

IN-STORE

## Finding the right metrics for online, offline behavior

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*Online consumers are extremely important*

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By NANCY BUCKLEY

NEW YORK – Carrying over the product and brand experiences from offline to online creates a unified story across channels, according to panelists on the “Creating a Meaningful Site Experience to Engage Customers and Drive Sales” session Oct. 14 at Luxury Interactive 2014.

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**Luxury Daily**

The panel discussed how to integrate all aspects of a brand to remain true to the individual experience. All panelists agreed that focusing on highly engaged clients, even in the digital space, is important and narrowing in on the metrics that are available to determine the trends of consumers can change the way a brand interacts with consumers.

“It is important to find the new ways and metrics,” said Christoph Oberli, vice president of ecommerce and interactive at **Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group**, New York. “Metrics such as, the time spent on the Web site and how many times [consumers] come back.

“For many people it is a big decision, especially for the first timers,” he said. “Many times we look to see how many times they come back and which channels they come to. We really try to understand the customer behavior.

"We look at different geographics like countries and nationalities trying to understand how to use the tools to build."

The online brand

The digital space is constantly evolving and even Web sites need to keep updating with new technological advances. On Web sites, inspirational content is typically separate from aspirational content, but recently sites have evolved to include everything together.

"[Brands] mix an aspiration or inspiration with products within an inspiration and make this experience for the customer with buy everything now," said Danielle Savin, director of digital consulting services at **Lysons Consulting Group**, Chicago.

Net-A-Porter released Porter, a print magazine that allows consumers to mix offline content with digital aspects of the brand. The app that coincides with Porter allows consumers to use their smartphones and tablets to leverage content in the magazine.

The anticipation of product purchasing is part of the experience of consumers. Net-A-Porter sees this in the app with the magazine, but other brands take different approaches for merging the worlds of experience and purchase.



*Panelists at Luxury Interactive*

For Mandarin Oriental, and other hotel brands, it is about selling the experience and the memories, so the Web site is expected to persuade guests through imagery. Photography is the simplest way for hotels to convey their brand.

Images also carry over to fashion brands. Brands like The RealReal must have many photos to convey the item that is for sale.

"It is a photography logistical challenge to take the shots and also display it in a very elegant way on the Web site," said Marc Viale, vice president of marketing at **The RealReal**, San Francisco.

Net-A-Porter uses a term, EIP, or extremely important person, to distinguish the consumers

that require consistent and customized engagement.

Similarly, The RealReal focuses on consignors who regularly feature their collections on the site and interact with the brand on a regular basis.

To determine these consumers, brands use different metrics. These same analyzing points can help reach and interact with the consumers.

### Online shopping

A new report by the Shullman Research Center found that consumers across demographic categories, especially the ultra-affluent, will be shopping at online-only retailers this holiday season.

Although consumers will also be spending time in department stores and other retail locations, the prevalence of online-only retail preference speaks to a growing demand for convenience. As consumers weigh their purchasing options, the outcome often comes out in favor of online shopping ([see story](#)).

The increase in interest among luxury consumers in the online realm, increases the necessity of brands to maintain the brand's name and reputation on the Internet as well as reaching consumers in a similar manner that brands would in-store.

"Much of the offline branding and marketing that we do is brand awareness, businesses need to have brand awareness, they need to share a voice, there will always be an ecommerce funnel, but if you are not out there and your voice isn't being heard, then you probably are not winning," said Heather Kaminetsky, vice president of marketing in the Americas at [Net-A-Porter](#), New York.

### Final Take

*Nancy Buckley, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

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