

MAIL

Bergdorf Goodman summarizes spring offerings in direct mail catalog

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By JEN KING

Ralph Lauren, La Prairie and Clive Christian reflected the wide range of offerings available at New York department store Bergdorf Goodman in the retailer's spring 2014 magalog.

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Sent out to Bergdorf's male and female consumers via direct mail, the double-issue summarized the brands sold by the retailer with an editorial approach that allows the magalog to rival traditional fashion publications. Bergdorf's 312-paged double issue maintains that print catalogs, if immersive and well-curated, may still be a valid way to connect with consumers to drive in-store and online interactions.

"No longer do mailed, glossy catalogs serve as the primary or even sole point of communication and ordering," said Courtney Albert, management consultant for [The Parker Avery Group](#), Atlanta. "In the past, catalogs were somewhat of a self-serve option for consumers who could leisurely flip through and note selected merchandise; many times this was not necessarily a matter of choice but of location.

"We can all agree that for the most part, digital channels such as apps, mobile and ecommerce have replaced this method and have introduced new brands and buying behaviors to those all across the globe," she said. "However, many retailers look to

catalogs to drive channel traffic either in-store or online.

"Additionally, more and more brands have adopted the idea of presenting their catalogs more in the format of a magazine. This is a bigger draw for a consumer to invest the time to sit with the catalog."

Ms. Albert is not affiliated with Bergdorf Goodman, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Bergdorf Goodman did not respond by press deadline.

A window into luxury

Recipients of Bergdorf Goodman's oversized magalog, whether opening to the men's or women's sections inside front cover found an advertisement for Ralph Lauren.

The front cover of the women's section featured an ad for Ralph Lauren's Black label, while on the reverse side of the magalog, the men's issue included an ad for Ralph Lauren's Purple Label. As Ralph Lauren continues to reposition itself toward a focus on its luxury lines, it is vital to be seen by those affluent enough to purchase from the collections.



Ralph Lauren Black Label, seen in inside front cover of the women's issue

In the women's side, the front of the book was dominated by fragrance and beauty products. La Prairie marked the beginning of this trend by featuring a full-page spread for its new Cellular Swiss Ice Crystal cream and dry oil.



La Prairie effort

Clive Christian's eponymous fragrance, Lancôme, Sisley, Tom Ford beauty and Jo Malone's orange blossom fragrance appear before the table of contents. Chanel continued the trend opposite the table of contents with an ad for its different types of lip color.



Chanel Le Rouge lipstick ad opposite the table of contents

Also, against the table of contents was Hermès' Metamorphosis campaign. Hermès was only the second apparel advertisement in the women's section after Ralph Lauren's Black Label.

After the cut, a mixture of beauty, fragrance, jewelry and apparel brands showed off their latest products and collections. The content pages included efforts such as Dolce & Gabbana, Dior, Yves Saint Laurent and Stephen Weber.

Skincare brand La Mer aimed to stand out among its competitors with an ad on thicker stock paper. The dual-sided ad featured a free sample coupon shaped like a jar of La Mer lotion that could be redeemed at Bergdorf Goodman's Beauty Level.



