Mixed Message

A mélange of prints and patterns on the Paris runways emerged as a key trend this season, lending a spirited vibe to collections, as in this festival of flowers and spots from Miu Miu. For more on the trend, see pages 5 and 6.

Change in The Air at The WWD Digital Forum

NEW YORK — Fashion’s racing into the post-omnichannel world. When executives from the industry’s top firms gathered at the WWD Digital Forum last month, they generally avoided or bristled at the term “omnichannel” as an outmoded buzzword. But they wholeheartedly embraced its central thesis— that the combination of digital savvy and retail know-how can lead to a better customer experience.

Over two days in lower Manhattan, 225 insiders on the digital cutting edge explored how bite-sized storytelling can garner digital attention, how jumping social media trends can lead to big payoffs in stores and much, much more.

See page 8

David Lauren Promoted at Ralph Lauren

NEW YORK — As part of its “Way Forward” strategic plan, Ralph Lauren Corp. has promoted David Lauren to the new roles of chief innovation officer and vice chairman of the board.

He was previously executive vice president of global advertising, marketing and communications and has served as a board member since 2003.

In his new post, Lauren, 44, will lead company efforts to create initiatives to help drive the brand across all channels.

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 17
Arson Hits Gap September Sales Hard

- A fire at a distribution center, which was ruled arson, pushed the company to a 3 percent comparable store sales decline in September.

BY EVAN CLARK WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM DEBRA BORCHARDT

An August blaze at Gap Inc.'s Fishkill, N.Y., distribution center—which was ruled arson and destroyed 12 million units—pushed the company's comparable store sales into negative territory last month.

Gap said its September comps fell 3 percent, compared with a 1 percent fall a year earlier, but those comps would have been flat without impact of the fire. However, Gap said its September merchandise margins ended up being better than expected, which "more than offset the impact of the fire. Our merchandise margins ended up being better than expected, which "more than offset the impact of the fire."

The lingering impact of the blaze is expected to also shave about 3 percent from the company’s comps this year.

A Gap spokesman on a recorded call said that goods that were destroyed were mostly destined for the Gap brand’s e-commerce site.

Gap brand’s global comps fell 10 percent for the month, but the company said they would have been down about 5 percent without the fire, or flat versus a year earlier. Banana Republic September comps were down 5 percent, but would have been about 6 percent without the fire, and improvement from the 10 percent drop a year ago.

And Old Navy compiled up 4 percent for the month, but would have been up about 6 percent without the disruption, ahead of the 4 percent comp gain a year ago.

Arson at Gap’s Fishkill, N.Y., distribution center "was ruled arson, and destroyed 12 million units—pushed the company's comparable store sales into negative territory last month."

The New York City Economic Development Corp. said Thursday that

The News From Paris

- A season of change at ateliers yielded dynamic collections.

Active Adjustment

- Nike and Apollo team up to re vamp the supply chain.

Asian Shift

- Transformation comes to the Continent from Japan to India.

Thinking Bigger

- Century 21 expands with stores outside the Northeast.

PLUS:

- Social Studies
- Arts & Culture
- Report Card

"Familiarity must be unsettled." - DRIES VAN NOTEN

OUT THIS WEEK IN

The New York City Economic Development Corp. said Thursday that the New York City Economic Development Corp. said Thursday that the new and current investments are the cornerstone of Futureworks NYC, which supports the advanced manufacturing sector in the city.

The workspace is the cornerstone of Futureworks NYC, which supports the advanced manufacturing sector in the city.

NYCEDC Taps Techshop For Manufacturing Center

- The workspace is the cornerstone of Futureworks NYC, which supports the advanced manufacturing sector in the city.

BY ARTHUR FRIEDMAN

The New York City Economic Development Corp. said Thursday that TechShop has been selected to operate a 15,000-square-foot advanced manufacturing center at the Brooklyn Army Terminal in Sunset Park.

This shared workspace will provide makers and other small manufacturing firms with affordable access to 21st-century equipment, as well as access to a suite of support services. A TechShop spokesman said TechShop Brooklyn will have textiles and apparel manufacturing capabilities.

The advanced manufacturing center is the cornerstone of Futureworks NYC, a network of programs and resources to support the advanced manufacturing sector in New York, create high-skilled production jobs and increase competitiveness for existing manufacturing companies. The new center is expected to create more than 500 jobs in the first five years, attract $200 million in investment and help launch more than 200 new industrial businesses.

TechShop has helped launch hundreds of businesses responsible for thousands of jobs, with a combined worth more than $6 billion. TechShop operates in 12 cities worldwide. Many of TechShop’s locations include equipment used in textile manufacturing, an NYEDC spokesman noted.

NYCEDC president Maria Torres-Springer said, "We are experiencing a manufacturing renaissance in New York that is driven by the talents of our creative entrepreneurs, makers and inventors. Our new partnership with TechShop will democratize access to the state of the art tools, equipment and workspaces necessary to not just support our city’s manufacturers, but also position New York at the forefront of changing manufacturing."

Carlo A. Scissura, president and chief executive officer of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, said, "Providing companies with space and access to the best equipment for a fraction of the cost will further enhance the environment of creativity and advanced manufacturing that is thriving in Sunset Park.''

In addition to the advanced manufacturing center, other components of Futureworks NYC include a "Virtual Incubator" to support the launch of product start-ups and encourage local production and supply chains, services to provide assistance helping traditional manufacturing firms learn about and adopt new technology, and grants that offset costs for advanced manufacturing startups establishing new operations.

Futureworks NYC was first announced in November 2015 as part of Mayor Bill de Blasio and Council speaker Mark Viverito’s 10-point action plan to grow industrial and manufacturing jobs.

In March, NYCEDC revealed the six winners of the Futureworks NYC Growth Challenge, each of which received $30,000 in funding over a two-year period to finance their growth in one of the city’s advanced manufacturing spaces.

Among the winners was Crated Inc., which develops textile wearable technology. The company plans to set up a small manufacturing facility for producing garments onto textiles called Kontinuum Cloth.

The new and current investments are the cornerstone of Futureworks NYC, which supports the advanced manufacturing sector in the city.

The workspace is the cornerstone of Futureworks NYC, which supports the advanced manufacturing sector in the city.
Skin Security

SHOP NOW

SHISEIDO

GINZA TOKYO
The Paris runways offered a cacophony of prints and patterns, keeping things lively for spring.
Change Is in the Air

Cutting-edge leaders from all pockets of industry gathered in Manhattan to talk about what works and what doesn’t.

