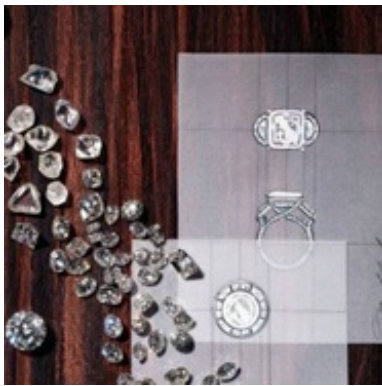


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Neiman Marcus features bespoke falcon set, \$1.5M speakers in Christmas Book

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By JEN KING

Department store chain Neiman Marcus is setting the tone for the holiday season through a charity initiative found within the 87th edition of its Christmas Book that calls for the retailer to donate a percentage of proceeds from its Fantasy Gift assortment to the The Heart of Neiman Marcus Foundation.

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Connecting holiday shopping to the foundation that fosters art experiences for children will likely appeal to consumers looking to get into the holiday spirit. The elaborate gifts found in the pages of the Christmas Book's Fantasy Gift section is likely to inspire recipients to make a purchase, especially since it is linked to charity.

"Neiman Marcus has a longstanding tradition of publishing a Christmas catalog and there is no reason to stop now," said Pam Danziger, president of [Unity Marketing](#), Stevens, PA.

"It is a supreme hands-on example of the Neiman Marcus brand and what it stands for," she said.

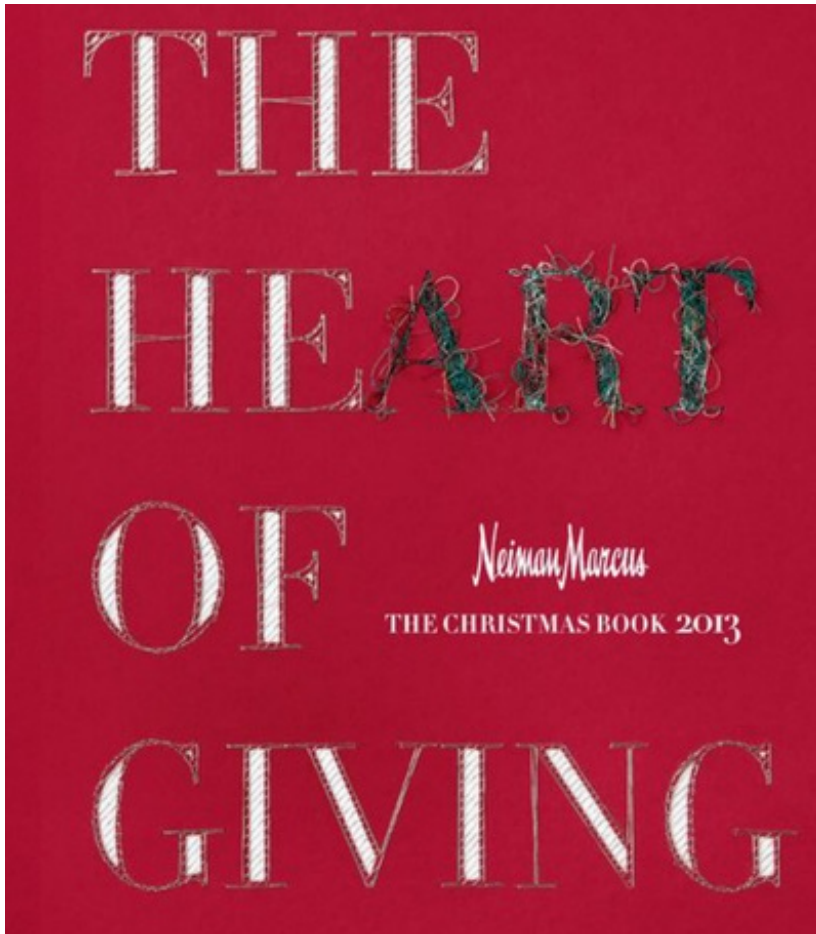
"The retailer's customers and the press wait expectantly for it."

