

INTERNET

Belstaff connects 90-year heritage with modern brand through Instagram series

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Belstaff Instagram image from J. Woods

By SARAH JONES

British apparel brand Belstaff is using its modern evangelists to help celebrate its 90th anniversary on Instagram.

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Luxury Daily

Belstaff's #SpeedandStyle series follows the brand's explorers as they hit the open road in various global locales. Bringing its anniversary celebration to social media allows all of Belstaff's consumers and followers to contribute and interact with the brand for its milestone.

"Belstaff's strategy is to encourage the participation of their audience in the celebration of their 90th anniversary," said [Brian Honigman](#), New York-based content marketing consultant and social media marketer.

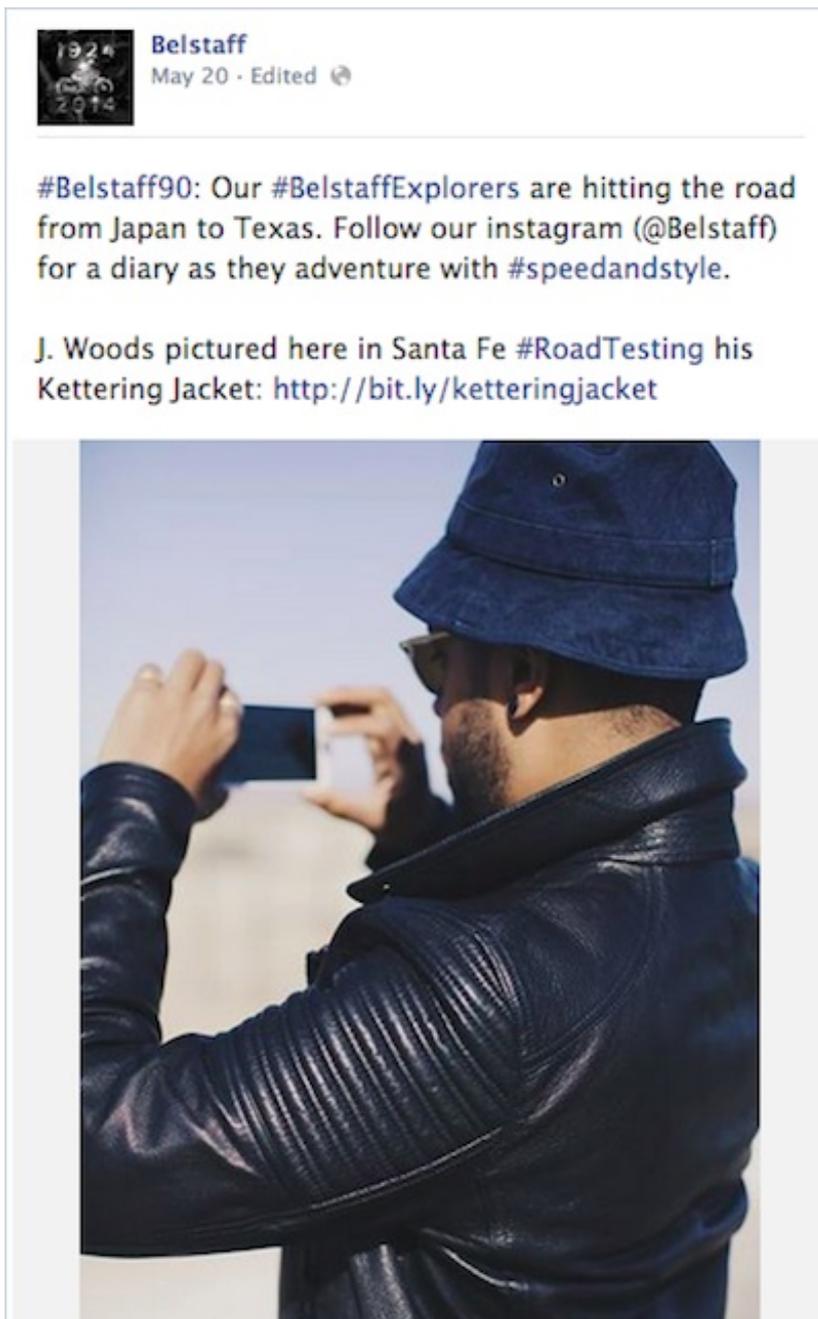
"Their audience, like most fashion brands, is particularly active on social media, which is why messaging around the anniversary is best suited for their Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest and Instagram," he said.

