

INTERNET

## Luxury brands host social contests to connect with fans on Valentine's Day

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By SARAH JONES

In the days leading up to Valentine's Day, a number of luxury brands sought out aspirational consumers with social contests centered on user-generated content or peer-to-peer communication.

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To enter, consumers were asked to upload photos or share their feelings with a loved one. These contests allow these brands to become a part of their fan's holiday celebration.

"These luxury brands wish to have daily conversations with their customer base online through the use of content," said said [Brian Honigman](#), New York-based content marketing consultant and social media marketer.

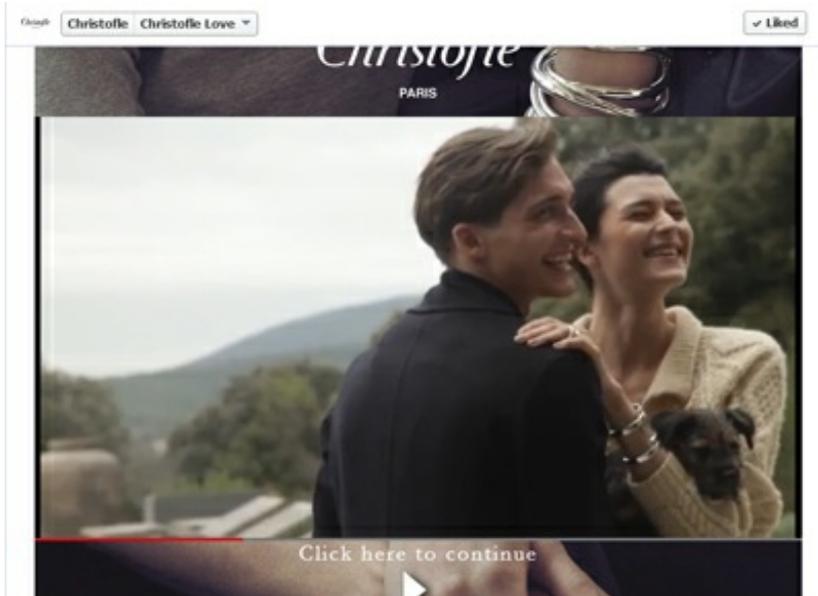
"By tying in their content to mainstream events like holidays, their content is engaging to their audience and relevant to what's happening in their lives," he said. "By launching a contest, these luxury brands chose to engage with their audiences past a Facebook post, an email or a tweet, but instead, drive their audience to take an action and participate in a moment with the brand."

Sharing the love

Jewelry is a typical gift given for Valentine's Day, and French silver maker Christofle took

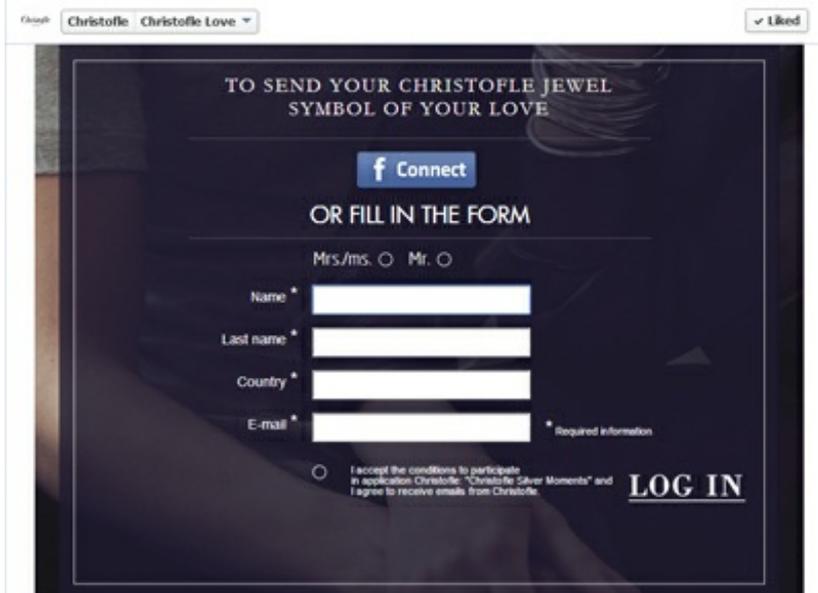
the opportunity to showcase its collection with a holiday-themed Facebook contest.

Consumers can enter the contest through Christofle's dedicated "Christofle Love" mobile application. When the app opens, users can watch a video documenting the making of the brand's jewelry campaign for 2013-2014, which shows a couple canoodling.



