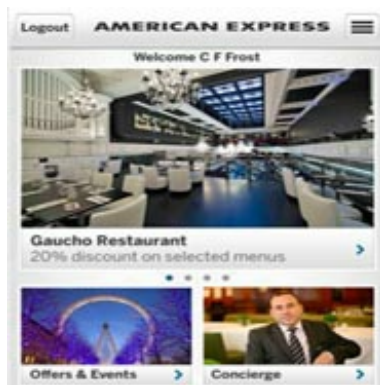


MOBILE

American Express taps app for exclusive insider's guide

May 16, 2012



By RACHEL LAMB

American Express is using a mobile application for an insider's look to London that offers special discounts, reviews and events only for cardholders.



The Amex London app is only available for American Express cardmembers including the Centurion card, Gold card and Platinum cards. It is available for free in Apple's App Store.

"The obvious strategic directive is to position Amex as a lifestyle-oriented brand, focused on providing its traveling customers not only with the tools necessary to effectively manage their financial concerns, but also with expert guidance offered to help them get the most out of their travel experiences," said Scott Forshay, mobile and emerging technologies strategist for [Acquity Group](#), Austin, TX.

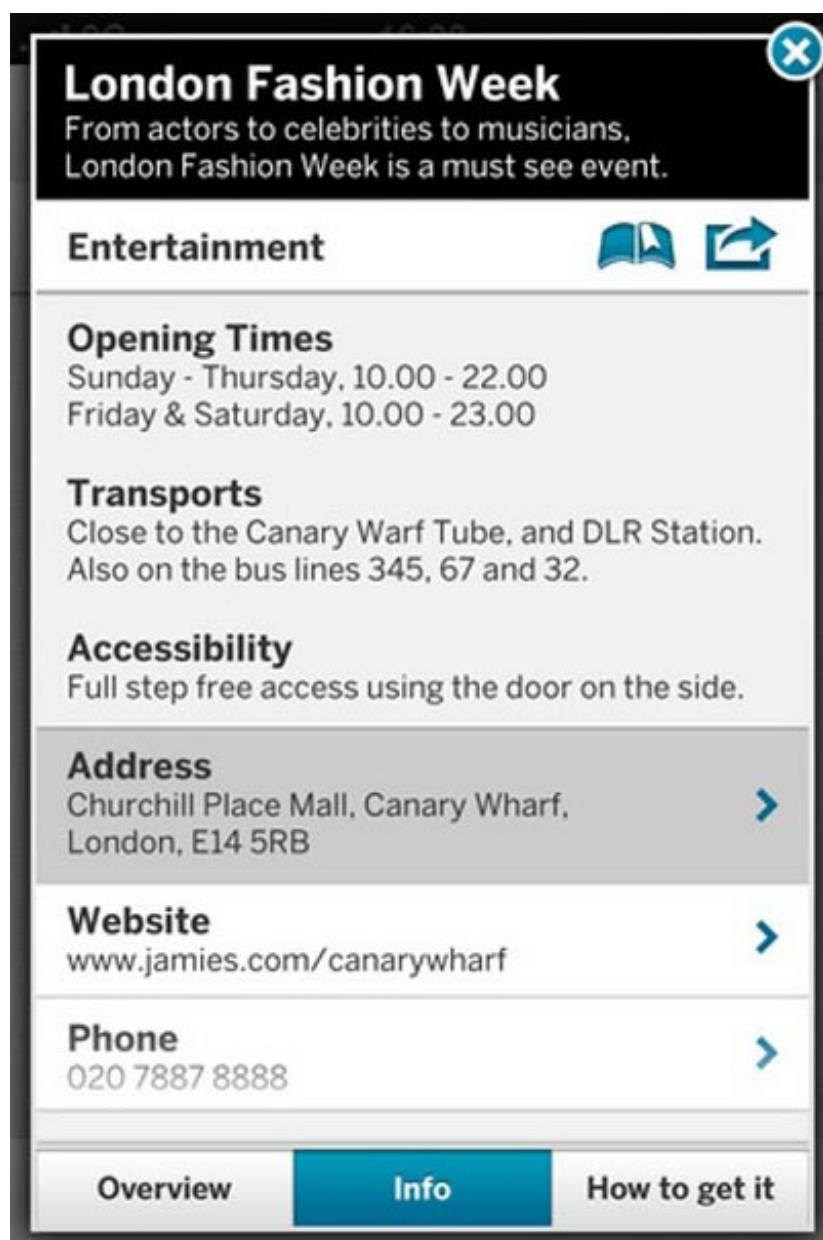
"The traveler engagement strategy obviously plays directly to strengths of the mobile medium as customers are not tethered to a big browser environment but, rather, are experiencing the world," he said.

