

INTERNET

Harrods prompts daily engagement via Facebook Advent calendar

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By TRICIA CARR

London-based department store Harrods is engaging its Facebook fans each day leading up to Christmas through a trivia-themed Advent calendar located on a Facebook application.



Harrods is revealing a trivia question each day Dec. 1-24 so that users can test their knowledge on the store. Luxury marketers that encourage repeat visits to a social campaign with something as simple as a daily prompt could increase brand recall through the effort, but it is unlikely to trigger a long-term relationship.

"Seeing the sharp rise for actionable advertising, digital Advent calendars really hit the new interactivity mark for what brands, social platforms and user-sumers expect," said Paul Farkas, cofounder/CEO of [ULN Ultra Lifestyle Network](#), New York.

"Nuances are important, and Harrods' design is aesthetically effective, contextually tying brand heritage milestones with shoppable brands and categories, with a ring win-it to constructively add currency for views and database building good measure," he said.

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

[Harrods](#) did not respond before press deadline.

Christmas spirit

Facebook users can visit the Harrods Advent Calendar 2012 app to access the trivia question each day.

Users can access past questions, but they cannot see future questions until the corresponding date.

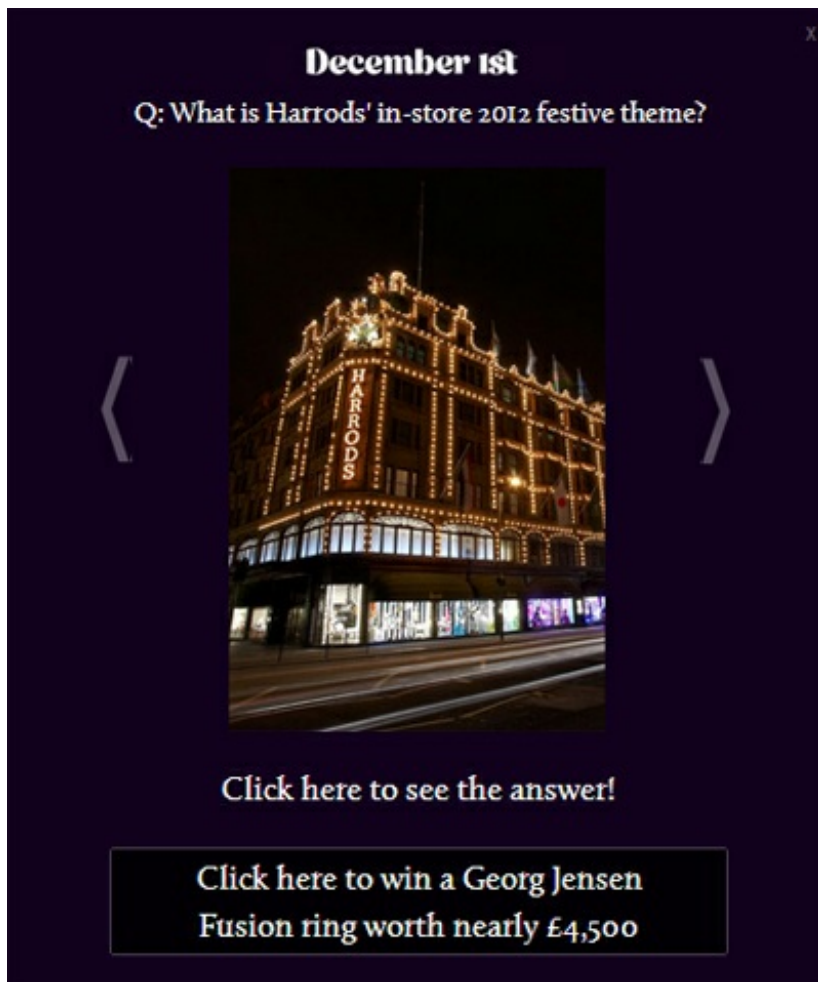


Facebook app

Clicking the date on the Advent calendar reveals the question and a corresponding image. The answer is revealed when users click the text below the image.

Also, below each question is a Facebook comment box. Users have been posting their answers to the questions through this tool.

The first question released Dec. 1 was, "What is Harrods' in-store 2012 festive theme?" This question nods to Harrods' partnership with Disney to create this year's Christmas window exhibit.

