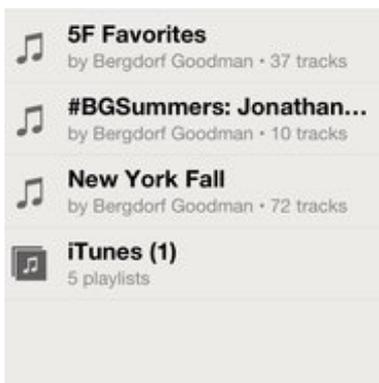


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## Spotify helps luxury brands build identities, engage with consumers

August 19, 2013



By ERIN SHEA

Luxury brands that create playlists and maintain a profile on Internet music provider Spotify can show off their identities and further engage with consumers through shared music interests.



Brands including Bergdorf Goodman, Pierre Balmain, Hugo Boss and Rebecca Minkoff have used Spotify to create and share playlists that embody the brand's character. Through a program like Spotify, brands are able to connect with consumers through a more emotional form such as music.

"People don't want to engage with logos online, they want to engage with people," said Christine Kirk, CEO of [Social Muse Communications](#), Los Angeles.

"Brands that do social media right create a personality or persona for themselves that goes beyond corporate jargon and messaging," she said.

"Luxury brands are looking for ways to connect with their existing consumers, as well as aspirational buyers, and creating a branded Spotify channel affords a brand to showcase its unique voice and personality through music."

Mix tape

Many brands have created a virtual mix tape through Spotify.

Some brands create playlists for special events that are either hosted by the brand or are other local happenings.

For instance, German apparel label Hugo Boss encouraged consumers around the globe to view its Berlin Fashion Week runway show by optimizing the live stream for smartphones and tablets and presenting it via Spotify, which was a first for the digital music service.

The #Hugo Rocks Berlin fall 2013 runway stream went live Jan. 17 at 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time via digital, mobile and Spotify. The show marked the label's 20th anniversary and the start of a monthly Spotify playlist offering that is available to users of the service on their PC, mobile device, tablet and home entertainment system ([see story](#)).

Also, apparel and accessory label Rebecca Minkoff created a playlist for New York's Governor's Ball Music Festival June 7-9.

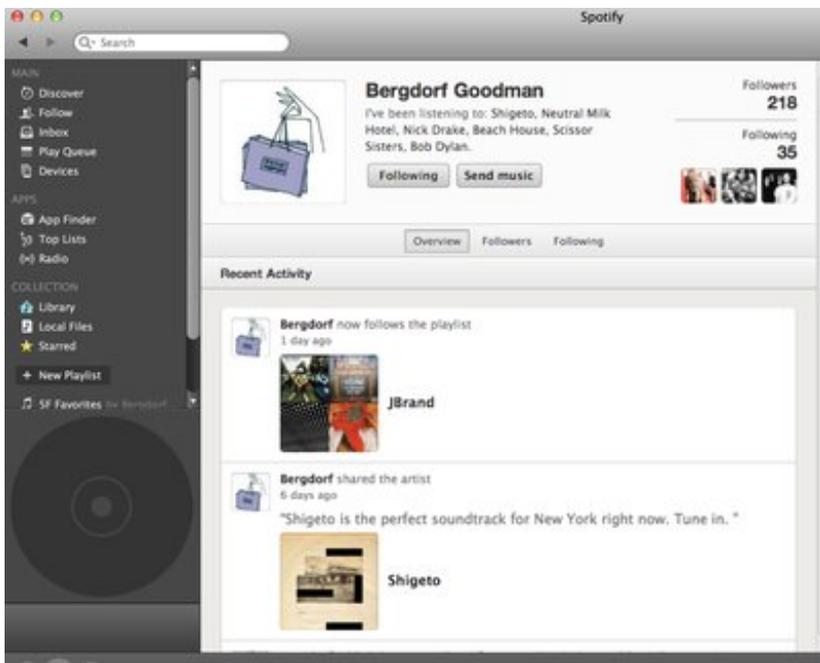
The label shared the dedicated Spotify playlist through its blog.



