

What Works NOW!

Having beautiful product isn't enough. Even having a beautiful store isn't enough. Today's customer wants to be drawn in, entertained, coddled, catered to, and wined and dined. It's all about giving her the specialty treatment. While some stores and brands are happy to develop events on their own, others are calling in help from industry experts, not to mention some unlikely partners. Lauren Parker steps into retail's brave new world.



"Retail Therapy" at Miraval Living apartments

HAVE A SHOPPING & REAL ESTATE PARTY

Why not combine two of New Yorker's favorite pastimes—shopping and drooling over luxury apartments? As various accessories designers work to promote themselves, clever pop-up shops are a proven way to build multi-brand awareness and drive sales in the process. Meanwhile, hard-hit luxury Manhattan condos are also drumming up creative ideas to drive traffic to their apartments. This past April, Miraval Living and Grace Group/Pop-Up Tart Productions launched "Retail Therapy." This 8,000-square-foot pop-up partnership between luxury retailers and brands was held on the Upper East Side in the lobby of Miraval Living as well as in six designer apartments on the 28th floor (model residence collection). Visitors got the unique experience of shopping known and emerging designers alongside spectacular Manhattan views.

The three-day event featured 19 brands (including Tory Burch apparel and accessories, Monaldi4 hair accessories, Nathan & Moe jewelry, flutter by jill golden jewelry, Hooch Bags, Alex Elliott leatherware, Leslie Greene jewelry, Jamin Puech handbags, Be & D handbags, JBM Vintage apparel and accessories, and more) and took in just under \$40,000 in sales. Miraval Living also gained exposure and client leads for its apartments. The luxury real estate property promoted the event to its own mailing list, while individual brands reached out to theirs, and the organizer kicked in its own promotional capabilities. An added bonus? The event's entry fee was donated to the non-profit organization Bottomless Closet.

HAVE AN EXPERT THROW YOUR EVENT

A retailer can always have an in-store event, cocktail party or trunk show but sometimes it pays to bring in the big guns. Teaming up with an expert takes much of the preparation edge off, while the extra traffic, sales and publicity achieved help overcome the cost. This was the case for handbag company Samantha Thavasa, which teamed up with Bagtrends.com and founder (handbag expert Pamela Pekerman) to host the event.

Not only does BagTrends.com and affiliate blog "My Bagalicious Life" have a large following, but Pekerman is quite the social media expert. "I'll Google an event and see people discussing it on social media sites before it even happens!" she says.

"Plus, there were about 30 mentions on other sites besides ours." At the event, BagTrends talked to shoppers about the line and capped off the evening with trend scoop and a bag raffle. Videos appeared on the BagTrends site the next day, as well as on YouTube.

"We can help clients host a trunk show for a handbag company at a department store, create a pop-up event, or even help them secure a liquor license," says Pekerman. "Beyond the logistical legwork, we create the buzz before and after through my blog, our site and our social media feeds. It goes viral after that." Guests featured in a BagTrends video are apt to post the link



to Facebook or Twitter, and other fashion sites will post as well."

Bag Trends tailors each event. For its upcoming Eenamaria handbag event, BagTrends will promote the brand as a way to get a hot new handbag style for less. For MCM—a high-end line with a boutique at the Plaza—it will talk about all the celebrities carrying the line.

Above: Pekerman does a video spot on Samantha Thavasa handbags. Left: Michelle Finkelshteyn and Pamela Pekerman of Bagtrends.com with the evening's handbag raffle winner (right)



PHOTO: KEVIN KEISER/COURTESY OF MIRAVAL LIVING

STAGE A SHOW

They say in today's tough times, shopping should be like entertainment, and now retailers can take that credo literally with a unique fashion-oriented one-woman show—"The Fabric of My Life" by Tziporah Salamon. A New York-based stylist and eclectic style maven (she's been photographed in *The New York Times*' Sunday Styles section 14 times and is often spotted riding her old bicycle around New York in her eccentric outfits), Salamon has taken her one-hour show on the road.

"The Fabric of My Life" chronicles not only Salamon's love of fashion, but her family's history and relationship to it (her immigrant mother and father were a dressmaker and tailor, respectively). Fashion is the metaphorical familial thread, and she punctuates milestones in her life with frequent costume changes—showing how fashion made the woman and how accessories shaped her life.

"When people ask me what I do, I say, I dress," she says. Energetic and dramatic, Salamon uses items from her own wardrobe to show women how to develop their own style—by starting with one striking piece and going from there (she owns over a thousand hats, from an authentic Moroccan fez to a rare vintage couture piece). Items are collected from decades of exotic travels, from international bazaars and flea markets to local designer shops.

Salamon spun off her show from a twice-yearly class she teaches at Parsons The New School of Design called "Dressing as an Art Form." Eventually she developed the class into her current show, which she has performed all over the city, in theaters, gardens, and increasingly, retail boutiques and showrooms.

The show is personalized to each store or showroom. "I explore all



THAT'S SHOW BUSINESS:
Tziporah Salamon stages her one-woman show at Off Broadway boutique in New York.

the offerings in the store and pre-select pieces that catch my eye," says Salamon. "After the show, I demonstrate how to create incredible looks using items in the store. The customers love having a 'personal stylist' on hand, and retailers *always* make additional sales."

Off Broadway Boutique on Manhattan's Upper West Side has hosted Tziporah's show three times. It's a perfect fit for the theatrical store, which regularly holds "Cabaret Nights" with local performers. "I don't usually

host a show that I've never seen, but I saw Tziporah riding her bicycle in the neighborhood in this incredible outfit and we just bonded," says owner Lynn Dell, also known for her eclectic style.

While Salamon charges the hosting retailer a fee, the show is always free for consumers, who also receive complimentary wine and cheese. "I also promote each event with my own email list and customer database," says Salamon. "And you'd be surprised how many people come to see the show again."

The show also inspires women after the fact. "As a result of Tziporah's presentation, I learned new ways to wear my scarves and now add bracelets and earrings every day in addition to a necklace I always wear," says Barbara Title, a New Yorker who's seen the show twice (once at Off Broadway boutique and once at a fashion showroom trunk show), spreading the word to friends and family.

To book Salamon, go to www.Tziporahsalamon.com, or email stylishlyours@tziporahsalamon.com.