

RETAIL

Nordstrom fetes annual sale with playful promo

June 27, 2018



Phoebe Robinson for Nordstrom's Anniversary Sale. Image courtesy of Nordstrom

By SARAH JONES

Department store chain Nordstrom is taking a humorous approach to marketing its Anniversary Sale, showing that fashion can also be fun.

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The retailer has called in a handful of comedians to highlight its deals, asking them to share their personal perspectives on the sale. Dating back to the 1960s, Anniversary Sale is the retailer's biggest shopping event of the year.

Nordstrom was reached for comment.

Funny faces

From July 20 to Aug. 5, the Anniversary Sale offers discounts on new arrivals. Nordstrom sees the sale as an opportunity to engage shoppers across a variety of price points and styles.

Celebrating this diversity of perspectives, the Anniversary Sale campaign features Liza Koshy, the host of "Double Dare" and star of "Liza on Demand," as well as Phoebe Robinson, author, actress and one half of the "2 Dope Queens" podcast.

Rounding out the campaign's spokesmodels are writer, producer and "Schitt's Creek" actor Daniel Levy and "New Girl" star Hannah Simone.

The quartet of comedians is seen a short film taking a call from the viewer's wardrobe. After answering a bright yellow phone, a rubber chicken or a banana, the actors dance and move in finds from the Anniversary Sale.

As text flashes across the screen telling the viewer that prices go up Aug. 6, the comedians are seen crying or shouting in disappointment.

Your Wardrobe is Calling - Nordstrom Anniversary 2018

Nordstrom's campaign was shot by Mary Ellen Matthews, who has done photography and video for sketch comedy

show "Saturday Night Live."

The campaign will span print media, digital, out of home, radio, store window displays, shopping bags and in-store visuals. It will also be featured on Nordstrom's Web site, social channels and Anniversary Sale catalog.

Nordstrom has asked the comedians to share their personal style stories, which are compiled on its site.

Ms. Robinson shares her purchase of a Diane von Furstenberg pantsuit that made her feel cool, a departure from her typically feeling "dorky."

Meanwhile, Ms. Koshy reminisced about her prom look, which included in her estimation 20 pounds of jewelry and two pounds of makeup.

In addition to getting the comedians' takes, Nordstrom is hosting a sweepstakes that asks shoppers to share a photo or video for a chance at a \$500 gift card. The "Show Us How You #NSale competition will run the length of the sale.

Sales push

Nordstrom began working with celebrities and personalities to promote its Anniversary Sale in 2016.

That year, the retailer gathered influencers and creatives including actress Melissa McCarthy, model Fernanda Ly and musician Jon Batiste for its sale campaign, allowing their individual personalities to shine through ([see story](#)).

While sales promotions are not usually known for being creative, some brands have opted to create new campaigns for discount events.

For instance, Toyota Corp.'s Lexus made the point that its cars can only be appreciated in-person by leveraging a trendy technology.

In the automaker's "Virtual to Reality" ads for its Command Performance Sales Event, models were shown using various virtual reality devices to take a simulated test drive. While most VR efforts have centered on providing the viewer with an immersive experience, Lexus' ads instead took a third-person view, highlighting the limitations of the innovation in an effort to drive traffic to its dealers ([see story](#)).

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