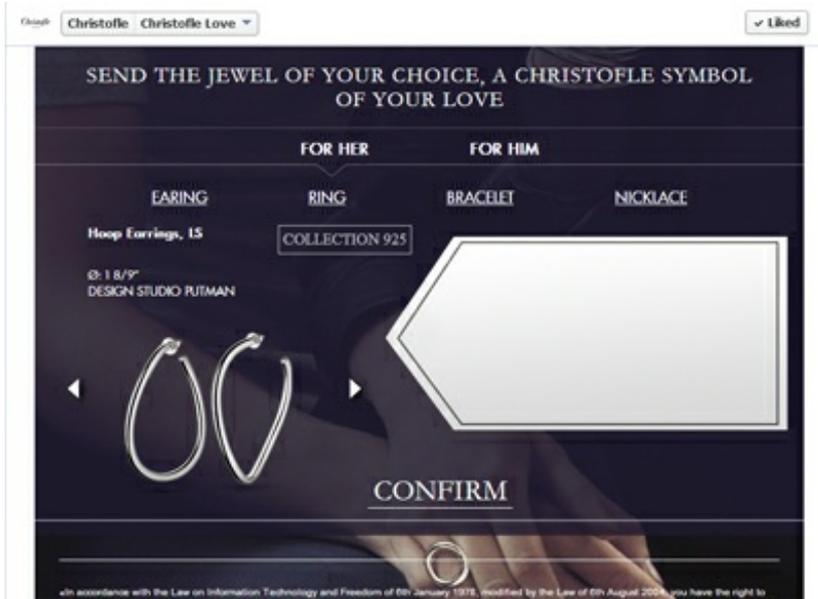
*Christofle app*

The first step in the process is entering contact information or connecting with Facebook. Below the fields to enter an email address, users must agree to receive emails from the brand to proceed.



*Christofle entry form*

Then consumers can pick from a selection of pieces for men and women, including earrings, a ring, necklace, a bracelet or cufflinks. After the piece is selected, users can enter a message to customize their entry.

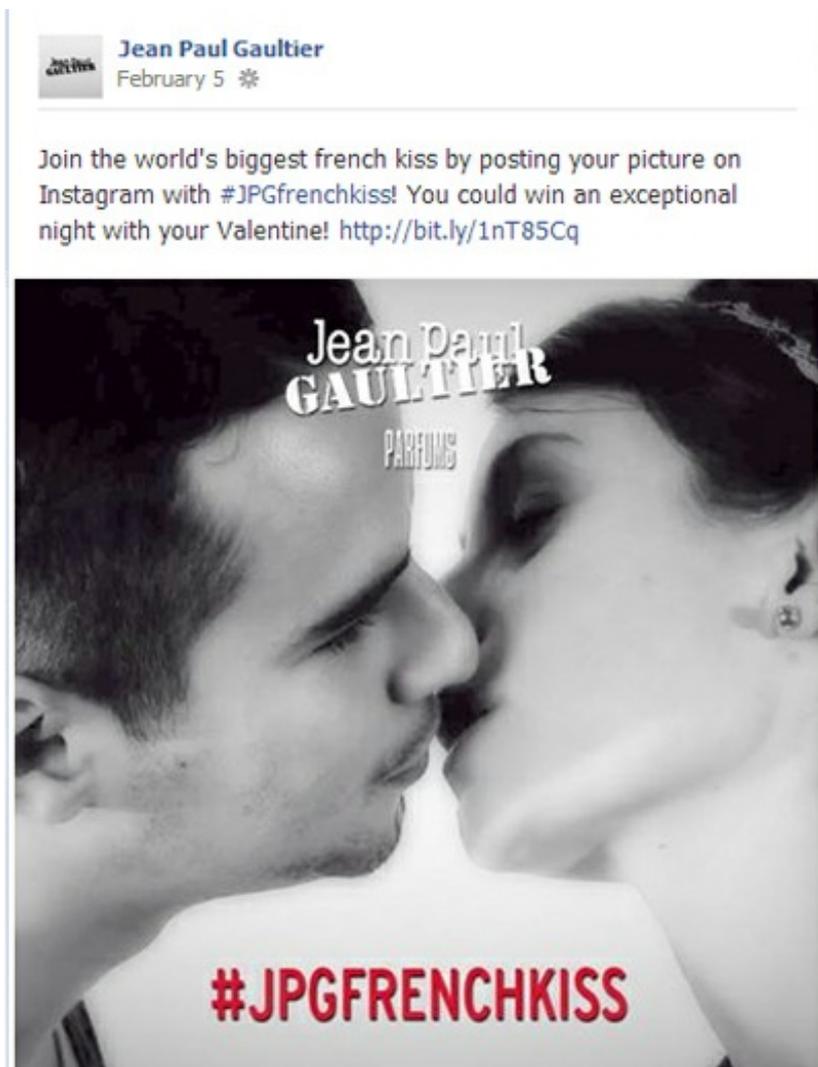


*Christofle customizable message*

Entrants will be eligible to win a piece of Christofle jewelry.

Similarly, Jean Paul Gaultier Parfums wants consumers to share their affection with an Instagram contest.

To enter, consumers simply have to post a photo of themselves French kissing a loved one. The grand prize is an “exceptional night with your Valentine.”



