendency to research across print, online and mobile before making a purchase ([see story](#)).

Together with SwellShark, the brand partners will benefit from readers being more inclined to engage with a brand through sponsored content over traditional advertising. The campaign also seeks to leverage the overlaps between Sotheby's and Hearst Magazine Digital Media's readership to each participant's advantage.

Upon its launch, the editorial supporting the native advertising will highlight the parallels between Sotheby's and ElleDecor.com readers. Its purpose will be to drive visitors to the property galleries aggregated by Sotheby's.



*Sotheby's listing in Seattle, WA*

"Affluent, design-minded audiences spend a lot of time interacting with Elle Dcor and its curated content," Sotheby's Ms. Purvey said. "This audience has an affinity for the design and extraordinary properties that can be delivered by the Sotheby's International Realty brand.

"Looking at our own consumer behavior, audiences are more likely to engage with sponsored content than traditional advertising, and using property as content satisfies this desire from consumers," she said.

Additionally, the collaborative effort will include an exclusive celebrity-sponsored content series to explore Elle Dcor's readers' interest in seeing how the famous live. The content surrounding celebrity homes will be based off Sotheby's portfolio of high-profile homes for sale.

Furthering Sotheby's visibility, the real estate firm will appear in high-impact media as a homepage sponsor.

"When sellers market their homes with the Sotheby's International Realty brand, we want them to know they have access to advertising opportunities that no other company can provide," Ms. Purvey said.

"By choosing the Sotheby's International Realty brand, a home seller has exclusive access to promote their property to the targeted, affluent readership of Elle Dcor an audience ideally aligned to be interested in the properties represented by our network worldwide," she said.

Going native

As brands turn more to native content rather than other forms of online advertising, the collaborative process

between the brand and publisher is the most important piece of the puzzle, according to a panel at iProspect's 2014 Client Summit.

For luxury brands, native content offers an opportunity to speak to consumers and tell their story, with the possibility of the media going viral. When choosing to enter into these partnerships, it is important for brands to choose publications that fit their brand image and truly understand their positioning so the content production is seamless ([see story](#)).

Cartier, for instance, went the distance to capture the adventurous spirit of its ideal male consumer through a paid post featured on The New York Times' Web and mobile sites.

For its "Going the Distance" native advertising effort, Cartier worked with The New York Times' commercial content operation T Brand Studio to develop a story that profiles the "active, adventurous" wearers of the Calibre de Cartier Carbon Diver timepiece ([see story](#)).

"Native advertising is done well when the brand and the publisher share the same values, and that is absolutely the case here," said Mary Perhach, president of [SwellShark](#). "Native advertising allows for a seamless consumer experience from the editorial content to the sponsored content.

"We are always looking for exclusive and first to market opportunities for the Sotheby's International Realty Brand," she said. "Elle Dcor has an engaged, affluent, international and design-minded audience and they have not had a real estate partner before."

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