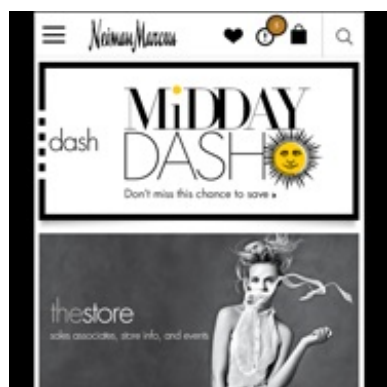


MOBILE

Neiman Marcus releases mobile app that blends content and commerce

February 28, 2014



By SARAH JONES

Department store chain Neiman Marcus has released an iOS mobile application that blends content and commerce to promote interaction with consumers on-the-go.



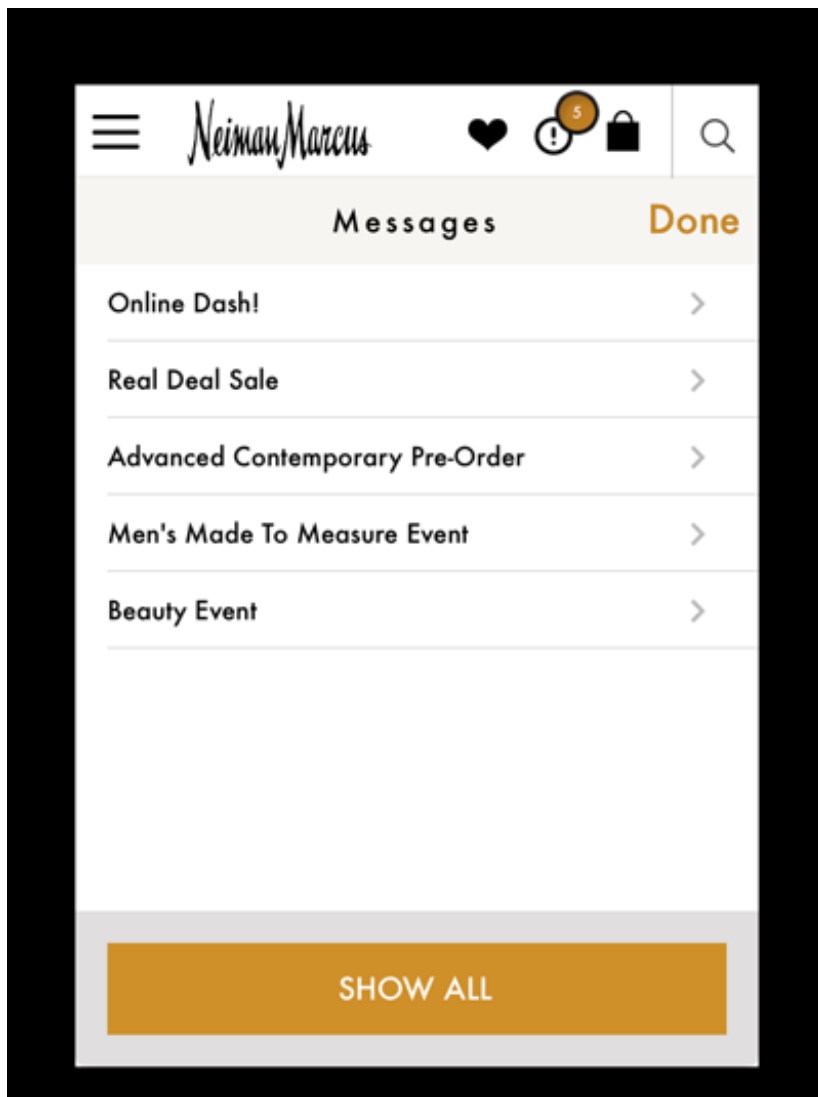
In addition to shopping features, Neiman Marcus' NM app houses the retailer's blog and Instagram feed. This separates the retailer from many of its competitors whose mobile apps serve only as commerce platforms.

