As New Brands Join Instagram Checkout, Users Get Notified via Email

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Instagram continues to add new tools to its Checkout feature, which is still in closed beta.

In October, the company started testing an augmented reality shopping experience with select brands, including Ray-Ban and Warby Parker, and now, it’s testing promotional emails that encourage users to shop from brands and check out on Instagram.

There are now several different ways Instagram’s asking users to become more comfortable with shopping (and in some cases, checking out) on the app, as brands get more capabilities such as a reminder sticker for product drops on Instagram Stories ands buying from influencers and publishers.

One email Instagram sent out on Nov. 26 (three days before a record-breaking Black Friday), stated “New to Instagram: shop outdoor voices, victoriabeckhambeauty, anastasiabeverelyhills and spearmint baby.” Once a user clicks on a product, a shopping feed opens up in the app, where users can select the product, sizing and more, and then check out with Instagram’s native Checkout feature. Another email sent on Dec. 10 highlights a set of brands available on Checkout including Victoria Beckham Beauty, Je11 (the brand from New England Patriots wide receiver Julian Edelman) and Savannah Bee Company.

Instagram first sent these emails a few months ago, when new brands like Outdoor Voices joined the Instagram Checkout beta

group. Outdoor Voices, a digitally native athleticwear company, was not part of the original beta group, but was also featured in both sets of emails.

“At Outdoor Voices, we only partner with brands who are aligned with our mission to Get The World Moving, and Instagram is no exception,” said an Outdoor Voices spokesperson. “They’ve been fantastic to work with, and we’re excited to continue partnering with them on future projects.”

Kevin Simonson, CEO of Metric Digital, a performance marketing agency, said he’s working on testing out the email tool and seeing if the brand gains any lift.

“After working with Facebook for years, they’re doing what they almost always do, which is testing a new advertising product with select disruptor brands, like a couple of our clients, in what’s free ad inventory for them,” Simonson said. “If history repeats itself, they will continue to send free emails until the new product, in this case curated emails you can shop, is so compelling to users that they can charge for ad placements in the email, unlocking new ad inventory and the advertising revenue that comes with it.”

Over the past year (if not decade), Instagram has influenced the way consumers shop and discover new products. Whether it’s influencers promoting an item or the rise of DTC brands on Instagram, the app has changed the products we want for ourselves.

As the company continues to ramp up its Checkout feature, it gives companies a chance to be discovered—or to reward impulse purchases from the brands consumers already know and love.

And while Instagram has yet to reveal specifics about how much consumers are spending on Instagram, it’s clear the app is an initial testing ground for lower-priced products like makeup, but part of a bigger plan to acquire customers and turn them into repeat ones.

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