

RETAIL

Neiman Marcus courts Chinese travelers with Alipay alliance

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Neiman Marcus is adding Alipay as a mobile payment method. Image credit: Neiman Marcus

By STAFF REPORTS

Retail group Neiman Marcus is making it easier for Chinese tourists to shop in its stores through a partnership with mobile platform Alipay.

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Neiman Marcus Group will now be accepting Alipay at Neiman Marcus, Bergdorf Goodman and Neiman Marcus Last Call stores across the United States. Offering familiar payment methods is one way for retailers to capture a greater share of business and traffic from valuable Chinese travelers.

"Neiman Marcus is known for offering unsurpassed service and developing better ways for our customers to shop," said David Goubert, executive vice president, stores and retail experience at Neiman Marcus Group, in a statement. "This partnership with Alipay gives our customers a convenient way to pay through channels they already use.

"Offering Alipay to our customers is another way we've exceeded our customers' expectations as we've evolved our company into a digital luxury platform," he said. "In fact, we've already received a significant amount of positive customer feedback as a result of launching this partnership and are now in the process of working to launch Alipay as an online payment option later this year."

Alipay acceptance

The group is launching Alipay at 43 Neiman Marcus locations, 24 Last Call and two Bergdorf Goodman stores.

Millions of Chinese tourists come to the United States each year.

The United States is becoming a highly coveted travel destination among affluent Chinese consumers, and due to their spending habits the demographic has proven extremely influential, according to a report from YouGov.

Chinese affluent look to purchase luxury goods while traveling abroad, and Chinese consumers spend the most out of any group while traveling. YouGov's Affluent Perspective 2017: Chinese Luxury Shoppers in America finds that 56 percent of Chinese affluent are planning a trip to the U.S. within the next two years ([see story](#)).



Alipay makes it easier to pay through mobile devices. Image credit: Alipay

Luxury retailers need to embrace Chinese digital payment solutions, as travelers from the country outspend all other travelers combined and are drawn to this technology.

When traveling overseas, more than 90 percent of Chinese tourists will use mobile payment platforms if the option is available, according to a report from Nielsen and Alipay. While Chinese consumers are more digitally savvy than other travelers, mobile pay also eases the difficulties that can come with language barriers and other issues from traveling abroad ([see story](#)).

In addition to familiarity, mobile payments can help tourists avoid credit card fees on foreign transactions.

Partnering with Alipay also offers retailers discoverability, since the application showcases promotions and information for nearby retailers to users.

"This is exactly the kind of strategic partnership that will greatly benefit Chinese consumers expats, tourists and students who come to the U.S. to sightsee, explore and shop," said Yulei Wang, general manager, Alipay North America, in a statement. "In the very competitive retail landscape, the convenience, familiarity and security advantages of Alipay give Chinese shoppers a distinct reason to visit Neiman Marcus stores and, soon, online."

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