"Our goal is to increase our interaction with our customers," said Wanda Gierhart, chief marketing officer of the **Neiman Marcus Group**, Irving, TX. "Our customers are always interested in learning more about product as well as shopping."

Shop on the go

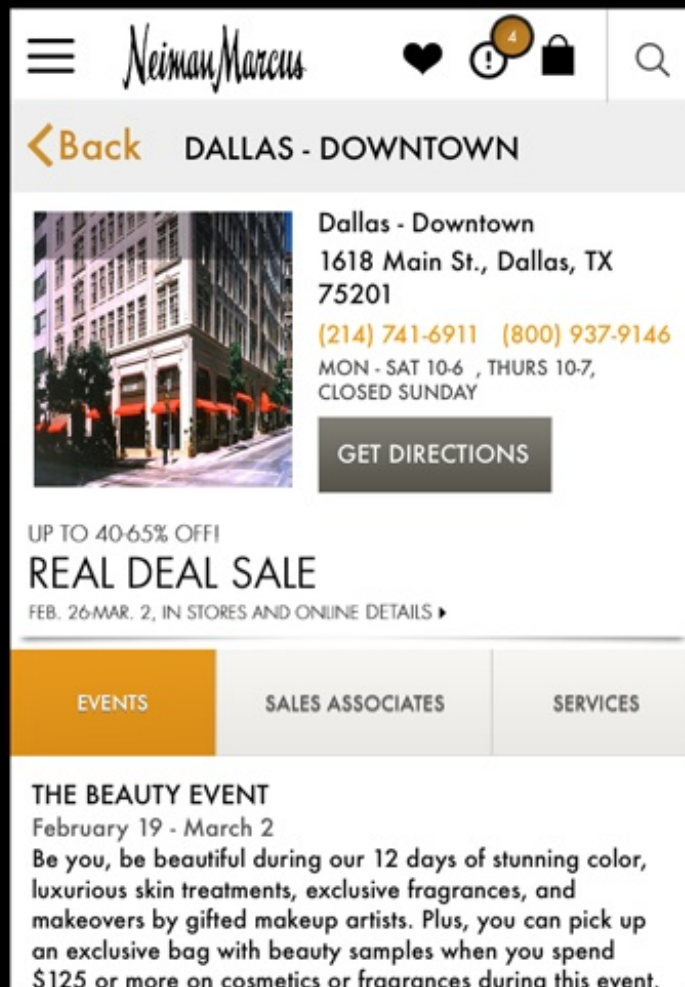
The homepage for Neiman Marcus' app shows five tiles: the store, shop, NM connect, InCircle and account.

On the homepage, there is an icon showing an inbox with messages from Neiman Marcus. Messages tell consumers of events and special offers, like the Real Deal sale or a beauty event. Buttons on the message give consumers the option to "shop now" or locate the nearest store to shop in person.



Neiman Marcus app

“The store” is up at the top, allowing consumers to search for their closest location either using geolocation on their phone or a search function. Once a store is selected, consumers can click on the name to read about upcoming events, the sales associates and services offered in-store.



