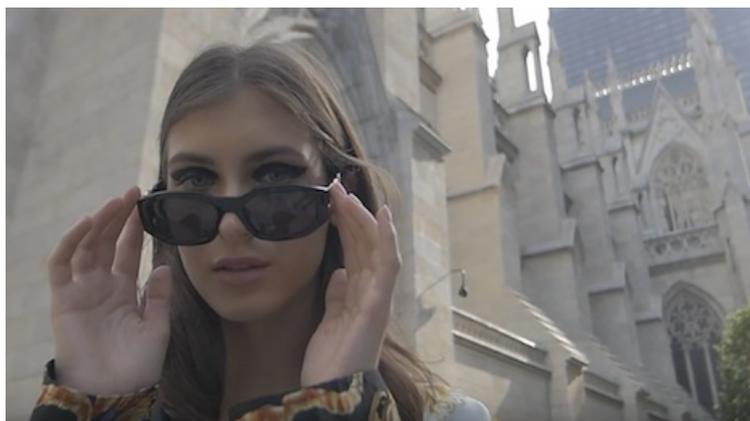


RETAIL

Brand collaborations lead to double exposure for retailers

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Versace eyewear is coming to Barneys. Image credit: Barneys New York

By SARAH RAMIREZ

To capture consumer attention, a growing number of retailers and department stores have partnered with luxury brands to create more engaging campaigns.

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From ecommerce fashion retailer MyTheresa to department store chain Barneys New York, collaborating with high-end labels allows these retailers to leverage brand enthusiasm into larger audiences. However, such campaigns can also dilute retailers' own carefully-crafted brands.

"While sharing the limelight with another brand does take away some of the focus on a department store's brand; if done well, it can enhance the store's brand reputation by being associated with a luxury brand that consumers love," said David Naumann, vice president of marketing at [Boston Retail Partners](#), Boston.

Collection collaboration

Barneys' latest brand collaboration is an exclusive collection from clothing brand Canada Goose.

A film and stills campaign for the outerwear was shot on location in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The setting is a departure, literally, for the New York-centered retailer.

Barneys New York goes rustic in campaign with Canada Goose

Less avant-garde than other Barneys efforts, the short film lets the scenery and the collection of parkas and jackets speak for itself. The models also wear apparel from other brands carried at Barneys, including Alexander Wang and Torino.

Italian fashion label Versace is introducing its sunglasses collection to Barneys, and a new short gave shoppers a glimpse at the eyewear. Clad in Versace prints, a model posed with different pairs of Versace sunglasses outside of New York's St. Patrick's Cathedral, bringing the house's Italian sensibility to the streets of New York.

"Partnering with brands on marketing and advertising campaigns has two key benefits for department stores leveraging brand passion and reduced costs," Mr. Naumann said.



Miu Miu x MyTheresa's Rebel Rebel campaign is about more than a fun girls' night out. Image credit: MyTheresa

Brand collaboration is not just for retailers with bricks-and-mortar locations.

Prada's Miu Miu is bringing its fall/winter 2018 collection to fashion retailer MyTheresa with a cheeky, carnival-themed campaign.

Reinforcing themes of female friendship and empowerment, the short film follows two women spending a fun evening at a fair to blow off some steam. A surprise ending, however, reveals that there is more depth to these friends beyond their shenanigans ([see story](#)).

However, retailers must strike a delicate balance.

"Retailers shouldn't focus on the brand so much so that a shopper can't tell if it is the brand's campaign or the retailer's," said Lauren Bates, marketing manager and lead storyteller at [Blue Moon Digital](#), Denver, CO. "Retailers need to remain top of mind even though they are aligning with the brand."

Store experimentation

Highlighting a variety of brands is also important for retailers that want to attract shoppers to their physical department store brands.

"Department stores are continuing to experiment with creative ways to drive store traffic as online and mobile shopping has become more prevalent," BRP's Mr. Naumann said. "Some of the most successful campaigns have focused on season and holidays, events or unique in-store experiences that are fun playing off consumers love of the theater of shopping."

Barneys New York put youth culture under the microscope in a fall fashion-themed vignette.

Set in upstate New York and filmed by photographer Stef Mitchell, the video features a diverse group of young models who wear designs by Marine Serre, Willy Chavarria, Katherine Hamnet London and others. Since the apparel reflects different aesthetics shoppers can search for at the retailer, the short film's theme had to be more universal ([see story](#)).

"It is nothing new that customers are increasingly turning to brand sites and marketplaces to find what they are shopping for," Ms. Bates said. "What's more, is that many consumers, led by millennials, are demanding an experience, or at the very least, an experience-based marketing approach."

"Consumers want to interact with luxury products before making a large purchase," she said. "So, if department stores can interact with the customers that are shopping multiple brands, they can likely drive them into a store where they can see all the luxury brands in one place."

British department store chain Selfridges is looking to attract both male and female shoppers with a menswear space devoted to high-end streetwear, leaning in to luxury fashion's increasingly gender neutral, casual aesthetic.

Dubbed the "Designer Street Room," the retail concept has found a home in the menswear department and was developed with brand mixing and cross-category shopping in mind, including luxury labels such as Gucci and Versace. Selfridges' latest opening reflects consumers' high-low shopping patterns, as they curate wardrobes that blend a bevy of brands ([see story](#)).

"Retailers and department stores need to continue to evolve," Blue Moon Digital's Ms. Bates said. "Millennials that haven't shopped at luxury department stores before aren't too concerned which store it is, mostly that they have what

they are looking for.

"Unless their parents took them shopping at these luxury retailers growing up, it doesn't particularly matter if it is Neman's or Barney's, their 'old' reputation isn't of much concern," she said.

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