

ADVERTISING

## Armani attracts aspirational consumers with InStyle sweepstakes

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By JEN KING

Italian label Giorgio Armani is promoting its Fifth Avenue concept store in New York through a new sweepstakes with Time Inc.'s InStyle magazine in order to spark an interest among aspirational consumers.



The InStyle Boutique Sweepstakes winner will win an exclusive experience inside the fashion brand's Emporio Armani storefront. Contests can be beneficial to a brand looking to expand its reach among aspirational consumers.

"The success of a contest - and ultimately how it impacts a brand's value - depends on how closely the idea plays up and ties to the core of a brand, how relevant it is to its audiences and how it's carried out, said Nikki Baboun, strategist at **Siegel+Gale**, New York.

"Also, deciding whether or not to keep it in house or partner with a publication is a critical decision," she said. "By keeping it in house, the brand can protect itself but then faces the challenge of getting media coverage."

"Alternatively, by partnering with a publication the brand opens itself to more risk but gains the benefit of guaranteed coverage."

Ms. Baboun is not affiliated with Armani or InStyle, but agreed to comment as an industry

expert.

Armani and InStyle were unable to comment directly.

#### Private Shopping

The winner of the InStyle Boutique Sweepstakes will travel to New York and receive hotel accommodations.

Armani and InStyle are providing the winner and their guest a 3-day, 2-night stay at a local hotel property to be determined by the sweepstakes' sponsor.

The winner will also receive a \$3,000 stipend to be spent inside the Armani bricks-and-mortar store on Fifth Avenue located at 717 Fifth Ave., New York.

In addition, the winner will have personal style consultant assigned to them to advise purchases during the shopping spree.

The in-store restaurant, Armani/Ristorante located on the 3rd floor of the Fifth Avenue location, will provide the sweepstake winner and guest with an Italian dinner.



#### *Armani/Ristorante*

Entries to the InStyle Boutique Sweepstakes are accepted from Aug.9-Sept.20.

Those interested in the contest can apply through a mobile device or through InStyle's Boutique microsite, <http://www.boutique.instyle.com/>.

InStyle is promoting the Armani sweepstakes through a banner ad on its Boutique microsite.



#### *InStyle contest banner*

Applicants can share their entry through Facebook or Twitter. Each click-through from the link posted on the applicant's feed or page earns them an additional bonus entry.



### *Sweepstake entry*

Armani is promoting the contest through its Facebook and Twitter to increase the number of entries.



### *Armani's Facebook*

Contests allow brands to interact with consumers on a personal level through exclusive, once-in-a-lifetime experiences.

Brands that organize contests for its followers are likely to see an increase among aspirational consumers who may not be able to fully experience the brand in another way.

### *Consumer POV*

Brands that engage consumers through personal interactions earn a better understanding of what brand enthusiasts expect.

Automakers commonly use experience-based contests to boost consumer interest.

For instance, Toyota Corp.'s Lexus International is creating a luxury experience space Aug. 30 in Tokyo's Aoyama district for brand loyalists to interact with the automaker and each other.

The “Intersect by Lexus” space lets Lexus owners relax and interact with the brand and similar lifestyle brands in myriad ways. Fostering a space that transcends a typical showroom allows consumers to engage with the brand in new ways ([see story](#)).

Furthermore, Mercedes-Benz USA is giving racing enthusiasts a chance to win an exclusive driving experience through a new contest that is being promoted via a Facebook application.

The winner of the contest will have the chance to drive at the AMG Driving Academy at Laguna Seca racetrack in Salinas, CA. The social media contest will likely be entered by fans of Mercedes and lovers of speed ([see story](#)).

Publications can benefit from organizing contests with well-known brands with similar ideologies.

"Emporio Armani and InStyle are a seemingly good fit," Ms. Baboun said.

"InStyle focuses on what is fresh and in right now and the Emporio Armani brand is the trendier, more accessible, line from the brand," she said.

"What will really be valuable in doing this joint contest is that after it's over, InStyle will most likely cover the day in a longer piece that prominently features Emporio Armani - that's the actual benefit, not the process or fact that a contest is happening itself."

Final Take

*Jen King, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

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