Mr. Honigman is not affiliated with Belstaff but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Belstaff did not respond by press deadline.

Road trip

Belstaff introduced the series on its Facebook, which has a more established following of about 142,000, compared to its Instagram's 27,000.

A screenshot of a Facebook post from the brand Belstaff. The post is dated May 20 and has been edited. It features a profile picture of a motorcycle with the years 1924 and 2014. The text of the post reads: "#Belstaff90: Our #BelstaffExplorers are hitting the road from Japan to Texas. Follow our instagram (@Belstaff) for a diary as they adventure with #speedandstyle." Below this, it says "J. Woods pictured here in Santa Fe #RoadTesting his Kettering Jacket: <http://bit.ly/ketteringjacket>". The main image in the post shows a man from the back, wearing a dark blue bucket hat and a dark leather motorcycle jacket, holding a smartphone to take a picture of a landscape under a clear sky.

Facebook post from Belstaff

In the post, the brand tells consumers to follow its Instagram for posts containing the hashtag #SpeedandStyle, giving the handle without providing a direct link to the account. Instead, Belstaff focuses on one image of J. Woods wearing a Kettering jacket, and gives consumers a link to look at the coat on its ecommerce site.

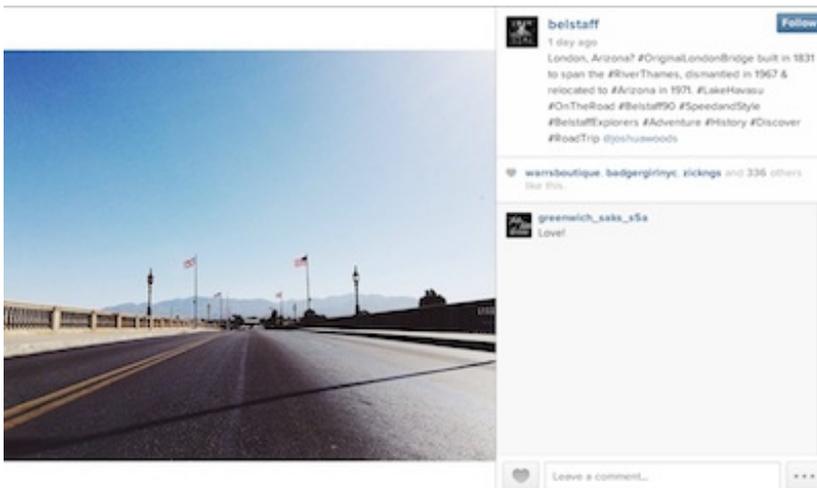
On Instagram, the brand began the series with a different photo of J. Woods standing on a red car in Texas. The explorer wears a Stetson and a Belstaff jacket.



Instagram post from Belstaff

This post includes 10 hashtags, including the one for the brand's anniversary, #Belstaff90.

Not all of the images in the series contain product placement, with J. Woods sharing a photo of a vintage motorcycle and London Bridge in Arizona. The structure was originally built and situated over the Thames, and was taken apart and moved to Arizona in 1967.