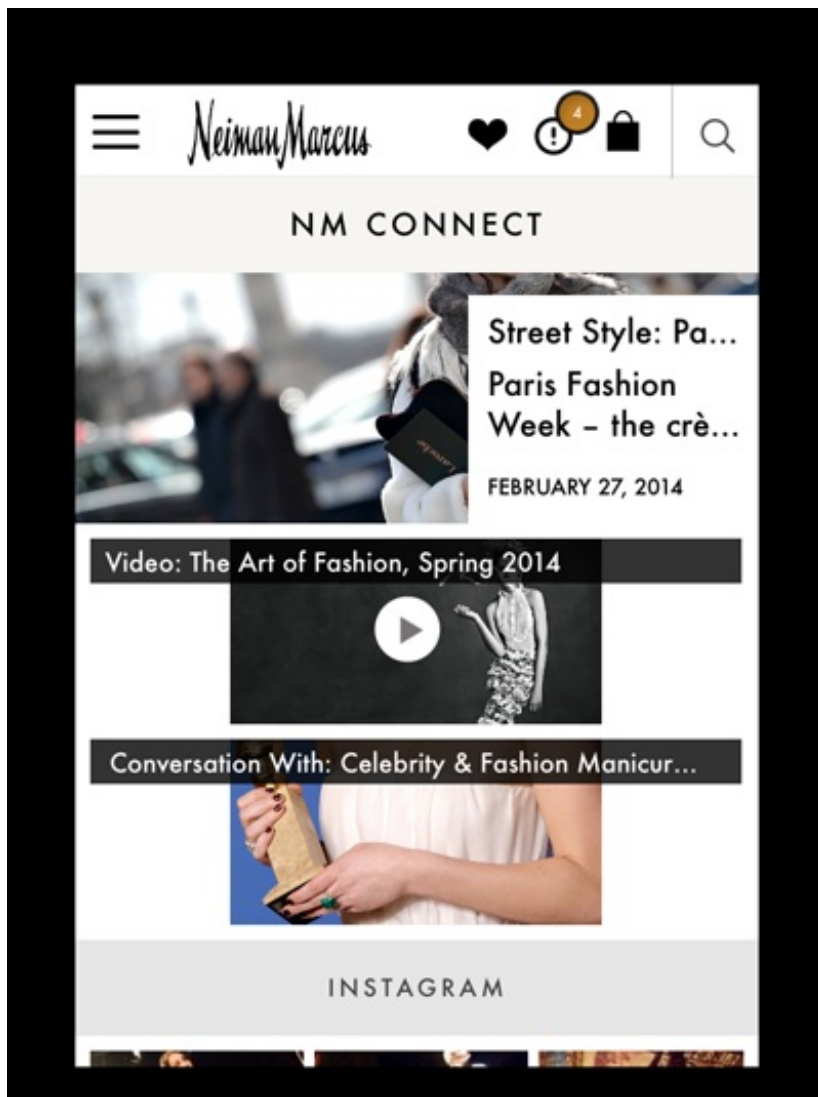
Neiman Marcus app

Sales associates are listed with their department, with icons next to their names so consumers can call, text, email or FaceTime with them right from the app.

Once in any category, consumers can click the menu icon in the top left corner to navigate back to the homepage or to another part of the app.

NM's shop function loads with links to popular categories, such as designers, women's apparel, shoes and handbags. Consumers can then search for merchandise by category or designer name.

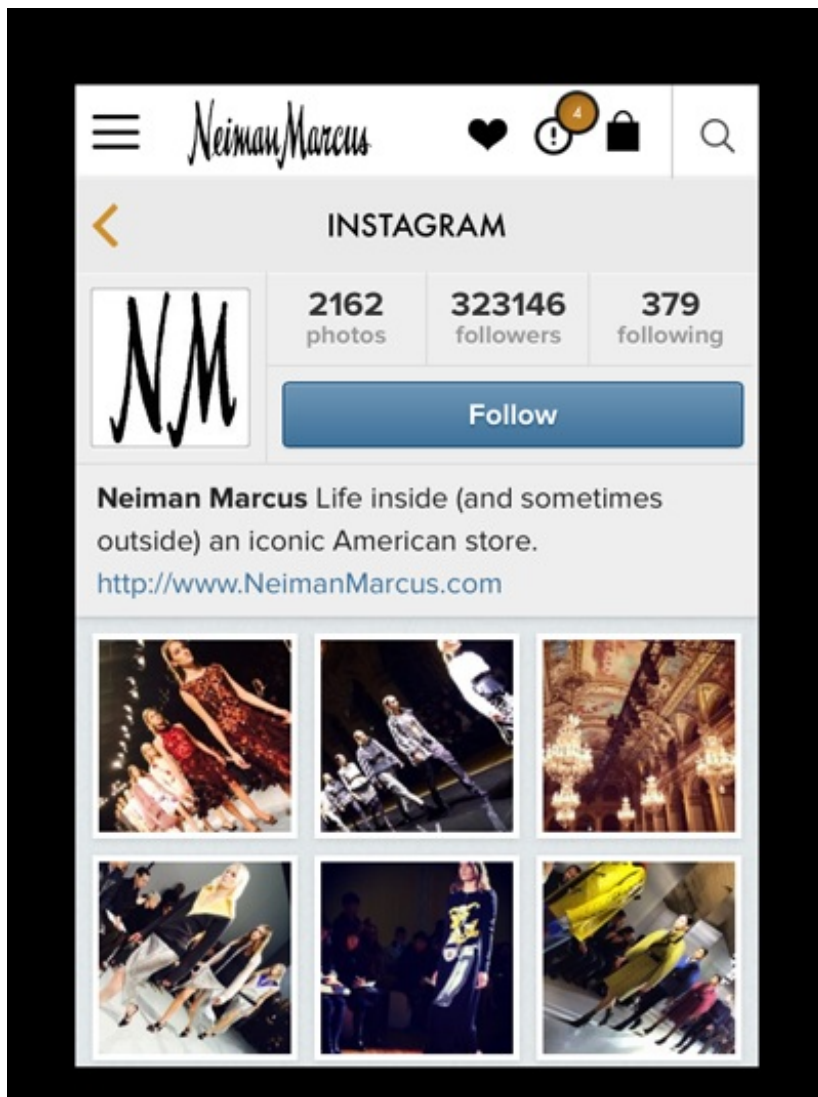
The connect area showcases the retailer's online presence, including its branded blog and Instagram channel.



