

IN-STORE

Harrods aims for in-store traffic via children's club program

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By TRICIA CARR

London-based retailer Harrods is extending its Harrods Rewards program by installing a new membership for children and parents offering exclusive in-store events, contests and benefits that is launching with a Twitter scavenger hunt.

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Luxury Daily

Mini Harrods, the new membership club for parents and children ages 2-10, will introduce a new line of benefits for the retailer in conjunction with the opening of the Toy Kingdom in July. Harrods is asking consumers to participate in a Twitter contest to raise awareness for the new program.

"Harrods is not just an upscale department store, but a 188-year-old institution," said Al Ries, chairman of marketing consultancy [Ries & Ries](#), Roswell, GA. "Brands that have been around as long as Harrods has need to create new events to keep existing customers from thinking that Harrods was yesterday's department store."

"Harrods needs to keep reinventing the brand in order to keep it alive in prospects' minds," he said. "Mini Harrods is a technique to strengthen the relationship between the customer and the Harrods brand."

"This new program will add value to the brand by increasing its memorability."

Mr. Ries is not affiliated with Harrods, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Harrods declined comment.

Hide and seek

Children who are registered as Mini Harrods members will get to know the Oska-Poska Doolittle character, a bear who likes to read, who will guide them through the new toy section of Harrods.

Mini Harrods members will get a membership card to use in-store. Similar to the standard Harrods Rewards card, consumers can unlock benefits and earn points with every purchase using the card.

Members will also have access to events, competitions, exclusive offers, new product ranges and special activities in Toy Kingdom and the childrenswear section.

Mini Harrods events will include storytelling, face painting, arts and crafts and treasure hunts.

Children will get a birthday greeting from the Oska-Poska character as well as the opportunity to host a private birthday party at Harrods. Members will also get priority booking for Harrods' Christmas Grotto.

Meanwhile, there are adult-oriented benefits of the club for parents such as monthly email newsletters that offer trends for children and new happenings in Toy Kingdom, Mother's and Father's Day events and exclusive in-store offers.

To register online, each potential member is assigned a Rewards Card number. Parents must give their full names, email addresses and number of children in the family.



**MINI
HARRODS**

DISCOVER THE WORLD OF MINI HARRODS

Mini Harrods is the action-packed new club that has been specially created for children between the ages of 2 and 10 and their parents. The club introduces a whole new world of fun and benefits. As a member, your child (or children) will get to know our book-loving bear Oska-Poska Doolittle and his friends who live in the new Toy Kingdom, which opens in-store this July. You will also find out about events, competitions, exclusive offers, new ranges and special activities that happen in The Toy Kingdom and Childrenswear.

By pre-registering for the club, you will be one of the first to enjoy the benefits of membership
For more information on Mini Harrods, email mini@harrods.com
or call +44(0)208 7893 8408

Fill in your details below to pre-register

Rewards Card number*

First name*

Surname*

Email*

Number of children*

SUBMIT >>

* Required fields.

Fun and rewards for you and your family

Cool fun for children
All Mini Harrods members will receive:

- A Mini Harrods membership card, which unlocks a range of exciting benefits, and lets children earn points every time it's used (just like a Harrods Rewards card) ▶
- Invitations to fun events, from storytelling to face painting, art and crafts sessions to treasure hunts, and much more.
- Entry into exciting competitions to win fabulous prizes ▶
- Birthday greetings from Oska-Poska and friends on your child's special day plus the opportunity to host their very own private birthday party at Harrods ▶
- Priority booking at Harrods Christmas Grotto – with members having the first choice of tickets ▶

Parent power
And the fun isn't just for children – parents can also enjoy special privileges including:

- Monthly newsletters that keep you up to date with the latest trends for children, from childrenswear fashions to what's new in The Toy Kingdom.
- Mother's and Father's Day celebrations for both parents and children to enjoy.
- Exclusive in-store offers for all the family.

† For full Harrods Terms and conditions please [click here](#)




Mini Harrods online registration form

Harrods is encouraging consumers to pre-register online to be the first to get club benefits via its **Facebook** and **Twitter** accounts.

To raise awareness for the Mini Harrods club, the Oska-Poska character will initiate a scavenger hunt June 22 around London. Participants have the chance to win a \$1,569 Harrods gift card.

Six toys will be hidden at different locations in London. Harrods will tweet clues about each location and consumers must find the characters and take a picture with each one.

To enter, images must be tweeted to the @Harrods Twitter handle with the hashtag #MiniHarrods. Images must be entered by July 1.

Harrods announced the first half of the first clue June 19 via Facebook. It said “Oska-Poska is visiting two special little Kune Kune pigs he read about in one of his books.”



Mini Harrods contest announcement

Child at heart

Harrods is on the mark lately when timing its in-store and digital initiatives.

In this case, the Mini Harrods membership will likely bring parents and children into the store during the summer months when children are off from school.

Harrods often uses local holidays and seasons to market product lines.

For instance, the retailer pushed summer fashion and beauty in a digital shopping guide and e-boutique called The Seasons that was presented by occasions that affluent consumers would likely celebrate such as festivals, balls, races and parties. Content was shared via email and social media ([see story](#)).

In addition, Harrods tapped into locals' affinity for Queen Elizabeth II to market a product line and a series of in-store events to mark the Diamond Jubilee, the British monarch's 60th year on the throne, and used email and Pinterest to market them ([see story](#)).

Catering to a specific demographic of affluent consumers via shopping guides, products or membership programs will likely strengthen brand loyalty because consumers feel that Harrods can relate to their needs.

Mini Harrods might help the retailer target parents who want to purchase items for children and themselves as well as the young consumers who may become accustomed to visiting the store and become customers later on in life.

"This program will encourage young shoppers to visit the store with their families while developing long-term customers," said Kathleen Fischer, marketing manager at **Boston Retail Partners**, Boston. "This generation of children will grow up to be the next generation of Harrods shoppers.

"The goal of the program is to raise sales by offering more reasons for customers to visit the store and rewarding them for their purchases," she said.

Meanwhile, it is interesting that Harrods chose to launch its Mini Harrods benefits via Facebook and Twitter. The retailer will likely push the program via email when the toy section opens as it has done with past products and services.

Mini Harrods is a new, unique way that Harrods is building consumer connections to its brand, per Mr. Ries.

"The strength of a brand depends on two variables, and the first is the essential essence of the brand in the mind of the prospect," Mr. Ries said. "I might think, for example, that Mercedes is a prestige vehicle, which is the essential essence of the brand in many consumers' minds.

"The other variable is the connections in the mind to the brand," he said. "For example, if there is a Mercedes dealership across the street from my house or my neighbor drives a Mercedes, there is a stream of connections in my mind associated with the brand, which makes it more likely that I would buy a Mercedes the next time I purchased a vehicle."

"Harrods' new program is not designed to change the essential essence of the brand, but to increase the number of connections to the brand in consumers' minds."

Final Take

Tricia Carr, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York