Ms. Danziger is not affiliated with Neiman Marcus, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Neiman Marcus was unable to comment directly.

Retail with heart

The retailer's 2013 Christmas Book titled "The Heart of Giving" can be purchased for \$15 and plays off the idea that gift giving is an art perfected by Neiman Marcus. On the cover page, the "art" in "heart" is in black font covered with strands of twine.



Neiman Marcus' Christmas Book 2013 cover

This concept is continued on the inside front cover to include the notion of giving back. The inside front cover sets the tone for the front of the book spreads, each of which includes a heart in one way or another.

Although technically a catalog, the 175-page Christmas Book reads as a magazine with extravagant gifts and artful fashion spreads that continue the red and teal color theme seen on the inside front cover.



Christmas Book's Red Hot fashion spread

Lavish presents found in the book's Fantasy Gifts pages include a \$150,000 Bespoke Global Falconry Companion set that features a 20-karat gold-plated falcon perch by Ken Hooke and furniture crafted by Richard Wrightman. The set also includes a handmade backgammon board by Alexandra Llewellyn and a crystal decanter and cigar cutter by David Linley.

With every purchase, the retailer will donate \$1,500 to its The Heart of Neiman Marcus Foundation.



Bespoke Global Falconry Companion

One of the most expensive gifts on the list is a "His & Hers" Outdoor Entertainment System for \$1.5 million. The entertainment system includes a 201-foot C SEED screen and CAT-California Audio Technology Inc. speakers commonly outfitted on yacht audio systems, 300 built-in movies and two Apple iPad minis acting as remotes.

Upon purchase, Neiman Marcus will donate \$10,000 to its foundation.

Additional lavish gifts include a Ciclotte exercise bike for \$11,000, a Forevermark Diamond trip to Africa to source your own De Beers diamond for \$1.85 million, an overnight stay in architect and art patron Philip Johnson's Glass House in Connecticut for \$30,000, a hand-built Indian Larry motorcycle for \$750,000, a bottle of Dom Perignon's Balloon Venus collaboration with artist Jeff Koons for \$20,000 and a Neiman Marcus 2014

Aston Martin Vanquish Volante, one of only ten in the world, for \$344,500.



Indian Larry motorcycle and the Balloon Venus bottle by Jeff Koons

Additional luxury brands featured in the Christmas Book include Fendi, Gucci, Valentino, Lanvin, Tom Ford beauty and Alexander McQueen jewelry and accessories.

The Christmas Book is accessible for free via the Neiman Marcus Web site where consumers can browse by category, download the PDF or flip through a digital flipbook version. The flipbook version allows consumers to hover the cursor over merchandise to reveal product details as well as bonus content.

Beyond stocking stuffers

Neiman Marcus and other high-end retailers go above and beyond to bring affluent consumers lavish gift ideas for everyone on their list. Although the gifts may seem extravagant to some consumers, these catalogs give a glimpse into the lives of ultra-high-net-worth consumers.

For example, New York-based department store Bergdorf Goodman, whose parent company is Neiman Marcus, looked to boost holiday 2012 sales through a direct mail catalog meant to lure affluent recipients to the in-store experience.

The holiday catalog promoted the retailer's exclusive gifts for fans of the Bergdorf lifestyle and featured brands such as Cadillac, Alexander McQueen, Tom Ford and Valentino. It includes gifts for men, women, children and the home in a 68-page print catalog ([see story](#)).

Even with the shift to digital, direct mail catalogs still have the ability to drive traffic.

"More than just an over-the-top piece of marketing, direct mail catalogs and online and in-store shopping go hand-in-hand," Ms. Danziger said.

"People really use their catalogs to zero in on what's new and on trend, then go online to order or into the store to try on and buy," she said.

"Direct mail still has a powerful pull on customers and will continue to be an important vehicle to sell items and deliver a brand experience."

Final Take

Jen King, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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