

MAIL

Bloomingdale's embeds multichannel touch points into direct mail strategy

March 9, 2011



By GISELLE T'SIRULNIK

A Bloomingdale's direct mail piece successfully embeds various multichannel touch points such as online, mobile, social media and catalog to alert consumers of its eleven days of new trends and fashion happenings and ultimately drive them to purchase.

[Sign up now](#)

Luxury Daily

The "11 days of hot new trends and fashion happenings" event takes place March 10-20 and it targets current and potential Bloomingdale's Insiders. Bar codes, links to a dedicated Bloomingdale's microsite, a scaled-down catalog, sweepstakes and drivers to the brand's Facebook destination are all embedded into the brochure-like mail piece.

"On the catalog side of direct mailing a lot of marketers are using on-page Web drivers and they primarily fall into two categories: the first category is to say 'to see a bigger assortment of the following [fill in the blank], please visit us online,'" said Bill LaPierre, senior vice president of business intelligence at Direct Media Millard, a direct marketing agency based in Peterborough, NH.

"These are still not very hard hitting," he said. "They basically just tie to the page of the product they appear on. I see very few drawing what they are doing in the catalog with what they are doing online."

Get Scarfed

That is not the case with **Bloomingdale's**, which uses the direct mail piece as the focal point of its "Get Scarfed" initiative.

Scarves will be a craze this spring: the must-have fashion accessory. And, they can be worn in so many differed ways, as Bloomingdale's illustrates by embedding a bar code on the direct mail piece.



The bar code is embedded on the mailing

Consumers that scan the bar code are routed to a video that demonstrates various ways that scarves can be worn this spring. The video shows that a scarf can be worn in many different ways that reflect a person's style.

Bloomingdale's

m.blmds.com/scarfed



Google

bloomingdale's



SHOP BLOOMINGDALE'S



After scanning the code, users are brought to a mobile video

Mobile video consumers are connected to

Before the use of bar codes and online media, Bloomingdale's would need to show images of each of the ways a scarf could be worn, using way more paper for its direct mail efforts.

"There's obviously the green element," said Mike Wehrs, president/CEO of Scanbuy, New York, the company powering the bar code initiative for Bloomingdale's. "But also you start to lose people when you give them too much.

"The message in a direct mail piece needs to be tight to evoke emotion and then the additional information comes from the electronic aspect," he said. "In the case of Bloomingdale's, the brand had custom content.

"You can think about that in perspective of savings in terms of money from paper. And, it allows for very targeted focusing of the message. For Bloomingdale's specifically, they were looking for a greater activation of people in terms of increased awareness and sales."

Consumers can also visit <http://www.bloomingdales.com/scarfed> for more on scarves' role this spring.

Additionally, consumers are encouraged to upload a video or picture of their scarf style at <http://www.bloomingdales.com/contest> for a chance to win a \$5,000 shopping spree at the 59th street flagship location.

Eleven winners will be jetted to Manhattan for a two-night stay at The Alex Hotel. They will be picked up by a limo and whisked to Bloomingdale's on 59th Street and can shop with fashion directors.

The direct mail piece asks consumers to “like” Bloomingdale’s on Facebook to be alerted on who wins the contest.

Thursday, March 10–Sunday, March 20

EVERY SINGLE DAY, A NEW CHANCE TO...

WIN A FASHION DREAM IN NYC

... ..

You've seen how we wear the scarf—now you show us!
Upload a video or pic of your scarf style at
BLOOMINGDALES.COM/CONTEST

11 lucky stylesetters will win a
\$5,000 SHOPPING SPREE
AT OUR 56TH STREET FLAGSHIP.*

Just think, you could jet to Manhattan for a 2-night stay at
The Leading Hotels of the World's **THE ALEX HOTEL**.
Be picked up in a limo and be whisked to our 56th Street flagship.
Shop with our fashion directors who will treat you like a star
and help you style your new wardrobe.
Get noticed as a style icon on our Facebook page.
And so much more.

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK TO SEE WHO WINS!

*PRIZES LIMITED BY AVAIL. PRIZES OFFERED WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. © 2011 BLOOMINGDALE'S. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. BLOOMINGDALE'S AND THE ALEX HOTEL ARE TRADEMARKS OF BLOOMINGDALE'S.

The right side of the mail piece features a collage of black and white photographs: a woman sitting at a table, a view of a building facade, a skyscraper (Empire State Building), a street scene with cars, the entrance to 'ALEX' hotel, a crowd of people, and a woman's face.

The contest is also promoted within the brochure

Mini-catalog

When completely unfolded, the Bloomingdale’s mail piece is a scaled down catalog that aims to help consumers put their spring look together.



The unfolded calendar displays various spring trends

With spring trends like top-handle satchels, the floppy hat, color blocking, the kitten heel and piles of bangles, to name a few, consumers can get an idea of what to expect this season at Bloomingdale's.

Bloomingdale's lets consumers know that they can find more pieces 24/7 at <http://www.bloomingdales.com>.

Additionally, there is information regarding how to connect with a personal shopper and encouragement to follow the brand on Facebook and Twitter.



“We are seeing that 60-90 percent of orders come from online,” Direct Media’s Mr. La Pierre said. “So people are going online but companies are not using the catalog enough to drive people online.

“Brands can drive people online to view more products and decrease the size of the book or direct mail piece,” he said. “QR codes are just starting to be used now, but primarily for store locators.

“Facebook is mentioned generically saying become our fan on Facebook. But brands are failing to tell consumer why they should do it. Become our friend on Facebook to receive personalized sale alerts or new product alerts. That would work better.”

Digitally-driven direct mail

With digital channels such as mobile, online and social media increasingly growing in importance, direct marketers are realizing the importance of using well-established mediums such as direct mail to connect consumers with their digital offerings.

Smart brands can figure out which of the customers on their direct mail list are online shoppers and target these individuals with scaled-down catalogs that drive shoppers to the Web for more products. This can help save costs on paper.

Of course, customers that are heavy catalog shoppers can continue to receive their catalogs.

Mobile and bar codes can be used to make direct mail, which has always been a static medium, more interactive and measurable.

Brands can use their direct mail pieces to give consumers incentive to “like” them on Facebook.

A study by the [Direct Marketing Association](#) found that 79 percent of households either read or scan advertising mail sent to their household. Additionally, the study found that consumers with higher-level incomes are more likely to read direct mail pieces immediately, find them useful and respond.

In fact, consumers that earn more than \$100,000 per year are most likely to respond to direct mail offers, per the DMA. Previous customers of a brand are much more likely to respond to direct mail offers.

According to the DMA, the average consumer receives 21.8 pieces of mail per week, making it really important for brands to figure out ways to stand out.

“Integrated marketing campaigns are a must,” Scanbuy’s Mr. Wehrs said. “If you are not doing it you are missing the point.

“Brands are looking for as much engagement as possible,” he said. “That means being able to communicate with customers however they want to interact with you.

“Various channels for customer engagement should be part of the traditional marketing you put together, whether it’s direct mail or other channels. You want to have the social and immediate response components exposed.”

© Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.