

MULTICHANNEL

## Michael Kors, Oscar de la Renta activate email, social media for Sandy updates

November 6, 2012



By ERIN SHEA

Luxury marketers such as Michael Kors, Oscar de la Renta and Diane von Furstenberg that are based in the United States are taking to email and social media to maintain customer service in the wake of Superstorm Sandy.



Michael Kors, Saks Fifth Avenue, Diane von Furstenberg, Marc Jacobs and Oscar de la Renta chose email to update their customers on their brand's individual situation and offer sympathy. Also, department store Bergdorf Goodman's Twitter account became another news outlet for those affected by Sandy.

"Loyalists are likely to engage with a brand through both email and social media," said Rachel Lewis, senior strategist at [iProspect](#), Fort Worth, TX. "Social media may be effective as a method of previewing information or products, then leveraging email to reinforce these things in more detail."

"Brands must be careful not to bombard their users with the same information repeatedly," she said.

Ms. Lewis is not affiliated with [Bergdorf Goodman](#), [Saks Fifth Avenue](#), [Diane von](#)

Furstenberg, Michael Kors, Marc Jacobs or Oscar de la Renta but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Emails of support

The majority of the email messages sent out from luxury brands and retailers were messages of sympathy for those on the East Coast.

New York-based brands made it clear in their emails that they understood the devastating situation since they had been affected by the storm as well.

Michael Kors kept its email short, but also personal by starting with the line, "We're with you," and included the designer's signature at the bottom.



*Michael Kors email*

Both Diane von Furstenberg and Oscar de la Renta voiced concern, gave updates on their East Coast stores and apologized for inconveniences.

*To Our Customers*

Hurricane Sandy has dramatically impacted the Northeast and our thoughts are with all of our customers in the area during this challenging time.

As a *New York-based company*, we have been affected by the storm. Due to power outages, our warehouse and Manhasset store are closed and will open as soon as power is restored.

As a result, *website and trunk show shipments will experience delays* which we are diligently working to minimize. As soon as we have additional information we will update you.

Please email [PersonalShopper@odlr.com](mailto:PersonalShopper@odlr.com) for immediate assistance.

We are dedicated to providing you with the best service, and apologize for any inconvenience. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

*Sincerely,  
The Oscar de la Renta Team*

*Oscar de la Renta email*

On Nov. 5, Ralph Lauren posted an Instagram image through Facebook with a quote from the designer about the resilience of New York. The post was signed “RL” and included the hashtag #SandyRelief.

“AS A BORN AND BRED NEW YORKER,  
I’M CONFIDENT THE RESILIENT SPIRIT  
OF OUR COMMUNITY WILL TRIUMPH.”

*Ralph Lauren*

### *Ralph Lauren Instagram photo*

Marc Jacobs sent out a short, sympathetic email that included a link to a page on its Website where there were links to various relief organizations, such as The American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, The American Hurricane Association and a link to New York Area service sites.

A NOTE TO OUR FRIENDS

OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS ARE WITH  
ALL OF THOSE AFFECTED BY  
HURRICANE SANDY



MARC, ROBERT &  
THE MJI FAMILY

### *Marc Jacobs email*

Also, Saks Fifth Avenue CEO Steve Sadove included a sympathetic note about the devastation of Sandy and said that the store and its employees are there to help in any way.

"Email communication is probably the most effective way to get messaging out, especially in challenging times," said Kathleen Ruiz, senior vice president of store and vendor marketing and public relations at Saks Fifth Avenue.

"We sincerely wanted to let our customers know that we are there for them, and if there is something that we can do to support them and ease their burdens, we will try," Ms. Ruiz said. "The safety of our Associates and customers is of paramount importance to Saks."



## *Saks Fifth Avenue email*

These emails were sent out after the storm passed through the New York area.

“This wait-and-see approach allowed those brands to develop a strategic plan to determine how to react, move forward and how to best communicate to consumers,” Ms. Lewis said.

“Once the storm had passed and the damage was assessed, the timeliness of the information was no longer a life-and-death situation, so brands opting to wait to send information via email were not rushed by the uncertainty and dire immediacy of the pre-storm preparations,” she said.

### Urgent message

Email and Twitter serve different purposes to disseminate brand information.

Email gives more content and information, but Twitter is immediate and the information can easy spread.

Retailers such as Bergdorf, Barneys New York, Bloomingdale’s and Saks Fifth Avenue used their Twitter handles to share customer service news, store closure updates, ecommerce promotions and good wishes in response to Sandy.

Twitter as a marketing channel is one of the most casual and immediate mediums through which brands can communicate with their customers. Therefore, it was appropriate for luxury marketers to transform their Twitter accounts into a news feed that keeps their social community updated on setbacks caused by Sandy ([see story](#)).

“For brands like Bergdorf that live and breathe the medium, it was natural to react over Twitter,” said Yuli Ziv, founder/CEO of [Style Coalition](#), New York.

“It would have been strange to their followers who are used to seeing several tweets daily not to get a reaction from a brand to an event so impactful,” she said.

These social media engagements can also help build a community around a brand or retailer.

“Events like these are not only offering an opportunity to do good, but build stronger connections between people,” Ms. Ziv said. “Brands that are seeing their customers as a community and not just individuals with wallets can really make a difference and inspire.”

### Covering all the bases

Luxury marketers try to engage in multiple social media and digital efforts and are not choosing one medium over another.

Brands should be sure to cover all of their bases since different customer demographics pay attention to different social media platforms.

“Now that we are past the digital learning curve, brands with a large customer base should

be communicating effectively across multiple channels,” Ms. Ziv said.

“If there is an important message that needs to be communicated, there is no reason why it would not be spread via all channels and customized for each format,” she said.

Final Take

*Erin Shea, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

Embedded Video: <http://www.youtube.com/embed/JH5nbeovgk8>

---

© Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your **feedback** is welcome.