

RETAIL

## Nordstrom sets template for customer communications in wake of COVID-19 outbreak

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*Fendi looks exclusively for Nordstrom's newly opened New York department store. Image credit: Nordstrom*

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

In the midst of the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) scare, U.S. department store chain Nordstrom has sent an email to millions of its customers that can serve as a template to luxury brands and retailers grappling with the communications around this issue.

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The letter, from Nordstrom CEO Erik Nordstrom and chief brand officer Peter Nordstrom, is straightforward and simple, acknowledging consumer and employee concerns, alluding to guidance from the authorities, and outlining steps that the Seattle-based company is taking to keep its store environments safe.

Washington state in the Northwestern United States, where Seattle is located, has registered the most number of coronavirus cases and casualties in the country.

While California and New York states have also declared a state of emergency in addition to Washington, the coronavirus cases pale in comparison to those emanating from China, South Korea, Japan, Iran and Italy.

On March 8, the Italian government quarantined the entire Northern Italy, including fashion and financial capital Milan and the surrounding manufacturing heartland a lockdown of 16 million people, or one-fourth of the country as a precaution against the virus spreading any further. The fallout to fashion and luxury, if this continues beyond the April 3 quarantine end date, could be catastrophic for the next two seasons of the calendar.

The **Nordstrom** letter serves as a template for how luxury brands can communicate with their constituencies and stakeholders in this hour of global crisis. Here it is in its entirety:



*Nordstrom CEO Erik Nordstrom with NBC News' Jo Ling Kent at the National Retail Federation's NRF Big Show in mid-January. Image credit: NRF*

## An update from Nordstrom

As the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) begins to have an increased impact on our communities, we feel it's important to connect directly with you to share more about the steps we're taking across our stores and businesses to help keep you, our employees and our communities safe and healthy.

Our hearts go out to all those who've been affected. The health and safety of our customers and employees has always been our top priority, and this is a rapidly evolving situation that we'll continue to monitor. Our stores are cleaned and sanitized daily as part of our normal course of business. Over the past few weeks, we've increased the frequency and extent of those cleanings, in addition to adding resources like hand sanitizer throughout the store for both customers and employees. We're also ensuring our employees have the information they need to stay healthy or stay home if they aren't feeling well. All of these practices and our business decisions are informed by guidance from local U.S. and Canadian government and public health agencies.

Based on the guidance we've received from various health agencies, our own preparedness and the current state of our operations, we are confident our stores continue to be safe, and we remain open for business.

As always, our hope is to make it easy for you to shop when and how you'd like. In addition to our Nordstrom and Nordstrom Rack stores, our teams are ready to serve you online at Nordstrom.com and Nordstromrack.com, through Trunk Club or through our mobile apps.

Thank you for being a loyal customer,

Erik & Pete Nordstrom

Chief executive officer & Chief Brand Officer



*Latest Pop-in@Nordstrom: The Pet Shop. Image credit: Nordstrom*