**OneStop, ABG**

On Beating Amazon

Just call Amazon, Goliath. Dan Wallace-Brewster, vice president of corporate marketing at OneStop Internet – a retail e-commerce solutions provider – spoke with Adam Kronengold and Alexandra Wallace-Brewster in New York to discuss the future.

“We have to think about what’s next,” said Chase, who joined the Eloquii team after it was shut down by The Limited and relaunched by investors. “We have to act before it will provide a seamless path to purchase. In terms of content targeted to the plus-size consumer, Eloquii wants to offer its customers more elevated content.

“Is the next ‘Modern Family’ created, produced and distributed by Target? Is the next show like ‘Girls’ created, produced and distributed by Urban Outfitters, Nasty Gal or Eloquii? It could be and it would be entertainment for entertainment’s sake,” Chase said. “It’s just a great show and it’s so good in fact that you can sell advertising against it.”

In terms of content targeted to the plus-size consumer, Eloquii wants to offer its customers more elevated content.

“Here is no Vogue for this customer,” Chase said. “What helps sell women’s clothing is inspiration, beautiful imagery and building a dream and part of a lifestyle. If you don’t see it, you can’t believe it, so we are taking a real bet on content and you will continue to see more and more of that from us.”

While Chase said Eloquii, which recently expanded its executive team, will move into brick-and-mortar in a very controlled and limited way, virtual reality, which could allow shoppers to have an in-store experience from their couch, is top of mind for the team.

“When you look at the big companies, they are putting a ton of investment dollars behind virtual reality.”

When asked what Eloquii is doing today to differentiate itself in the growing plus-size market, Chase said the brand is taking merchandising risks many players have been scared to take, speaking directly with its customer on a daily basis and acting on the feedback as soon as they can.

**Eloquii CEO Predicts Future for Marketers**

Instead of expounding on Eloquii, a plus-size fast fashion retailer, and its merits, Mariah Chase, the brand’s chief executive officer, used her session at WWD’s Digital Forum in New York to discuss the future.

“We have to think about what’s next,” said Chase, who joined the Eloquii team after it was shut down by The Limited and relaunched by investors. “We have to act in the present and know what’s now, but we have to see what’s coming down the road and predict what might be around the curve.”

According to Chase, conversational commerce, which allows customers to purchase items within messenger apps or platforms such as Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp, is where the rate of change is the fastest. Chase said Facebook recently announced it would begin to offer payment options within the Facebook Messenger platform.

“This could be the evolution of Facebook commerce,” Chase said. “We’ve decided that instead of building an app right now, we are going to pursue conversational commerce. We never hear our customers asking for an app.”

Another area of interest for Chase, who believes digital commerce is eroding pricing power, is dynamic pricing, a mechanism that would price items based on supply and demand, a strategy that’s often used in the travel and hospitality industries.

“We are trying to build brand equity around the idea of scarcity,” Chase said. “There’s FOMO, but as a brand we actually talk with our customers about FOMO, the fear of selling out. We feel that something that will potentially be a precursor to dynamic pricing.”

Fashion brands and retailers have doubled down on creating content for the past few years, but Chase predicts that in the future, content, specifically within video, will be less focused on selling product, but it will provide a seamless path to purchase, taking a hard look at social opportunities.

For the campaign Taylor turned to not just a popular social media influencer, but to a few Millenials. “The objective and also our biggest challenge was to reconnect with our core customer, engage with big social media personalities, and make Juicy Couture relevant again,” Taylor said. To do so, Taylor guided Juicy Couture to revisit its most identifiable product for its #TrackSuitBack campaign.

Juicy Couture featured 21 influencers like model Ruby Aldridge and socialite/Atlanta de Cadet. Taylor said they wanted to highlight the idea of stripping back overglamour and recalling favorite memories of their first tracksuit. “We wanted to highlight the idea of stripping back overglamour in previous Juicy campaigns and focus on the customer. We featured relatable, diverse women to stand as our global girl squad to align with the customer,” de Cadet Taylor said.

The campaign saw tremendous success in two months, garnering more than one billion impressions primarily attributed to customer engagement in all social channels.

“We’re engaging across all platforms and making it cohesive from e-commerce to social media to in-store,” she said. Bolstering its place in the U.S. market, the brand collaborated with Bloomingdales to release an exclusive version of the track suit to instill messaging in physical stores.

The main takeaway: different organic themes to deliver integrated messaging in all mediums to support the consumer’s journey.    

**Aria Hughes**
Using Data Effectively

Digital Dots at VF

OCTOBER 7, 2016

●

Brendan Sullivan, vice president of direct-to-consumer at VF Corp., noted that of those 16 brands, 10 also have their own stores, opening opportunities for the company to tie together the full shopping experience.

“For us, it’s really about connecting the dots and what are really the threads that help connect these different channels,” Sullivan said. “The consumer is shopping multiple venues. It’s not an ‘either/or’ it’s really the power of ‘and.’”

“We’ve got to show up and have your game in all channels,” he said. “And you’ve got to have a very similar experience for the consumer, because they’re not finding a distinction anymore [in where they shop].”

To that end, VF has established a Silicon Valley, Calif.-based unit that seeks to keep the merchants on focus by keeping the brand current and leaning into the technology front.

“We feel this way’s the right approach to take some of the pressure off our brands and to worry away from the back end, but have them do what they do best, which is deliver great experiences and themselves,” Sullivan said.

Delivering great experiences today requires what amounts to a little logistical wizardry, even for a well- ingrained brand.

“We need to make sure we get the right stuff into the right place at the right time,” Sullivan said. “Really easy to say, hard to do. But we’re putting in some different processes and for us at VF this is a hard journey, because we are used to thinking about things in stockpiles and pallets. Now we have to think about how to edit assortments and ship it not only to our stores and replenish our stores, but ship it to consumers. We’re committed to that evolution.”

Connecting the Digital Dots at VF

VF Corp.’s bread and butter might be its wholesale business, but the powerhouse apparel company also can count with e-commerce sites that already drive about $2 billion of the company’s $12.4 billion in sales.

First, are looking to grow by being smart, coordinated (and a little lucky).

“Sometimes it’s free shipping….sometimes it’s the highest promotion works,” Sullivan said. “You’ve got to show up and have your game in all channels.”

It starts with putting yourself in the customer’s shoes.

“It’s not a business that demands attention,” he said. “That’s the problem with retail, if you follow the status quo you won’t achieve disruption in your industry, to get out of the status quo requires efficiency,” Hunter said.

