

MOBILE

## Top 10 luxury brand mobile efforts of Q2

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By TRICIA CARR

Bloomingdale's, Christian Louboutin, Maserati, Ritz-Carlton and other luxury marketers focused on mobile campaigns during the second quarter of this year to reach the growing number of affluent consumers using smartphones and tablets.



Some luxury brands focused on personalization in mobile applications while others made it easier for consumers to browse and purchase on-the-go. As mobile usage continues to increase among luxury consumers, brands that have an engaging presence on smartphones and tablets will likely stay top of mind in 2012.

Here are the top luxury brand mobile efforts of the second quarter of this year, in alphabetical order:



Bentley – British automaker Bentley Motors released its first iPad app during the second quarter dedicated to its Continental GT and GTC models that lets users design their own vehicles and shows history via films, photography and stories.

The Bentley GT V8 app includes a customization tool called the Visualiser that lets users change a model's color, wheels, hood color and interior. It also contains a photo gallery, videos and specifications for both models.

The Bentley GT V8 iPad app is available for free from the Apple App Store. A version for the iPhone will be released in the future.

The app's home screen lets users navigate to different sections such as two model-dedicated sections for the GT and GTC, the Visualiser customization tool, The V8 Story and Bentley's Twitter feed.

The GT and GTC sections let users navigate to the Visualiser where they can modify the vehicle and save it to their personal V8 Garage within the app.

The V8 Story sections contains a two-minute video, a design photo gallery, a sound sampler and a performance section where consumers can experience the history of the engine.

In the Visualiser, users can create a new bespoke vehicle or edit an existing vehicle in their garages. Customization options include nine colors, three types of wheel rims and nine interior color schemes ([see story](#)).



## Visualiser section



Bloomingdale's – Department store chain Bloomingdale's rolled out an iPhone and Android app to let fashion-savvy consumers shop the latest trends, as well as check prices and read product reviews.

Via the Big Brown Bag app, consumers can find the nearest location to learn more about in-store events and special offers.

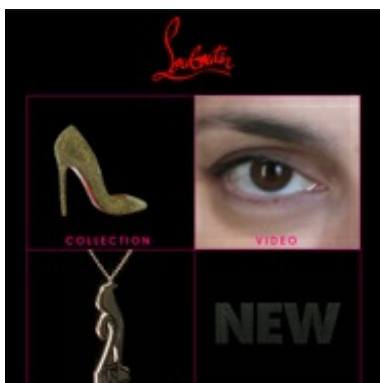
The app lets consumers create and manage their wedding registry and shop from the registries of their friends and family.

The in-store bar code scanner lets users view additional product details and read customer reviews.

Additionally, consumers can manage their Loyallist rewards points and pay their Bloomingdale's credit via the app.

The app also lets customers find discounts and promotions and scan products in-store to view available promotions.

The Big Brown Bag app joins the other Bloomingdale's family of apps including the 59th Street iPhone app which launched in January, and the Bloomingdale's iCatalog app for iPad which debuted in August ([see story](#)).



Christian Louboutin – French footwear label Christian Louboutin is showcasing collections and designer sketches in its first iPhone app that acts as a to-go guide to the brand.

The free app lets consumers view shoes and handbags from the current collection, add products to an in-app wishlist, share images via Facebook, Twitter and email and locate a

retailer.

The label is also sharing product videos, sketches of its 20th Anniversary Capsule Collection and brand news.

The Louboutin app is available worldwide for the iPhone and iPod touch from Apple's App Store. It acts as a digital touch point for Louboutin fans, per the brand.

The home screen of the app contains six squares arranged in three rows of two. Each square leads to a section including Collection, Video, 20 Ans, What's New, Wish List and Store Locator.

The Collection section shows the spring/summer 2012 collection as well as available women's shoes, men's shoes, women's bags and accessories. Users see Louboutin shoe boxes as each product image loads in the app.

Users can click on a product to go to a larger image. In this view, they can read a product description, add an item to the in-app wish list and share via Facebook, Twitter or email ([see story](#)).





Crystal Cruises – Crystal Cruises looked to attract both tech-savvy and traditional consumers in its first smartphone app released in the second quarter. It enables travelers to share photos via social media, email and mail.

The Storyteller app lets consumers edit and share personal vacation photos from their iPhones while traveling and centers on branded storytelling to go along with Crystal Cruises' Begin a New Story campaign that was also launched during the second quarter.

Crystal Cruises is the first in the luxury cruise industry to release an app of this kind, per the brand.

When users open the Storyteller app, they are asked to select the cruise they are taking. The options are arranged by ship and date.

The app gives the option to take a new photo or use an existing one on the iPhone.

Once a photo is added to the app, users can customize it with color filters, borders and caption fonts.

Users can share a photo on their personal Facebook pages, the Crystal Cruises Facebook page, via email or send a postcard via mail with the photo. A postcard can be signed and mailed from within the app.

Photos are saved to the app and labeled by story – a term the brand is using instead of the word “trip.” Users can create a new story or add a photo to an existing story (**see story**).





