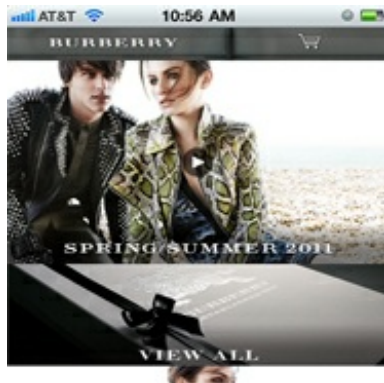


MOBILE

Burberry breaks into mobile commerce

April 5, 2011



By RACHEL LAMB

British apparel brand Burberry's long-awaited advance into the mobile arena kicked off with the launch of a mobile site. Is its inaugural mobile presence up to scratch?

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The mobile site is showcased by spring/summer collection, all clothes, womenswear, menswear, childrens and store locator, with text over a thumbnail image. Optimized for the iPhone and Android platforms, the first iteration of the Burberry mobile site needs some polish, per some experts.

“Like most brands, Burberry is attempting to reach out to the majority of their customers who are browsing the mobile Web at higher rates than ever and shopping right from their mobile device,” said Simon Buckingham, CEO of Appitalism, New York. “Burberry is attempting to be innovative in the luxury retail space by driving mobile commerce and bring in customers to their retail locations via their mobile site.

“Unfortunately, the mobile site is a very poorly designed and conceived site, so in Burberry's case, their mobile site is actually negatively affecting its brand,” he said.

“Mobile users want a user-friendly, fast and intuitive mobile Web experience, none of which is delivered by Burberry's new mobile site.”

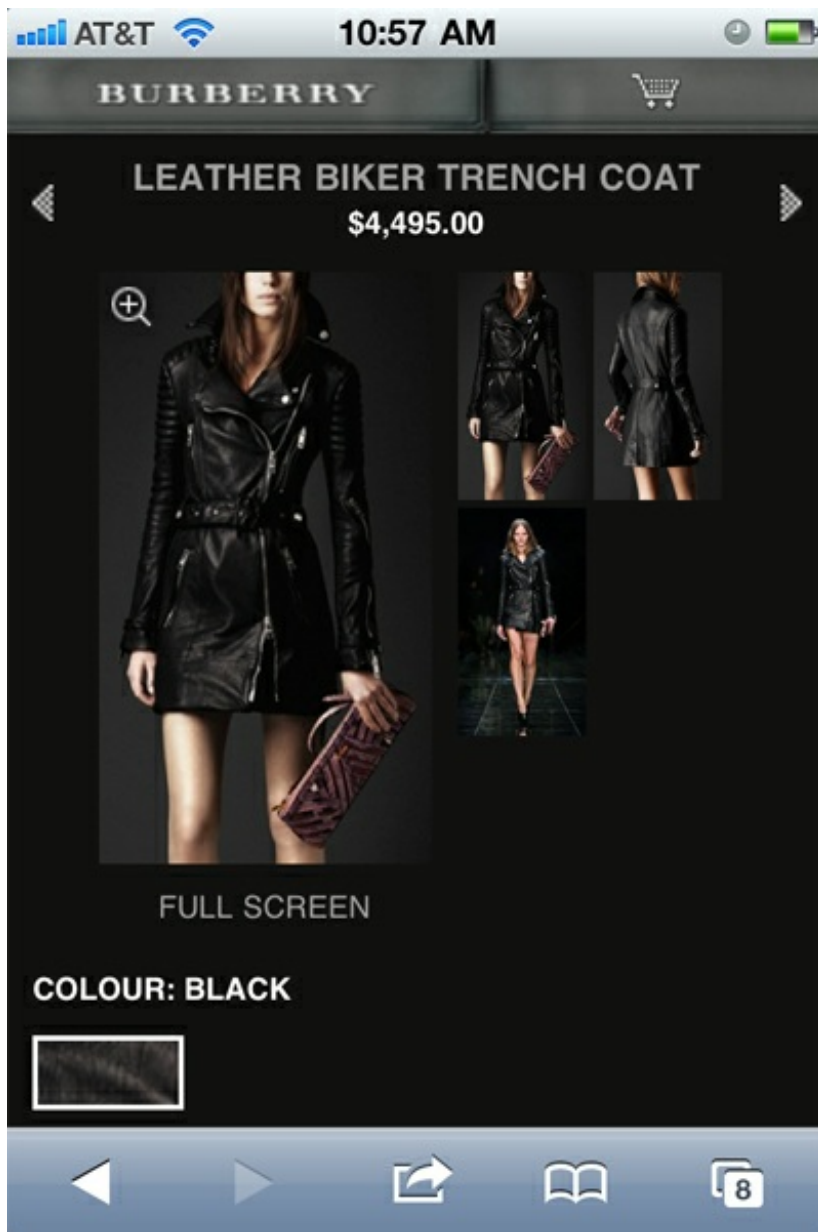
Burberry was not able to respond by press deadline. Mr. Buckingham is not associated with the brand, but agreed to comment as a third-party expert source.

