

IN-STORE

## Nicholas Kirkwood uses pop-up shops to increase global retail footprint

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By SARAH JONES

British shoe label Nicholas Kirkwood is using a series of pop-up stores to grow its global presence as the brand expands its product offerings.

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**Luxury Daily**

The first pop-up, at French department store Printemps' location on Boulevard Hausmann in Paris, opened in March, and from there the brand will host pop-ups in six other cities. The reach of these pop-ups could be expanded with a revised digital strategy, focusing on more social content.

"When a brand is in a state of transition, there is a need to maintain the current customer base while also introducing yourself to a new demographic," said Kimmie Smith, accessory expert and co-founder/creative director of [Accessory2](#), New York.

"As most transitions have a variety of components to them, you need a beta test of sorts which allows you to organically obtain necessary information for expansion within the intended direction of the brand as well as the product assortment," she said. "A permanent boutique carries a number of risks without allowing one to pivot when needed.

"A pop-up denotes that for a determined or undetermined period of time that customers can expect to enjoy the brand experience. It allows a living model to get feedback which

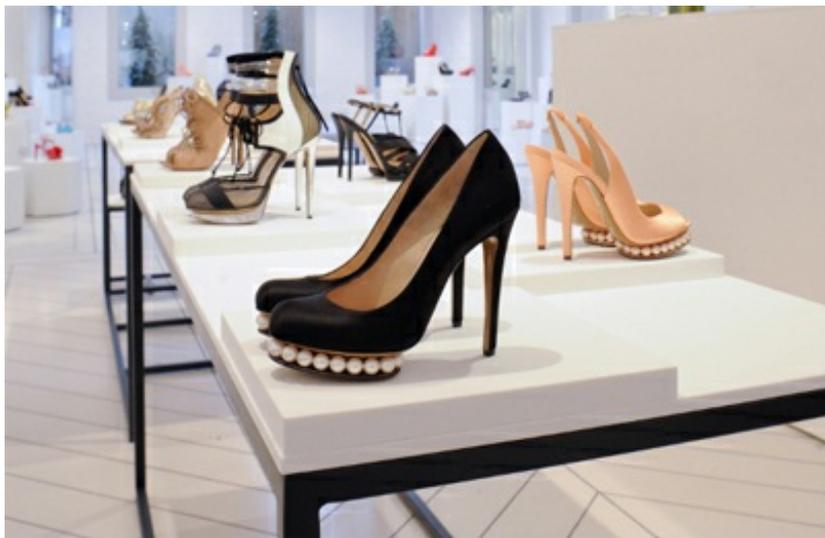
could lend itself to being permanent within the space or within that general area."

Ms. Smith is not affiliated with Nicholas Kirkwood but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Nicholas Kirkwood did not respond by press deadline.

## Business plan

Nicholas Kirkwood founded his eponymous label 10 years ago. In September LVMH acquired a majority stake in the brand.



## *Nicholas Kirkwood shoes*

Nicholas Kirkwood currently operates three brand-owned stores in London, New York and Los Angeles. On top of its direct-operated stores, the footwear maker is stocked in 150 stores globally at retailers including Bergdorf Goodman, Barneys New York, Neiman Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue, Harrods and Nordstrom.

In Las Vegas, the brand has a boutique at the Wynn Las Vegas & Encore Resort.

The label's store in the Mayfair area of London stocks only women's shoes. To showcase more of the label's offerings, the brand used a pop-up shop in London to house its fall/winter 2013 collection for men from Oct. 23 to Jan. 25.



## *Nicholas Kirkwood men's pop-up shop*

This newest set of pop-ups began with the pop-up at Printemps which opened March 4, according to [Vogue France](#).

Following Paris, the label will have a temporary space at Miami's Bal Harbour shops, a luxury fashion mall which is home to Saks, Neiman Marcus, Jimmy Choo, Chanel and Fendi. This pop-up will house the brand's spring/summer collection.

Going forward, the brand intends to further develop its men's shoe line and launch leather goods, becoming a more diversified accessories brand. Popping up in stores around the world will give the brand more buzz and awareness as it starts to grow its business.

To further amplify its efforts, Nicholas Kirkwood may want to add to its digital strategy.

Nicholas Kirkwood has revamped its digital presence in the past year, launching a new ecommerce site. While the brand does have accounts on both Twitter and Facebook, it has never tweeted and rarely shares what it is doing with its fans on Facebook.

The pop-ups are only part of what should be a multichannel approach at building awareness on a global scale.

"A variety of social media efforts will need to be taken to translate the experience of the pop-ups to a larger scale," Ms. Smith said. "This can be done through Instagram, shoppable videos and more.

"Brands and their assortment can be translated into living/breathing entities that make people excited to incorporate this into their lifestyle," she said. "There will be a need to drive home the notion of who the Nicholas Kirwood girl is as aspirational and inspirational qualities need to be attached in order to invoke a call to action to the designated consumer."

### Popping up

Other brands have looked to Printemps for pop-up shops, placing themselves among the department store's fashion brands.

Accessories label Jimmy Choo opened a pop-up shop in Printemps' Paris flagship to showcase its handbag line.

The pop-up included a range of day and evening bags, set in an urban jungle-themed display. Jimmy Choo tends to be known more for its footwear than its range of handbags, so this pop-up is likely to raise awareness of the brand's other offerings ([see story](#)).

Pop-ups are a good way to gauge consumers' interest in a particular item.

French fashion house Lanvin targeted fashion-savvy male consumers with a pop-up shop in London department store Harrods.

The pop-up boutique focused on men's accessories and shoes, and was only open until March 6. Since the boutique was only around for a very limited amount of time, the

novelty may drive consumers to buy before they missed out ([see story](#)).

These pop ups combined with a social strategy could help the brand grow into its new position at LVMH.

"Six pop-up shops can be effective as it's small enough to get feedback from a number of standpoints while also being large enough to cover desirable geographic growth," Ms. Smith said. "It's a great indicator of how this brand is in terms of its global positioning.

"Having the ability to be in the pop-up virtually via social interaction, seeing what happened throughout the day and what people purchased is a great way to show interest in attending the pop-ups while encouraging the brand to have a permanent placement within those areas and those that were not a part of this testing," she said.

"The need to truly embrace social interaction that is initiated by the brand as well as to interact with those that have feedback is a necessary two- way street that is needed in order for Nicholas Kirkwood to present itself as a global brand and one that makes sense within the portfolio of LVMH."

Final Take

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

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