

VOGUE LOVES REGENT STREET: A NIGHT OF FASHION, FROLIC AND MINGLING IN LONDON

VOGUE
VOGUE FASHION
NIGHT OUT

VOGUE Fashion Night Out 2015

Source: heyevent

Vogue's Fashion's Night Out (FNO), on September 10, 2015, was a night of goody-bag scavenging, tippie hunting and discount roving for London's fashion wanderlusters. The first such event took place in New York in 2009, and was sponsored by *Vogue* magazine and the Council of Fashion Designers of America. It was established to inspire customers to visit stores, shop and support the fashion industry during the economic slump. In 2010, the event turned into an annual occurrence, and it is now held in various regional fashion capitals in the US, Europe and Asia throughout the month of September.

THE REGENT SCENE

In London this year, FNO—dubbed “*Vogue Loves Regent Street*”—included roughly 84 participating brands, shops, pubs and restaurants in the city's prime shopping district. While some stores, such as Mango, Gap, Godiva, Levi's and Kiko Milano, ran in-store discounts, Accessorize, United Colors of Benetton and Penhaligon's gave out goody bags to the first few shoppers who visited their stores. And many stores took the opportunity to introduce new products: Accessorize had a new makeup range, H&M offered its Studio A/W collection for sale and French Connection launched its exclusive London Fashion Week dress.



Source: Vogue



Source: regentstreetonline.com



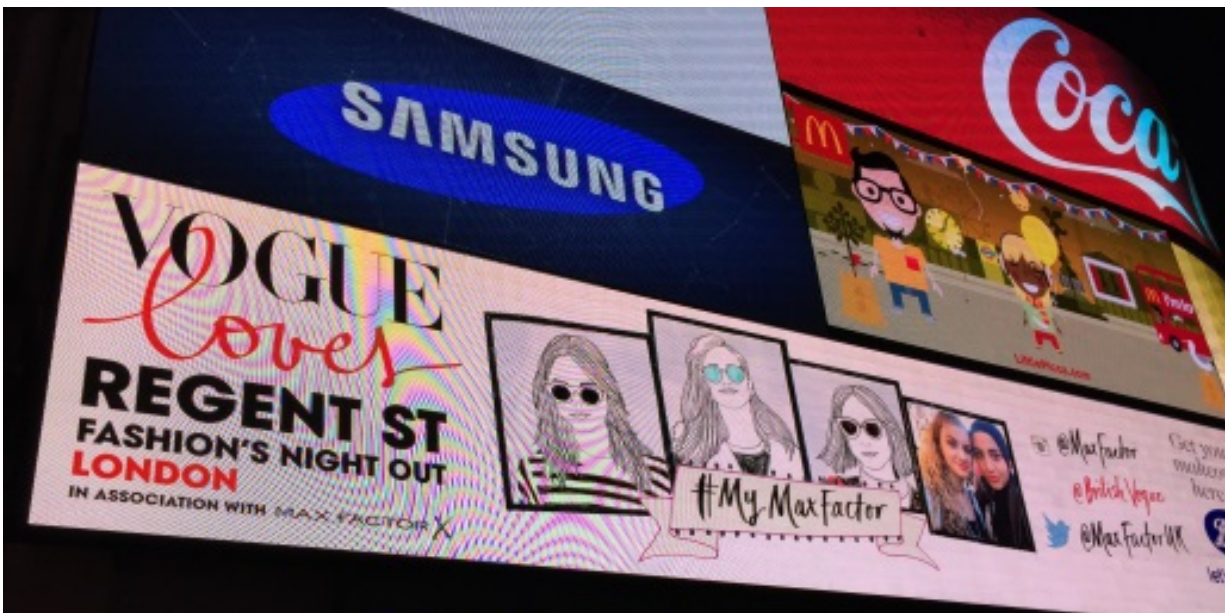
Source: FBIC Global Retail & Technology



The night of FNO, fashionistas with glittery body art and makeup and photographers with big cameras capturing the most chic shoppers were common sights, as were confused tourists. Several makeup artists wearing striking white “Vogue Loves FNO” T-shirts, offered free touch-ups throughout the street. After informing shoppers about the features of the products they were applying, and telling them that this was the first time Max Factor was partnering with Vogue for FNO, the artists directed shoppers to the brand’s station at the Boots store in Piccadilly Circus for a full makeup application. Shoppers were also encouraged to tweet or Instagram their new look with the hashtag #MyMaxFactor to be featured on the billboard outside the Boots store.



