

CENTEX 50 YEARS OF HOME BUILDING

At Centex Homes, customer satisfaction isn't just a phrase. It's the way we do business.



INVEST IN A NATIONAL BUILDER

With 26 locations in southeast Michigan, we are where you want to be.

TIME TO BUY - FIND A HOME NOW >>

Business 4.70 LU -5.26 GD 2.87.4 HKF 13.90 EMC 4.70 LU -5.26

[Local News](#) | [Sports](#) | [Autos Insider](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Weblogs](#) | [Forums](#) | [Photos](#)

The Detroit News
detnews.com

Search Detroit: All

Tuesday, June 19, 2007

[Print this](#) [Comment on this](#) [E-mail this](#)

- In Business** RSS
- [Main Index](#)
- [Careers](#)
- [-- Find a Job](#)
- [-- Post a Resume](#)
- [Money & Life](#)
- [Real Estate](#)
- [-- Find a Home](#)
- Essentials**
- [Homepage](#)
- 1-week archive:**
- [Wed Thu Fri Sat](#)
- [Sun Mon Tue Today](#)

- [Photo Galleries](#)
- [Photo Store](#)
- [Multimedia](#)
- [Weather](#)
- [Horoscope](#)
- [Lottery](#)
- [Crossword](#)
- [Sudoku](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- Opinions**
- [Editorials](#)
- [Blogs](#)
- [Columnists](#)
- [CyberSurveys](#)
- [Forums](#)

- Autos**
- [Autos Insider](#)
- [Auto Shows](#)
- [Autos Weblog](#)
- [Drive](#)
- [-- New Car Photos](#)
- [-- Car Reviews](#)
- [-- Latest Deals](#)
- [-- Model Reports](#)
- [Joyrides](#)
- [Dream Cruise](#)
- Business**
- [Business](#)
- [Money & Life](#)
- [Careers](#)
- [-- Find a Job](#)
- [Real Estate](#)
- [-- Find a Home](#)
- Metro**
- [Metro/State](#)
- [Wayne](#)
- [Oakland](#)
- [Macomb](#)
- [Livingston](#)
- [Commuting](#)
- [Obituaries](#)
- [-- Death Notices](#)
- [Schools](#)



Charles V. Tines / The Detroit News

Sarah Mehaffey models a hat for her mother, Linda, at the Somerset Collection. Macy's moved into the area last year.

Macy's works to win over wary Metro Detroit shoppers

Nathan Hurst / The Detroit News

HARPER WOODS -- Convincing Metro Detroit shoppers to give Macy's a shot was going to be tough job from the beginning for the second-largest U.S. department store chain. After all, it had been only six years earlier that Marshall Fields had gobbled up the beloved hometown Hudson's department stores, and shoppers were still grieving.

Macy's took over 10 Metro Detroit Marshall Fields stores in September as part of a massive, nationwide reincarnation of 400 stores that Macy's bought from the May Department Store chain.

The transition has been a bit bumpy in Metro Detroit and nationwide. Macy's same-store sales in May were down 3.3 percent

Advertisement

LaSalle Bank
ABN AMRO

How would you react?

"Mom, dad, we're getting married."

Take your daughter and flee to Canada. Use home equity for her dream wedding.