In the trenches

The womenswear, menswear and children's are further divided on the homepage.

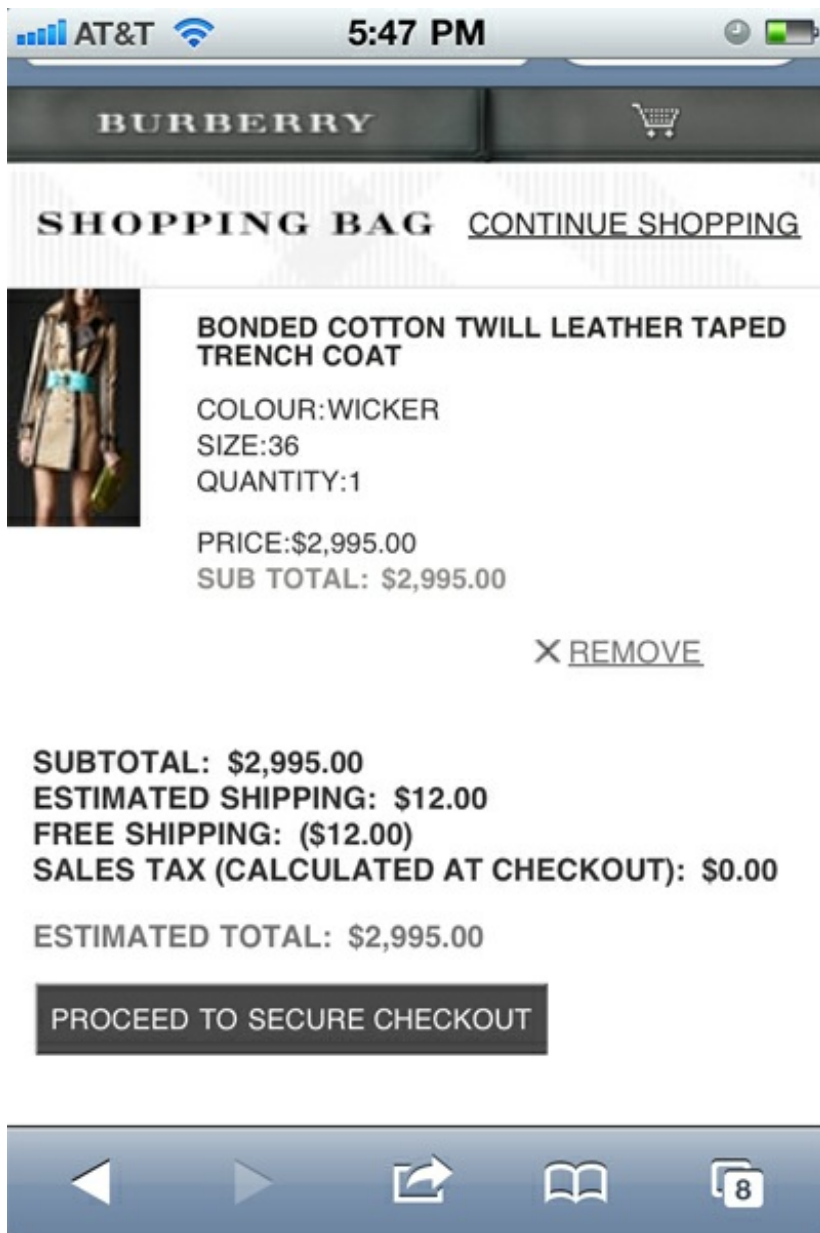
Each of the sections brings the visitor to a new page with subsections in whichever category the consumer is looking.

When a product is clicked on, consumers can view it from many different angles and make the pictures smaller or larger.



Burberry mobile product page

The site also does a good job of letting the viewers see prices and product details.



Mobile cart

The site incorporates a video of the spring/summer collection campaign. The video is on the site so that consumers do not have to go to an application to see it.

Burberry's use of mobile video could definitely be used to its advantage, since mobile video viewing is up 40 percent, according to a study done by Nielsen ([see story](#)).

The brand also has a store locator that uses GPS to find the customer's location and the nearest retail store.

