

INTERNET

Acqua di Parma pens travel log for Colonia collection's newest fragrance

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Acqua di Parma's Colonia Leather

By JEN KING

LVMH-owned Italian fragrance house Acqua di Parma is relying on storytelling to promote its latest men's fragrance, Colonia Leather.

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Luxury Daily

While marketing fragrances can be a difficult task, a narrative can motivate consumers to learn more and form a connection. In the case of Acqua di Parma, the perfumer aimed to tell the story of an Italian tanner's workshop through the notes of Colonia Leather.

"I do believe the representation of the craftsmanship is done nicely, but this site isn't very functional for the male shopper," said said Brittany Mills, director of digital marketing services at **Mobiquity**, New York. "It doesn't create an easy shopping experience for desktop or mobile convenience.

"[Also,] I don't think that the digital experience that has been created is valuable to consumers," she said. "Typically, a luxury brand will feel that a digital destination is needed to show beautiful imagery and design.

"However, they lack in fitting it into the customer's journey. For example, this site is educational, but doesn't quickly offer a way to shop the products being showcased."

Ms. Mills is not affiliated with Acqua di Parma, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Acquired by LVMH in 2001, **Acqua di Parma** did not respond by press deadline.

Colonia's travels

Originally created in 1916, the Colonia scent was intended to perfume handkerchiefs, but today the fragrance's range is worn by both men and women.

To introduce the latest men's scent in the Colonia portfolio, Acqua di Parma posted to its Facebook and Twitter. On Facebook, the brand gave a brief description of the personality of the Colonia Leather and background on how the scent was created.



Acqua di Parma's Facebook announcement for Colonia Leather

Acqua di Parma's Twitter did not include this copy, but both include a link to the brand's Web site and a social video for the fragrance.

A click-through on the link lands on a Colonia Leather microsite where interested consumers can explore the new scent. The opening image of the microsite shows a sunlit Tuscan landscape with overlaid text showing the Acqua di Parma emblem and fragrance's name.



Opening image for Acqua di Parma's Colonia Leather microsite

The first section shows the consumer a larger bottle of Colonia Leather. To the right, the consumer can read a text box that paints the image of an Italian tanner's workshop by noting that "hides are scattered everywhere" and "hands [work with] accuracy and confidence."

Acqua di Parma's passage continues by delving deeper into the tannery imagery by mentioning the energetic atmosphere and products being created that will then be shipped around the world. The brand's mention of leather goods and their scent connects Colonia Leather to its target consumer, by noting that "these accessories appeal to a cosmopolitan man."

The idea of travel continues in the following section, which shows a map of Europe and a portion of the Middle East. Italy and much of the Middle East is shaded to represent either Colonia Leather or another scent in the range, Colonia Oud.



Colonia's Travel section

By clicking on either of the bottles, a text box is updated to include the notes of the selected fragrance. A "discover more" prompt is found below which lands on a passage explaining that Colonia has journeyed across different olfactory regions and cultures to combine Acqua di Parma's iconic scent with rare and unusual ingredients.

Here, Acqua di Parma says that the Colonia collection is like a travel logbook with Colonia Leather and Colonia Oud acting as the first two chapters.

Next the microsite features a 35-second social video that begins with a map before taking the viewer behind-the-scenes at a Tuscan tannery. The video also reinforces its connection to the scent of leather with hides shown in nearly every scene.

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/Sz_k8pHns0Q](https://www.youtube.com/embed/Sz_k8pHns0Q)

Acqua di Parma's Colonia Leather

The following microsite section includes imagery similar to that of the video with the

Colonia Leather fragrance bottle positioned with leather goods, hides and a still of a leatherworker. A text box focuses on Italian craftsmanship and continues the link between the fragrance and leather goods.

Acqua di Parma also included a section dedicated to Colonia Leather's notes. The fragrance includes top notes of Sicilian lemon, Brazilian orange and raspberry accord, heart notes of red thyme, Paraguayan petit grain and rose-honeysuckle accord and base notes of Somalian olibanot accord, birch oil, Spanish cist absolu, Paraguayan guaiac oil and Moroccan cedar wood.



Top notes of Acqua di Parma's Colonia Leather

The final section expands on Colonia Leather's notes and includes a link to discover more. This link does not land on ecommerce but rather directs the consumer to a page that restates the information from the microsite.

With no clear path for purchase, an interested consumer must search for a third party retailer on their own. Retailers such as Neiman Marcus, Nordstrom and Harrods sells Colonia Leather for \$210.

Tell us a story

Storytelling is an essential part of marketing luxury goods as it attracts the consumer's attention by highlighting brand codes and product worth. This is especially important when a brand is considering a microsite.

A senior director and professor at New York University's Leonard N. Stern School of Business at the Luxury Interactive 2013 conference Sept. 25 highlighted the storytelling capacity of microsites through six key points meant to elevate engagement.

The academic's "Achieving Your Long-Term Marketing Strategy Through the Use of Microsites" presentation showed the potential that microsites have for engaging consumers. A dedicated microsite has the ability to engage consumers on an emotional level through brand storytelling ([see story](#)).

For example, Montblanc, maker of writing instruments and watches, pushed the ubiquity of its Meisterstück pen line through a digital consumer storytelling campaign.

The "My Meisterstück" microsite was the hub for the storytelling effort, though Montblanc

is also linking pen product pages on its Web site to the campaign. The brand asked consumers to tell a personal story having to do with a Meisterstück pen to showcase the collection's history lasting generations ([see story](#)).

Acqua di Parma may have benefited from focusing on the travel log aspect of Colonia Leather's storyline.

"This was my favorite feature on the microsite," Ms. Mills said. "It allows you to discover as much information as you'd like and helps to bring the full story together.

"For luxury brands, storytelling is critical," she said. "Customers are not just visiting the site for a transaction, they want the full experience."

Final Take

Jen King, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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