Appetizing offers

The Amex London insider's app helps cardmembers make the most of their time in the

city this summer, according to the brand.

Users must enter their American Express user ID and password before they can access the app.



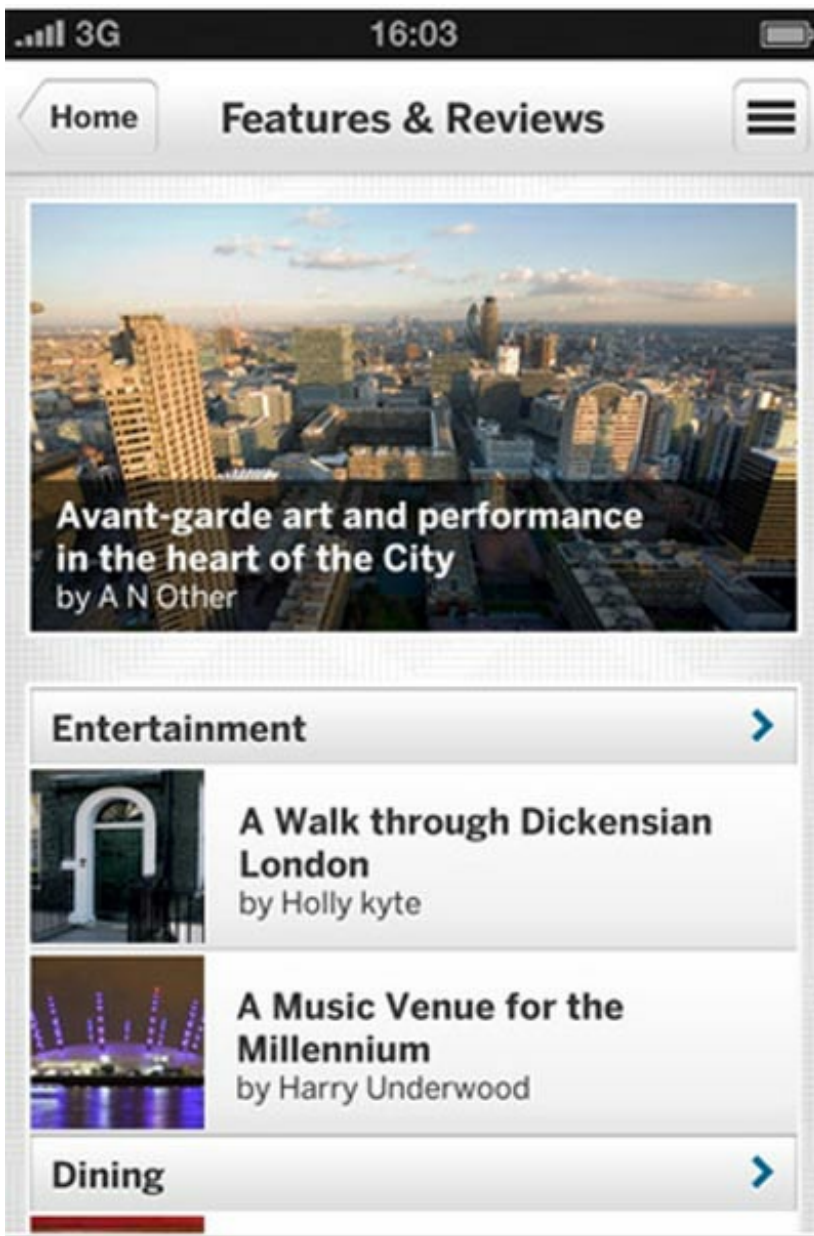
Details on London Fashion Week

Consumers have access to exclusive discounts if they use their American Express cards in certain restaurants, bars and tourist hotspots.

The app also serves as an insider's guide to London so that consumers can get special deals off the beaten path.

Cardmembers will also have information about special events including London Fashion Week and the Summer Olympics.

There are also reviews and articles inside the app.



