

IN-STORE

Bloomingdale's elevates in-store presence via BMW, GQ pop-up shops

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By TRICIA CARR

High-end department store chain Bloomingdale's is looking to draw affluent males to retail locations this fall with pop-up shops created in partnership with BMW Motorcycles and Condé Nast's GQ, likely to make the female-centric shopping experience more tailored for men.

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It is affluent women who are known to spend hours in retail stores, but Bloomingdale's seems to be encouraging men to browse in stores with a few strategic pop-up shops this fall. Getting affluent male consumers into the store could help Bloomingdale's generate sales from the customer group throughout the fall and holiday season.

"I think this partnership will help prompt customers from BMW and GQ who might not have shopped at Bloomingdale's before to now do so," said Jordan Phillips, founder and director of **Lure of Luxe LLC**, New York.

"This strategy is also about capturing the attention of Bloomingdale's current clients, since the store has staged the unexpected by incorporating motorcycles into a fashion campaign," she said. "Good marketers are always on the lookout for collaborations with other brands that can open up the doors to new, but still complementary, audiences."

“It is very likely that the man who reads GQ and owns, or least appreciates, a BMW motorcycle will also shop at Bloomingdale’s.”

Ms. Phillips is not affiliated with Bloomingdale’s, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Bloomingdale’s was not available for comment before press deadline.

Mastering masculinity

Bloomingdale’s limited-time "On The Road" pop-up shops in collaboration with BMW Motorcycles are open now in the men’s department of stores nationwide. Consumers can not only shop, but enter a contest to win a BMW motor bike.

This is the first time the retailer is partnering with BMW’s motorcycle division.

The shop centers on the “moto trend” and features the BMW R 1200 R Classic bike as well as travel accessories such as leather fingerless gloves, hooded knits and leather totes.

Bloomingdale’s is raising awareness for its BMW Motorcycles partnership in its men’s fall catalog. It is also the subject of a window display at the 59th Street flagship store in New York.



The "On The Road" pop-up shop and contest is also available online at <http://bloomingdales.com/itson>.

In addition, Bloomingdale's is presenting men's merchandise in limited-edition "Power On" pop-up shops in partnership with GQ magazine.

Retail locations for Power On include those in New York; Garden City, NY; Aventura, FL; Hackensack, NJ; Short Hills, NJ; Chicago; Los Angeles; San Francisco; Santa Monica, CA; and Costa Mesa, CA.

The shop contains gadgets and tech gear for men chosen by Bloomingdale's Fashion Office as well as "GQ Picks" chosen by the magazine's editors.

Meanwhile, Nordstrom is also in the midst of a partnership with GQ magazine.

For the next six months, Nordstrom will offer a group of men's items called GQ Selects that are available for purchase in stores and online ([see story](#)).

Pop goes the shop

Pop-up shops have a different purpose than in-store boutiques, per Ms. Phillips.

"Since this campaign is about capturing the attention of current and potential customers, pop-up shops are more appropriate since they are temporary," Ms. Phillips said.

"In-store boutiques are typically longer-term arrangements, and thus should be reserved for more traditional brand partnerships," she said.

A few high-end retailers are trying pop-up shops recently.

For instance, department store chain Nordstrom collaborated with Topshop to open a pop-up shop in select Nordstrom locations this summer.

The stores installed a 2,500-square foot Topshop for women and 1,500 square-foot Topman with mannequins, texturing and lighting ([see story](#)).

In addition, Russian jeweler Fabergé opened a pop-up in New York's Plaza Hotel that was only accessible by appointment during the holiday season.

This effort set the scene for its Madison Avenue store, which opened this spring. It is the jeweler's first bricks-and-mortar presence in the United States ([see story](#)).

Also, pop-up shops are often a part of London-based department store Harrods' holiday strategy.

The retailer will open a 7,000-square-foot Disney Princess pop-up boutique available only during the holiday season that will complement its Christmas window display, which will show Disney princess dresses designed by fashion houses such as Oscar de la Renta, Versace and Elie Saab ([see story](#)).

Bloomingdale's collaborations with BMW Motorcycles and GQ could be considered risky

since they are not fashion brands and not items traditionally sold at its stores.

However, the partnerships will certainly draw attention to Bloomingdale's this fall.

"I would not have previously associated Bloomingdale's with BMW, but that is exactly what makes it such a smart partnership," Ms. Phillips said.

"When passing by my local Bloomingdale's store the other day, I stopped and did a double-take at the motorcycles paired with leather jackets in the Lexington Avenue window," she said. "That in itself says quite a bit, since it is extremely difficult to capture consumers' attention in today's overly-stimulated marketing environment."

Final Take

Tricia Carr, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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