

INTERNET

Barneys gathers personal profiles from barber's chair

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Hugo McCloud for "A Quality Cut"

By SARAH JONES

Department store chain Barneys New York is opening a window on the community surrounding its downtown flagship with a trip to the barbershop.

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The series, "A Quality Cut," running on the retailer's content site The Window, is a collaboration with Blind Barber, a high-end men's grooming brand with an outpost in the new Chelsea flagship. Through intimate chats and portraits, Barneys introduces the key players who are tied to its newly opened store, perhaps prompting viewers to book their own time in the chair.

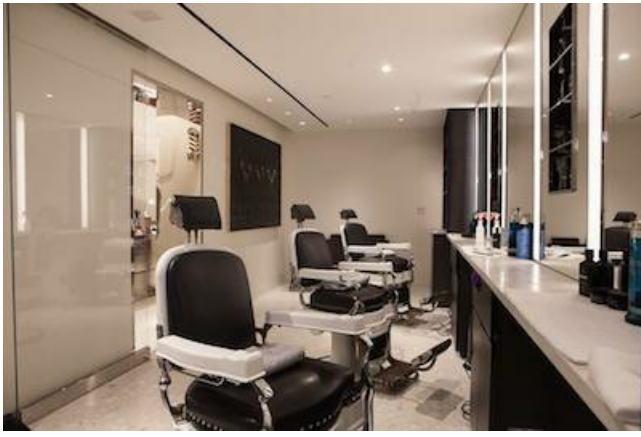
"The series is a collaborative partnership with the Blind Barber that focuses on intriguing personalities," said Marissa Rosenblum, editorial director of The Window at **Barneys**, New York.

"It's a natural fit because Blind Barber recently opened their fourth shop on the foundation floor of the newest Barneys downtown," she said. "When we met with the team to brainstorm ideas for editorial and social content surrounding the opening, and we were blown away by their creativity and felt the teams were a good fit to create the series together."

Cutting room

A Quality Cut premiered in March with a profile of artist Hugo McCloud, who created an installation for Blind Barber's shop within Barneys' store.

In a two-minute film, Mr. McCloud is first shown working on a piece as he talks about his approach to art, which was not influenced by traditional schooling. The artist is then shown arriving at Barneys' downtown flagship and entering the barbershop on the lower level of the store.



Blind Barber at Barneys New York

As he gets situated in the chair and the barber begins his work, Mr. McCloud shares his background story, getting personal about his creative family. Needing to break out into the art world, he moved away from home to New York.

The artist also shares his concept and vision for his piece for Blind Barber, which was created on torched tar paper, part of a body of work using the common roofing material.

Barneys and Blind Barber's second film follows Eidos creative director Antonio Ciongoli.



Antonio Ciongoli

His video opens by showing him at a skate park and walking New York's streets, giving an overview of who he is.

Sitting in Blind Barber's salon, Mr. Ciongoli walks the viewer through his family history as it pertains to fashion. With a number of Neapolitan tailors in his family tree, it comes as little surprise that he ended up at the helm of an apparel label.

However, an influence from skateboarding separates the designer from previous generations. His clothing reflects this with easy pieces.

Along with clips of Mr. Ciongoli getting a haircut, the video shows footage of the designer with his friend and former campaign face Gino Iannucci.

A Quality Cut: Antonio Ciongoli / Barneys New York

Surrounding the opening of its Chelsea flagship earlier this year ([see story](#)), Barneys has used content to introduce the new location to its audience.

"We have rolled out content starting with the store opening that touches on the history of the original store, the building of the store, product and Freds," Ms. Rosenblum said. "Now that we have the foundation of the store laid out online we'll be introducing personalities affiliated with the store and downtown neighborhoods a prime example being the 'A Quality Cut' series with Blind Barber."

Content first

Consumers who are engaged with a brand across multiple platforms are the highest spenders, said a Barneys New York executive at Luxury FirstLook: Strategy 2014.

The traditional consumer path to purchase needs to be amended to get results, and brands should instead focus on

creating exclusive content that is of value to consumers. This strategy skews content more toward CRM than media to genuinely engage consumers ([see story](#)).

In 2015, Barneys New York invested in its consumers' online experience with the redesign of three of its Web sites with a mobile-first strategy.

The retailer claimed to be the first luxury retailer to use responsive design to more fully integrate content and consumer feedback into the ecommerce environment. Barneys looks to be at the forefront of digital within luxury, bringing its in-store experience to consumers regardless of where they are located and how they choose to connect ([see story](#)).

"The feature is engaging and lets you in on the world of the personalities featured in the Blind Barber and Barneys space," Ms. Rosenblum said. "Not only will you get to see what Barneys and Blind Barber is passionate about a good haircut and making friends are two of those things you also get some great product suggestions that is not solely focused on the Blind Barber line.

"We're not selling a specific pomade in this series, we're introducing the audience to a whole offering that fits their lifestyle," she said. "It's an introduction and exploration."

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