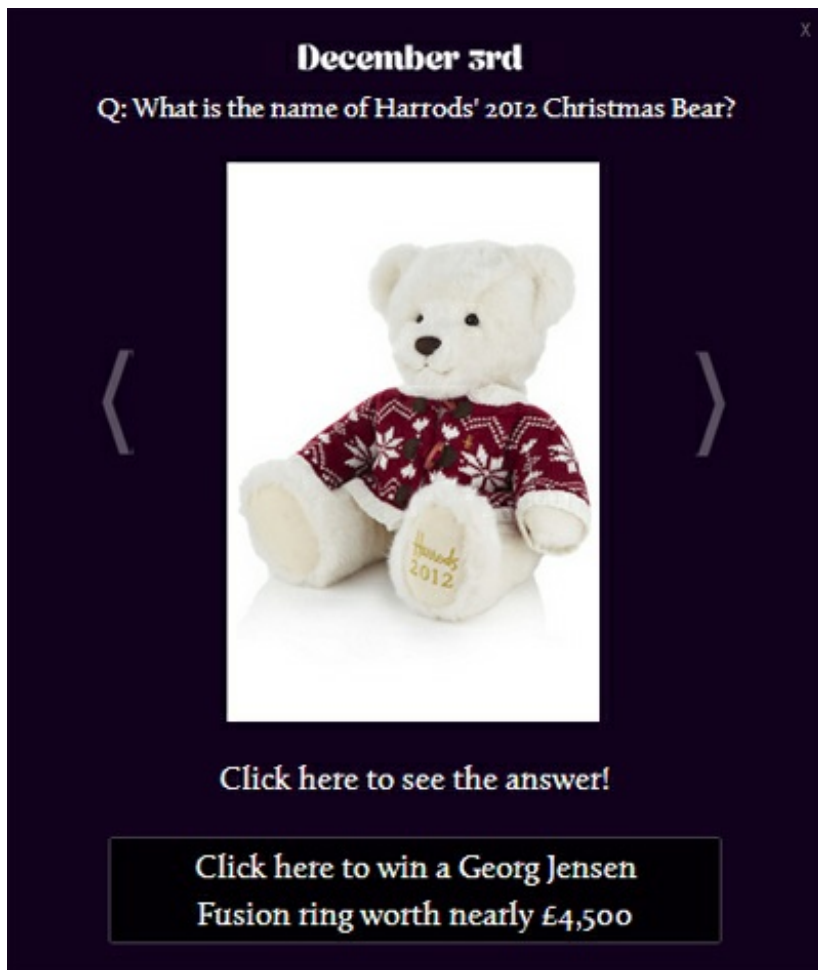


Dec. 1 question

The partnership includes a window display of designer dresses inspired by princess characters and a dedicated in-store shopping section ([see story](#)).

Another question released on Dec. 3 was, “What is the name of Harrods' 2012 Christmas Bear?” The answer given through the app is Chester.

Below this particular question, there are 249 comments with users’ answers. This is the question with the most comments in the app.



Dec. 3 question

Other questions bring the focus to Harrods' Christmas windows, historical facts and specific items offered from the department store.

Harrods is also raising awareness for its holiday giveaway of a Georg Jensen Fusion ring worth approximately \$7,280 through the app. Users can click-through to fill out the entry form on Harrods.com.

"The strength of the strategy is engaging prospects and spreading the narrative," said Chris Ramey, president of **Affluent Insights**, Miami. "Harrods' rich history reinforces why it is one of the world's great stores.

Daily dose

Other luxury marketers have encouraged repeat visits to a digital campaign through daily updates.

For example, Mandarin Oriental, New York, is marketing its property with a Facebook campaign that shares photos and qualities of its location and home city each day for one year during which the brand hopes to reach out to past guests and aspirational consumers.

The 365 Reasons campaign features one property amenity, local landmark or nearby event that is unique to New York on the Mandarin Oriental, New York, Facebook page each day.

The campaign was developed to build a follower base for the Facebook page and engage

current fans across additional digital platforms such as Twitter, Pinterest, Tumblr and email ([see story](#)).

In fact, Harrods recently held a week of digital shopping events that aligned with British Vogue's Online Fashion Week Dec. 3-7.

The department store offered a new event-related competition each day including a "Hide & Chic" competition, silent auction and other exclusive offers ([see story](#)).

These campaigns might boost engagement, but there needs to be more to result in new long-term customers.

"Distinguishing brands on social media is a substantial challenge," Mr. Ramey said.

"Facebook is like pabulum - you digest it and then you move on.

"Long-term relationships are not built on social media as it is too fleeting," he said.

Final Take

Tricia Carr, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York