

EVENTS/CAUSES

Neiman Marcus surveys fan submissions for beauty campaign models

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By JEN KING

Department store chain Neiman Marcus is accepting submissions for its fall 2014 beauty campaign Feb. 10 through March 31 to find women who represent the retailer's everyday consumer.

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Neiman Marcus' "Be You, Be Beautiful" beauty campaign submissions are uploaded through the retailer's Facebook page to ensure a wider reach via shares. By accepting submissions from across the United States, Neiman Marcus will gain exposure in markets that the retailer has yet to established a bricks-and-mortar presence.

"The affluent reject that to which they cannot relate," said Chris Ramey, president of [Affluent Insights](#), Miami, FL. "Ageing creates new expectations and desires.

"Being comfortable with oneself is a privilege for the privileged," he said. "Connecting with the privileged is a responsibility for marketers.

"At some point, prospects demand you to be real. Dove Soap proves this with their marketing. Neiman Marcus will do the same."

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

Neiman Marcus could not respond by press deadline.

The eye of the beholder

For the Be You, Be Beautiful campaign, Neiman Marcus is asking its Facebook followers to submit a photograph of a friend, family member or themselves to be selected to model for the retailer's fall 2014 beauty campaign. Asking real women to upload photographs to be included in the campaign shows that Neiman Marcus cares about its consumers.



Be You, Be Beautiful submission page on Neiman Marcus' Facebook

By going through the submissions, Neiman Marcus will also be able to better gauge the ages and backgrounds of its core consumers. The submission form does not mention age as a signifier, allowing the consumer to base entries on inner beauty as well as physical characteristics.

Submitted photos must include a brief paragraph describing how the nominee spends her time, any charitable work she does and how she aims to make the world a better place. Additionally, the submission must include what makes the nominee beautiful in the eye of the submitter.

As of yet, Neiman Marcus has not posted to its Facebook information about submissions for Be You, Be Beautiful, but has included an icon for the campaign contest at the top of its account homepage.



Neiman Marcus' Facebook page, Be You, Be Beautiful icon, bottom right

The six women selected for the Be You, Be Beautiful will be flown to Neiman Marcus' Dallas flagship for the campaign photoshoot with a New York photographer, yet to be disclosed. While in Dallas, the selected faces of the the fall 2014 beauty campaign will enjoy a private fitting at Neiman Marcus and will be allowed to keep the clothing worn during the day-long shoot.

In addition, the women will receive roundtrip airfare, hotel accommodations, dinner at Neiman Marcus' in-store restaurant Zodiac and \$1,500 in cosmetics and fragrances sold by the retailer.

To enter, consumers must submit nominees through the retailer's Facebook application found here: https://www.facebook.com/neimanmarcus/app_614746681926248.

Real time beauty

Using everyday consumers rather than models in campaign promotions enables a retailer to tell a story while building brand loyalty.

For instance, department store chain Barneys New York has aligned itself with the fight for transgender equality with an ad campaign and outreach.

Barneys' "Brothers, Sisters, Sons and Daughters" campaign features 17 transgender individuals with diverse backgrounds and stories that will be told through a series of short films. With this campaign, Barneys shows a more personal, human side to its brand that allows it to connect on a deeper level with consumers ([see story](#)).

Similar to choosing a private citizen, featuring an appropriate brand ambassador that appeals to consumers creates a relatable campaign.

For example, French fashion house Chanel has tapped actress Kristen Stewart to star in its advertising campaign for its Métiers d'Art Paris-Dallas collection to further showcase the U.S. inspiration behind the collection.

Chanel announced its latest face at the collection presentation in Dallas on Dec. 10, part of a trip that commemorates the brand's relationship with the U.S. Chanel typically uses fashion models rather than celebrities in its apparel ads, so this campaign will shake

things up at the couturier and give the brand attention from a new, younger audience that relates to Ms. Stewart ([see story](#)).

Neiman Marcus reach with this campaign will expand beyond its core consumer.

"The promotion, as do all promotions, will be successful for those who can relate," Mr. Ramey said. "I call this spiritual affluence, defining wealth not by your purse, but how you carry it and what you do with it.

"There is no geographic mapping for natural beauty," he said. "This promotion will touch women regardless of whether their proximity to a Neiman Marcus store because beauty is defined by the beholder."

Final Take

Jen King, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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