

PRINT

## Net-A-Porter's print publication cuts path to purchase

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By JEN KING

Now that Net-A-Porter's print magazine Porter has hit newsstands worldwide, how does its inaugural spring 2014 issue compare to well-established fashion imprints?

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**Luxury Daily**

As many luxury publications have slowly turned toward mass in response to the changing publishing industry, Porter's introduction, the retailer's first venture into print media, has created tension among competitors because of how far down the purchasing funnel it resides. With no regional content and only pure fashion and beauty coverage, Porter instantly appeals to Net-A-Porter's following of 6 million in a way that other imprints may have trouble competing against.

"We are constantly seeking new ways to blur the lines between physical and digital print," said Rachel Reavley, group publisher of [Net-A-Porter's Porter magazine](#), London.

"From inspiration to transaction, the time spent browsing Porter magazine's downloadable content is a remarkable service that's unmatched in the industry and constantly changing the consumer expectation," she said. "Our advertisements seamlessly redirect consumers interested in any product shown on the printed page to the e-commerce site with just a click."

"Additionally, our award-winning team has transformed the process of browsing our curated product assortment while also revolutionizing how readers expect to interact with the magazine."

Newsstand neighbors

Found among fashion imprints such as Vogue, Harper's Bazaar and Tatler, Porter stands out due to its square design rather than the more rectangular shape of others placed nearby. Although Porter cannot be categorized as oversized, its high-gloss, square shape will attract readers as it is more noticeable than others.



*Net-A-Porter's promotional image for Porter*

One drawback or potential strength, depending on the perspective, of Porter may be its circulation. Published six times per year, rather than monthly, readers may continue to read publications with a more frequent distribution.

On the other hand, consumers are less likely to tire of its circulation.

Also, readers can turn to its weekly digital journal, The Edit, to read similarly-styled content. Providing readers with viable content in the months between issues will maintain reader retention and most likely increase anticipation.

Porter's content is similar to the Vogue-like imprints found on newsstands with "bespoke curation" of fashion pieces and beauty products. Each issue will also include travel and cultural sections with columns focusing on book reviews and booking trips ([see story](#)).



### *Page spread in Porter*

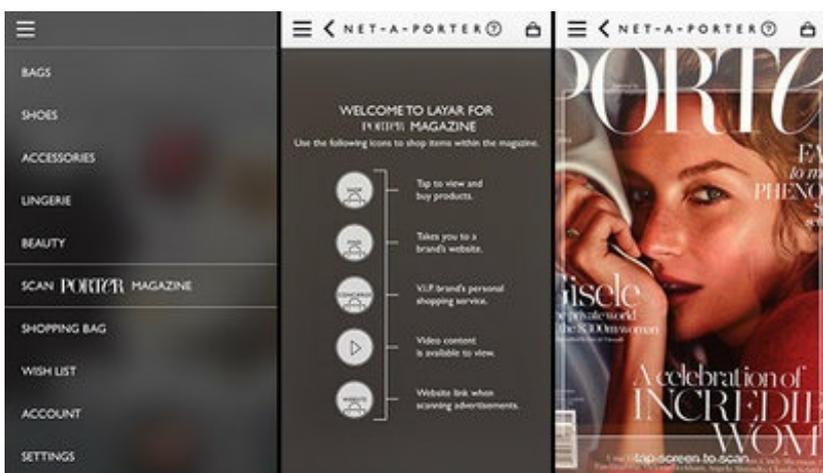
Debuting the first issue in February was ideal timing for Porter to make its mark. As countless publications increased their March edition's pagination to include campaigns from the world's leading designers and retailers, Porter took a more subdued approach.

Porter strives for quality over quantity, though, with a page count nearing 300, whereas Vogue's March issue, in comparison, weighed in at 648 pages ([see story](#)).

According to [The London Evening Standard](#), Porter is causing alarm at both Hearst and Condé Nast for a multitude of reasons such as its established fan base, a high price of \$10, far-reaching distribution, simultaneous digital version's release and that the fashions included are curated to be wearable and, most importantly shoppable.

Therein lies the defining difference. Porter's most competitive element is that although the campaign efforts from designers such as Gucci, Fendi and Valentino can be seen in other established imprints, Porter's readers can shop its pages instantaneously.

Staying true to its digital roots, the Porter magazine mobile application was developed with image recognition powered by Layar to make shopping the issue easy and direct.



### *Net-A-Porter app's image recognition, powered by Layar*

When an advertisement or piece featured in the editorial content of Porter is scanned, small circle icons appear when the page is recognized. In some instances, the app redirects the consumer to the brand's ecommerce Web site with the "Shop" icon, while the "Find" icon lands on Net-A-Porter's product page or items in a similar category.

The app also shows “Be Inspired” icons that filter similar products as those seen in the magazine or the “Concierge” icon that presents readers with a phone number for help finding a specific item.

With the buzz surrounding Porter and its successful model, will more retailers follow Net-A-Porter's example?

“It is interesting to see more and more online entities turn to print as the next step in building their brands, it is more expensive and riskier than the digital format,” said Courtney Albert, management consultant for [The Parker Avery Group](#), Atlanta. “I think this could be a indicator that print isn't dead and even gives it greater cool factor since it is being backed by the more modern medium.

“I think that its competitors are already being beginning to take the magazine seriously as it is staffed by veteran editors and contributors,” she said. “It has been in the making for a really long time, so I also think that consumers are curious about the end product, creating a high level of interest.

“Also, I think that its long-term viability will be determined by if it is able to offer more to readers than just fashion spreads and instead appeal to other lifestyle interests outside of the world of retail and fashion.”

Welcome wagon

Chanel kicked off the spring 2014 issue with an inside front cover gatefold ad for its latest collection. Its expansive ad shows both a playful and classic style from the brand to support its range.



*Inside front cover gatefold ad from Chanel*

Front-of-the-book ads appeared from Ralph Lauren Collection, Gucci, Armani, Dolce & Gabbana, Burberry, Ferragamo, Tod's, Michael Kors and Alexander McQueen. Both Fendi and Tom Ford placed efforts opposite the table of contents.



### *Kate Moss for Alexander McQueen*

Additional brands such as Versace, Valentino, Jimmy Choo, Mulberry and Anya Hindmarch were seen among the content pages. Dior closed out the issue with its current campaign on the outside back cover.

The inclusion of such brands, as in any magazine, helps to support the lifestyle affinities of its target reader. In Porter's case, it helps to dress them as well.

"Advertising in the inaugural issue is advantageous for both brands and Porter," Ms. Albert said. "First as a new magazine, the brands featured set the tone for the publication.

"Imagine a consumer picking up the magazine for the first time," she said. "The most instinctive action is to thumb through it first as opposed to making the decision to read cover-to-cover outright.

"During this initial scan, adverts along with editorial titles and pictures will either sway or discourage that reader to invest more time into the magazine. Recognizable, high-end brands give the reader a point of reference and familiarity. On the other side, Net-A-Porter already has a substantial luxury consumer base, meaning less of a gamble for a luxury brand."

### Final Take

*Jen King, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

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