Netsuite, Alton Lane On Customer Service

Chief executive officer of Alton Lane, Colin Hunter and director of retail industry principal of Netsuite, Matthew Rhodus led a casual Q&A on mapping the roadmap to customer experience nirvana.

Alton Lane, an experimental tailor, is focused on bringing customers bespoke treatment in man-friendly showrooms featuring bars, big screens and cutting-edge technology. It’s all about the consumer. Powered by Netsuite, Alton Lane catalogues its customer data to build brand loyalty and provide seamless experiences in the store, while also gathering insights into the behavior of the shopper.

During a scheduled appointment, customers are measured by 3-D body-scan technology that gathers over 300 measurements in about 30 seconds for built-to-order items. “We provide a hyper-personalized supply chain,” said Hunter. “We order unique fabric for every single customer. We’re able to tailor where we produce the garment based on their preferences and give the customer insight into the supply chain so they know where their garment is during every point in the process.”

With commuting showrooms, locations in 11 cities and mobile platforms, Alton Lane centers its efforts on two basic concepts: being convenient and being cool. This is informed of course, by customer data collection. “If we can make better recommendations, if we know the customer’s shopping history, what games they like to watch on TV, certain recommendations can have certain enhancements on their experience; they’re going to appreciate that even more,” said Hunter.

In regards to convenience: “We make sure that we have a dynamic supply chain that is always improving. Where previously there was a five-week turnaround on a previous item, we can make sure there’s a three-week turnaround on the next item,” Hunter said.

With comprehensive data collection encompassing hundreds of data points for thousands of products, Hunter faced an obstacle. Data analysis is time consuming and can borrow time from areas of business that demand attention. “That’s the problem with retail, if you follow the status quo you won’t achieve disruption in your industry, to get out of the status quo requires efficiency,” Hunter said.

Rhodos noted that not all brands are as young – or nimble – as Alton Lane. He prompted Hunter to shed advice to digital marketers not be inhibited by the amount of data accessible.

“Start somewhere, and start today,” Hunter said. While reskilling a brand can be time intensive and metrics can be distracting, Hunter advised to keep the customer the priority. “They factors into what data is important and large data factors into personalization and enhancing the customer’s experience, and empowering our employees with the tools they need to deliver not just customer satisfaction, but customer surprise and delight at every single turn. It starts with putting yourself in the customer’s shoes.”
OCTOBER 7, 2016

Is Key to Social Media

The consumer is always in control. “Winners in the market have a singular focus: The consumer is always in control.” Laukaitis said. He urged retailers to consider the path to the marketplace, retailers need to keep their eye on the prize: the consumer, which requires following their lead. SAP U.S. managing director of retail Matt Laukaitis and Aldo’s chief digital officer, Matt Laukaitis examined how to navigate a path to the consumer amidst fervent chaos of competition and rapidly evolving business models. These are turbulent times, but a little shakiness might be helpful, according Laukaitis. He urged retailers to consider the path to success as a series of waves to weather not only from external sources but also from the consumers. This constant scrutiny invites daily disruption for improved customer experience, he said. Change is not a singular handle to overcome and then resume business as usual. “Use disruption as questions about the business to address the company’s culture,” Laukaitis said. “Attack yourself before someone else does.”

Evolution, survival and adaptation are key. Laukaitis noted that efficiently evolving businesses will be the ones standing. “We’re seeing businesses today building this innovation culture that constantly asks themselves what we can do to make the customer experience better and how can we reinforce her experience with our brand... and then build that DNA,” Laukaitis said.

Each department needs to support the customer’s journey. Let her take the wheel. “Winners in the market have a singular focus: The consumer is always in control. She is always dictating what her experience will look like. Focus on the customer and then act.”

Aldo’s Matt Laukaitis echoed Laukaitis’ advice on designing the customer experience. Notably featuring an in-store location in Manhattan’s new Westfield World Trade location, the brand was inspired to think big. A fresh in-store digital initiative commenced envisioned as Aldo’s connective store.

Technology can be distracting for the consumer, and for businesses introducing it. “Define products and experiences that are focused on the customer, not technology. Figure out the pain points in the experience and go after those specifically,” Martel said.

To Martel, it’s not about fail but adjusting. Building the infrastructure to support customer experiences is crucial. Strong program management was imperative to help build Aldo’s digital initiatives. Throughout the process, Martel learned that platforms for innovation needed to exist before the products.

Partnership with c-level executives to in-store associates are all valid members of the new ecosystem, according to Martel. From the big idea to the discovering small wins available for development, it’s all about servicing the consumer with personalized and delightful experiences.

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● Sap, Aldo Discuss Following the Consumer’s Lead

At MAC Cosmetics, the social media strategy is all about balance. “We’re not making it a free-for-all,” Elkins said. “We are very agile in terms of seasonality. If you take away knitwear, coats and heavy footwear, the rest of it is fashion you can wear all year round. If you are having a tricky season, be agile. Bring your going-out fashion dresses to the forefront. Because a big part of our business is in the southern hemisphere, we actually running several seasons at once.”

“We’re always on-duty, all of our studios are in house, all of our content teams are in house, so it’s just about getting out there, having an enormous team of buyers, nearly 100 of them now out every week,” said Carol Kane, Boohoo’s founder and chief executive officer.

The fast-growing e-commerce business, launched in 2006, introduces 500 new products a week on average, sometimes 800 in a day, and has 21,000 items on the site on any given day. It targets to 16- to 24-year-old consumers with on-trend fashion at value prices.

“We’re seeing businesses today building this innovation culture that constantly asks themselves what we can do to make the customer experience better and how can we reinforce her experience with our brand... and then build that DNA,” Laukaitis said.

“We realized those resources were not the best allocation of our time and energy, and we were always calling it ‘plus.’ Our customer is very flexible.”

She said Boohoo works to have the looks seen on the catwalks translated online as soon as possible and that regarding the ‘expensive-looking model that Burberry and Tom Ford adopted,’ she acknowledged that if the fashion dictated a lot of embellishments such as embroidery and sequins, “we would have to spend more to offer the production to be able to do that. We are very agile.”

Laura Elkins said that Burberry and Aldo is experimenting with artists with the hashtag #MACartistchallenge. We took ourselves off the platform,” Elkins said. “The consumer is always in control. She will always dictate what her experience is with the brand and how she’s going to talk about your brand.” Laukaitis said.

