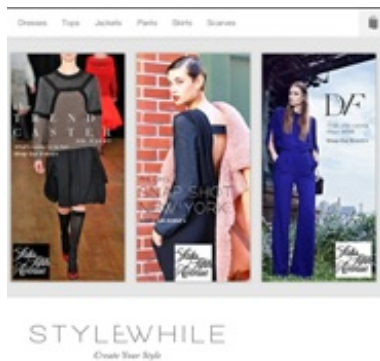


MOBILE

## Saks grants consumers greater stylistic control with app

October 23, 2013



By JOE MCCARTHY

Saks Fifth Avenue is empowering consumers with the ability to digitally put together outfits on specific body types by joining up with a fashion-centric iPad application.



The app created by Stylewhile aggregates product images from participating retailers such as Diane Von Furstenberg and allows consumers to see how outfits look on an avatar with a similar body type. Since consumers will have an idea about how items mesh or clash before making a purchase, the app will likely reduce the amount of returns.

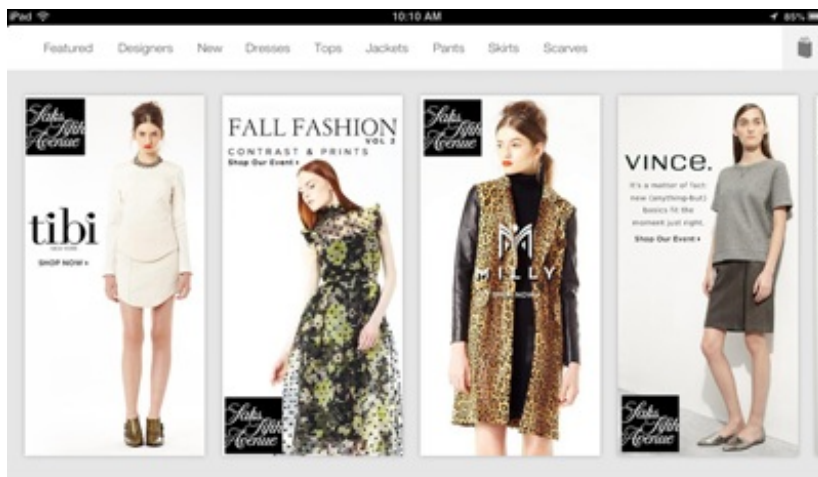
"The idea came from my personal need," said Jutta Haaramo, founder of **Stylewhile**, Helsinki, Finland. "As an enthusiastic online shopper, I wanted to have a more active role when buying fashion and to be able to play with items to create my own styles before buying them.

"As I never just wear separates, I thought it would be helpful if I could visualize how different items work together in an outfit and on a real model," she said.

"This way I would not need to guess how a certain top would look with pants of different fabric, or if the same top would also work with a skirt, scarf and a blazer."

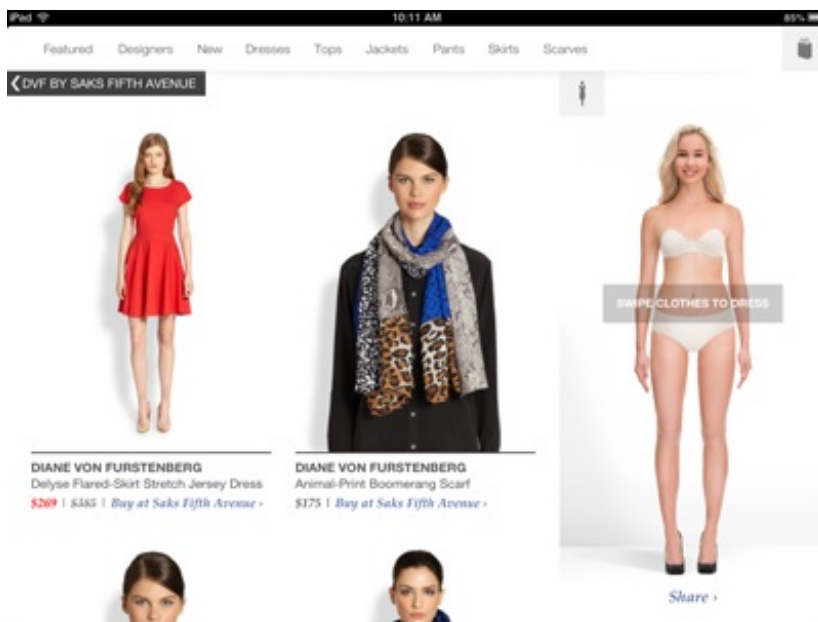
Styles that fit

Users can browse multiple brands available at Saks when first opening the app.



