

MOBILE

## How other channels can drive mobile

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By RACHEL LAMB

Luxury marketers are tapping channels such as in-store, digital, out-of-home, direct mail and print to drive customers to mobile for exclusive content, products and offers.

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**Luxury Daily**

Brands such as Bloomingdale's, Michael C. Fina and Neiman Marcus are using different types of mediums to showcase product videos and increase mobile conversions. Luxury brands are also realizing that mobile is not just a fad, but a viable marketing source that can be used to their advantage.

“All too often mobile is simply viewed as a siloed channel, providing search, browse and buy capabilities irrespective of time or space,” said Scott Forshay, regional sales director at Digby, Austin, TX. “Although they share a common infrastructure, the stationary Web and the mobile Web are fundamentally different mediums in the way they are used by luxury shoppers.

“Luxury brands should play to the strengths of this unique medium, with emphasis given to how to most effectively utilize mobile-specific functions such as location awareness, immediacy, personalization, voice capabilities and social connectivity,” he said.

“Until luxury brands raise the bar and design beyond the construct of mobile as simply an extension of the stationary Web, designing instead to highlight the differentiated capabilities of the device, the true power of mobile will not be realized.”

Mobile is becoming increasingly important to consumers. In fact, some experts believe that mobile commerce will be up \$50 billion by 2014 ([see story](#)).

## App tap

For example, Michael C. Fina is using in-store advertising to complement its mobile initiatives. The brand uses QR codes in its store-front windows next to products.

Consumers can scan these codes with their mobile phones and in doing so will be shown exclusive content such as videos or product information on their devices.

Some brands link these codes to their mobile sites, where it is easy for customers to buy products via a smartphone.

Foursquare and branded apps can also benefit luxury brands.

Mobile applications can recognize when a customer is in or near a branded retail location. Consumers can be sent push-notifications that ask if the consumer wants to check-in via Foursquare or if they want to go to the mobile site or mobile app.

“Push-notification engines can recognize when a shopper is within a defined radius of a boutique via GPS coordinates and a branded communication can be pushed to that shopper, offering a private consult with a store associate or an invitation to an exclusive collection viewing party or a private trunk show,” Mr. Forshay said.

“Featuring a limited supply offering of the day available only to app customers allows the brand to play marionette with the heartstrings of the luxury shopper by effectively utilizing the concept of time-sensitive exclusivity,” he said.

## Code language

Mailers and brochures can be used to a luxury brands’ advantage for their tactile experience.

For example, Bloomingdale’s sent out a brochure with a mobile call-to-action to promote its “Get Scarfed” campaign ([see story](#)).

Consumers who 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.

Mobile provides a platform where users can interact with products that they could not before. Bloomingdale’s mailer alone cannot provide the additional images, information and videos as the mobile call-to-action.

By scanning the code, consumers were brought straight to the retailer’s commerce-enabled mobile site.

“Mobile is important to luxury consumers because they are passionate about brands,” said Karen Greenberg, vice president of sales and marketing at Copia Mobile, Scottsdale,

AZ.”They will engage more readily and, therefore, act as an advocate for the brand.

“Advocates are more valuable because they tend to tell their friends about the brand, but it's really the engagement piece that is so interesting to the brands,” she said. “Mobile is about a conversation with the consumer for the brands and mobile gives them the ability to truly converse, speak and listen to consumers.”

Luxury brands can also use this approach in print advertisements.

For example, Neiman Marcus used bar codes in newspaper and magazine ads to promote its Christmas sales. Consumers were taken to Neiman Marcus’ commerce-enabled gift application, where they could view luxury products.

Entice via device

Finally, brands can use social media and Web sites to drive their customers to mobile.

Advocating a new branded mobile site or application on a Web site or social media page can entice customers to download it.

Customers who download mobile apps are likely true brand fans. Brands who make apps commerce-enabled can drive sales by advertising a new form of purchasing to their most loyal fans.

Even if an app is not commerce-enabled, affluent on-the-go consumers can expect to use mobile as a glorified product catalog or information source.

Brands can use mobile-exclusives for promotions, but they are contrary to luxury shoppers as they are usually not interested in discounts.

“Luxury shoppers are interested in exclusivity – access to a lifestyle attainable by very few,” Mr. Forshay said. “As such, mobile-exclusive offerings for luxury brands should be conceived that create a greater degree of intimacy with their advocates through exclusive access to the brand.

“The stationary Web is about presentation,” he said. “The mobile medium is about action and instantaneous connection.

“Design to the strengths of the medium, with focus given to location awareness, immediacy, personalization and social connectivity. At that point, the utility of the medium will make it indispensable for luxury shoppers.”

Final Take

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