*Photo created with the Storyteller app*



De Beers – De Beers stepped up to its competition in the second quarter through an app for the iPhone and iPad that serves as a wedding jewelry finder as well as a consultant on diamonds and the brand.

Consumers can look at engagement rings, wedding bands and jewelry, but there is also access to videos and other details about the De Beers brand, history, design and the diamonds it uses.

When consumers search through the De Beers collection to choose an engagement ring, they can add it to their favorites, share with a friend or move to the next section, which is matching the ring to a wedding band.

Consumers can look at the two rings on the same screen as they try to make a match. When the wedding band is chosen, users can put the two rings together to see how they look next to one another.

There is also the option to complete the purchase with an eternity band – mostly used for anniversaries – or wedding day necklaces, earrings and bracelets.

Other luxury jewelers such as Tiffany & Co. and Cartier have developed apps to aid in the

search for the ideal wedding jewelry. However, the De Beers app is unique in a few different ways, per the brand.

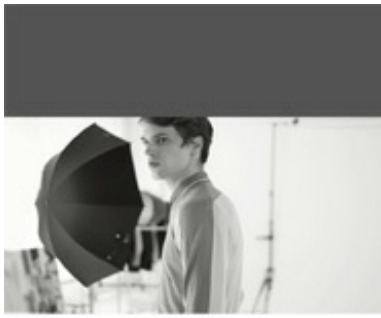
The first is the expert guidance and service. In a section called The De Beers Difference, the brand gives access to its diamonds, designs and craftsmanship through content and videos.

Another important aspect of the app is that De Beers strives for repeat usage. Consumers may keep coming back to select jewelry and eternity bands for other important moments in their lives.

Also, the fact that De Beers purposely did not make the app commerce-enabled ensures that consumers will come into the store to purchase ([see story](#)).



*Engagement and wedding rings shown together*



Z Zegna  
EXPERIENCE

Ermenegildo Zegna – Ermenegildo Zegna launched a new app for the iPhone and iPad during the second quarter that offered two exclusive products following the live streaming of its spring/summer 2013 show.

The Z Zegna Experience app was designed to focus on the preparations surrounding the new Z Zegna fashion show on June 25 that live-streamed within the device.

Z Zegna streamed content for tech-savvy fashion followers in anticipation of the new collection.

Consumers had the ability to buy two exclusive products – a hybrid classic city shoe and a leather iPad case – when they appeared on the runway. A few luxury marketers are offering product buys from the runway, but not many of them offer delivery this quickly ([see story](#)).



Lexus – Toyota Corp.’s Lexus introduced its new GS 350 model in the second quarter with an app that sets competing models side-by-side so consumers can see differentiating features from both vehicles.

The Lexus GS app was created by Lexus College, which is a department that is responsible for dealer training. The app is available for iOS 5 users in Apple’s App Store.

There are three key factors that differentiate this Lexus app from others. The first is the competitive comparisons feature.

The app allows consumers to position the GS and its competitor side by side or stacked on top of one another.

Another differentiating feature is the key takeaway. Each vehicle hotspot has a key takeaway, which provides the salesperson a quick key selling point, per the brand.



Consumers can also use the “favorites” option to go back to vehicles quickly after they have left the app ([see story](#)).



*Lexus compared to Audi*



Maserati – Italian automaker Maserati released an app for the iPhone called Maserati Passion to help broaden its mobile presence and deepen engagement for both affluent buyers and aspirational consumers.

Maserati Passion acts as a dealer locator, news source, social media community and car configurator. It is available for free in Apple’s App Store.

Maserati Passion is split into sections pertaining to models, community, news, dealerships and models.

The model section includes individual pages on the GranCabrio Range, GranTurismo Range and Quattroporte Range.

Tapping on an individual car’s page brings up detailed model information, a photo gallery and a link to the car configurator.

Consumers can also tap on the audio and video section to watch the models in action or listen to the sound of the transmission. Users can send these features via email to friends.

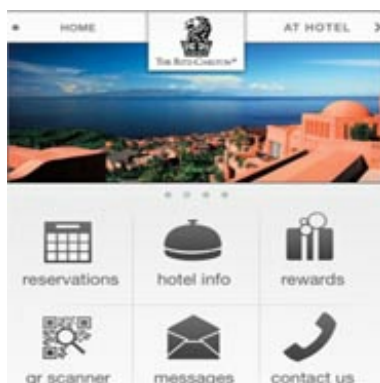
The Maserati app includes a dealer locator that uses the iPhone’s GPS to find a brand dealership via the user’s location. Consumers can also choose to find one by country or address.

The car configurator allows consumers to design their own Maserati by choosing colors, rims, tops and callipers. Users can save their designed model into their iPhone photo library.

Users can also opt to sign up for brand emails, check out Maserati social media sites and send messages about the app to friends ([see story](#)).



*Maserati configurator*



Ritz-Carlton – Luxury hotel chain Ritz-Carlton met its competitors that are already in the mobile game with an app that uses GPS, social media, a QR scanner and special tips from the company president, which it released during the second quarter.