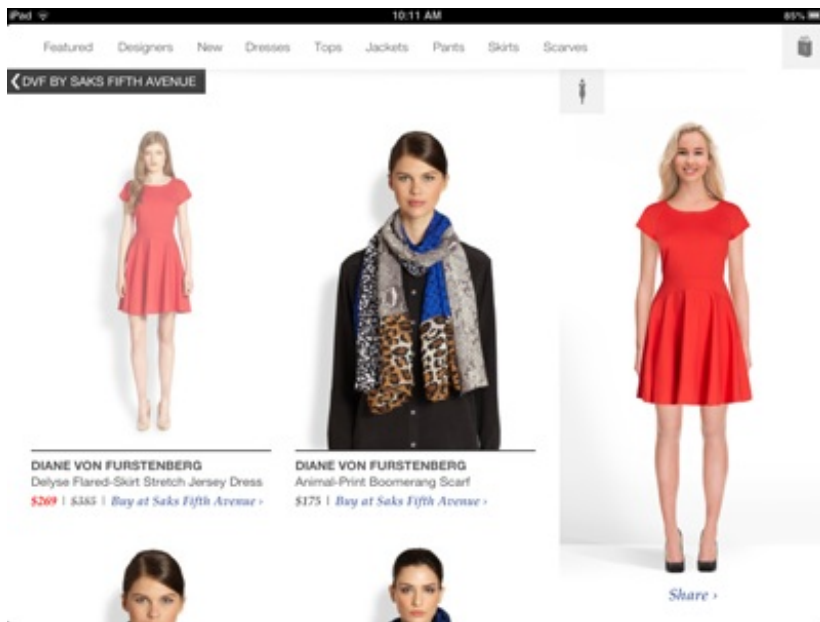
### *Stylewhile app*

Once a brand is selected, an array of products are displayed vertically alongside a model. Users then select between small, medium and large to determine the body type of the model.



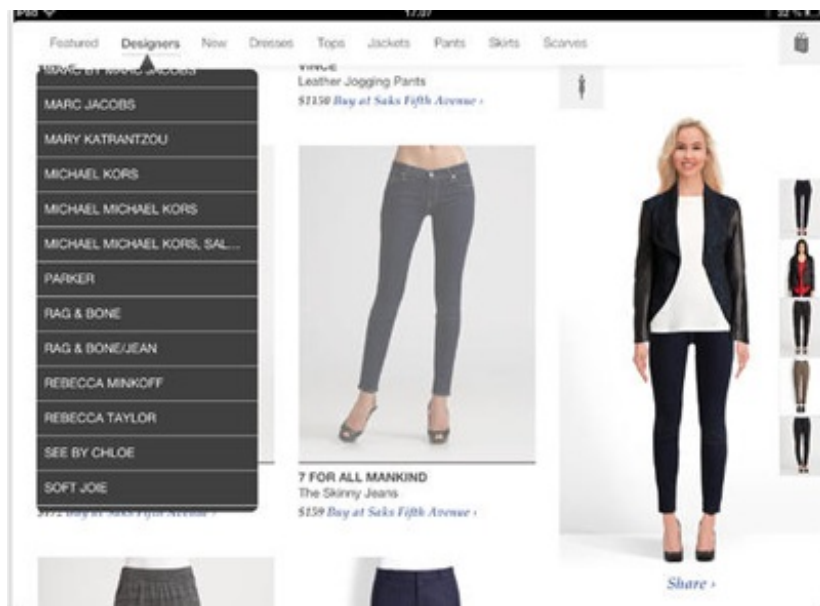
### *Stylewhile app*

Next, users drag desired products over to the model to craft a look. Prices and availability are listed under products.



### *Stylewhile app*

Users are able to mix and match with products to assemble an outfit. Also, consumers are able to create a multi-branded look by switching to another retailer.



### *Stylewhile app*

Recent outfits designed by users are stored near the model for future access. If consumers are pleased with an outfit, they can proceed to purchase the products from Saks ecommerce Web site.

Following the app's launch, a range of brands will be available to Saks consumers. The retailer will have exclusive rights to the app for one month following the launch.

Sak's will be the only multi-brand luxury retailer with rights to the app for six months, but e-retailers will begin to join the mix by this point.

Stylewhile will focus solely on the iPad app for now, but the company plans to expand to a Web site and other platforms in the future depending on feedback.

The app is available for free download at <https://itunes.apple.com/app/id691168946>.

## Welding together

Other retailers are finding ways to weld in-store and online experiences.

For instance, the 1,400-square foot, second-floor showroom will feature a rotating collection of the retailer's 175 designer brands and lets consumers work directly with Rent the Runway Go-To Girl personal stylists. Beyond enhancing efficiency, the showroom gives the brand greater control over its image since in-store experiences are generally more encapsulating than digital ([see story](#)).

Also, a senior executive from Saks Fifth Avenue at the Luxury Interactive 2013 conference shared the retailer's strategy to amplify consumer experiences in-store by physically replicating its digital presence.

The executive spoke about Saks' in-store technology tactics used to enhance the consumer experience during the "Using In-store Tech to Link the Online and Offline Experience" fireside chat. The use of technology in bricks-and-mortar retail locations allows for better consumer engagement, while displaying consumer behavior for the retailer's use ([see story](#)).

Stylewhale will likely gather useful suggestions on how to improve the app following the launch.

"At the moment we have three different body types and four skin and hair colors, so the user gets an idea of how outfits look on different people," Ms. Haaramo said.

"We are constantly gathering feedback from users and improving the app to make sure we help customers create and buy the right styles," she said.

Final take

*Joe McCarthy, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/xoXThdeyJ-I](http://www.youtube.com/embed/xoXThdeyJ-I)

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