“We are seeing businesses today building this innovation culture that constantly asks themselves what we can do to make the customer experience better and how can we reinforce her experience with our brand... and then build that DNA,” Laukaitis said.

“We are not seasonal buyers. We are buying daily...We are always updated, I think in e-commerce, that is so important because newness and freshness to our consumer, whether they come onto the site daily, weekly or monthly, are expecting to see something completely new. So it’s very important for us to have new inventory, a very updated inventory, every single day...We don’t make a week plan. We have a daily plan. We will change things daily if we have to. We are very agile in terms of seasonality. If you take away knitwear, coats and heavy footwear, the rest of it is fashion you can wear all year round. If you are having a tricky season, be agile. Bring your going-out fashion dresses to the forefront. Because a big part of our business is in the southern hemisphere, we actually running several seasons at once.”
Alicianne Rand: Content Powers Customer Experience

Quantity versus quality. That was a point zeroed in on by Alicianne Rand, vice president for marketing at NewCred, in her presentation, “The Content Marketing Imperative.”

According to Rand, “We as marketers face two challenges—we need quantity and quality of content.” She noted that her firm works with 200 enterprise clients on a global basis, and said that “content powers the entire customer experience.”

Rand emphasized that “content is the customer journey,” and noted that omnichannel shoppers buy eight times more than those buying from single channels. Of the shopper statistics that are available, Rand said 97 percent look for information before buying, while 82 percent look for information while they are in a store. Another 35 percent look for information after they visit a store.

In fact, there’s so much competition grabbing the attention of shoppers that retailers are no longer competing with another store, but now are also competing with bloggers and news feeds. And with the clutter of information out there, the challenges faced by marketers aren’t just about the quantity of content, but the quality of content as well.

According to Rand, the ability to connect content to revenue is one area that can bring success. Conversions by the audience to customers can result in brand loyalty. And the connection through content can drive both conversion and upselling. The key is in mapping content strategy to the customer journey. Even better is having content that interacts with the e-commerce strategy. That means having consumers go to the site for the content and then having the content drive them to the e-commerce component for the purchase. This is one way to map the journey to guide purchasing behavior at every step of the way.

Customer loyalty is about whether you’re keeping the brand topmost of mind for consumers. From the perspective of editorial content, the question is where can the content fit? Rand gave an example of content from a blog about the top must-have products, which could list the product and color options for purchase—and then the product and color options for purchase—and then back to the content site for information on how to accessorize the look or determine proper sizing.

Rand also said one has to focus on retention just as much as acquisition of customers.

She gave as an example the site Rue La La, which had a problem of being unable to reengage its customers. Many who made their first purchase didn’t return to the site for a second purchase. The revamped strategy included publishing 12 to 15 pieces of content each day, whether done in house or licensed, which increased the engagement from customers. It’s an example of consistency in the amount of content posted each day as well as the compounding effect of that content. “The more you publish, the greater ROI you get,” Rand said, adding, “Content marketing is not a sprint. It is a marathon.”

Rand also noted, “You don’t need to be everywhere. You just need to be focused in the channels where your customers are.”

Deborah Lippmann Takes Pain Points Out of E-Commerce

Nail brand Deborah Lippmann is all about reducing friction at checkout.

The business had one of the first beauty e-commerce sites after its 1995 launch, and continues to implement new technologies to make its customer experience easier, according to Mark Lippmann, managing partner and cofounder of Deborah Lippmann, and brother to Deborah.

Lippmann told the crowd at the WWD Digital Summit that the brand’s goal is to create fresh, engaging, shoppable content while shortening the path to conversion and reducing checkout friction, particularly in mobile.

“We want to put it in context for the user, whether that be the new fall color collection or backstage at fashion week, or how to choose the right gift for holiday or how to videos...and then [make] that content shoppable,” said Lippmann.

When customers are in the store, if they want to look at a color more closely, they just pick it up and aren’t moved out of the brand experience, he said. “But with e-commerce, you can’t do that.”

Now a mobile customer might be looking at a product that they can swipe right to add to bag, and then they might go to the product listing page, where now you just kind of have a boring grid catalogue and you’ve taken all the product out of context, and then you might go to the product detail page, and then some sites might even—Lord forbid—take you to the cart, and then we expect the user to find their way back to that original content with which they were so engaged. That’s kind of a crooked path,” Lippmann said.

In order to make that transaction simpler, Deborah Lippmann has implemented a system called Zmagas Creator that allows them to create shoppable images and videos. “It doesn’t require a developer at all,” Lippmann said. “At Deborah Lippmann, our creative and our digital marketing team, which is me, is able to create all of these experiences and push them live.”

The brand has also created a Tinder-like mobile experience where users can swipe right to add to bag, he said. “On a mobile device exclusively, not an app, you can actually swipe right through a section we call Meet Your Match and when you swipe right, you add to bag.”

Lippmann said the brand is also big on Apple Pay, which it uses for mobile and is working to implement through desktops so that when a customer taps a video their “phone lights up asking for [their] fingerprint to confirm and the purchase is over,” Lippmann said.

So far, the strategy seems to be working. Mobile conversions are up more than 100 percent, desktop conversations are up 50 percent, 200 percent overall, order value is up almost 40 percent, Lippmann said. About 50 percent of mobile customers are new customers, he said, and of those, about 50 percent are new customers.

“We’re reducing, not eliminating, the friction of checkout at mobile,” he said. — Allie Collins
Neiman’s Digital Path To Customer Loyalty

What does omnichannel mean to the Neiman Marcus Group?

“The phrase omnichannel is definitely overused. It’s really just about how we connect with customers and leveraging all parts of Neiman Marcus,” said Lindy Rawlinson, senior vice president of customer experience, Neiman Marcus Group. The parts include the 42 Neiman Marcus stores, neimanmarcus.com, Bergdorf Goodman, bergdorfgoodman.com, the corporation’s catalogues, marketing channels and mobile devices.

“For us, the idea of omnichannel has evolved into creating a seamless shopping experience in which we can further our relationships with our customers. In order to make that evolution, we had to make sure we had the right foundation of all of the capabilities,” Rawlinson said. “We’ve done so in the last number of years.”

NMG now offers buy-online, pick-up-in-store, ship-from-store, ship-to-stores from distribution centers, same-day delivery, and has one pool of inventory under its new NMG One system, which as of last August was fully phased in and has been experiencing some glitches attracting vendors. Stores can also take returns from online orders.

