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ADVERTISING; Print Is Just Part of a Big Hearst Push

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NEVER mind what the devil wears. Hearst is starting an elaborate effort, in and out of its magazines' pages, to help determine the clothing brands that people buy.

The initiative, scheduled to go online today, is called 30 Days of Fashion -- as in the month of September, when apparel makers begin their big fall and holiday campaigns. In addition to a dedicated Web site (30daysoffashion.com), offering content including podcasts, blogs and video-on-demand, there will be contests, giveaways, auctions and promotional events like fashion shows, concerts, sponsored shopping at stores and charity fund-raisers.

One event, a party on Sept. 14 to benefit the Ovarian Cancer Research Fund, is meant to serve as the coming-out gala for the new Hearst Tower headquarters in Midtown Manhattan.

The Hearst Magazines division of the Hearst Corporation is spending more than \$1 million on the initiative, which will involve nine of its publications: CosmoGirl; Cosmopolitan; Esquire; Harper's Bazaar; Marie Claire; O, The Oprah Magazine; Seventeen; Shop Etc.; and Town & Country.

The goal is to bring to life for magazine readers the kind of intimate insider experiences they might have if they took part in, say, the Fashion Week festivities held in New York each September.

"The idea is to connect more to consumers, give them more access," said Kevin O'Malley, vice president and publisher of Esquire.

"If they're brought underneath the tent, so to speak, and we give them greater incentive to purchase, then mission accomplished."

The fashion-focused program is generating almost \$10 million in advertising revenue and fees from marketers that include four companies being designated as the presenting sponsors: the Citibank unit of Citigroup; Gold Expressions jewelry, sold at the Fortunoff retail chain; the LensCrafters division of Luxottica; and L'Oréal Paris, part of the L'Oréal USA unit of the French cosmetics and beauty company L'Oréal.

The Hearst initiative is a sign of how magazines and other print media are working to broaden their appeal to advertisers intent on using digital media and other nontraditional approaches for campaigns.

Another example is being demonstrated this week by TV Guide magazine, owned by Gemstar-TV Guide International, at a meeting of television critics in Pasadena, Calif. The magazine is offering meeting coverage on its Web site (tvguide.com), in articles, blogs and video clips, as well as on the TV Guide Channel cable network.

The appeal of the Hearst program "was to be featured in the magazines, but also online, at events, out of home, in e-mail," said Mark Ingall, managing director for global strategic media at the Citigroup consumer businesses in New York.

"The scale of the program really brings the benefits," Mr. Ingall said. "We're always asking, How can we add something on, and on and on, to get more scale?"

Spending for online ads is growing faster than for any media category. By comparison, demand for ad space in print media is flat at best.

"This is the way the market is moving," said Michael A. Clinton, the executive vice president at Hearst Magazines who is the chief marketing officer and publishing director.

"The reader wants to be in touch with our brands in lots of different ways," Mr. Clinton said. "To keep the reader excited and engaged, we have to do projects that involve them off the printed page."

Another presenting sponsor offered her endorsement of that strategy.

"We want to find consumers wherever they are," said Carol Hamilton, president and general manager for the L'Oréal Paris division of L'Oréal USA in New York.

"Hearst is getting behind fashion in a new way, consistent with what L'Oréal stands for," Ms. Hamilton said. "The power of Hearst to reach people beyond magazines is something we have to experiment with."

Still, Hearst and other media companies that are seeking to expand past print face a tricky task: preserving the brand identities of their print properties while still making their new-media properties attractive, particularly to younger consumers.

"You have to speak to the reader in the book, at the point of sale and online, giving them more of a 360-degree experience," said Susan Plagemann, vice president and publisher at Marie Claire.

"The other media are an extension of the print product; they don't replace it. The quality of the editorial, the editorial endorsement, is very important."

The four presenting sponsors of the fashion program will be the sole advertisers in a 36-page supplement that will be distributed free around mid-August to 500,000 subscribers of the nine Hearst magazines who live in metropolitan New York.

The supplement, which will accompany the September issues of the nine magazines, will feature nine celebrities billed as "style makers"; they include the author Candace Bushnell, the designer Doo-Ri Chung, the actress Eva Longoria and the rapper Nelly.

On the Web site, Mr. Clinton said, the podcasts will come from Hearst Magazines' mainstays like Glenda Bailey, the editor in chief at Harper's Bazaar, and Nick Sullivan, the fashion director at Esquire.

There will also be a blog "written by one of our folks here under a nom de plume," Mr. Clinton said, to foster a franker kind of reportage on "everything in the fashion scene during the month."

To gain attention for the initiative, Hearst Magazines will run ads in the August and September issues of its own publications as well as buy ads in non-Hearst magazines like Hamptons, Playbill, Time Out New York and Women's Wear Daily. There will also be "wild postings," posters affixed to construction sites and other locations around New York.

The digital elements of the campaign will include banner ads on the Web sites of Hearst magazines, text messages sent to readers' cellphones and e-mail marketing. The campaign is being created internally.

Fashion and retail has become the second-largest advertising category for Hearst Magazines, Mr. Clinton said, behind only beauty and cosmetics.

"The message here is, Let's take fashion to the consumer in a big way that'll move merchandise off the shelves," he added. "We hope it will become something annual."

As they say, the devil's in the details -- regardless of what he (or she) is wearing.

Photos: Some 500,000 Hearst subscribers will get the 30 Days of Fashion supplement in August.; The Web site, 30daysoffashion.com, will try to give readers a behind-the-scenes experience of Fashion Week in New York.