

RETAIL

Fashion labels should seek greater exposure on retailers' social channels: L2

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Image courtesy of Saks Fifth Avenue; Saks is most likely to mention brands in its posts

By SARAH JONES

Retailers and the fashion brands they carry are missing out on a key opportunity to collaborate on social media, according to a report from L2.

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While retailers are in the habit of posting content featuring merchandise, they often fail to mention the labels featured, a tactic that could drive sales for the store as well as awareness for the brand among a potentially larger audience. L2 sees an "untapped potential" for fashion labels to seek more social media placement from the retailers that they sell through, striking up a mutually beneficial relationship.

"Social media is good indication of which brands retailers are focusing on, as well as which brands have been strategic about the relationships they have made with select retailers," said Ried Niziak, senior data scientist at L2.

"Retailers should be highlighting the same brands on social media that they feature in store and online, and brands should be encouraging these efforts," he said. "Barneys does a great job of aligning their social, ecommerce, and search strategies to ensure they are supporting the same core brands.

"For example, Givenchy only offers ecommerce via an app in the U.S, therefore relying on retailers for online sales. Givenchy receives the highest share of product visibility on Barneys.com and is one of their top three brands mentioned by the retailer across social media."

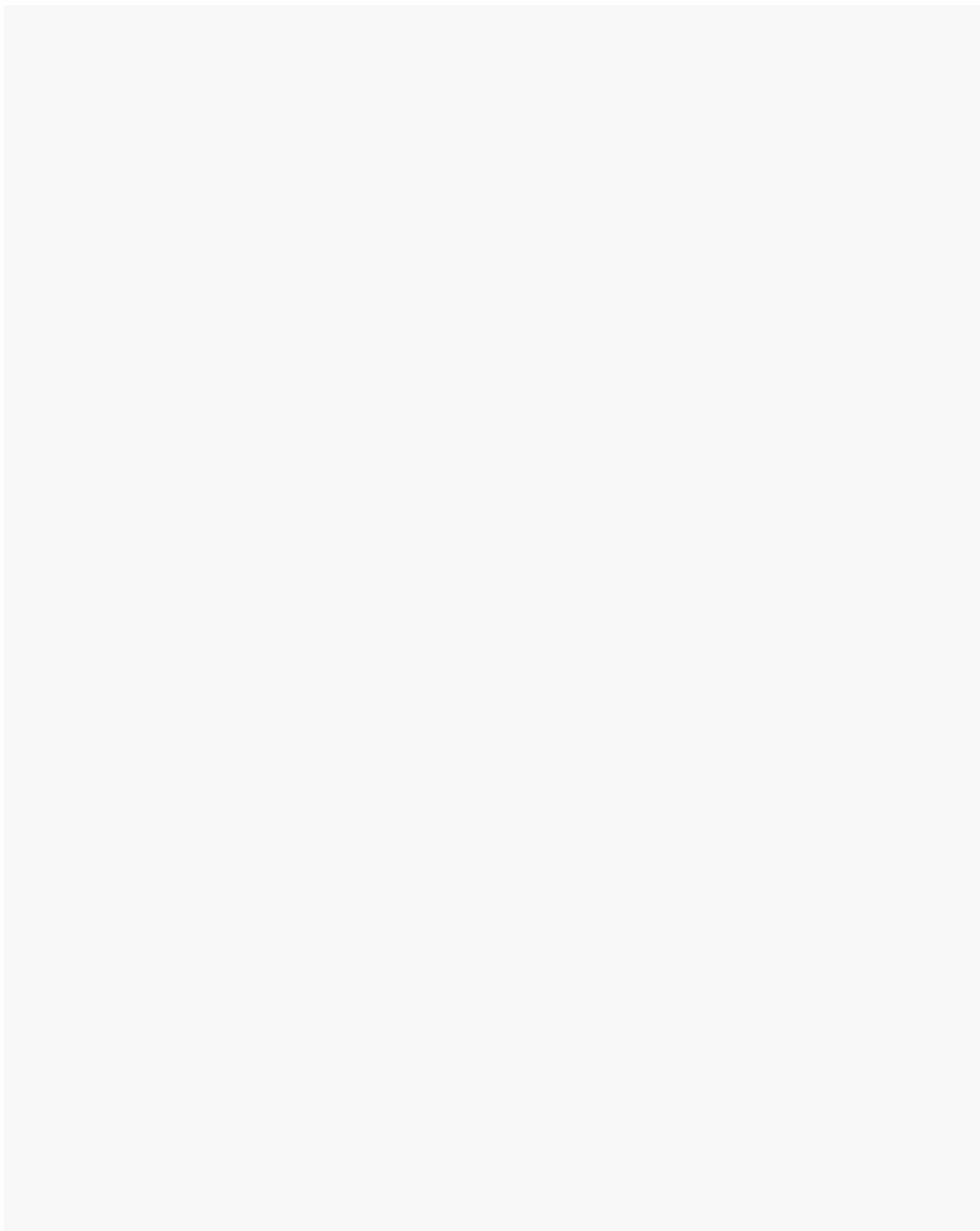
L2's "**Fashion: Social Synergy**" report looks at the brand mentions of nine retailers including Net-A-Porter, Saks Fifth Avenue, Neiman Marcus, Farfetch, Barneys New York, Bergdorf Goodman, Mr Porter, Bloomingdale's and Nordstrom.