“It doesn’t make any difference how a customer shops, or where a transaction takes place. Everything we do is focused on the customer,” Rawlinson said. “We view those capabilities as a necessity so customers can interact with Neiman Marcus anytime, anywhere.”

Neiman’s has also been working to identify potential points of friction in “the shopping journey...making sure we remove any barriers, making sure interactions are easy and fun and capitalizing on the differences in the experiences of the different shopping channels.”

Through research, surveys, talking to customers and sales associates, and through data, Neiman’s works to identify issues in the shopping journey, Rawlinson said. “We focus on unique and compelling experiences, within and across the channels,” she said.

A key enabler is personalization — “a pillar of our customer experience,” Rawlinson said. Neiman’s personalizes e-mail content, makes product recommendations based on browsing and buying histories of the customers, and replicates, as much as possible, store experiences and online experiences.

“Relationships between sales associates and customers, on the web site we try to replicate that…. We have a history of personalizing online,” with e-mails, product recommendations, and homepage content, she said. Loyalty programs are being personalized as well, by reminding customers of benefits they’re entitled to, as well as points they’ve earned, and providing information about special events likely to be of interest, such as trunk shows at their local stores with their favorite designers.

The more the customer interacts with the web site or shops the stores, the more personalized the communications become. Browsing or purchasing from a particular brand or designer leads to greater communications concerning that brand or designer, but not entirely. “We want to make sure they have that [sense of] discovery,” Rawlinson said.

NMG recently launched size preferences, recommending sizes for a select products, and enables customers to quickly see if the product they want is available in their size.

In addition, associates all have iPhones to help customers determine availability of products and where they are located, and inform customers on new products and other matters.

Neiman’s new tools geared to help customers shop include: the memory mirror, which shoots videos of customers in what they have tried on and allows the customer to compare different looks, side by side, and forward the looks to friends and family for second opinions.

There’s also the “snap, find, shop” technology which enables customers to take photos of items they see on someone or on a magazine page, so Neiman’s notifies them if they carry the exact product or provides a similar product.

“Understanding that customer’s journey is one of the things we spend a lot time on,” Rawlinson said. “It makes no difference what channel or device a customer decides to browse or purchase with at Neiman Marcus. What matters is that we provide the full Neiman Marcus experience in that journey of the customer in the most relevant way possible.”

Mary Beech: Telling Kate Spade’s Story

Storytelling is key to the Kate Spade experience.

Mary Beech, executive vice president and chief marketing officer of Kate Spade & Co., believes in 24/7 connectivity and being in constant conversation with their customers.

“At Kate Spade, we are, first and foremost, a customer-centric organization. It means building a lasting relationship,” said Beech, who noted that their customer is the center of all their actions and all their efforts. “We make every effort with her in mind. Otherwise, we’ve just an orchestra playing for ourselves,” she said.

For years, Kate Spade’s customer was found in a retail store, but things have changed dramatically. “Today, whether she’s online, at one of our stores or wholesalers, on her mobile phone or on any of our social networks, we want to be there for her,” Beech said. And that includes the consumer immersing herself in the brand or doing actual shopping.

“We are channel agnostic and brand and customer centric,” Beech said. She said she wants the Kate Spade customer to have a consistent and positive experience. And, what’s key to the customer relationship is brand voice.

“Storytelling is how you communicate in an authentic voice to your customers and make sure they understand and engage in your brand,” she said.

Successful storytelling requires two key ingredients: Great content and great distribution, she said. She said the phrase, “Content is king,” which was coined in 1996 by Bill Gates “still holds true” 20 years later. “At our core, we are storytellers, and this approach touches every part of our business,” she said. “To create great content, tell a great story,” she said. “You have to have a strong and unique brand voice in order to be heard and remembered. At Kate Spade, our brand voice is distinct, and it’s woven in our product, our communications, our marketing, our experiences, our stores.”

She said the company’s brand promise is to inspire their customers to lead a more interesting life. “It is our job, each and everyday, to bring that life to life every day.”

Beech said they know everything about their customers, because they’ve taken the time to get to know them. They know her favorite drink, her favorite colors, the flowers she buys, the books she reads, the car she drives, etc.

The company created an image campaign with interesting female and male personalities, as well as brand videos which talks about the “Miss Adventures” of their Kate Spade New York girl. In addition, it has an e-commerce site, which communicates its brand story and establishes a connection to its customer. It has an Instagram account, where it shows all aspects of the aspirational Kate Spade girl’s life, and has specialty stores, which looks like the customer’s apartment. Pinterest is the company’s second highest traffic driver after Facebook.

The company’s “Miss Adventure” film series depicts the Kate Spade New York girl. “It’s been incredibly successful from a customer acquisition standpoint, she said. In two seasons, and five episodes, it has over 100 million views to date, while also significantly increasing search activity, purchase consideration, key-board interest and traffic. This month the company won a Clio for fashion.”

— LISA LOCKWOOD
Neiman’s, Shinola On Refining Mobile Shopping

Fashion customers are fickle, yet there are wants and needs related to the shopping experience that remain constant. “Our customers at the end of the day is very interested in the best of luxury and fashion merchandising and wants easy ways to interact with that. Easy access,” said Lindy Rawlinson, senior vice president, customer experience, Neiman Marcus Group, in a conversation on mobile e-commerce and the modern retail customer.

She was joined by Jacques Panis, president of Shinola, and Andrea Zaretsky, vice president, customer marketing and engagement at American Express, who moderated the panel.

Rawlinson cited ways Neiman’s makes shopping easier and interesting, and noted the majority of Neiman’s web traffic is on the phone. “A consistent experience” from desktop to smartphone is vital. “Mobile is just the center of what we focus on.”

Mobile has “given us new ways to connect with customers” and can be an easy and quick way for associates to connect with customers, she said.

Rawlinson went through a litany of technology and services her company provides to customers to personalize and expedite shopping, citing gift finders; Snap, Find, Shop, memory mirrors; free shipping; free returns; express mobile checkouts with AmEx; beacon technology, and in-store changes to the desktop.

“If you think about mobile, ComScore just reported mobile now comprises 20 percent of a e-commerce spend, up 60 percent year over year,” said Zaretsky. “If you think about screen time, the majority of time adults spend on screens is on mobile, it just crossed the 50 percent. Gartners who shop mobile spend more, and regardless of whether they’re shopping via desktop or by mobile, there is the same desire for free shipping, easy navigation and checkout and the same concerns about security.