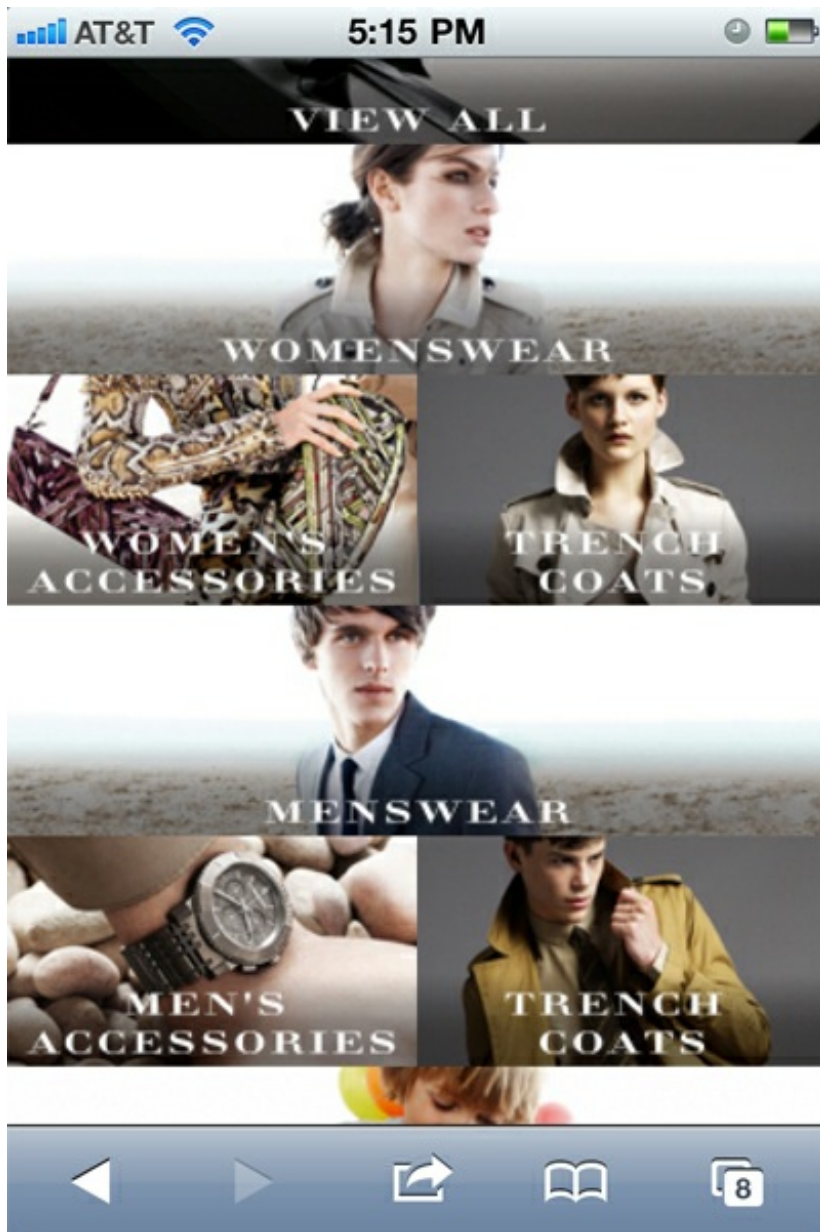
However, there are some major glitches in the new mobile site.

Although the site is very carefully segmented, it makes consumers click through many times before they can purchase.

"As with all mobile commerce sites, it is imperative to provide the least amount of friction possible with the checkout procedures," said Sean P. Gately, director at Roam Data, Boston.

"By forcing consumers to enter in payment data on a small screen in multiple locations, it

will discourage most consumers from purchasing from their mobile devices,” he said. “Retailers should provide the preferred customers with a one-tap-buy mobile wallet experience.”



Cluttered homepage

Furthermore, the homepage does not send a clear message as to why the user should use the mobile site, according to Appitalism's Mr. Buckingham.

The user interface is cluttered and filled with fashion photos and white text that makes it difficult to read.

“The site could improve in every aspect,” Mr. Buckingham said.

Awesome for Prorsum

That said, the mobile site still gives Burberry an advantage over some its competitors.

To start, rather than building an application that could only work for one type of smartphone, Burberry's mobile site has the ability to go cross-platform and connect with many customers.

“The demographics of a typical patron of Burberry will be a traveling professional,” Roam’s Mr. Gately said. “They will have multiple devices that have access to the mobile Web [such as] iPads, iPhones and BlackBerry and Android phones.

“It is important to capture these high-dollar expenditures from this group, as this will lead to further customer loyalty and, ultimately, greater market share,” he said.

The mobile site also does a good job of showing product images and it effectively delivers information and descriptions. Therefore, even if consumers do not want to buy via mobile, they can still see the products and use the store locator to find a retail store.

“As the mobile commerce market is expected to grow into the billions of dollars within the next five years, it is pertinent for all retailers large and small to position themselves in this sector,” Mr. Gately said. “Ecommerce has driven the buyer to the PC or to bricks-and-mortar.

“Effective mcommerce strategy allows your customers to purchase your products anytime and anywhere they are,” he said. “By exploiting the mcommerce space, Burberry will be able to micro-target customers and drive sales in a directly accessible manner through electronic couponing, mobile offers and SMS advertising, and thereby increase revenues,” he said.

Final Take

Rachel Lamb, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York