

MARKETING

Luxury brands inspire consumers to spoil dad

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Hugo Boss' Father's Day campaign stars Toni Kroos. Image credit: Hugo Boss

By SARAH JONES

Ahead of Father's Day, luxury marketers are pushing gifting ideas that center on elevating dads' lifestyles.

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Along with presenting products such as cologne and crystal cognac decanters, luxury brands are tapping into the celebrity of famous fathers for personality-driven campaigns. Father's Day is a significant spending holiday, with The National Retail Federation projecting that spending on Father's Day will reach \$15.3 billion this year, coming in second to last year's record \$15.5 billion.

"While parental roles with regard to spending have certainly evolved over time, there are still some distinct patterns at play when it comes to gender and spending," said Taylor Rains, managing partner **Flugel Consulting**, Charleston, SC.

"While women tend to manage the majority of expenses in a male-female household, men spend more when they do chose to shop," he said. "That makes them an extremely viable market for luxury brands.

"Traditionally, though, these brands have had trouble connecting with that 'father' audience. A gifting holiday like Father's Day helps brands to initiate a connection with that segment without having to target them directly."

For fathers

Three-quarters of U.S. shoppers will celebrate Father's Day on June 17, spending an average of \$133 per person on gifts.

The NRF's survey found that the majority of shoppers will head to department stores to find gifts for the dads in their lives. Following multi-brand retailers is online shopping.

Consumers are most apt to gift clothing, followed by gift cards and electronics. However, as experiences continue to top things, the largest percentage of shoppers plan to give the gift of outings such as a sports game or dinner.

Taking this into account, Four Seasons and Mandarin Oriental suggested consumers give gift cards for trips to their properties.



Four Seasons is suggesting gift cards for dads. Image credit: Four Seasons

Similarly, Magellan Jets is offering a 10 Hour Getaway Card exclusively for Father's Day and valid through the holiday in 2019. The card, beginning at \$47,350, gives access to a private jet with as few as 10 hours' notice.

In addition to experiences, luxury brands are pushing product ideas. Popular gifting suggestions include barware, leather goods, watches, apparel and fragrances.

For instance, Fortnum & Mason curated a selection of gifts for different dad personality types, such as an "adventurer" or a "foodie."

A number of luxury brands have linked with famous fathers for their holiday marketing.

Mr Porter tapped well-known dads including actor Jerry Seinfeld and football player Victor Cruz for an editorial feature. The article asks the famous fathers their advice gleaned from being a parent.

Soccer star and dad Toni Kroos celebrates Father's Day - Boss

The online retailer is partnering with the Good+ Foundation for the second year in a row. On June 17, net sales of some white shirts will go towards the organization, which supports dads and families who are in need.

Johnnie Walker also linked up with a public figure, hosting a Reddit Ask Me Anything, or AMA, with Reddit cofounder Alexis Ohanian. The tech entrepreneur is married to tennis player Serena Williams, and the two welcomed a baby girl last year.

Hugo Boss similarly picked German soccer player Toni Kroos for a Father's Day campaign. In the images, Mr. Kroos is pictured with his son while modeling Boss attire.

A film sees the athlete talking about preparing for fatherhood and wanting to capture every moment of being a dad.

"Aligning with media personalities for a promotion is a tried and true tactic for brands, especially in the luxury arena where the role of the tastemaker is so vital," Flugel Consulting's Mr. Rains said. "Celebrity marketing used to be associated with female consumer goods only, but in an age of such heavy social consumption, those influencer relations resonate across the board.

"It's also worth noting that fatherhood has become much more visible in media, and with that, men are able to identify with personalities on a level that they had not been able to before," he said.

Dad's day

Consumer spending for Father's Day typically falls behind Mother's Day. According to the NRF, total Mother's Day spending in the U.S. was projected to be \$23.1 billion this year, almost \$10 billion more than what will be spent on dads.

Despite this discrepancy in gifting spend, many retailers and brands create dedicated campaigns for Father's Day.

In 2016, department store chain Bloomingdale's showed fathers in a three-dimensional fashion through interactive displays at its New York flagship.

Beginning May 26, Bloomingdale's applied 3D wallpaper to its windows facing Lexington Avenue to celebrate "Dimensional Dads," part of the department store's push for Father's Day gifting. Interactive window displays were

ideal to grab the attention of passersby who may have not planned a shopping excursion, but would be swayed to enter based on the street side experience ([see story](#)).

Hotels have also coordinated special experiences for Father's Day.

For instance, Four Seasons Hotel Miami teamed up with Tesla Motors on Father's Day for a "Drive and Dine" event in 2015.

Throughout the day the hotel hosted Tesla Model S test drives before corralling families to the property's Edge Steak & Bar restaurant for brunch. Many families head out for a quiet morning on Father's Day and the Tesla option added a bit of zest to an otherwise typical offer ([see story](#)).

"First and foremost, it's important to remember that Father's Day is a gifting holiday," Mr. Rains said. "It goes without saying, but brands should not be speaking exclusively to fathers during this time.

"Instead, the messaging should speak to all different members of the family unit," he said. "A second important note to consider during Father's Day, as with Mother's Day, is not to fall victim to stereotypes.

"The way fathers have traditionally been spoken to and about in marketing no longer applies. Their role in the household and out of it has grown and changed. Fathers are a much more dynamic segment than previously thought."

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