“We are a narrative-driven brand,” said Shinola’s Panis. “People always confuse us with a made-in-America play. We are not. We are a job-creation vehicle. We have created about 350 jobs in Detroit – jobs that left our shores over 60 years ago in the watch industry. We are also making leather goods in Detroit, that haven’t been made in this country in many years.”

At Shinola, “The dynamic of mobile traffic today accounts for just over 50 percent of total traffic, 16 percent of transactions actually happen on a mobile device, 14 percent on tablets, 60 percent of conversions happen on the desktop, Panis said.

“As we were designing Shinola 3.0 [the new web site] we had everyone in the organization thinking mobile first. That is critical as we move through into that next phase in the cycle of digital experiences. Making sure your teams are not operating in silos whatsoever. Thinking mobile first, whether it’s the creative bringing you the design, or the guys punching code in the back office.”

Shinola has 17 U.S. stores and one each in Toronto and London. “When you walk into a Shinola store, I hope all of the senses are activated. How do we do that in the digital space? That was one of the big challenges I gave to the design team when they were designing Shinola 3.0. How do you get the consumer to smell, taste and hear. We are trying through photography. Unfortunately your phone won’t spritz you with the smell of Shinola, or throw our coffee at you. You are not going to be able to feel the leather. If we can collectively as digital thinkers figure out ways to [bring] that in-store experience, that the consumer still loves, to the digital space, what does that do to our conversion? We focus on that conversion.”

He said the strategy to grow Shinola from $100 million in revenues to more than $300 million will be done by utilizing data, wearing content into the purchasing process, regarding the mobile device as a discovery tool and tapping the brand’s “elasticity” to launch products. “You will start to see Shinola audio products come to life in Detroit... It’s about that job creation mechanism. There is not really science to the madness. It’s a lot of how we feel. There is a lot of extension of the brand. What it shows is the elasticity of this thing.”

Charlie Cole: Leadership Tips for Transforming a Brand

“Change is really hard...” Charlie Cole, chief digital officer and vice president at Tumi, should know. He was once head of e-commerce for Lucky Brand, where he helped drive sales from $4 million to $60 million in two years. Afterward, he was chief executive officer of e-commerce firm The Line, and later an entrepreneur in residence at venture capital firm Maveron LLC. In his presentation on “Starting From Scratch: How to Help Transform a Brand When Coming From The Outside,” Cole provided leadership pointers on how to successfully effect change.

According to Cole, “Be aware of your individual biases.” He spoke about biases you can’t change, and how that can impact change in an organization. Also, “Know what you suck at,” Cole said. He explained that when talking change, one needs allies. “Who do I need to make friends with?” is a key question to think about, Cole said. “Don’t alienate everyone around you and focus just on your department. When I was at Lucky I alienated everyone. You need personal relationships across department around you. As we were designing Shinola 3.0 we had everyone in the organization thinking mobile first. That is critical as we move through into that next phase in the cycle of digital experiences. Making sure your teams are not operating in silos whatsoever. Thinking mobile first, whether it’s the creative bringing you the design, or the guys punching code in the back office.”

Cole touched upon cross-department collaborations, and having team members rewrite job descriptions, but this time having them “focus on what they actually do and what they want to do.” Then there’s the review of the product pipeline and whether that still makes sense or if it needs to be adjusted. Cole touched upon other tips for leaders, such as corporate ownership changes and the new learnings stemming from Samsonite’s acquisition of the brand earlier this year. “Understand what you can’t change,” Cole said, explaining that one needs to “understand how to work within the structure.” That means knowing your boundaries, as well as understanding the people around you.

Further, when you come in from the outside, you also have to give your team a chance to prove themselves, as well as be a team player yourself. Cole spoke of working in the trenches on a project with his team, and taking shifts with his team so he can “walk the talk.”

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Time Inc.
Sunday, Dec. 24, leaving the day before, Friday, as the 10th top shopping day this holiday season, according to RetailNext's projections, which are:

- **Friday, Dec. 23**
- **Saturday, Dec. 17**
- **Sunday, Dec. 18**
- **Monday, Dec. 19**
- **Tuesday, Dec. 20**
- **Wednesday, Dec. 21**
- **Thursday, Dec. 22**
- **Friday, Dec. 23**
- **Saturday, Dec. 24**

**The procrastinators** are expected to rule the roost this holiday season. According to forecasts from analytics firm RetailNext, a late surge in shopping will make Friday, Dec. 23, the largest shopping day of the season by sales. Super Saturday, on Dec. 17, is expected to be the second-biggest sales day, while Black Friday project is to come in third place.

"As retailers have continued the trend to open more stores on Thanksgiving Day, it has panned away both sales and traffic from Black Friday," said Shelley Kohan, vice president of retail consulting at RetailNext.

"This year, with Christmas falling on a Sunday, most shoppers will want to cut short their shopping early on Saturday, Dec. 24, leaving the day before, Friday, as retail’s biggest shopping day."

While Black Friday, Cyber Monday and Super Saturday are well as that last Friday before Christmas will be all 3 days, Kohan noted that those retailers that "renovate thanksgiving weekend shopping as more of a month-long event culminating with the holiday weekend will start the season strong.

She also said retailers wanting to win the day in December would have to be nimble enough to respond to what shoppers are telling them in November.

The projection amounts to another blow to Black Friday — which has been weakened by online sales that started on Cyber Monday, and have spread out into the weekend, and by Thanksgiving day itself.

Although, there are also signs that the drive to kick off the holiday sales season while the turkey is still warm on the table is letting up. On Wednesday, executives at Mall of America — North America’s largest shopping destination with 5.6 million square feet — said the mall would stay closed this Thanksgiving so its 15,000 employees could be with their families.

"We have made the decision to close on Thanksgiving Day so that team members can put that energy where it matters most, into making memories with the people they care about most," mall executives wrote in a letter to employees.

"That might be an easier call to make given that the biggest sales days could come closer to Christmas."
**BEAUTY**

**Re-Nutriv Launches Antiaging Line**

- The new product line is expected to do $90 million in retail sales, industry sources projected.

**By Allison Collins**

The Estée Lauder Cos. Inc.’s Re-Nutriv brand has formulated itself a new antiaging line for its 60th birthday.

The business, a project of Estée herself, has continued its tradition of sourcing rare, regenerative ingredients for the Re-Nutriv Ultimate Lift Regenerating Youth Line. Each product contains Floralixir Dew, which is made from the Himalayan gentian and the Brazil Everlasting — two rare flowers. Re-Nutriv has continued its tradition of sourcing rare, exotic ingredients for the Re-Nutriv line for its 60th birthday.