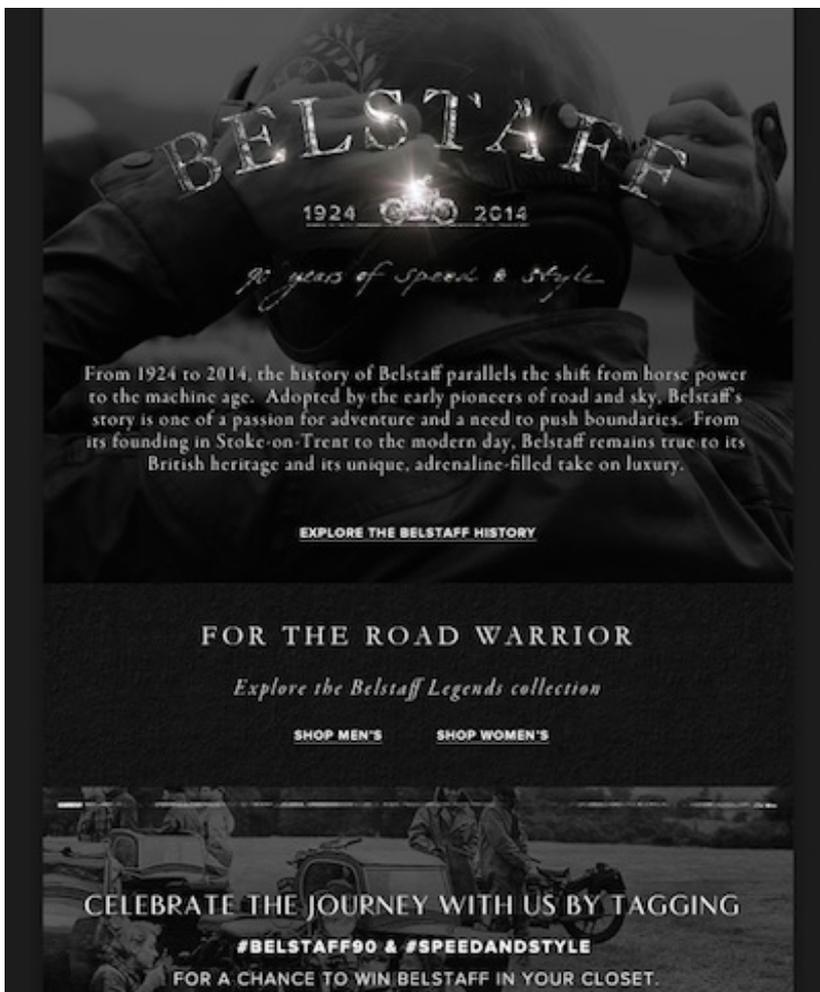


Instagram post from Belstaff

Belstaff has connected itself to adventurous figures over the years, including Amelia Earhart and T.E. Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia.

The brand, which was founded by Eli Belovitch and his son-in-law Harry Grosberg, developed a niche in waxed cotton jackets. As the coats became known for their breathability yet waterproof qualities, they became a choice for outdoor sports, including motorcycle racing.

Belstaff has been working to educate consumers about this history through social media and email marketing.



Email from Belstaff

The brand's Pinterest has a new board dedicated to its history, with photos from the label's beginnings. Along with the original logo, images of the brand's part in World War II as a military manufacturer and the early motorcycle riding adopters of the brand are shown.



Belstaff history Pinterest board

More recent photos, including a Kate Moss advertising campaign and a 2014 ready-to-wear presentation show the progression of the house.

"Instagram is the best match for this Belstaff campaign, since it's a highly visual platform that's ideal for sharing messaging on the go in real-time," Mr. Honigman said. "Since the Instagram campaign will be documenting Belstaff staff members, it's the right platform to

give a first person perspective of the company's most valued brand advocates celebrating the 90th anniversary."

Looking back

Other brands have celebrated milestones through online content.

French fashion house Lanvin is celebrating its 125th anniversary with a campaign spanning all of its social media platforms and its Web site.

The brand will periodically release archived photos and videos focusing on its heritage and Jeanne Lanvin, the designer who founded the label. The brand has told the story of its founding and history in print, but sharing its heritage through an online medium will allow it to reach a broader audience ([see story](#)).

Also, U.S. label Ralph Lauren is celebrating the 30th anniversary of its home collection with a microsite dedicated to the philosophy and craftsmanship behind its interiors.

Ralph Lauren's first endeavor into homewares was in 1983 when the brand launched its "Log Cabin," "Thoroughbred," "Jamaica" and "New England" collections. The home collection has grown and evolved to encompass many more facets of interior design that mirror the sensibilities of its core consumers ([see story](#)).

Belstaff used hashtags to make sure the campaign was easy to follow across platforms, but it may disrupt the consumer experience.

"The Belstaff campaign is relatively easy to follow on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram," Mr. Honigman said.

"[Also,] the images shared from their accounts on brand, but a problem with the initiative, at least on Instagram, is that the company is using way too many hashtags in the description of their photos," he said. "Excessive hashtag use can get annoying for users very quickly and make the photo caption difficult to read."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/W3_4Ey1wzEE](https://www.youtube.com/embed/W3_4Ey1wzEE)

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