Retail relationships

With Instagram gaining popularity, retailers publish twice as many posts on that network as they do on Facebook. Instagram also sees more brand mentions, with retailers 60 percent more apt to include a label's name in an Instagram post.

Of the index retailers, Saks Fifth Avenue is the most likely to mention specific brands in its Instagram and Facebook

posts, using Facebook's hyperlinking option to frequently send consumers to the direct product page for the item featured in a photo. On Instagram, the retailer leverages Like2Buy to provide consumers with a path to purchase.



Floral fantasies with @Etro. #SaksItList // Link in bio.

A post shared by Saks Fifth Avenue (@saks) on Jan 24, 2017 at 8:05am PST

L2 points out that retailers often invest more heavily in social media strategies that push conversions.

Nordstrom's social strategy favors more general product edits based on trends or seasonal needs, with the retailer one of the least likely to include brand names. Showing consumers' desire to have a more direct link to the items they see, many request product information in the comments section, at which point the retailer typically supplies more details.

Aside from driving ecommerce transactions, other retailers use brand mentions as a way to inspire in-store shopping trips. Bergdorf Goodman most frequently points to Chanel and Dior, which retail most categories exclusive in bricks-and-mortar.



#ValentinesDay is almost here, so drop a hint: @chanelofficial please. Shop now on the Main Floor.

A post shared by Bergdorf Goodman (@bergdorfs) on Feb 10, 2017 at 11:18am PST

On Facebook, retailers are most apt to include the names of brands that are well-known and commercially successful, including accessible luxury brands such as Michael Kors and buzzy labels such as Gucci and Valentino.

When it compared brands' visibility on retailers' Web sites against their prevalence on retailers' social channels, L2 found that it is rare for brands to be highly featured in both channels.

Gucci is an outlier, as the top brand for site visibility and the second most frequently mentioned label on Instagram and Facebook. The brand, which was ranked a genius in L2's fashion rankings for 2016 ([see story](#)), manages to capture attention from retailers while not losing out to them in search.

Whereas popular brands usually have to fight for placement in product listing ads, Gucci owns the majority of its branded search terms.

"Many brands are continuing to form special and selective partnerships with retailers that goes beyond the typical brand to retailer relationship," Mr. Niziak said. "Leading index brand Gucci created a special collection for Net-A-Porter over the summer, and not surprisingly the brand received the most mentions on Instagram and Facebook of any of the brand studied, and the highest share of product visibility on the retailer's Web site."

Making mentions

While retailers often fail to mention brands in their posts, some have built entire campaigns around a particular label or product.

For instance, Saks took Chlo's "posh" Drew handbag on a whirlwind world tour in a social media campaign.

Saks Fifth Avenue
Yesterday at 4:19pm · Edited · 🌐

Follow Chloé and Saks to England where we tag along with Drew, the most posh Chloe handbag, who is taking in all the sights and sounds of London. From a quick photo op at Buckingham Palace to browsing the stalls of Savile Row, keep up with Drew's adventures on Instagram by following [#WhereIsDrew](#). Snap you and your Drew using hashtag [#SaksStyle](#) for a chance to be featured on our shoppable hub! [#ChloeGirls](#) See more on [#SaksPOV](#): <http://s5ave.nu/6181BBXYX> Shop Chloe Drew: s5ave.nu/chloe-drew



Saks' Chlo effort

[#WhereIsDrew](#) inspired consumers to share a photo of their own Drew bag in glamorous locales with global content by Saks on its POV blog and Instagram. Incentivizing engagement with notoriety, select images were shared on the retailer's shoppable [#SaksStyle](#) feed ([see story](#)).

Retailers also have a short amount of time to make an impression, as consumers' attention spans dwindle.

Consumers' attachment to their smartphones presents a key opportunity for brands if they know how to leverage mobile-optimized marketing mediums, according to a report from Fashionbi.

On average, individuals check their phones about 150 times per day, with each glance lasting around one minute and 10 seconds, giving brands numerous chances to reach their audiences in small but powerful ways. Making the most of these minute sessions revolves around being visible and accessible to consumers at varied steps in the purchase path ([see story](#)).

"Retailers offer brands access to an audience of luxury consumers that may not ordinarily consider that specific brand," Mr. Niziak said. "Social media reach is self selecting. Brands can only organically reach consumers that

have chosen to follow the brand, and retailers offer access to a new crowd of potential shoppers.

"In addition, while online luxury sales are growing, in-store purchases still account for more than 90 percent of sales," he said. "Being featured in a retailer's social media post indicates to potential consumer where they can purchase the product in store.

"Retailers also have the resources and data to better target consumers and facilitate sales from social media impressions, whether through targeted ads via Facebook, or customer service to help find specific products. On Instagram, Saks Fifth Avenue regularly encourages consumers to email the retailer in order to learn more about product featured."

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