

RETAIL

Fortnum & Mason spotlights shopper resourcefulness via social media

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Fortnum & Mason is encouraging consumers to reuse its packaging. Image credit: Fortnum & Mason

By SARAH RAMIREZ

British department store Fortnum & Mason is going back to its origins as it celebrates reuse and upcycling in a multichannel effort.

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A new campaign, "Long Love #Fortnums," encourages shoppers to share on social media how they refashion Fortnum's long-lasting products. The new initiative serves as an opportunity for the department store to honor its heritage in a modern way while reminding consumers of its values.

"The Long Love campaign is a way for Fortnum, long considered a heritage brand, to demonstrate continued innovation in an authentic manner that creates a positive market facing image for the brand and resonates with today's conscientious consumers who are committed to sustainability," said Rebecca Miller, founder/CEO of **Miller & Company**, New York. "Further, it invites consumers to participate with the brand in a fun and creative exercise.

"Initially being the premier supplier of exotic edibles to the gentry,' the brand has evolved into one that is inclusive to all," she said.

Ms. Miller is not affiliated with Fortnum & Mason, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. **Fortnum & Mason** was reached for comment.

Packaging prowess

The retailer's decorated history began in the 18th century when its founder, William Fortnum, melting discarded candle wax from Queen Anne's palace to create fresh candles.

Almost 150 years later, Fortnum introduced window displays and truly began investing in quality packaging, making it something shoppers wanted to keep after consuming their tea, biscuits or other treats.

Now Fortnum is spotlighting that same spirit of resourcefulness and creativity in its customers through user-generated content.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by Fortnum & Mason (@fortnums) on Apr 3, 2019 at 5:39am PDT

Instagram post from Fortnum

"Great packaging is a very effective way to perpetuate a brand's visibility to the consumer," Ms. Miller said. "Well designed and quality executed packaging has often been repurposed in revered and practical applications."

Consumers have long been finding imaginative uses for Fortnum packaging, such as using tea tins as planters or vases.

Its famed hampers have been repurposed as coffee tables and more. Another example features a biscuit container turned into a homemade instrument.

Capitalizing on common behavior of tech savvy shoppers, the department store is asking its fans to share photos of reused and reimagined Fortnum products on Instagram and Twitter with the caption, "Long Love #Fortnums." Through May 17, these photos will be entered in a contest.

Fortnum will be reposting its favorite submissions on its own social media, as well as including them in a window display at its Piccadilly store. One grand prize winner will receive their own wicker hamper.

Cultural touches

Fortnum & Mason often turns to unique events or campaigns to celebrate moments in its history or honor British culture.

To celebrate a partnership starting in 1886, Fortnum & Mason and Heinz recently teamed up together for a limited-edition collection of the latter's classic products. Featuring accents with Fortnum's iconic color blue, the collection

was only available at the department store.

The store also featured Heinz-dedicated windows at its flagship on Piccadilly in London, the same store that debuted the Heinz baked beans in 1886 ([see story](#)).

Previously, Fortnum & Mason hosted a pop-up pie market and a series of pie-making events to mark British Pie Week. As a retailer known for its fine food, sharing an authentic taste of British gastronomy tradition may appeal to tourists in for a visit and unfamiliar with savory pies ([see story](#)).

"There is nothing more honest, endearing or relatable than that of a brand's history," Ms. Miller said. "When used creatively, it acts as an effective tool to differentiate, attract, engage and retain a global audience.

"Fortnum & Mason has been able to consistently weave a rich and varied evolution of the brand through product development introducing foreign foods to their European consumers while delighting the consumer and solving preservation problems," she said.

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