

MARKETING

Luxury returns to lavish, charming gift campaigns for 2021

November 10, 2021



Givenchy is featuring its fragrances and beauty items in a new holiday campaign. Image credit: Givenchy

By SARAH RAMIREZ

While luxury may not rely on deep discounts to drive holiday sales, it has not stopped brands and retailers from celebrating early with festive holiday campaigns.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

For luxury labels, holiday campaigns are less about promotions and more about building brand awareness and attracting aspirational consumers. Early campaigns are emphasizing holiday traditions and togetherness, with more glamour than 2020's more empathetic efforts.

"The classic luxury marketing axiom dictates that marketing is created to drive brand desire; generally with narratives and emotion," said Chris Ramey, CEO of [Affluent Insights](#), Palm Beach.

"Holiday ads often tell us which brands understand luxury."

'Tis the season

High-end retailers are among the first advertising to holiday shoppers, in large part to encourage early purchases amid a stressed supply chain.

British department store chain Fortnum & Mason is leaning into the drama and tradition of the season, tapping the cast of choreographer Matthew Bourne's *Nutcracker* for an imaginative film.

Fortnum & Mason turns to a Christmas classic for its holiday campaign

Set to Tchaikovsky's "Waltz of the Flowers," the vignette opens with the character of Clara dancing through the grand entrance of Fortnum & Mason's Picadilly flagship.

Clara steps into "The Parlour," where Fortnum & Mason will be serving Nutcracker-inspired ice cream sundaes through the end of the year. Next, she arrives at "Sweetieland," the grocer's new confectionary wonderland.

Guided by a sugar plum fairy and other dancers, Clara delights in the store's decadent treats. They dance through the cheerfully decorated store before finishing their adventure with a sundae.

"Fortnum & Mason's partnership with Matthew Bourne's *Nutcracker* in ads and events is a brilliant holiday strategy," Mr. Ramey said. "The musical justifies dancing through the store filled products that are generally consumed and often gifted."

Retailer Nordstrom takes a more modern approach to its holiday campaign, "Make Merry," which first launched in mid-October.

Nordstrom highlights in-store and online services for holiday shoppers

The 30-second hero film encourages shoppers to learn more about Nordstrom's product offerings and services to simplify gift-giving.

Emphasizing inclusivity, the diverse cast includes older, multiracial and LGBTQ+ couples as well as multigenerational families and groups of friends. The campaign song, "There Will Never Be Another You" performed by Seattle-based Shaina Shepherd, echoes the loving theme.

Shorter Nordstrom ads highlight complimentary gift assistance, free shipping, in-store pickup and complimentary gift wrapping.

French fashion house Givenchy is appealing to aspirational luxury buyers by highlighting entry-level beauty items in its holiday film.

Taking place in a winter wonderland in the French countryside, the spot follows a curious fox exploring a hedge maze.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by Givenchy Beauty (@givenchybeauty)

Givenchy charms with the help of a curious fox

As snow delicately falls, the fox discovers gifts including bottles L'Interdit, Irresistible and Gentleman fragrances, as well as lipsticks and makeup palettes. At the center of the maze, the fox finally finds a frozen fountain that is adorned with Givenchy gift boxes.

The camera zooms out to reveal that the maze forms Givenchy's quadruple "G" logo.

"Givenchy's snowy surprise and delight' nails classic luxury strategy," Mr. Ramey said. "Every color, sound and image is carefully choreographed to create drama and desire."

Getting into the spirit

This year's holiday campaigns appear to be a return to form after 2020, when brands and retailers showcased empathy and comfort in their seasonal efforts.

Department store chain Bloomingdale's introduced its "Give Happy" campaign in October 2020, highlighting togetherness and curated gifts that can be enjoyed at home. Nordstrom's decision to highlight its expanded customer service offerings was business-savvy as it reassured shoppers the retailer is taking their comfort levels and safety seriously ([see story](#)).

A more traditional strategy is the one exemplified by Givenchy, as beauty items are a popular holiday gift for luxury shoppers since they often serve as an "entry level" purchase.

Last year's "Winter Wonderland of Gifts" by French fashion label Chlo was a similarly whimsical take on the holidays. In the spot, a rabbit discovered an enchanted forest with Chlo fragrances ([see story](#)).

Storytelling, even if it is straightforward, remains essential for luxury brands to differentiate themselves.

"Holidays are not a pass to go down market," Mr. Ramey said. "Luxury brands risk losing their affluent customers when their values don't match or their ads no longer resonate."

© 2021 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.