Reviews section of the app

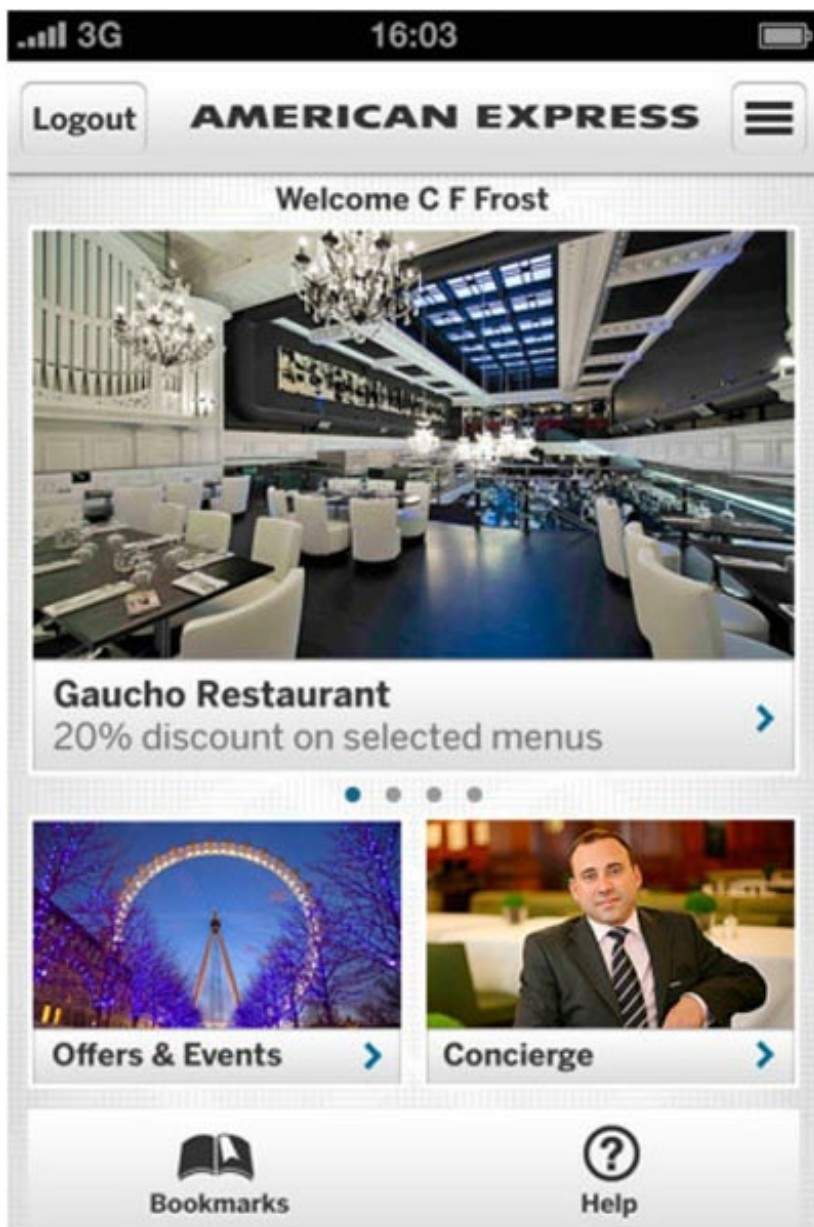
“By highlighting local offers and events, complete with a map view function, as well as offering curated guidance concerning various attractions of potential interest, the brand is aligning itself with the experience of travel,” Mr. Forshay said.

Location, location, location

The exclusivity of the app is definitely something that speaks to affluent consumers.

Indeed, insider's tips and exclusive experiences are some of the most valued parts of the affluent lifestyle.

This app will likely add value to American Express cardmembers both in loyalty and in transactions.



Deals on the Amex London app

Offering reviews and discounts that are only accessible to this clientele is something that will surely prompt cardmembers to use their American Express cards.

Likewise, American Express users will continue to be customers if they think that they will keep getting special treatment.

However, there are some basic functions that could make the app a more seamless experience, such as location-based services and contextual relevancy.

“I was surprised not to be prompted to allow location-recognition after logging in to the app,” Mr. Forshay said. “There is certainly an opportunity missed by the brand to more accurately assist customers in navigating places and events of potential interest based on their current location.

“Additionally, offering push notifications to customers would allow the brand to proactively communicate offers or guidance based on a customer's current location, without the app even having to be open,” he said. “These are basic blocking-and-tackling considerations in any functionally useful app that, hopefully, will be rolled out in

subsequent versions of the app.”

Final Take

Rachel Lamb, associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

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