

RETAIL

Westfield introduces Service with Style to better accommodate consumers

August 31, 2017



Westfield's Service with Style is available at 33 U.S. malls. Image credit: Westfield

By JEN KING

As bricks-and-mortar foot traffic continues to decline, concierge services that draw from the high-end hospitality sector may help shopping centers and malls regain traction among consumers.

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Shopping mall operator Westfield, for instance, has announced its plans to introduce what it calls, "Service with Style" to assist consumers who visit its United States shopping centers. As with hotel concierges, the service will provide insights and advice for consumers to ensure enjoyable shopping trips.

Service with style, and a smile

Westfield will unveil Service with Style across its 33 malls in the U.S. throughout 2017.

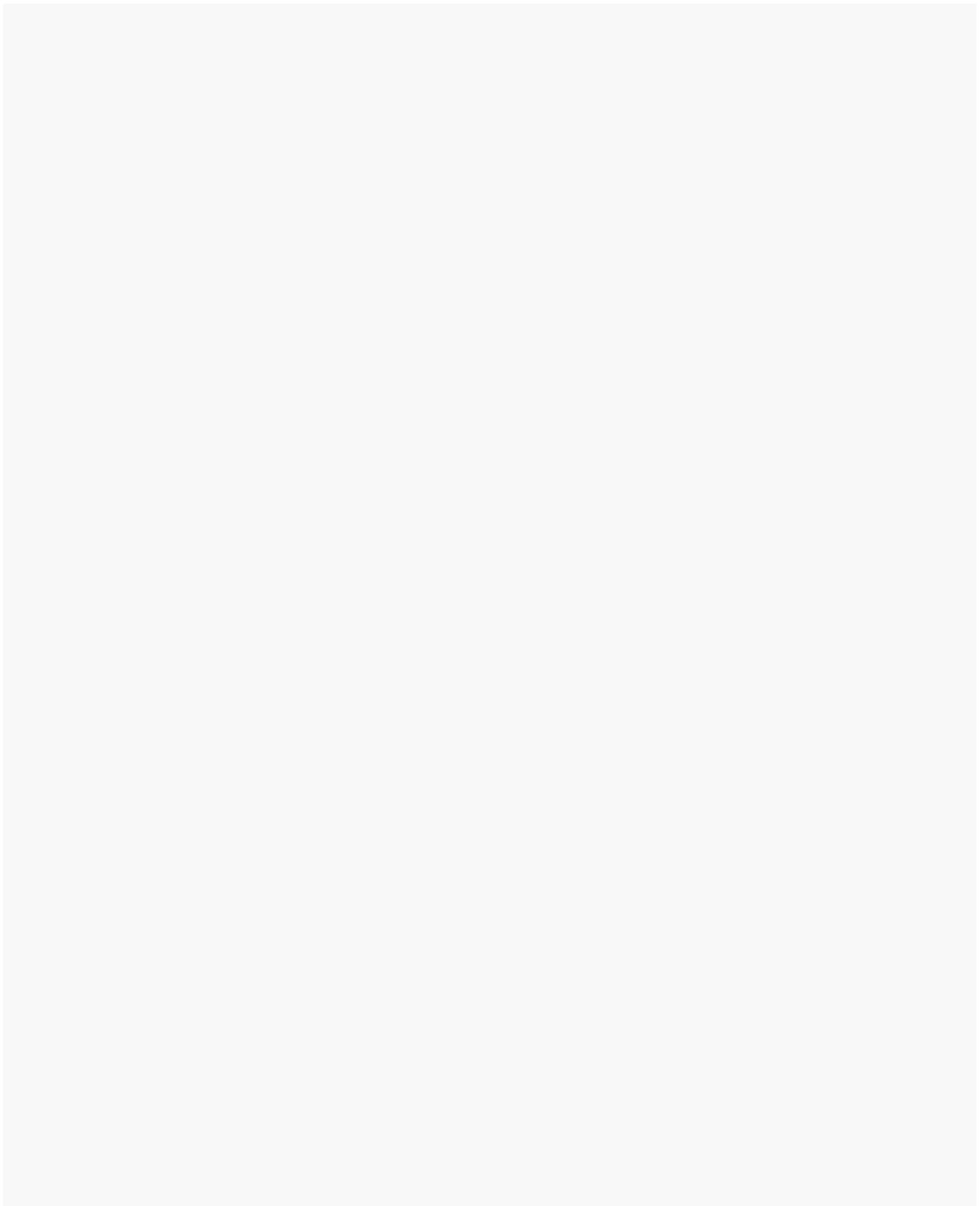
The new guest services program will provide Westfield's visitors with a high level of professional customer service. Taking a hospitality angle, Service with Style was inspired by the concierges found at the world's finest hotels and luxury resorts.

Similar to visiting an unfamiliar destination, Service with Style concierges will help consumers navigate Westfield properties.

To ensure quality service, Westfield has trained all customer-facing employees over a period of two to three months to hone customer service skills. Those trained include the concierge team, brand ambassadors, center management representatives, valet attendants, security officers and the housekeeping staff.

Each Westfield shopping center with Service with Style will have a dedicated service coach who will be permanently based at the mall. The Service with Style coach at each location will ensure that Westfield has a consistent consumer service standard across its 33 U.S. properties.

Ten flagship centers in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington, San Jose and San Diego, CA will offer additional services.



Take it all in. : @Dirka

A post shared by Westfield World Trade Center (@westfieldworldtradecenter) on Jul 26, 2017 at 1:26pm PDT

These high-end services include one-on-one personal styling and personal shoppers, as well as package check and delivery. The latter will see the concierge hold shopping bags at the concierge desk and deliver the packages later on to the consumer's vehicle or home.

Westfield's "Store to Door" program allows consumers to call or text the concierge staff to purchase a particular item. The concierge will then have the purchase delivered to the consumer's home.

The hassle of returns was also considered by Westfield as it developed Service with Style.

At the 10 flagships, Westfield, in partnership with Happy Returns, will set up a "Returns Bar," where consumers can return purchases made from selected online retailers. The concierge staff will then take care of the logistics.

Additional touchpoints include live access to interpreters, fluent in more than 50 languages, smart and reserved parking options, restaurant reservations and ticketing assistance for local events and attractions.

Us and them service

As bricks-and-mortar looks to boost its service amenities, online retailers are doing the same.

For example, online retailers Net-A-Porter and Mr Porter are easing the ecommerce experience for their top customers.

Beginning in September, the ecommerce sites will offer their "Extremely Important People" the option to try on their newly purchased merchandise while the delivery person waits, streamlining the return process. The retailers are also introducing new personal styling experiences in the comfort of these clients' homes ([see story](#)).



Net-A-Porter campaign. Image credit: Net-A-Porter

Also, Chinese ecommerce giant JD.com is giving the online luxury shopping experience a more personal touch.

For its JD Luxury Express, the retailer has trained a special team of employees, who will shuttle luxury purchases to consumers' doors in style. Designed to more closely replicate the individualized experience expected from bricks-and-mortar stores, JD's service aims to ensure that luxury products are handled in a manner that reflects the brand ([see story](#)).

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