

EVENTS / CAUSES

Peninsula Hotels crafts SnowPage as unifying holiday symbol

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By JOE MCCARTHY

Peninsula Hotels holiday spirit culminates on a SnowPage microsite that features a festive mascot that is woven into digital and in-store efforts.

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A number of seasonal offers are girded by charity initiatives that remind consumers of the hotel chain's engagement in the community at large. Centralizing its holiday efforts around the SnowPage symbol may grant Peninsula's various offers a dose of unity, while acting as an anchor in the busy holiday season.

"We saw tremendous interest in our first brand video campaign, Peninsula Moments, last year," said Robert Cheng, vice president of marketing for **Peninsula Hotels**, Hong Kong.

"Our short films engage with Peninsula guests and fans on an emotional level because they reflect very honestly the Peninsula experience and feature actual Peninsula staff on location in our hotels," he said. "The SnowPage film is a charming seasonal greeting that spotlights our staff's genuine warmth."

Carrot and coal

The SnowPage microsite opens with a short video that shows three Peninsula employees frolicking on a hotel roof and putting together a snowman. The rest of the video travels

throughout the hotel as different members of the staff create different parts of the snowman's costume.



SnowPage video still

The chef provides a shaved carrot for the nose. A florist ties thin branches together for arms, a baker makes two chocolate treats for eyes and a tailor sews a scarf to designate the special page status.



SnowPage video still

When all the pieces of the outfit are gathered, the three original employees dress the snowman that then becomes the source of the SnowPage symbol. The SnowPage is a seasonal riff on Peninsula Hotel's traditional pageboy by borrowing their outfit.

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/qWLTgNZCIWI](https://www.youtube.com/embed/qWLTgNZCIWI)

SnowPage / The Peninsula Hotels

The microsite also outlines the hotel chain's other seasonal offerings. "Winter Moments" entail special room rates that include daily breakfast, the ability to upgrade to the next room category and hotel credit of up to \$200 for suite guests.

More winter-centric offers include holiday feasts, dining, dancing, holiday shopping incentives and seasonal spa treatments that soothe dry, chapped skin.

Property-specific offers range from a skating rink at Peninsula Chicago, a European-themed Christmas in Shanghai, a holiday supper club in Beverly Hills, CA, and The

Peninsula Christmas Concert in Manila.

Those who visit the microsite can create their own SnowPage ecards to send to friends and family. Fans are asked to design a snowman for the ecard's cover by selecting eyes, buttons, arms and a location-based postage stamp and then writing a brief message to the person who will receive the card.



SnowPage ecard

The hotel chain is also extending its annual Trees of Hope fundraising campaign that generates donations for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Proceeds from a SnowPage Christmas tree ornament, "Tree of Hope "cocktails and a "Teas of Hope" will go benefit children's charities.



SnowPage ornament

"The holiday season can be an extremely fruitful time for brands, but it also carries with it

a number of challenges that must be overcome in order for a campaign to be successful and impactful in the long-term," said Taylor Rains, account executive at [Rawle Murdy Associates](#), Charleston, SC.

"Branding' the holidays, in a traditional sense, tends to be looked at quite critically by the general public," he said. "Overt commercialization of holiday symbols can foster distaste among even the most loyal of consumers.

"That said, when brands are able to incorporate subtle elements of their own brand into the greater holiday story the result can be quite effective. For example, with the Peninsula's SnowPage campaign, the branding is secondary to the season through its partnership with charitable organization. The physical pieces are also minimally and tastefully branded, making consumers more likely to pick them up as part of a greater holiday collection."

Dressing up

Peninsula Hotel's invention of a holiday symbol more strongly resembles the fanciful approach of retailer rather than what is normally seen among hotel brands.

For instance, department store chain Saks Fifth Avenue is giving visitors to its holiday windows the opportunity to become part of the display through a new mobile site.

Opened on Nov. 25, the windows this year tell the story of the Yeti, which is rumored to live on top of the Saks Fifth Avenue building in New York making snowflakes. Saks is working in conjunction with MasterCard and The Science Project on the mobile site that allows users to create their own Yeti name, customize a snowflake and flick it up from their phone or tablet onto screens in the display ([see story](#)).

Also, department store Barneys New York engaged consumers in its Electric Holiday campaign by giving away gift cards through a mobile scavenger hunt during which clues were sent out through Twitter and Instagram.

Barneys' Twitter account [@BarneysNY](#) began to tweet clues the morning of the window unveiling so that mobile users could find secret spots where "Mickey Messengers" are located. Mobile Twitter users were encouraged to interact with Barneys through the hashtag #ElectricHoliday and follow the retailer on Instagram to find out additional clues ([see story](#)).

Since the holiday season is universally cherished by consumers, any inkling of a festive spirit will be appreciated.

"All in all, when executed properly, a unifying campaign symbol can be rather effective for a brand during the holiday season," Mr. Rains said.

Final Take

Joe McCarthy, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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