

ADVERTISING

## Physical and digital blending must be balanced

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*Neiman Marcus snapping feature*

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By NANCY BUCKLEY

Physical and digital campaigns can no longer be separate, but must instead be intertwined to attract the attention of consumers on multiple platforms, according to a session Nov. 5 at ad:tech New York 2014.

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**Luxury Daily**

According to the “Physical and Digital = The New Creative Palette” panel, the integration of the physical and digital will result in higher rates of consumer interaction for a particular campaign. The recipe for combining the two platforms can be complicated, but with the right amount of action from each side, brands can find the balance between the physical and digital.

“The number of times you ask someone to do something – download an app, open this up, click here – you start losing people,” said Tracy Quitasol, director of Ignition Factory at **OMD**, New York.

“Try to make it simple,” she said. “Where you see the physical it is critical for the digital to succeed.”

Digitally interactive

Emotional ties spark connections with consumers, because most decisions are made in the lymphatic system.

“J.P. Morgan once said 'man always has two reasons for doing anything: a good reason and the real reason.' The real reason is what is taking place in the emotional space and the good reason is what is reverse engineered later,” said Jim Meskauskas, partner and co-founder of [Media Darwin](#), New York.

“In order to get you do something I have to reach into that lymphatic system and get you to some place emotionally and only later do I, post facto, rationalize why that might be,” he said.

Creating a physical and digital campaign can get consumers to be emotionally attached through their multiple experiences around the same brand.



*ad:tech panel*

Ms. Quitasol spoke about OMD’s work with Naked Juice where a virtual garden was set up in Chicago. The physical space, the garden itself, was brought together with the digital. Each plant had a voice and sensors that were activated when people physically touched the plants.

Each sensor was also set up with Twitter and people had to tweet at the plants to activate the sprinklers to water it. The physical plants would die without the help of the consumer’s digital interaction.

The combination of physical and digital in this space let consumers better understand where the ingredients for Naked Juice come from and how they are grown, while simultaneously using digital interactions.

Novalia, a brand that puts digital in the physical, creates digital experiences around paper and print. For instance, an album with a drum set image can physically play the drums when touched.

“The value that we place on things, the sense of value we have for something is based

around our sense for how much we think it costs to make something.,” said Kate Stone, founder of [Novalia](#), Cambridge, United Kingdom.

“When you have something physical and you can hold it, you can imagine this thing has been made, this is its weight, this is its size, so you can place a value on it,” she said. “But, when you look at things that are digital you imagine how much that, as a consumer, that costs to make and all you can imagine is that all it costs is to copy and paste. Things like music, like content magazines, things like news and things like books. You sort of expect those things to be free, but we love the digital experience, that we can touch things and have instant gratification and connectivity.”

Ms. Stone encourages brands to take all the digital experiences it has and put it back into physical items.

The use of physical and digital together can create immersive and interactive experiences that will likely resonate with the consumer.

#### Immersion process

Integrating two realms into one connected experience can be difficult, but solely relying on digital or just on physical is becoming less effective in brand marketing. Some brands have been creating experiences with both realms for their consumers.

For instance, Swiss watchmaker Hublot opened a pop-up store in the Grand Atrium of the Dubai Mall to kick-off the first Hublot Challenge with its Ferrari F1 racing simulator.

Hublot is the official timekeeper of Ferrari races and will time consumers virtually racing against Ferrari F1 drivers in the simulator. The consumer interaction this challenge presented in various Middle Eastern cities likely drove attention to Hublot ([see story](#)).

Also, department store chain Neiman Marcus has updated its mobile application to provide a quick and easy shopping option for consumers through a new “Snap. Find. Shop.” feature.

Neiman Marcus has paired with mobile visual search firm Slyce to create a shopping feature that allows consumers to snap a photo of an item they like and have the app find a similar item sold by the retailer. Snap. Find. Shop. will appeal to the younger, more tech-savvy consumer who is interested in finding the latest trends and styles ([see story](#)).

The blending of the two campaigns can bring the brand greater connections with their consumers.

“What digital does depends on what you are talking about,” said Media Darwin's Mr. Meskauskas. “The biggest challenge is scale and what digital allows you to do. It is not an ingredient, but an enabler for, at the very least, being able to spread that experience elsewhere, using it as a kind of megaphone.”

#### Final Take

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

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