

MULTICHANNEL

## American Express bolsters exclusive digital presence of Departures magazine

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By RACHEL LAMB

American Express Publishing is expanding its widely-distributed yet exclusive Departures magazine with an added mobile application and ecommerce presence with exclusive deals.

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With content only for American Express Platinum and Centurion cardmembers, Departures is released seven times per year. The added digital presence will serve to bolster the exclusivity and upscale lifestyle that is covered in the magazine.

“Cardmembers really love this magazine,” said Steven DeLuca, vice president and publisher of **Departures**, New York. “It will add value in terms of card memberships’ better experience with robust editorial product that helps them live their lives better and live the right life.

“Our readers are drawn to the more unique and exotic which also happens to typically be higher-priced,” he said. “They are not looking for something that everyone else has, but unique, limited-edition items.”

Departures is sent to 1,040,000 individuals with an average household income of

\$476,000.

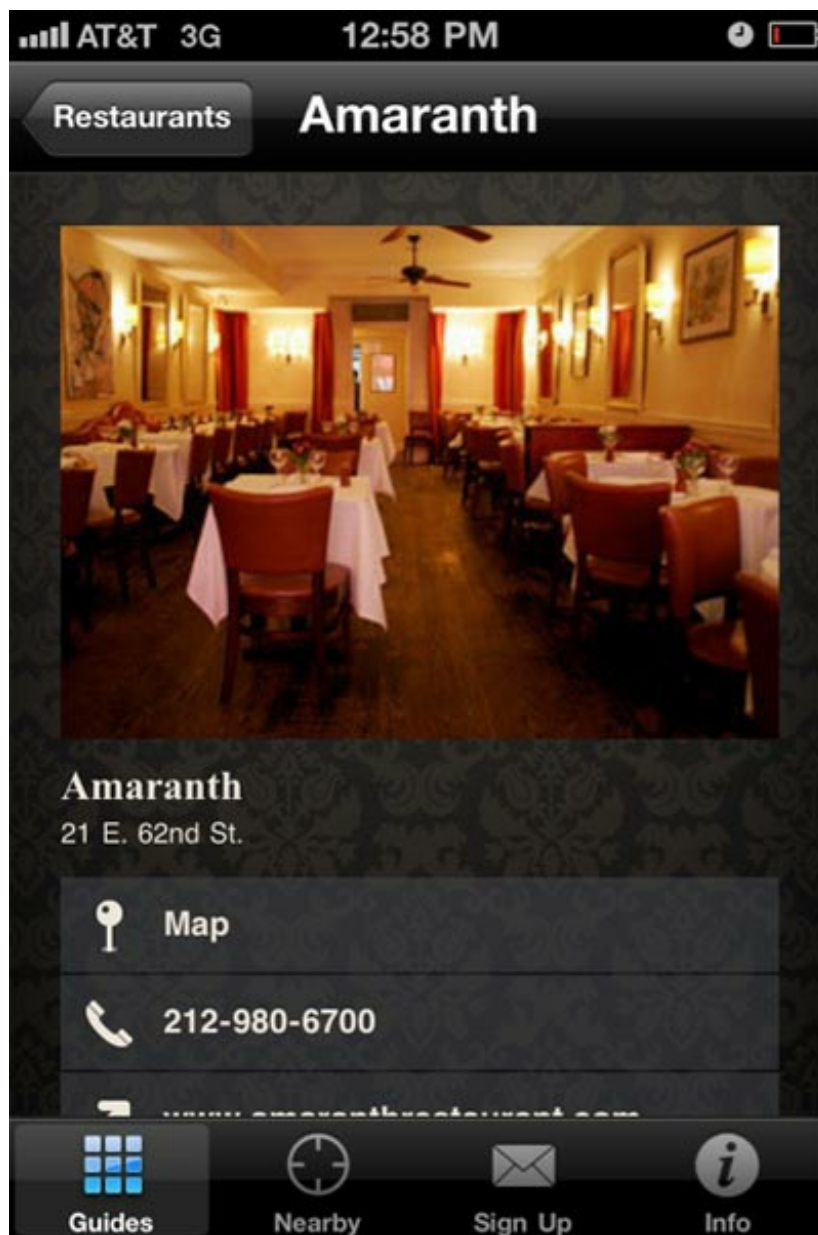
There is also a weekly editorially-curated opt-in newsletter with 50,000 recipients.

Departure from print

One of the most valued features from Departures is the restaurant and hotel reviews section.

Not surprisingly, it made sense for American Express Publishing to launch the new Departures Ultimate City Guide for iPhone and iPad yesterday.

Platinum and Centurion card members are able to look at restaurants, museums, shopping areas, hotels, lounges and VIP experiences in New York and eventually Hong Kong, Miami, Los Angeles, Chicago, San Francisco, Las Vegas, London, Buenos Aires and Paris throughout 2011 and 2012.



