

RETAIL

## How Neiman Marcus leveraged look book content to buoy online engagement

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*Neiman Marcus Cashmere Collection, fall 2016*

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By JEN KING

Department store chain Neiman Marcus boosted its online engagement by revamping its approach to look books, going from a standard grid layout to intuitive, shoppable pages.

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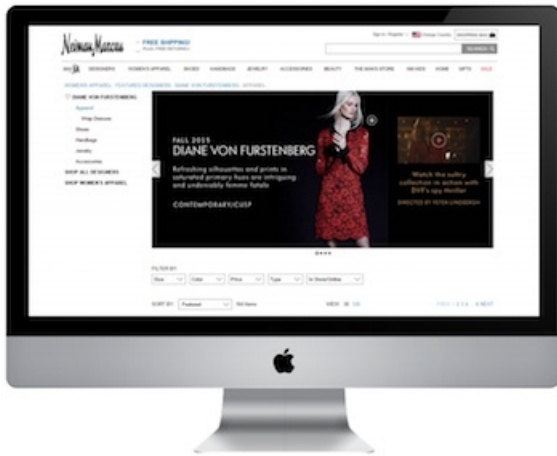
As part of its merchandising strategy, Neiman Marcus publishes more than 150 look books annually to show off the designer collections it carries both in-store and online. Although its look books included rich imagery illustrating its merchandise, **Neiman Marcus** was limited in terms of shopping functionality.

"Shoppable lookbooks are an easy win to make traditionally static category banner images into shoppable look books," said Brian Rigney, CEO of **Zmags**. "Retailers place them there for a reason: It inspires the customer, and sets the tone for the entire category page, so why wouldn't you want to make it easy for the customer to buy from them?"

Get the look

The rich, "hero" imagery found in **Neiman Marcus**' look books displayed its designer products and worked to inspire its consumers as they browsed. As the department store chain produced look books, the retailer recorded a lift in sales and consumer engagement prior to purchase.

Although the look books provided a discovery point, the consumer could not continue the purchase path directly from the imagery. Instead, she would need to scroll beyond the look book content to shop items from a traditional grid layout. The disjointed experience resulted in fewer conversions, lost sales and a consumer experience not on par with Neiman Marcus' values.



### *Neiman Marcus look book on desktop*

Noting the technical limitations with its format, Neiman Marcus realized its look book strategy was not providing optimal consumer experience and sales opportunities. Realizing its shortcomings, Neiman Marcus' ecommerce team set out to enhance the look books via shoppable functionality, but its internal teams did not have the resources needed.

Through its relationship with digital creation agency Zmags, Neiman Marcus was able to bolster its look book strategy. The retailer had worked with Zmags' Publiator platform since 2008 on publishing commerce-enabled digital publications.

Using Zmags' Creator, an SaaS-based shoppable content marketing platform, Neiman Marcus' in-house merchandising and ecommerce teams revamped the retailer's look books to be commerce-enabled, moving away from the previous grid layout.



### *Neiman Marcus look book featuring Brunello Cucinelli*

When set into play, Neiman Marcus launched five shoppable look books in the first six weeks. By week 12, Neiman Marcus added another 45 look books for a total of 50.

Since putting Zmags' Creator into motion, Neiman Marcus has seen customer engagement strengthen. According to data provided by Zmags, Neiman Marcus saw 3 million page views over the course of a seven week period in the second quarter of 2015.

The retailer also saw 10 percent of consumers convert from quick view to making a purchasing due the same time frame.

"Zmags Creator gives Neiman Marcus the ability to create fully-responsive look books and interactive content without coding," Mr. Rigney said. "Instead of having to code separate experiences for desktop, mobile and tablet, they can use the responsive features within Creator to easily adapt experiences.

"Not only does it speed up the process, but it also frees up their IT' to focus on mission-critical projects," he said.

Whenever, wherever

Shoppable content is an intrinsic aspect of a well-rounded omnichannel retail approach. Today's consumers expect a retailer to offer experiences that meld all channels, allowing for purchases to made in a variety of ways but maintaining service, merchandising and quality expectations.

For example, Italian footwear and apparel label Salvatore Ferragamo responded to consumer demands of

immediacy with the launch of an ecommerce ready-to-wear section.

Previously, Ferragamo had only offered accessories and footwear styles through its ecommerce page, but as of Oct. 11 consumers in the United States market are able to shop the brand's ready-to-wear fashions for women. The fashion industry is becoming increasingly aware that consumers' expectations no longer model the traditional fashion calendar and that online shopping is now unavoidable ([see story](#)).

Also, U.S. jeweler Harry Winston is making a connection between its Instagram content and its physical points of sale through a shoppable feed.

The brand, which does not offer ecommerce, is leveraging Curalate's Like2Buy platform to drive in-store appointments and product exploration instead of online purchases. Brands' Instagram audiences tend to be the most engaged, making this initiative a means to connect the brand's digital followers with its frontline staff ([see story](#)).

These efforts have been placed to improve consumer interaction and retention.

"Switching from static category banner images to interactive carousels enables Neiman Marcus to set the tone for each designer's page, highlighting particular pieces within the collection that they want to focus on outside of the standard grid," Mr. Rigney said.