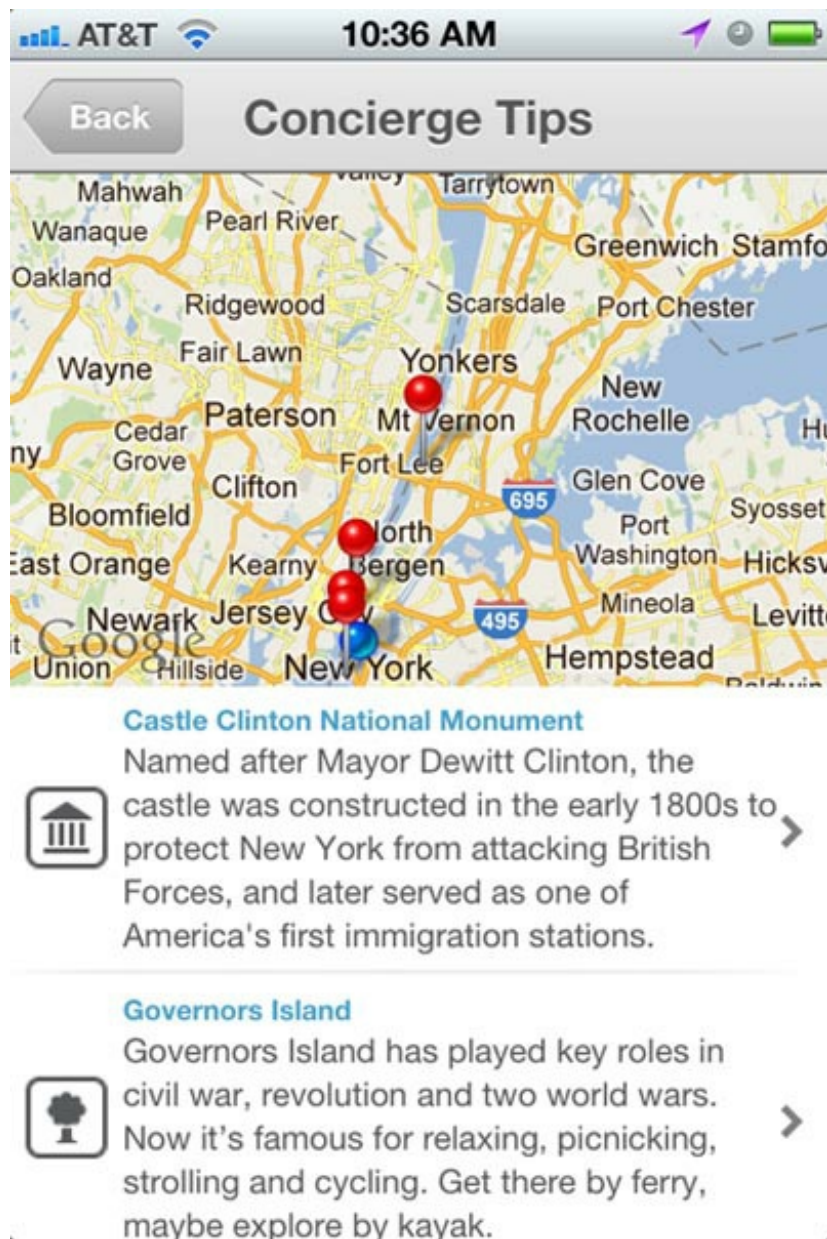
The app has basic functions such as booking reservations and accessing more information about a particular location and gives access to its calendar of events.

A smartphone uses GPS to figure out at which hotel the user is staying. It uses it to reveal cultural, sightseeing, dining and shopping tips.

Consumers can look at new tips from Ritz-Carlton president Herve Humler, who has compiled his favorite places about each Ritz-Carlton location such as a secluded garden in Sanya or a Viennese crystal chandelier in Doha. To access these, consumers can scan a QR code at check-in.

Ritz-Carlton also rolled out mobile offers for specific locations to collaborate with the app launch.

For example, at the Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua, consumers can participate in a cultural art tour led by QR codes to learn more about the hotel's art collection ([see story](#)).



### *Concierge tips*



Starwood – Starwood Hotels & Resorts offered incentives for checking in on foursquare at its nine hotel brands including St. Regis and The Luxury Collection as part of a promotion to share the company's partnership with Live Nation that launched during the second quarter.

Starwood Preferred Guest rewards program created a contest to market its Live Nation 2012 summer programming during which members could enter to win tickets to exclusive performances.

The Hear the Music, See the World's SPG summer schedule consisted of nine trips to Starwood properties in destinations such as New York, Miami, Dallas, Houston, Paris and Dubai. Each trip included a musical performance.

Starwood encouraged foursquare check-ins at its properties by offering extra contest entries per check-in.

Also, members in the United States who checked-in unlocked a single-use \$15 Live Nation concert cash code that could be applied to the purchase of tickets or artist merchandise.

These programs are an extension of the long-running On Tour with SPG program and the brand's three-year partnership with Live Nation, claimed the brand ([see story](#)).

Final Take

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