The new product line was presented at the Neue Galerie, where Ronald Lauder shared a wide spectrum of anecdotes, from his mother and great uncle’s formulation of the original Re-Nutriv line, which he had started a charge of mixing up, to the time when he left Lauder, WWD arrived at the doorstep of his new job at the Pentagon, much to his chagrin. At 72, he also credibility the brand for his lack of crow’s feet.

“Growing up in the cosmetic industry is not the easiest thing in the world,” Lauder said. “I had an intimate view of the cosmetics industry and went to the Pentagon.

“The fact is, I must tell you, that I was in my 20s when I started using the cream...no wrinkles here,” Lauder said, motioning to the corners of his eyes. “It goes back to the 1950s,” Lauder said. “I was at the dinner table with my parents and my mother had an uncle from Hungary...a great dermatologist, great scientist. I said to my mother, ‘this guy looks like a rock.’

“My mother and he worked on a product that he had been working on,” Lauder continued. “It was a product that had a huge cost of goods because he used things that had never been used before....At that time, my father was the one who used to mix the creams, my mother didn’t have the patience...They came with the name Nutrition, and my mother said, ‘that’s a lousy name.’

After considering the name Re-Nutrition, Estée changed it to Re-Nutriv, Lauder said, and charged $115 at a time when most creams cost between $5 and $10.

Guests at the event were then treated to an after-dark tour of the Neue Galerie’s upstairs exhibit, Klimt and the Women of Vienna’s Golden Age.

“When I was a teenager, I started to collect art and frankly, I could not afford, or rather my parents could not afford — I was on allowance at the time,” Lauder said. “At that time, German and Austrian art was still relatively cheap. I started to buy it...I had a Bar Mitzvah. They gave me all types of gifts and I took all my gifts, and charged $115 at a time when most creams cost between $5 and $10.

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Continued from Page 1

David Lauren Promoted At Ralph Lauren

him the platform and opportunities to do events. “I am excited by my new responsibilities as we intensify our efforts to take our great company to the next level,” said David Lauren, adding he was “energized by the opportunity to establish a systematic and disciplined innovation process that will create real business impact across the company.”

Lauren said that “naming our first chief innovation officer reflects the central importance of innovation to the company’s future and the success of our Way Forward plan. I have great confidence in David, and his skill set and track record make him the logical choice for this critical new role in which he will be responsible for building an innovation capability that can have a major impact on the company’s overall brand strength and financial importance.”

“For me, the innovation piece is something that David has been driving, but I want him to build up an innovation capability that can really move the needle in moving us forward,” added Larsson. He said the reason he selected Lauren is because “he’s somebody who knows the DNA better than almost anybody else in the company and has extensive experience in driving innovation.”

Lauren, who joined the firm in 2000, has been responsible for the global advertising and marketing campaigns for the group and all of its brands, as well as the firm’s corporate and fashion communications and strategic marketing partnerships.

Other initiatives he sparked include introducing one of the industry’s first luxury fashion web sites; leading Ralph Lauren to be among the first brands to create an e-commerce site optimized for mobile phones; introducing QR scan technology to the U.S. for fashion; developing the concept of personalized apparel and the “create-your-own” customization shops; launching the first shoppable 24x7 touchscreen windows at stores, and developing 4D holographic fashion shows and in-store experiences in New York and London.

Under his direction, Lauren was the first luxury fashion brand to introduce a wearable tech shirt, the PoloTech Shirt. He also organized the company’s global sponsorships of Wimbledon, the U.S. Open Tennis Tournament and Team USA at the Olympics.

In an interview Thursday at company headquarters here, Lauren explained that before Larsson joined as ceo, they met and talked about the company, why he should join and the challenges, opportunities and future of the group. Larsson asked him what he thought made the company unique and Lauren replied, “My father has been an entrepreneur all along in his job, while also doing his communications role. Previously, 95 percent of his job was advertising, marketing and communications. Now I don’t have to worry about placing that story or developing that ad campaign, or going on that shoot. Now I can work on the myriad of opportunities that we can turn into real businesses for the future,” he said.

“We’re in an age of disruption. Ralph Lauren has been the most disruptive business in fashion, constantly reinventing itself and doing novel things. And building it across all these different brands — men’s to women’s to children’s — but now we want to do things that are even bigger and have more longevity,” said Lauren. He said all these things are nice ideas, pointing to the Polo Tech Shirt, “but how do you turn it into a business now? We’ve seen the value of this. There are a hundred ideas in the wake of this that need to be developed. The idea is, if I focus on this, build a division and look at what the future of the company can be, we can really reinvent retail, wholesale, the Web business. It’s all changing right now. The whole industry is being reinvented,” he continued. “So we better be nimble, we better be tuned in and exploring every opportunity and you have to really commit yourself to being focused on exploring the future of fashion. I want to get out there immediately and see what innovative companies are out there that we can work with and how we can also develop in-house a nimble and entrepreneurial spirit which can infect and excite our own company,” said Lauren. He’s watched other companies and brands “trimming at our heels” and taking ideas from the group, he said. “Now our thing is to push it way into the future. To get ahead of the competition and to do things that are amazing. The brands that are winning — Apple, Nike and Porsche—they are committed to reinvention all the time,” said Lauren.

Turning to his other role as vice chairman, Lauren said that position will help ensure that he’s working very closely with the board to make sure they can support all the ideas he generates.

Does his appointment as vice chairman signal a succession plan for the company, with the ultimate goal of succeeding his father, 76, as executive chairman?

“I think it’s clear that Ralph Lauren will live forever,” he replied.

All he would say is that he’s vice chairman and “it’s a wonderful opportunity to work closely with my father and work closely with the board on a new level. This is about understanding in a deeper way the opportunities and the business.”

Asked about the succession plan, Larsson would only say: “It signals a belief in David and how important he is to the company.”

The corporation has begun a search for a senior executive to assume the chief marketing officer role. “We have a pretty good team. I think we can run pretty effectively right now. I’m going to be doing a bit of both. Hopefully we can transition. I want to jump in because I want to get ready for the 50th [anniversary next year], which is very important,” Lauren said.

