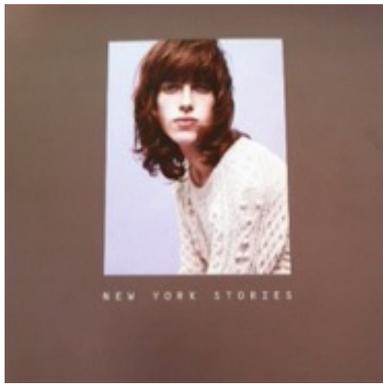


MAIL

Barneys emphasizes malleable New York personalities through catalog

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By RACHEL LAMB

Department store chain Barneys New York is using real New York residents to promote its newest Co-Op inventory through a “New York Stories” catalog.

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Luxury Daily

The two-part catalog uses up-and-coming design students, models, actors and musicians from New York to showcase the line’s urban, edgy spirit. The first part consists of the new crop of New Yorkers modeling collections while the second part is purely products.

“The importance of catalogs in the luxury world varies according to the product,” said Ron Kurtz, president of [American Affluence Research Center](#), Atlanta. “The tactile quality of a catalog, based on page size and paper quality, can contribute to an image of luxury, as does the type font and use of color and photography.

“The color and size of the product image can enhance the perception of luxury,” he said. “Some products may require extended text, best provided in hard copy, to explain or describe important features of the product.”

Mr. Kurtz is not affiliated with Barneys, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Killer looks

The first part of the [Barneys](#) catalog features apparel and footwear for men and women.

Each model has a small blurb under his or her name and age. Some photographs are shot against an urban background such as a wall covered with graffiti or the outside of a building.



New York Stories

Many of the models have artistic backgrounds and are studying art, music or literature in New York educational institutions such as New York University, Hunter College or Parsons School of Design.

Others moved to New York to make a name for themselves as artists, while some were born and raised there.

Under each blurb is the name and price of whatever the model is wearing.

Brands such as Theory, Helmut Lang, Barneys New York, Opening Ceremony and Marc by Marc Jacobs are represented.

In the second half of the catalog, there are accessories and footwear from brands such as Alexander Wang, Iosselliani, Helmut Lang and Isabel Marant.

Barneys includes a Web call-to-action by placing its Web address at <http://www.barneys.com> on the side of every page.

The retailer also included a list of store locations and their numbers on the back of the catalog.

Mail bondage

In the face of an increasingly digital world, luxury retailers strive to stand out from rivals through traditional media such as catalogs, print and out-of-home ads.

Luxury marketers tend to differentiate their direct mail pieces from competitors, as well.



New York Stories

For instance, the Barneys catalog is made with thicker stock paper and is bound. Its unique fold-out mechanism is also helpful to differentiate the catalog from other retailers.

A thicker paper stock and a clean catalog layout look more elegant, which affluent consumers appreciate.

In addition, many luxury marketers tend to add multichannel touch points, similar to Barneys' Web call-to-action.

For example, department store Bergdorf Goodman coaxed consumers to its blog, mobile site, store and Web site using touch points in its Fall collections catalog ([see story](#)).

In addition, Bloomingdale's and Neiman Marcus are using QR codes in newspaper and magazine ads and mail to engage consumers and drive in-store or mobile traffic ([see story](#)).

"Catalogs can be designed to incorporate other media by using QR codes and directing people to video where sound and motion are important to the use or understanding of the product," Mr. Kurtz said. "They can also be the carrier of a CD that provides additional information.

"Direct mail, especially catalogs, can help the consumer to have a better understanding of colors, textures and scale than what is normally achieved in broadcast or digital advertising, especially if being viewed on a small screen or mobile device," he said.

Final Take

Rachel Lamb, associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

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