

MAIL

Bergdorf Goodman broadcasts retail experiences in holiday catalog

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By JEN KING

New York-based department store Bergdorf Goodman targeted affluent female consumers with a direct mail catalog intended to pique interest in the retailer's curated gift selections in time for the holiday shopping season.

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The 97-page "Holidays on Ice" print catalog featured merchandise on the front cover that likely enticed female consumers to flip through for a window shopping-like experience. The catalog included gift items for men, women and children from brands such as Lalique, Ralph Lauren, Zegna, Fendi and Chanel.

"From a consumer point of view, there clearly is an age divide," said Jerry Cerasale, senior vice president of government affairs at [Direct Marketing Association](#), Washington.

"Many younger consumers virtually do not use the mail at or very little, while older consumers still use and value it," he said. "It's still alive and well with older consumers who like to shop via catalogs."

"Younger Americans, if you don't know what people are looking for, the catalog allows you to window shop, in essence, and take a look and think about what you want to see."

Mr. Ceresale is not affiliated with Bergdorf Goodman, but agreed to comment as an

industry expert.

Bergdorf Goodman did not respond by press deadline.

Merry shopping

The front cover of Holidays on Ice showed merchandise of a similar color scheme to contrast against the white icicles behind the retailer's embossed, silver metallic logo.

On the inside front cover, the retailer promoted its Holiday Window Watching experience where consumers can reserve a spot for Nov. 19 when Bergdorf Goodman's holiday 2013 window displays will be unveiled.

Guests who attend will enjoy a private dinner at the retailer's BG Restaurant and receive a signed copy of "Windows at Bergdorf Goodman, Special Edition" by Assouline.

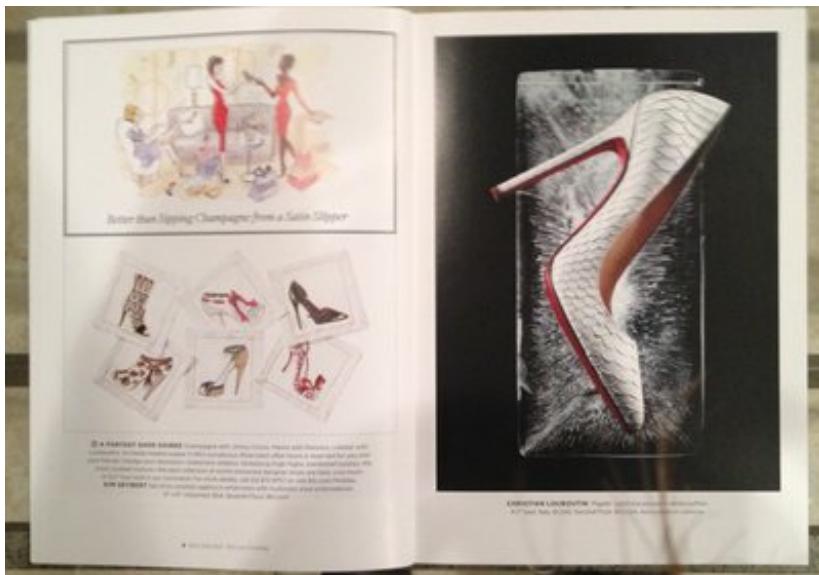


Holiday window experience

The catalog's matte pages were broken into sections such as For Her, For Him, For the Kids and For the Home to ensure that everyone on a consumer's list was accounted for.

The For Her section included jewelry, apparel and accessories and fragrance and personal care items set against ice and wintry backgrounds to tie in with the catalog's overall theme. Brands featured in the For Her pages included Chanel, Manolo Blahnik, Burberry and Dior.

Additionally, the For Her section included two exclusive experiences. The first is "A Fantasy Shoe Soiree" at the retailer's Shoe Salon after hours and the second is a memorable holiday card experience where a consumer and family will be photographed in Central Park by photographer and jewelry designer Monica Rich Kosann, who will then create a locket for the photos.



Women's shoe department experience

Bergdorf Goodman's Holiday on Ice catalog's men's section included apparel and accessories, cologne and personal care products. Brands such as Tom Ford, Bottega Veneta and Ferragamo were featured.

An exclusive gift experience for men included in the catalog was a made-to-measure suit.



Men's made-to-measure suit experience

The children's section of the catalog includes apparel and accessories from Gucci, Burberry, Moncler and a selection of toys.

The book's home section features interiors from Ralph Lauren, Lalique and Asprey in addition to a bespoke Christmas tree designed by designer and event planner Bronson van Wyck inside the consumer's home.



Bespoke Christmas tree experience

Holiday luxuries

For the holiday season, retailers aim to display a wide variety of items that appeal to the lifestyle and interests of its affluent consumer base.

For example, Bergdorf Goodman looked to boost holiday sales in 2012 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 features brands such as Cadillac, Alexander McQueen, Tom Ford and Valentino. It included gifts for men, women, children and the home in a 68-page print catalog ([see story](#)).

In addition, 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.

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 ([see story](#)).

As technology evolves, the role of the mail will change but for the foreseeable future its role will remain the same and help drive in-store foot traffic.

"Mail is still a valuable tool," Mr. Cerasale said. "It's still alive and well."

"Catalogers use digital marketing data to drive and try to target consumers," he said. "The return on investment is still good and the response rate still high."

"Catalogs are a leisurely shopping experience that replaces walking around the mall and a hands-on experience and will change as technology gets better."

Final take

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