*Ultimate City Guide app*

Travel experts at American Express recommend hotels, shopping and eating areas that users can browse or search for by current location using the geolocator in the app.

The second installment of the Ultimate City Guides app focuses on Hong Kong and is due out in October.

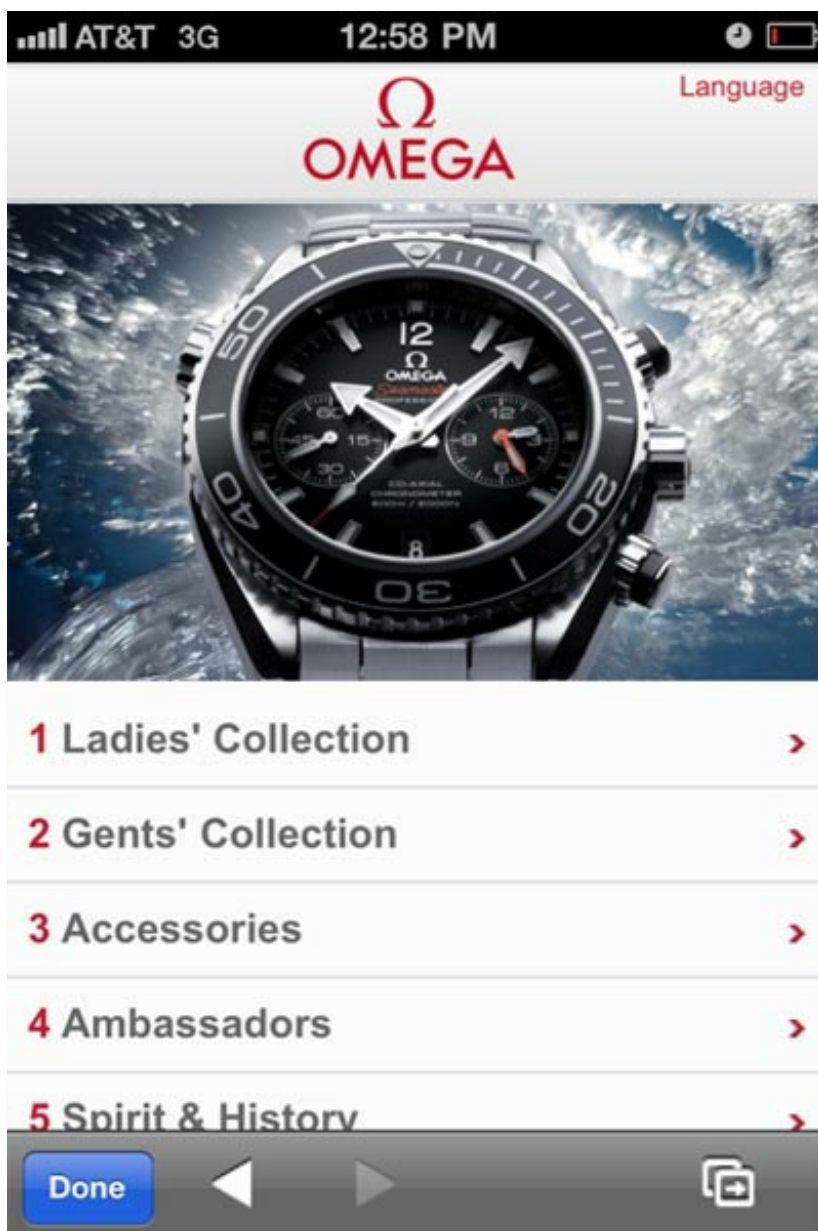
The theme is coinciding with the Departures special destination-themed issue dedicated to Asia.

The third installment, for Miami, is scheduled to debut in November to complement the Art Basel festival in the city.

Departures readers were constantly checking in at the publisher's offices to see if the company had issues from years ago because the consumers were planning on traveling to one of the cities.

This is the main reason why Departures developed an on-the-go guidebook, per Mr. DeLuca.

Watchmaker Omega sponsors the app and allows consumers to find boutiques and retailers in the city they are visiting.



*Omega sponsors the Ultimate City Guide app*

## Clicks with advertisers

The second part of Departure's digital endeavors is its new ecommerce site, eExclusives, slated to launch in October.

The site will give cardmembers access to limited-edition apparel and accessories.

Luxury brands such as Akris, Saks Fifth Avenue and Brunello are already participating.

"The brand has high expectations from readers and clients and the last thing you want to do is let anyone down," Mr. DeLuca said.

The print edition of Departures is also doing well, with its September issue boasting a 24-percent increase in revenue and up 16 percent in ad pages from this time last year.

Luxury brands such as Caroline Herrera, Conrad and Tom Ford are new advertisers in Departures.

"The magazine is still vibrant and it's a testament to luxury companies knowing that what we do best is connecting them to affluent people," Mr. DeLuca said. "That's what we do well even in post-recession, turbulent times.

"Our job at Departures is to curate the world," he said.

## Final Take

*Rachel Lamb, associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York*