

RETAIL

Harrods leans into Chinese tourism growth with mobile pay

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Alipay is accepted in more Western stores to cater to Chinese travelers. Image credit: Printemps

By STAFF REPORTS

British department store Harrods is appealing to Chinese travelers at its Knightsbridge store by implementing checkout through WeChat Pay and Alipay.

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Working with payment platform RiverPay Inc., Harrods is adding the mobile pay options to its current payment infrastructure. The move comes after a shift shows an increase in Chinese tourism to the United Kingdom.

Chinese tourism

Official tourism group for Great Britain Visit Britain predicts that 483,000 Chinese travelers will come to the region this year and spend a total of 1 billion pounds, or \$1.3 billion at current exchange. In addition, 393,000 Chinese residents and 95,000 Chinese students live in the U.K.

With Chinese consumers relying so heavily on mobile payment options such as WeChat and Alipay, Harrods is hoping to facilitate an easier checkout.

According to Nielsen, more than 69 percent of Chinese tourists use their mobile phones to pay while traveling abroad.



Exterior of Harrods. Image credit: Harrods

"Harrods is much more than a department store; it's a destination unto itself for Chinese consumers," said Ryan Zheng, cofounder/CEO of RiverPay, in a statement. "The Harrods brand is highly-desirable and synonymous with premium, luxury and excellence.

"We are pleased to help enable even more convenience for Harrods Chinese clientele through RiverPay's fast, secure and widely-compatible payments technologies," he said. "By expediting the connection to the top two mobile payment platforms from China, we are playing the role in enhancing the overall experience of Chinese consumers when shopping at the most sought-after shopping destination on the globe."

Similarly, retail group Neiman Marcus has made it easier for Chinese tourists to shop in its stores through a partnership with mobile platform Alipay.

Neiman Marcus Group is now 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 ([see story](#)).