REACTO METER

Use the slider to choose

Macy's works to win over wary Metro Detroit shoppers

[Detroit History](#)
[Nation/World](#)
[Nation/World](#)
[Politics/Gov](#)
[-- Election](#)
[Health](#)
[Religion](#)
[Technology](#)
[Sports](#)
[Lions/NFL](#)
[Pistons/NBA](#)
[Red Wings/NHL](#)
[Tigers/MLB](#)
[Shock/WNBA](#)
[MSU](#)
[U-M](#)
[More Colleges](#)
[High Schools](#)
[Golf](#)
[Motor Sports](#)
[Outdoors](#)
[More Sports](#)
[Scoreboards](#)
[Entertainment](#)
[Entertainment](#)
[Events](#)
[-- Events Calendar](#)
[Movies/TV/DVD](#)
[-- Movie Finder](#)
[-- TV Listings](#)
[Eats & Drinks](#)
[-- Restaurants](#)
[-- Wine Report](#)
[Books](#)
[CD Reviews](#)
[Casino Guide](#)
[Michigan's Best](#)
[Living](#)
[MichMoms](#)
[Lifestyle](#)
[Homestyle](#)
[Fitness](#)
[Forums](#)
[News Talk](#)
[Faith Talk](#)
[Autos Talk](#)
[Mom Talk](#)
[Schools Talk](#)
[Wings Talk](#)
[Lions Talk](#)
[Pistons Talk](#)
[Tigers Talk](#)
[Big 10 Talk](#)
[High Schools](#)
[Movie Talk](#)
[Tech Talk](#)
[Weblogs](#)
[Blog Index](#)
[Amber Arellano's Blog](#)
[Anime Blog](#)
[Architecture Blog](#)
[Autos Blog](#)
[Big Ten Blog](#)
[Bizarro News](#)
[Bullard's Pundit Blog](#)
[Crafts Blog](#)
[Dads Blog](#)
[Daniel Howes Blog](#)
[Entertainment Blog](#)
[Fashion & Shopping](#)
[Food Blog](#)
[Golf Blog](#)
[Health Blog](#)
[Henry Payne's Blog](#)
[High School Sports](#)
[Homestyle Blog](#)

from last year, in contrast to large gains for rivals like Neiman Marcus, Nordstrom and Saks Fifth Avenue, and Macy's slowed efforts to reduce coupon discounts at the former May stores after store traffic fell off. The company doesn't break down its sales by region or individual stores.

Some local shoppers still long for the Hudson's they grew up with; others haven't warmed up to the Macy's merchandise that replaced what Marshall Fields had to offer.

Other shoppers in Metro Detroit, though, are becoming Macy's fans, as the Cincinnati-based chain gets its staff up to full speed, fine-tunes its merchandise offerings and displays and reaches out to customers. This fall, it will launch a Martha Stewart collection that is expected to boost slumping housewares sales.

"Many customers didn't know what to expect, and I think we did a great job making a good first impression," said Scott Ferguson, Macy's North regional vice president for stores. "We've only been here nine months. That means we still have more work to do, but want to make sure that work is relevant."

Analysts say Macy's has had some hits and misses, but acknowledge that it's only been a short time since the department store entered the local market. The lingering Hudson's legacy doesn't help.

"People were so used to Hudson's, many people never even called the stores Marshall Fields," Farmington Hills retail analyst Ken Dalto said. "Macy's has to spend a lot of time and money to get people to understand Macy's."

Investing in Mich.

Macy's initiated that investment last fall. It spent five months retraining former Marshall Fields employees to become experts in Macy's products, policies and customer service ideals, Ferguson said. Store managers in the region were given a strict set of guidelines governing details such as the distance left between clothes racks and how each type of merchandise should be displayed.

Customers looking for familiar Marshall Fields brands were directed by Macy's workers to new, exclusive apparel and housewares lines. Macy's also offered deals like give-away gift cards, in-store refreshments and cooking demonstrations.

Last year, Macy's North chairman and CEO Frank Guzzetta said he saw Michigan as "one of the biggest opportunities" for the company as it retired the Marshall Fields name. Macy's is finishing renovations of its Twelve Oaks store in

- ▶ [Get free headlines by e-mail](#)
- ▶ [Get text alerts on your cell phone](#)
- ▶ [Get The Detroit News on your PDA](#)



Linda Mehaffey, right, and her daughter, Sarah, shop at Macy's at the Somerset Collection. [See full image](#)

Local Macy's

The former Marshall Fields stores that became Macy's last fall:

- Briarwood Mall, Ann Arbor
- Fairlane Town Center, Dearborn
- Eastland Mall, Harper Woods
- Twelve Oaks Mall, Novi
- Northland Mall, Southfield
- Lakeside Mall, Sterling Heights
- Southland Mall, Taylor
- Oakland Mall, Troy
- Somerset Collection, Troy
- Westland Mall, Westland


Related Articles and Links

- ▶ [Compared with comparable department stores, how would you grade Macy's?](#)



[See full image](#)