## *Jean Paul Gaultier #JPGFRENCHKISS post*

In a post on its Facebook page to introduce the contest, Jean Paul Gaultier posted a link to a branded YouTube video of people kissing, which included contest rules in between images of smooching couples.

Even though this contest is Valentine's Day-themed, the brand is accepting entries until Feb. 28. As of press time, 295 posts on Instagram were tagged #JPGFrenchkiss.

Keeping to its photo-sharing contest structure, LVMH-owned Champagne producer Moët & Chandon created a Facebook app contest for its Tie-For-Two initiative, which focuses on the brand's Rosé Impérial.

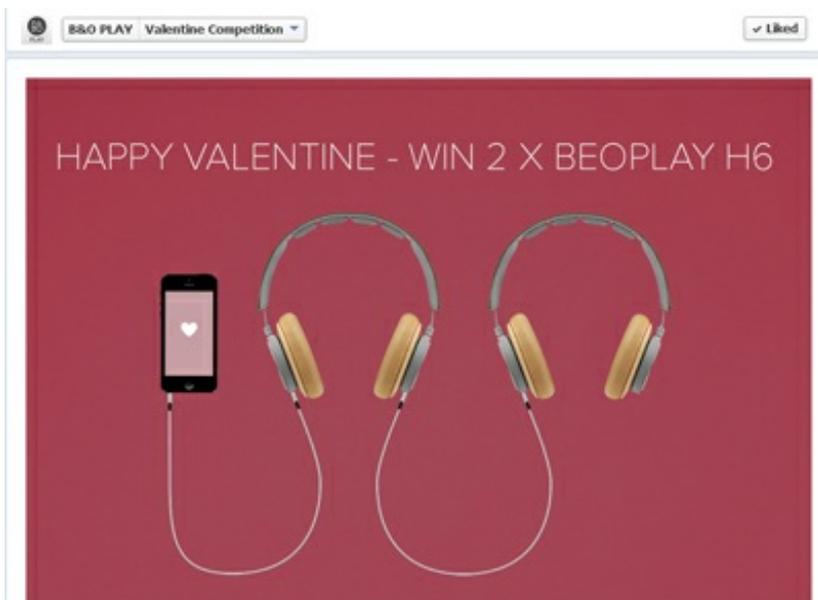


## *Moët & Chandon Tie-For-Two initiative*

The app allows users to take a photo of themselves or upload an image from their device and then tint it pink, playing on the color of the rosé.

App users can personalize an invitation to mimic the animation and enter to win a week-long trip for two to France's Champagne region. To enter, users must take a photo, using Moët's Rosé photo sharing app, highlighting a black tie and post it to the brand's Facebook and ask friends to vote ([see story](#)).

Danish electronics brand Bang & Olufsen took the idea of a couple in love and translated it to a Facebook contest, giving consumers the opportunity to win two pairs of its BeoPlay H6 headphones.



### *Bang & Olufsen Valentine's Day contest*

Through the brand's Facebook app for the contest, users can choose between two colors for their own and their Valentine's headphones. Below that are fields for contact information, including a button to register for email updates from Bang & Olufsen.

The copy in the contest form tells users they can plug the headphones into each other to share music, telling users that they will be the only ones listening to their song.

### *Audience participation*

Many brands choose to host contests on dedicated Facebook apps.

For instance, department store chain Barneys New York reached out to its aspirational followers with a Pinterest contest that gives consumers a chance to win a \$1,000 gift card.

Barneys asked fans to pin items on the Barneys Web site and enter the link to their board on its Facebook app for the contest called "Pin to Win." By using this multi-platform approach, Barneys was able to encourage engagement across all of its social media accounts and drive traffic to its ecommerce site ([see story](#)).

Like many of these Valentine's contests, Barney's prize and the cost of entry point to a more aspirational target, for whom the prize would be more of an incentive to participate.

Many of these contests follow the trend of luxury brands choosing to cultivate user-generated content through contests.

For instance, department store chain Neiman Marcus hosted a photo contest to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its InCircle loyalty program to reach consumers who are truly devoted to the retailer.

To enter the contest, consumers posted a photo showing what they love about Neiman Marcus, with one of the prizes being an upgraded loyalty status. This photo contest was a fitting way to celebrate the retailer's loyalty program, since a lot of the same customers who are enrolled in the program will be the ones interested in showing their affection for the brand ([see story](#)).

Since the point of a contest is often to find new ways to connect with a beneficial audience, brands need to plan accordingly to see the best results.

"At times contests can drive unqualified people just looking for prizes, which is why the contest itself, as well as the prize, must be very relevant to the interests and positioning of the brand and its audience," Mr. Honigman said. "When this is achieved, many of your most social customers will participate and help spread the word of your promotions.

"Make the contest relevant to your brand and its audience, be remarkable and offer an enticing prize that is of value to your customer base," he said. "Standing out is difficult, but thinking of new ways of communicating with your customers on new and existing platforms will help differentiate your brand."

Final Take

*Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

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