In June, Larsson introduced the company’s “Way Forward” plan that involves a series of initiatives aimed at getting the company back on a growth track. These include speeding up the supply chain; focusing on the core collections of Ralph Lauren, Polo and Lauren; shuttering stores, and eliminating management layers that will result in job cuts of about 8 percent of the company’s workforce, or 1,000 people this year.
**Lora Lee Gayer Shines in Irving Berlin’s ‘Holiday Inn’ on Broadway**

The actress brings Irving Berlin’s Fred Astaire and Bing Crosby film to Broadway, open now.

*The V&A Stages Medieval Embroidery Show*

The show will likely be the last of its kind due to garments’ age and fragility.

LONDON — It’s the end of an era — yet again. The Victoria and Albert Museum has unveiled a gem of a show about the beauty of English embroidery — from the 12th to the 15th centuries — complete with gleaming gold and rich red silk; some of the finest velvet fabric; and human and animal figures so alive they look as if they could walk, fly or sit right off the garments. “Opus Anglicanum: Masterpieces of English Medieval Embroidery,” is the largest exhibition on the subject for 50 years, some of the pieces — mainly the religious vestments — how made their first trip back to England since they were created centuries ago, and is most likely the last time they’ll travel, due to their age and fragility.

The timing of the show, which runs until Feb. 5, could not have been better. It picks up the threads of many a conversation taking place today, including the importance of trade with Europe, luxury bubbles, the rise of fast fashion (of the Renaissance variety); the need to demonstrate power and status via clothing, and women’s embo-

The annual showoff of their skills. During a walk-through of the show, Browne pointed to a particularly expressive horse featured on a linen cloak, its eyes popping comically as it strides towards a bit of grass. She said the English embroiderers “seemed to have a particular affinity for animals and birds — there’s a tenderness and a quietness to them,” she said.

There are detailed panels from the early life of the Virgin Mary, showing her parents weaving her as a baby. Adam and Eve talking to a creapy, human-look- ing mermaid, a monster gazing into a mirror, and the murder in 1170 of St. Thomas Becket at Canterbury Cathedral.

The little ones, as the bleaker bills roll at a comic-cal-

cinated her to a little bit more,” she says. “She wants so badly to just be loved and liked, like we all do, and so she’s so nervous about being rejected, like so many other Linds — Linda is so painfully awkward, but like in this beautiful, charming way.”

The show includes Berlin’s most famous songs, like “White Christmas,” as well as a selection of lesser-recognized, courtesy of the Berlin estate. “A couple of his daughters are still alive and then his granddaughter (and great grandson),” she says. “They’ve been very involved and basically just said, ‘Here’s the whole archive of music, have it!’” The result is a mixture of songs from the movie, as well as a surprise that she didn’t know was going on at the time.

And while the show expects to be a heavy task for the costume department, Gayer argues that it might just have a bit of historical relevance to it. “The movie was made during World War II, Universal called Irving Berlin and said, ‘We want to make a movie that’s going to lift the spirits of the entire country,’ and they came up with the idea of all the holidays,” she says. “And it’s really interesting.”

**“Opus Anglicanum”’s Masterpieces of English Medieval Embroidery**

“A pair of luscious garlands on a cloth belonging to King Edward III, his horse are menu, Dinsey- al called Irving Berlin and said, ‘We want to make a movie that’s going to lift the spirits of the entire country,’ and they came up with the idea of all the holidays,” she says. “And it’s really interesting.”

**The V&A Stages Medieval Embroidery Show**

The show will likely be the last of its kind due to garments’ age and fragility.

**The V&A Stages Medieval Embroidery Show**

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New Kids On The Block

Five hundred and four. To date, that’s the total number of members of the Council of Fashion Designers of America, including the addition of Alexsandro and Designers Initiative Head Armando Testa, who is a former vice president of talent at The New York Times. The council has been honored with the CFDA’s Honorary Membership Award for their contribution to the fashion industry.

Amanda Kaiser

The worlds of entertainment and motor racing collided Thursday night in Hong Kong, where the Dragon Racing team unveiled its new electric car designed by Chinese company Faraday Future. The event, which coincided with this weekend’s FIA Formula E Hong Kong ePrix, was attended by Hollywood stars Russell Brand, James Corden, and Matthew, Samantha Burch — who was spotted mingling with new members Adam and Penn Badgley — and former football player Michael Ballack.

The guests would need were the cross-body alarm clock bag. A couple of attendees, Gillian and Ros L’Esperance. The event as a “back-to-school” for the guests would need more — were not present.

It was a full day for the designers, who started at 10:30 am with an orientation and various member-ship meetings. “It’s so gracious of Tony to have us here tonight,” said Steven Kolb, the CFDA’s president and chief executive officer. “Many of the designers that become part of the CFDA are in the early part of their career; and they are really working hard and looking toward the future. When you are hosted by someone like Tony — who had that same struggle and who’s had such great success — it’s a bit of a motivation. It’s like being watched by an officer.”

Sloan Overstrom, one of the guests, added. “It’s always a great group. A couple of attendees, Gillian and Ros L’Esperance. The event as a “back-to-school” for the guests would need more — were not present.

Stopping By

By AMANDA KAISER

As dancing to a voice-over as a trio of music for Arctic Building in the city of stars, the guests were excited that it was a good mix. “I love this place,” said one attendee. “It’s just fun, and my husband in particular loves that you can come and go and have fun.”

Trolls — which has been on the list of movies that transcend cultures and has undergone a $97 million renovation. Last year’s event took place at the Four Seasons. A couple of attendees, Gillian Mirler included, described the event as a “back-to-school” for New Yorkers. “I love that it’s cocktail and not a sit-down dinner,” Mirler said. “It’s always such a good mix.”

The movie has original music by Timberlake and mash ups of songs from other popular artists. The film also features the voices of Russell Brand, James Corden, Kunlun Nayer, Ron Funches, Icona Pop, Glenn Close and other.

Variety’s Night of Stars Revs It Up for Dragon Racing

Husband Killers.” It’s her first film in 12 years as she had been concentrating on her modeling career over that time period. Her approach to a movie was different this year, she said. “I pay a lot more attention to what the director is doing, the lighting, the whole idea,” she said. “When I was younger, I was paying a lot more attention to myself.”

Ma, one of Hong Kong’s most famous ex-models, said she just wrapped a project producing a shoe event for department store Sogo. She has been in China for the past year, but what Hong Kong should do to kick start flagging retail sales in the face of a slowdown in mainland Chinese tourism.

“The most important thing is to help the younger people,” she said. Variety, like WWD, is part of Penske Media Corp (PMC) while the Dragon Racing Team, along with PMC, is owned by Jay Penske.