Source: FBIC Global Retail & Technology



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DRAWING THE CROWDS

Several stores amassed big crowds. Liberty offered champagne and Prosecco pops, beauty treatments, Eliza Doolittle at the DJ station, and Lucinda Chambers, *British Vogue*'s Fashion Director, styling the latest Nike shoes. The Apple Store hosted the Editor-in-Chief of *British Vogue*, Alexandra Shulman, who spoke at a fully booked, reservation-only affair about her career and the fashion-tech revolution. Guess had a floral-themed selfie booth, and the allure of a free floral headband had many standing in a line that snaked all through the store. Karl Lagerfeld offered fortune cookies in the store and gave shoppers a chance to sample mini bottles of Prosecco before going home with a custom balloon. Finally, Topshop featured model Gigi Hadid's seasonal campaign, which was launched at the store, and a trend talk by industry experts that was popular with shoppers.



Source: FBIC Global Retail & Technology

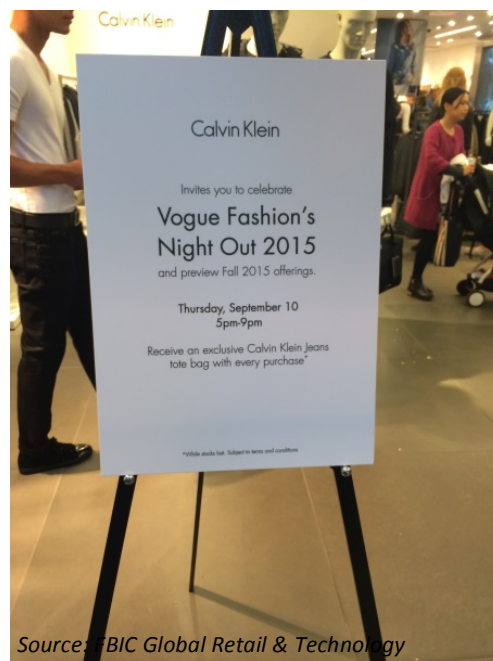
While several shops managed to gather visitors by offering snacks and the promise of goodies as music pulsated from live DJ stations, there were a few that attracted only a sparse crowd, and some stores with no visitors at all. Toy and game shop Hamleys was an unlikely participant in the event. It had a conspicuous welcoming duo at the entrance, but, when we were there, no takers for its hair-braiding station for kids that was tucked away on a top floor. Coccinelle, Coach and Wolford did not have many visitors, either, even though they were running discounts in their stores.



Source: FBIC Global Retail & Technology

JUST A FUN EVENING? OR AN EXAMPLE OF HOW RETAILERS CAN DRIVE EXCITEMENT AND EXPERIMENTATION?

While most shoppers enjoyed all that the stores had to offer, we feel the initial goals of FNO were not fulfilled by this year's London event. For starters, it could have been better promoted to entice a larger audience. We noticed no promotional posters around the city and no special décor on Regent Street that indicated the occasion. Even the signs on store windows were quite subtle. The event was written about in detail only in *Vogue* magazine. A few publications carried a small article on it the day before the event, but they did not manage to create the publicity FNO should have had, in our view. If *Vogue* had advertised it across more channels, the event could have drawn bigger crowds.



Source: FBIC Global Retail & Technology

MIDWEEK PARTY

Also, the event was held on a Thursday evening, which might work for retail analysts and fashion bloggers whose presence at FNO is more professionally inclined, but which might not have worked well for the average shopper's schedule. In addition, there was little information about up-and-coming designers or the stories of brands that might have encouraged one to support the industry. Finally, the duration of the event was quite short, only three to four hours, which did not allow much time for eventgoers to get through the crowds and attend talks or demonstrations, and still have time to shop a little later.

FOOTFALL VERSUS SALES

An article in *Women's Wear Daily* had stated that "generating good vibrations—rather than actual sales—was the priority" of FNO in London in 2012. This year, beauty brands such as Kiehl's, Molton Brown, L'Occitane and Crabtree & Evelyn scored especially well in that sphere by offering express beauty treatments and samples of their products. Some other stores also did very well along those lines: for example, Tommy Hilfiger handed out American football-style foam hands and Liberty offered wild orchid corsages, henna tattoos and guidance sessions in its beauty hall. Also, most shops played pulsing music, which helped create a party vibe.

It was indeed a great opportunity for brands to engage with patrons who cannot attend exclusive Fashion Week events that are open only to the trade. If the focus was on creating a feel-good atmosphere to increase footfall, FNO definitely succeeded with that. In terms of raising support for those in the industry, perhaps FNO has moved on from its original goal of increasing sales to boosting footfall and fostering brand engagement instead.

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