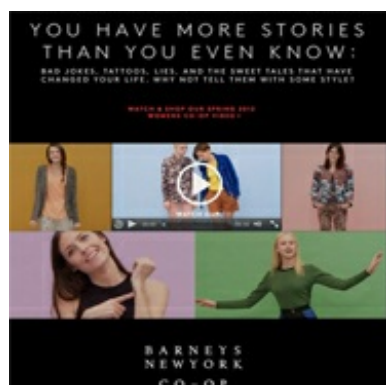


INTERNET

Barneys cuts back mailers to expedite online transactions

March 2, 2012



By RACHEL LAMB

In lieu of physical mailers and catalogs, Barneys New York is releasing shoppable digital videos for its Co-Op line, a collection catering to the younger affluent market.



Although the brand will continue to offer catalogs for other lines, Co-Op's spring line will be completely digital for the first time. Does this move signal a shift in strategy for Barneys, or mailing campaigns in general?

"This action hopefully reflects an effort to tailor marketing communications to specific market segments and not just a general cutback in one form of communications," said Ron Kurtz, president of the American Affluence Research Center, Atlanta.

"It could be that they have found the target market is more comfortable with digital media and does not need to have a printed catalog," he said. "An either/or choice seems strange, however."

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

Barneys was not able to respond before press deadline.

Model turn

Barneys has two videos on its ecommerce site at <http://www.barneys.com> for the men's and women's Co-Op lines.



Women's video

The videos greatly differ from other shoppable videos from luxury brands.

Where most videos just have dancing and music, Barneys' acts more as an interview or documentary where the models answer questions and move around against a back drop.

When a model is talking, the clothing that he or she is wearing appears on the left-hand side of the screen.

Clicking on an article expands the product and allows consumers to add it to their basket for check-out later.



Shopping capabilities

At the bottom of the videos, consumers can scroll through the different looks which are accompanied by the designer name.

Barneys alerted consumers to the new videos through social media and email blasts.



Browsing through the Co-Op videos

Co-opportunities

This very well could be an attempt to relate with consumers on a deeper level.

Barneys tried to make itself more relatable by using real New York models, musicians and residents instead of models in its last Co-Op mailer ([see story](#)).

The Co-Op line is directed to an audience of online natives who shop, browse and research online.



Barneys Co-Op catalog

Therefore, interacting with consumers on a space where they already are makes sense for Barneys.

However, this likely does not mean that this is the end of mail campaigns.

"I assume Barney's has analyzed past sales results and decided the paper catalog is not cost-effective with the target market," Mr. Kurtz said. "Direct mail is here to stay."

"Digital will not make it obsolete," he said. "Direct mail can be precisely targeted to reach specific market segments among both current and potential customers."

“It has tactile and visual qualities that digital does not.”

Final Take

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