- ▶ [Printer friendly version](#)
- ▶ [Comment on this story](#)
- ▶ [Send this story to a friend](#)
- ▶ [Get Home Delivery](#)

[Laura Berman Blog](#)
[Lions/NFL Blog](#)
[Mears Photoblog](#)
[Moms Blog](#)
[Motor Sports Blog](#)
[Music Blog](#)
[NASCAR/Racing Blog](#)
[Neal Rubin Blog](#)
[Nolan Finley Blog](#)
[Outdoors Blog](#)
[Photo Blog](#)
[Pistons/NBA Blog](#)
[Politics Blog](#)
[Scott Burgess: Autos Sports Blog](#)
[Sports & Celebs](#)
[Sports Buzz](#)
[Technology Blog](#)
[Terry Foster Sports](#)
[Tigers Blog](#)
[Tom Long Movies](#)
[Travel Blog](#)
[TV Blog](#)
[Wings/NHL Blog](#)
[RSS](#)
 [Feeds](#)

Novi, which have gotten positive customer response, Ferguson said.

'They've got better styles'

For some customers, the efforts are paying off.

Jerome Anderson, 26, of Detroit said he likes shopping at Macy's even after years of loyal purchases at Marshall Fields and Hudson's.

"They've got better styles, and the store is a little flashier," Anderson said after picking up a pair of shoes and a few shirts at the Eastland Mall in Harper Woods on Monday. "You get a big-city feel. It was a good change."

Other customers, though, like Gladys Oblinger, 63, of Troy still pine for a more familiar store, one that's steeped in Midwest tradition.

"I liked Marshall Fields much better," said Oblinger after leaving empty-handed from the Somerset Collection Macy's in Troy. "I think (Macy's) is trying to get at younger people with a certain style and forgetting the rest of us. I still miss Hudson's."

Maggie Marantz, 33, a New York native who grew up with Macy's and moved to Royal Oak when Marshall Fields still reigned, said she can see fellow customers at the Oakland Mall don't get excited about Macy's like her friends from back East. "I think it's the about the same quality, just a totally different kind of store," she said.

Earning Metro Detroit shoppers' loyalty will take some time, analysts said.

"There's more of a learning curve than (Macy's) realized there would be," said Ed Nakfoor, a Birmingham retail consultant. "But they're playing things a little too safe. I'd like to see them take some more risks."

A long way to go

Macy's has done some things right, Nakfoor said, including carrying apparel geared toward Michigan customers. But at the same time, the company must be careful to not appear as though it's dumbing down fashion for Detroiters.

"Consumers are very savvy," Nakfoor said. "They pick up on that attitude."

Dalto said a thorough push toward unparalleled customer service is Macy's biggest opportunity to gain market share.

"Copy Nordstrom," Dalto advised. "Learn from the best and imitate; make salesmen more than that, make them true consultants."

Macy's has two or three years before customers get used to the store's image, brand and offerings, Dalto said. It has a chance to be successful, he said, but the job isn't over.

"They just have to saturate the market more until people see them by name recognition," he said. "It can take awhile, but it's not impossible."

You can reach Nathan Hurst at (313) 222-2293 or nhurst@detnews.com.

More Business Headlines

- ▶ [Bill protects workers from being fired for off-duty activities](#)
- ▶ [Nation/World briefs](#)
- ▶ [Hot weather costs motorists at pump](#)
- ▶ [Three-day stock rally ends](#)
- ▶ [Justices side with Wall Street](#)
- ▶ [People on the move](#)
- ▶ [Autos, coal, utilities stall energy bill](#)
- ▶ [Public Service head likely to go](#)
- ▶ [Metro/State briefs](#)
- ▶ [Mortgage, auto loan rates surge](#)
- ▶ [Market fires up grill for healthy customers](#)
- ▶ [Wrangling renegade gas pumps](#)
- ▶ [Tigers boss: Lead by example](#)
- ▶ [State checks turn up trends](#)
- ▶ [For sale: Name for airport terminal](#)
- ▶ [People on the move](#)
- ▶ [Plastic surgeons grow young client base](#)
- ▶ [Wal-Mart asks court to toss ex-exec's suit](#)
- ▶ [Digital billboards: The future of advertising or danger to drivers?](#)

