

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Mobile preferred over print magazines for fashion inspiration, sales: report

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Photo courtesy of Michael Kors

By CHANTAL TODE

Apparel retailers typically bet heavily on women's magazines to drive inspiration heading into the fall and are overlooking the opportunity on mobile, where consumers are spending six hours every week looking at fashion, according to a new survey from GPSopper.

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The September issues of women's magazines are traditionally the biggest of the year as an influx of advertising dollars translates to hefty tomes. However, GPSopper's survey reveals that 39 percent of U.S. consumers prefer getting their fashion inspiration from their mobile phones over magazines because it is easier to make a purchase when they see something they like.

"Retailers need to diversify their approach to capturing the consumer's attention," said Maya Mikhailov, co-founder and chief marketing officer of **GPSopper**. "The September Issue was the go-to source of inspiration for fashionistas for a long time, but now digital - specifically mobile is giving fashionistas instant-access to what's new and cool.

"While consumers still dig print magazines, they also want to access and share content, not just product something retailers need to consider when developing their mobile strategies," she said.

For the report, GPSopper commissioned **YouGov** PLC to poll 1,096 adults at the beginning of August.

Print's changing role

A key takeaway from the report is that mobile is changing where consumers get their fashion inspiration.

While print magazines were once an important source of inspiration in the past, its role is shrinking. In 2011, 27 percent of consumers said print magazines were their main source of fashion inspiration, compared to just 13 percent today.

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This number shrinks even more for millennials, with just six percent listing print magazines as their main source of fashion inspiration. Instead, millennials are mainly getting their fashion inspiration from friends and family and Facebook.

The GPSopper survey also found that 60 percent of consumers have never heard of "The September Issue."

Mobile inspiration

In contrast, consumers are spending an average of six hours a week looking for fashion inspiration on their mobile phones.

Besides the fact that phones are easy to make a purchase from, 38 percent of consumers also prefer phones over magazines because it is easier to access the content they like. Additionally, 31 percent prefer mobile because it is easier to share content they like, 20 percent because they do not want to wait until a magazine arrives to find the latest trends and 13 percent because mobile lets them be the first person they know to find new trends.

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As customers look beyond traditional outlets such as print magazines for their fashion fix, retail brands need to expand their digital footprint to capture a shopper's attention via mobile apps and influence the path to purchase, per the report.

"We found consumers were spending on average six hours a week hunting down fashion inspiration on their mobile phones, that's a full day every month," Ms. Mikhailov said. "Mobile is definitely a major gateway for retailers looking to drive a purchase and if consumers are spending this much time on their phones just looking at cool clothes then brands can't ignore them.

"Fashion retailers are getting better at using mobile to their advantage, but there's still a lot to learn," she said. "Nearly 40 percent of Americans said they preferred getting fashion inspiration via mobile because it was easier to make a

purchase when they see something they like, so making that seamless transition from inspiration to purchase is critical.

"Smart retailers know how to evolve beyond a mobile app's capability to purchase product by delivering something that fits into a customer's lifestyle and keeps them coming back."

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