MOBILE

Swarovski increases staying power of loyalty program via app

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Swarovski rewards app

By JOE MCCARTHY

Precision cut-crystal maker Swarovski is elevating the customer experience across channels with a new rewards mobile application.

Loyalty programs become effective when consumers use them frequently and for a range of purposes. Swarovski is ensuring regular use with "Sparkly" rewards or "Sparklisms" that can be earned for a variety of activities and exchanged for prizes.

"Apps are important in retail, but to me, choice is the killer app," said Jeff Hasen, a Seattle-based mobile marketing strategist. "Successful retailers like Macy's provide multiple ways to engage.
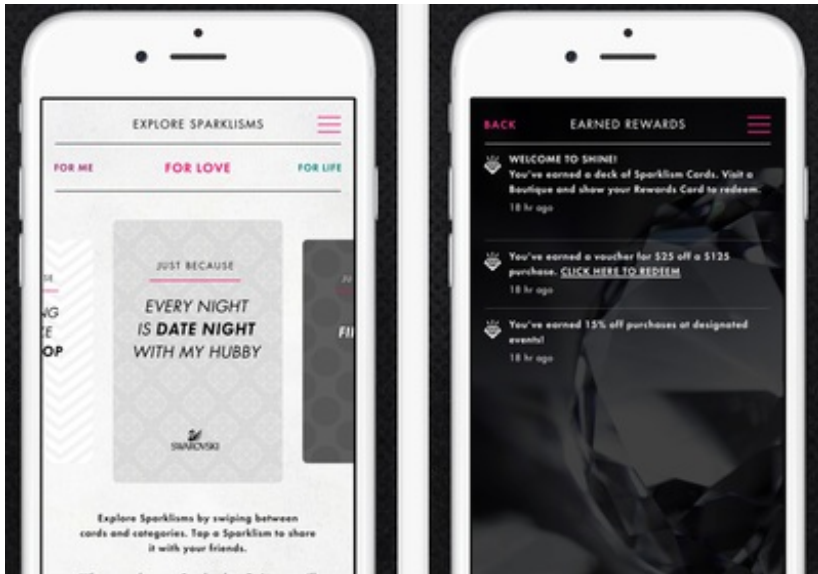
"For loyalty, SMS is the 'reach' product since nearly every phone carried today has the capability and texting is so pervasive," he said.

Mr. Hasen is not affiliated with Swarovski, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Swarovski did not respond by press deadline.
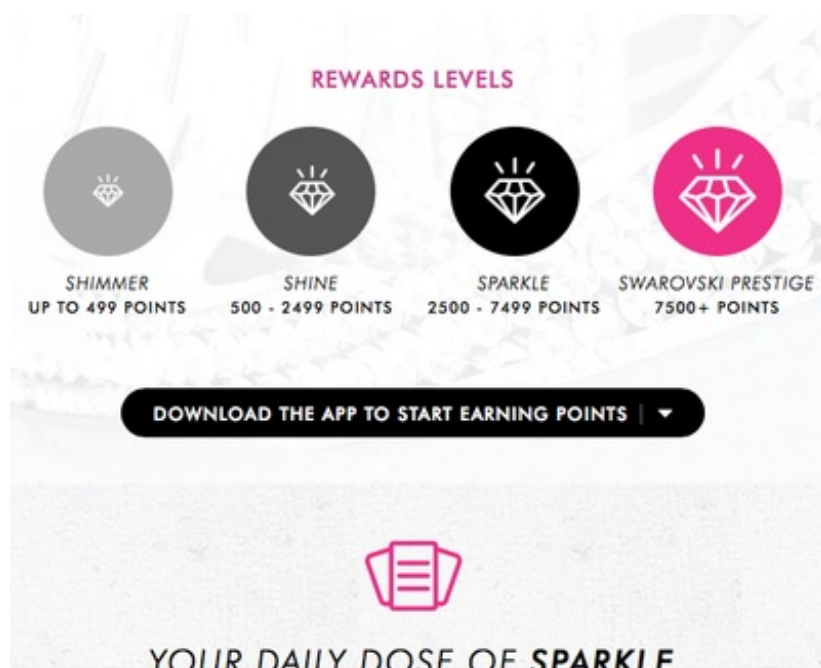
Sparkle some more

The Swarovski Rewards "Just Because" app synchronizes with the brand's loyalty rewards programs, but supplants older forms by providing more and easier ways to interact.

Swarovski rewards app

Most importantly, the app introduces the concept of "Sparkling." The more consumers interact with the app, the more they "Sparkle" and the more rewards they accrue.

There are four stages of sparkling: Shimmer, Shine, Sparkle and Swarovski Prestige. Each level bestows more substantial rewards.

Swarovski rewards levels

Consumers can ascend the four stages by making in-store purchases with the app, attending Swarovski events and sharing content with friends.

Interested consumers can download the app either through the Apple Store or Google Play or by stopping into a Swarovski boutique to set up an account and get a loyalty card, which will keep track of all points earned.

As sparkling points are earned, consumers can track rewards on their app or view an email they will receive that enumerates perks.

Some rewards include unique deals at boutiques, member-only discounts, custom program content and notifications, gifts as a new level is reached and "surprise rewards."

Ultimately, the app will allow the brand to collect valuable customer data throughout the purchase journey as consumers check-in to accrue points. Also, the app may raise loyalty among frequent users who regard sparkle points competitively or just appreciate the streamlined interaction and chance to flaunt.

Part of the picture
Loyalty programs are essential, but they are only as good as a brand's content strategy and omnichannel capabilities.

Many brands have resorted to blitzing consumers with content in the misguided belief that abundance equals efficacy, according to a report by L2 and Demandware.

Seventy-two percent of North American organizations created more or significantly more content in the last 12 months, oftentimes at the expense of content quality, visibility and utility. The positive correlation between strong content and commerce is clear and brands have to be shrewd about content deployment or otherwise watch their investments languish in a crowded space (see story).

The "creepiness cliff" for consumer data collection always seems to be one step away, yet consumers have become more tolerant to various practices as the shopping experience improves and brands act in a more mannered way, according to a new report by L2.

Brands are moving their CRM programs to cloud-based solutions that better integrate data collected from diverse channels. As data silos collapse, brands can better shape data collection practices to minimize customer repulsion (see story).

"Apps certainly can be more engaging," Mr. Hasen said. "Through beacons, retailers have the ability to wake up dormant apps assuming that the user has opted in for notifications.

"Still, other retailers are bypassing apps completely and using a WiFi solution to reach opted-in loyal customers," he said.

Final Take
Joe McCarthy, staff reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

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