

RETAIL

Marie Claire hails IoT as retail's next big thing at first concept shop

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Sketch of Marie Claire's first-ever The Next Big Thing concept shop. Image credit: Hearst's Marie Claire

By JEN KING

Hearst-owned Marie Claire magazine is heading to New York's SoHo neighborhood to bring discovering the next big thing in fashion, personal care and technology from its pages to the physical realm.

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Marie Claire's first-ever "The Next Big Thing" concept shop will open on Sept. 23 and will offer consumers a new way to shop, powered by Mastercard technology and other innovative touch points that are revolutionizing the retail sector. The concept shop, in addition to selling innovative products, will demonstrate how in-store retail is becoming smarter thanks to advances in digital technologies that mirror the online experience.

"Since its inception, Marie Claire has led influential and important women on the path to discovery, proving that curiosity is the best currency," said Nancy Berger, vice president and publisher of **Marie Claire**, New York.

"We're excited to share what's new and what's next, while offering New Yorkers to experience the future of shopping with our partners at Mastercard," she said.

Things for work, play and peak

The Next Big Thing will be located at 120 Wooster Street between Sept. 23 and Oct. 12. Open daily from 11:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., Marie Claire's concept shop will bring the publication's editorial focus to life.

Each of the three zones found at The Next Big Thing speaks to different areas of a reader's life as explored by Marie Claire in each of its issues. Mirroring popular sections of the magazine, the temporary pop-up includes @Work for career, @Play for personal downtime and @Peak for health and wellness.

Department store chain Neiman Marcus' stylists will be on hand during the concept shop's run to provide style advice and tips to shoppers as they browse a selection of top designer fashions.



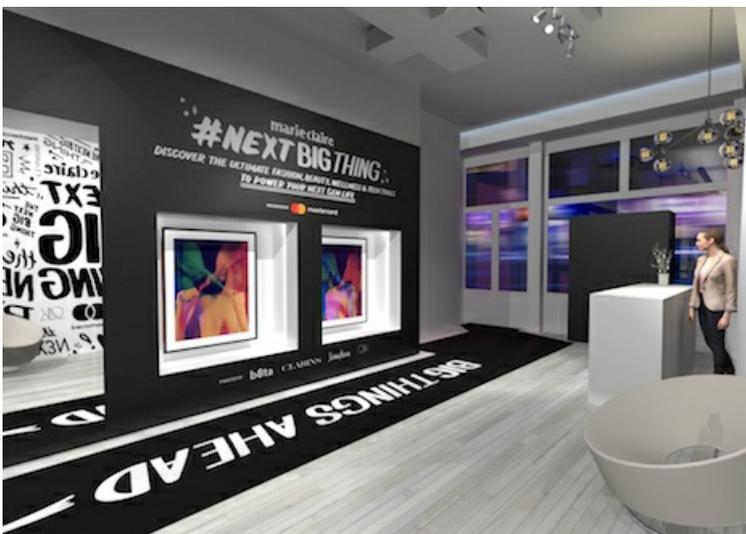
Computer rendering of Marie Claire's @Play and @Work zones at The Next Big Thing concept shop. Image credit: Marie Claire

When Marie Claire's concept shop opens later this month, Neiman Marcus will not yet have a retail presence in New York. The retailer's Hudson Yards' flagship, its first location in New York, is expected to open in 2018 ([see story](#)), but its involvement with The Next Big Thing may help introduce the department store to New Yorkers.

The Next Big Thing will also be ripe with digital advancements to improve the in-person shopping experience. Smart mirrors by Oak Labs will be placed in dressing rooms to add a layer of customization, for example, through accessories recommendations to complete an outfit.

Skincare brand Clarins will take a similar approach with its Sensor Mirror Pro, a virtual skincare mirror developed by MemoMI. The smart mirror picks up skincare troubles as a way to recommend products.

Marie Claire has also turned to Mastercard for cashless transactions. Shoppers who download The Next Big Thing mobile application, available for Apple and Android devices, will be able to seamlessly make a purchase from anywhere in the store, including via the fitting room mirrors.



Mastercard will enable cashless payments during The Next Big Thing concept shop. Image credit: Marie Claire

The app will also help consumer set up one-on-one stylist appointments and sign up for in-store events and activities.

Events will include "The Headshot Truck," a mobile photography studio specializing in professional headshots and LinkedIn profile pictures, talks on mindfulness and finding your inner Zen, a latte artist on Sept. 29 for National Coffee Day, relaxation sessions and a nail-art studio.

Details of the concept shop's events can be accessed on a [dedicated microsite](#) designed for The Next Big Thing.

Marie Claire's The Next Big Thing concept shop coincides with the publication's October book. On newsstands nationwide Sept. 19, the issue includes a six-page guide to products and technologies that will enhance readers'

lives.

From print to facetime

The print sector excels on the page and through digital efforts, but facetime with readers remains a necessary ingredient to maintaining interest and furthering established relationships or generating new connections.

British Vogue, for example, hosts its Vogue Festival, an annual event series that brings together talents featured in the pages of the magazine. Attendees can partake in workshops, talks, makeovers and career advice sessions, or peruse branded merchandise in the Vogue Caf and Vogue Shop ([see story](#)).

As print titles are intended as a discovery tool, shopping events are common for the space.

Lifestyle publication Robb Report, for instance, brought la dolce vita to its readers by dedicating its entire March 2016 issue to Italy.

From automobiles and fashion to travel and food, the issue explored the people responsible for the country's cultural significance. To kick off the issue, Robb Report and Saks hosted a shopping event at the retailer's Fifth Avenue flagship, bringing together elements of the good life on the men's floor ([see story](#)).

"Today's consumer is seeking a seamlessly integrated experience across both the digital and physical environment," said Sherri Haymond, executive vice president, digital partnerships at [Mastercard](#), New York.

"At the Next Big Thing concept shop, we will showcase how retailers can do that by blending Internet of Things (IoT) devices, such as smart mirrors and windows, with Mastercard's industry-leading security and analytics solutions, and Masterpass digital payment service to allow every consumer interaction to be unique," she said.

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