Front page of La Mer's campaign, coupon card found in center

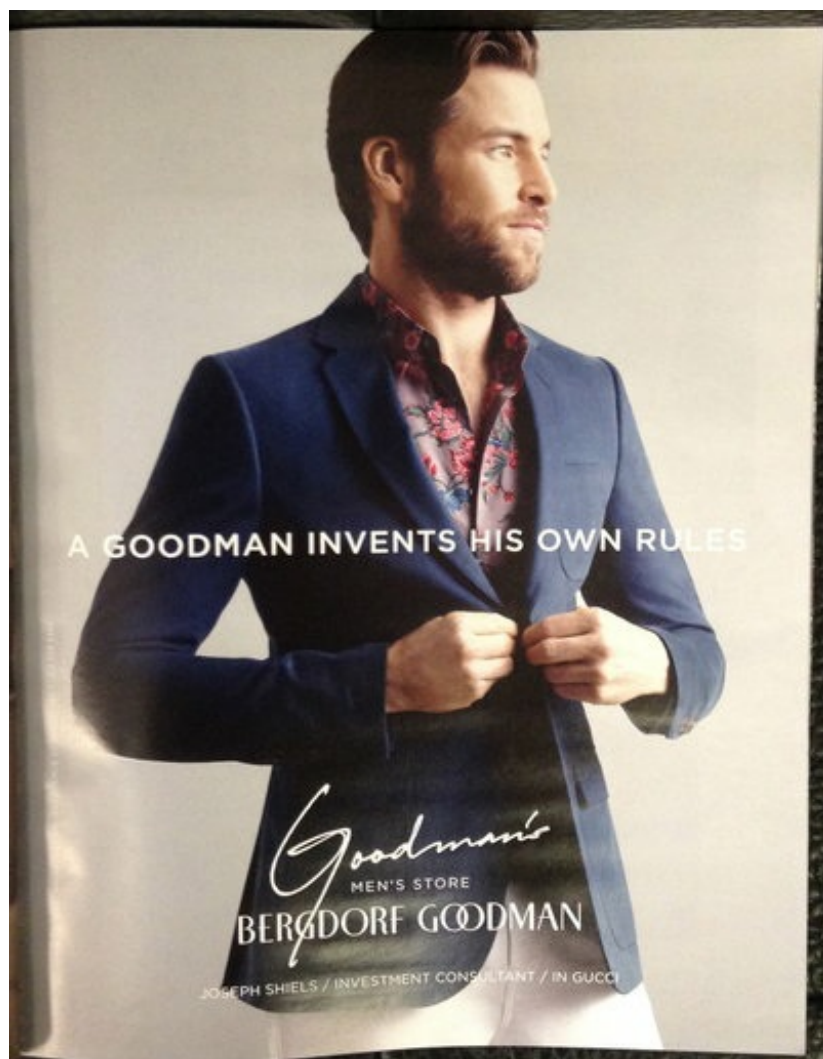
Near the end of Bergdorf Goodman's women's side of the magalog, the retailer featured two ad efforts from Dolce & Gabbana's and Gucci's children collection. Interestingly, these campaigns were placed across from one another after a spread with other brands such as Lanvin, Burberry, Moncler and Marni were featured.



Children's collections from Dolce & Gabbana (left) and Gucci (right)

The men's section is drastically smaller than the women's at 79 pages. Bergdorf Goodman's main advertising spread was reserved for the retailer's men's store located

across the street from its flagship on Fifth Avenue.



One of Bergdorf Goodman's Men's Store ads

Content for both sides included short editorial pieces and apparel and accessories fashion spreads meant to show off the latest trends. The fashion spreads also act as pictorial advertisements that tout the brands carried at Bergdorf Goodman further.

Power catalog

In the past, Bergdorf Goodman has structured its magalog similarly but focused on in-store additions and attractions.

The New York department store placed an eight-page spread for its new Christian Dior boutique among other luxury advertisements and editorial content in its spring 2013 collections print magazine that was mailed out to customers.

Bergdorf's 328-page spring collection magalog features both men's and women's products on alternate sides of the issue along with ads and editorial content on both sides ([see story](#)).

Also, Bergdorf's targeted affluent female consumers with a direct mail catalog intended to pique interest in the retailer's curated gift selections in time for the holiday shopping season.

The 97-page "Holidays on Ice" print catalog featured merchandise on the front cover that

likely enticed female consumers to flip through for a window shopping-like experience ([see story](#)).

Similar to the spring 2013 magalog, Bergdorf maintained the double-issue format to widen its appeal.

"I think we can all agree that many people are tired of the winter weather," Ms. Albert said. "These same consumers are looking for an escape to warmer climates and seasons, whether physically or just mentally.

"The promotion of spring fashion feeds into this desire," she said. "On a more social outlook, yes, when the catalog arrives at a consumer's home there is a chance that males in the house might peruse the catalog too, since there is content devoted to them.

"Menswear is one of the fastest growing apparel categories. Another argument, though not as linear, is that the primary readers are female and seeing the curated images devoted to menswear will entice them to splurge for the men in their lives."

Final Take

Jen King, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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