Neiman Marcus app

Consumers can browse the entire blog archive chronologically just by swiping.

The Instagram page allows consumers to follow Neiman Marcus from within the app by logging in. Since consumers do not have to go to an external app for this step, they are more likely to stay in NM.



Neiman Marcus app

InCircle is Neiman Marcus' customer loyalty program. The dedicated section on the app details each ring of the program, which is determined by annual spend.

To sign up for InCircle, consumers have to click a link that takes them to the Web browser on their phone for Neiman Marcus' Web site.

At the bottom of the homepage, NM allows consumers to check their account.

"Neiman Marcus has done a great job of balancing content and commerce," said Philippe Poutonnet, vice president of marketing at **Hipcricket**, Kirkland, WA. "They are engaging their users through message boards, blogs, Instagram and videos about the latest fashion trends. The fresh content gives users a reason to keep coming back.

"And, of course, the ability to purchase directly from the app can't be overlooked," he said. "We often see apps that are one or the other: content or commerce.

"This app promises to merge the two worlds, bringing the store to a user's phone while giving them the chance to explore more than they ever would be able to in a physical store."

Neiman Marcus' NM app can be downloaded for free [here](#).

Customer connection

This app reflects the type of conversation that Neiman Marcus tries to facilitate online.

Neiman Marcus hosted a photo contest to celebrate the 30th anniversary of its InCircle loyalty program to reach consumers who are truly devoted to the retailer.

To enter the contest, consumers had to post 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 were the ones interested in showing their affection for the brand ([see story](#)).

The retailer has previously worked to get consumers to shop on mobile devices with mobile ads.

For instance, Neiman Marcus pointed consumers toward its mobile commerce site with mobile advertisements detailing a gift card promotion that the retailer was offering.

The Neiman Marcus mobile ads ran on New York magazine's lifestyle blog The Cut and The New York Times' T magazine page. These ads likely generated full-price mobile commerce purchases at a time when most consumers are slowing their spending after a season of shopping ([see story](#)).

"Neiman Marcus is the premier destination for fashion, luxury and unprecedented service," Mr. Poutonnet said. "Taking this shopping experience mobile was a natural progression.

"The new app has a sleek, easy-to-navigate design and is feature-rich with blogs, videos and online promotions to make shopping easy for those who are on the go," he said.

"They have spared no detail to ensure their customers receive a personalized mobile experience that is second only to the walking in the store.

"Neiman Marcus is a savvy retailer. They wouldn't have pursued the mobile channel unless their customers were asking to engage with company via mobile. With everyone living such a busy life, it's very helpful to be able to browse items without ever having to set foot in a store."

Final Take

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