### *Rebecca Minkoff's June playlist*

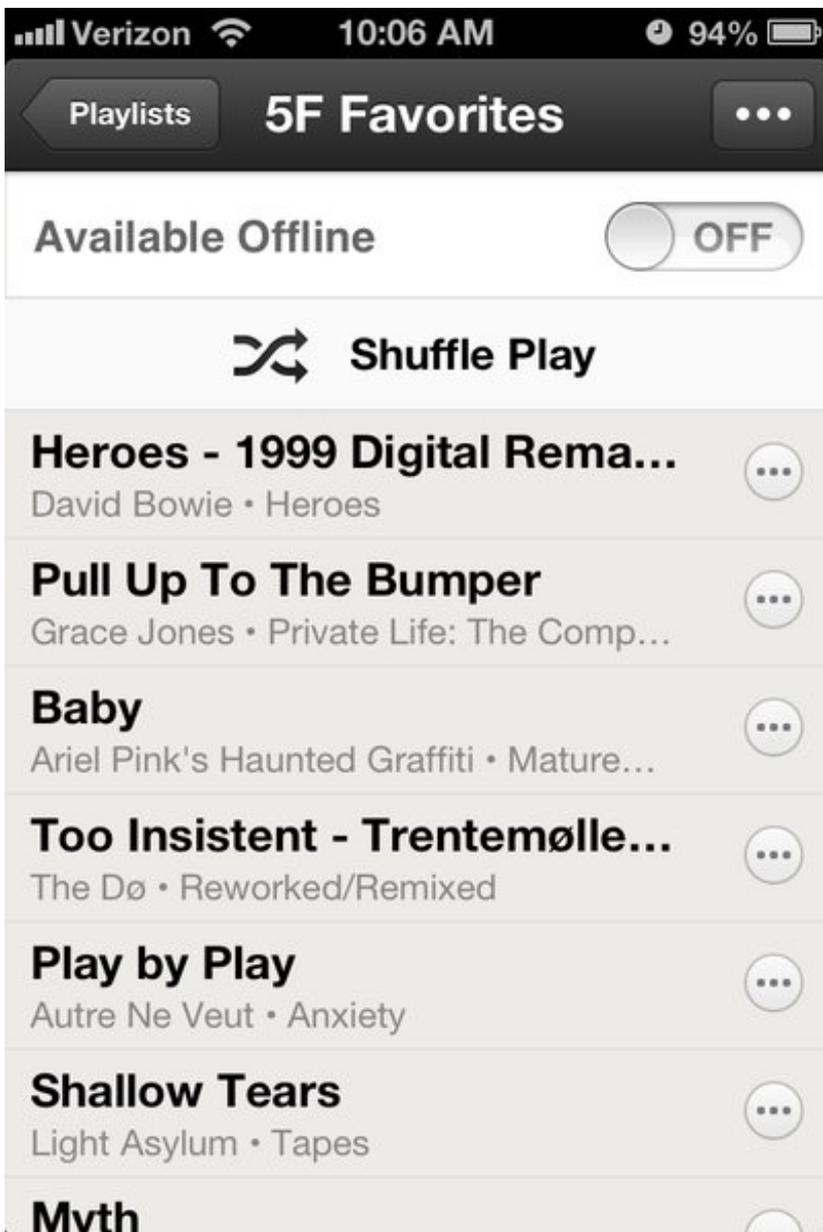
Other brands have created playlists for celebrating seasons, certain locations or collections. Some playlists include employee's favorite songs.

New York retailer Bergdorf Goodman has created a number of playlists for different seasons and in-store departments.



*Bergdorf's Spotify profile*

A couple of Bergdorf's playlists include "5F Favorites," "New York Fall" and "#BGSummers."



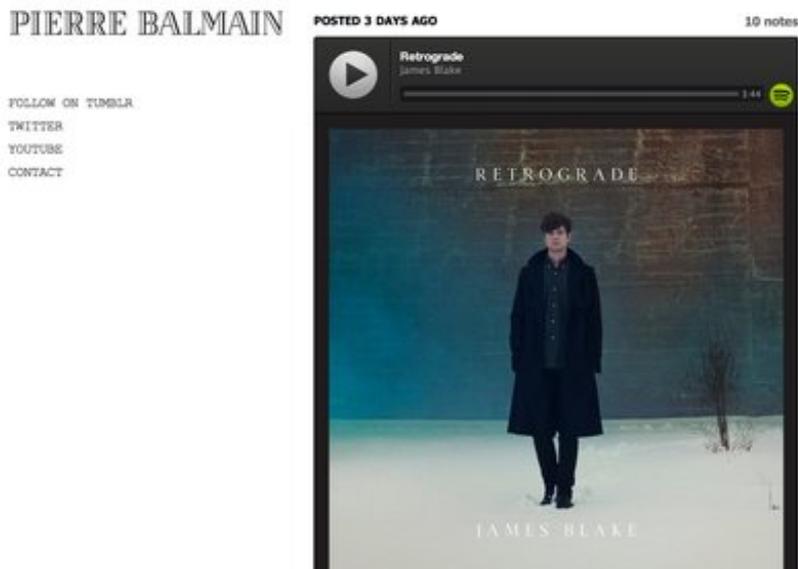
*Bergdorf's "5F Favorites" playlist*

Furthermore, French footwear label Christian Louboutin created a number of playlists for different locations where the songs were about a certain city.



### *Louboutin's New York playlist*

Additionally, French fashion house Pierre Balmain posted a single song through Spotify to share with its fans through its blog.



### *Balmain's blog post*

Through these shared Spotify playlists luxury brands are able to connect with their current fan base and possibly attract new followers as well.

“Sites and services such as Spotify have the ability to distinguish between users and identify them by location, demographic and other qualifiers, and in this case, music preferences,” said Jason B. Cohen, executive vice president at **The O Group**, New York. “This allows Luxury brands to connect with specific types of individuals who may or may not be current brand devotees.

“Also, playlists allow luxury brands to share equity with the artists featured on those lists,”

he said.

“It's also a great opportunity for luxury brands looking to communicate a curatorial point-of-view.”

Although Spotify can allow a brand to show off its personality, it is not clear whether the platform actually gives luxury brands ROI from using it.

"While Spotify is relatively small in the United States today, it's well-positioned to be a leader for a while, but the space is crowded and the business model is untested," said Marko Z. Muellner, senior director of marketing at [ShopIgniter](#), Portland, OR.

"Building a community of Spotify followers on the platform itself isn't yet a great investment and it's unclear if this will ever be part of marketer's key objectives," he said.

"But like Vine, SoundCloud or other content-based social networks, brands are in constant need of great content to drive loyalty and sharing, and Spotify playlists can help fill that pipeline."

#### Creating an online bond

Since music is a more personal and emotional art form, creating playlists could help brands create deeper connections with their fan base.

“Music is a visceral experience,” Social Muse’s Ms. Kirk said. “A luxury brand with a Spotify channel can build customer loyalty and make an emotional connection with buyers through music.”

Moreover, brands are likely to reach target customers and potentially find new ones through sharing these playlists through Spotify’s large reach.

“Everyone is online these days, from celebrities, to Fortune 500 CEOs, to successful entrepreneurs, and they're all looking for unique ways to spend their hard-earned dollars,” Ms. Kirk said.

“A brand should be wherever they know consumers are spending their time online,” she said.

#### Final take

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

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