

MOBILE

## Missoni stays true to brand image with new iPhone app

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By RACHEL LAMB

Missoni has launched a new application to let users create works of art with their own photographs inspired by the brand's trademark zig-zag patterns.

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**Luxury Daily**

Missoni Art lets consumers paint over images by running their fingers across the screen to create a unique new picture. The application is available for free in Apple's App Store.

"The application is huge step forward for Missoni," said Todd Bowman, senior vice president of sales at appssavvy, New York. "It's staying true to the brand's signature promise of color and texture."

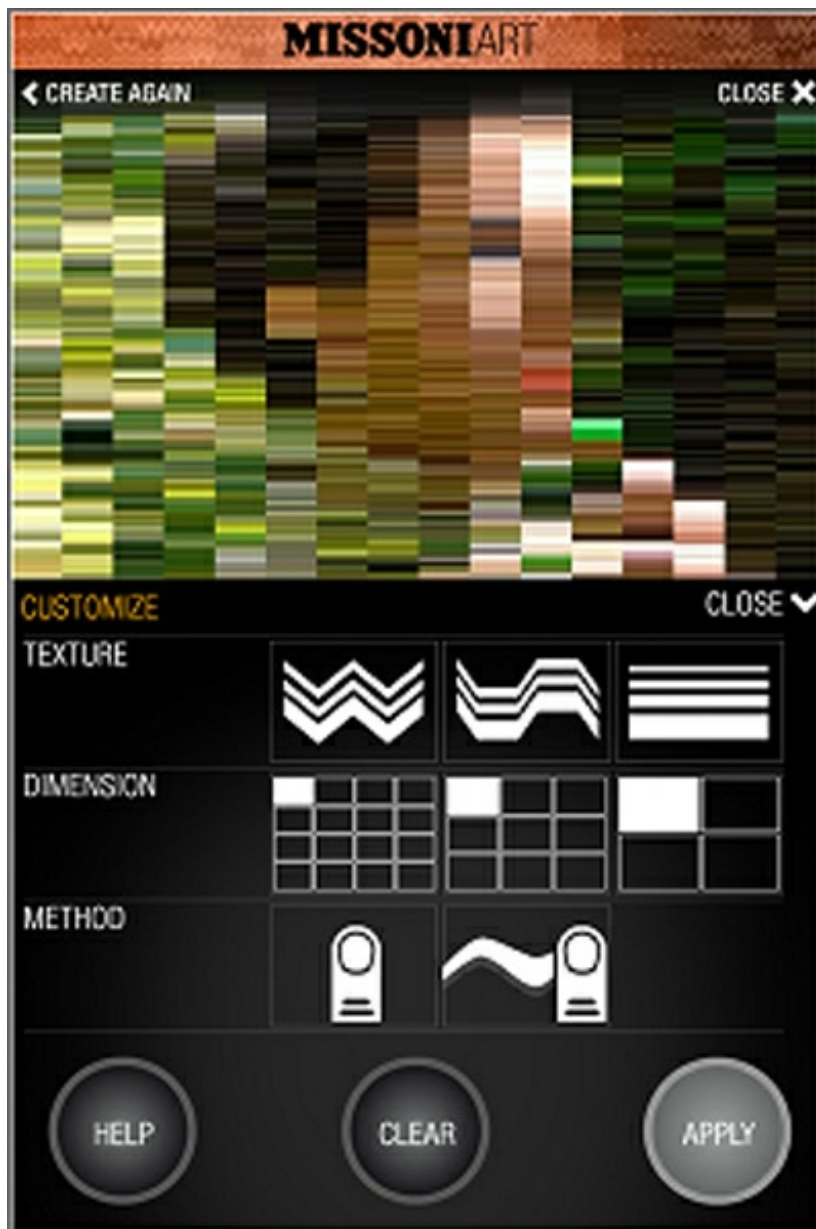
**Appssavvy** is an application-developing company and is not associated with **Missoni**. Mr. Bowman offered to comment as an industry expert.

Inside the app

The application lets users transform pictures from their own photo libraries and make them into Missoni works of art.

When the picture is chosen, consumers can choose whether or not they want the application to change the picture automatically, or if they want to distort it themselves.

Clicking on the information button on the top left corner lets consumers choose how they can change the picture by choosing what size the lines are as well as what pattern they want to use.



*Screen grab from the Missoni application*

Consumers can remake the new images as many times as they please, and can save the images right to the phone's image library.

Additionally, they can share the pictures with friends via email, or put them on Facebook.

Knowing (and keeping) your audience

Possibly the No. 1 best practice for luxury brands developing applications is making sure that they know their audience, and that they make sure that these consumers know who they are, according to Neil Strother, Kirkland, WA-based practice director at ABI Research.

Mobile marketing is proving to be a very tricky platform for luxury marketers, especially when the number of brands using the same techniques in the channel makes it hard to differentiate from competitors.

Many brands are making iPhone applications because they think that all of their consumers are there, but it's better for a brand to build a profile of customers and work out a strategy from there, not just build an application on a whim because it thinks that it should.

A poor experience via mobile can turn consumers off from a brand. This is because they could be disappointed or annoyed with the Web experience, Mr. Strother said.

If an application or mobile Web site is not working properly, then a brand could miss out on sales because consumers can opt to go to a competitor where they have a better experience, or just give up all together.

Additionally, brands could try a cross-platform approach if they discover that there are more users on another kind of smartphone, or implement SMS messaging.

Nonetheless, brands will get lost in the shelves of an application store if they do not make sure that they stand out to their consumers, Mr. Strother said.

"The key is to not have a commercial message – there's a reason why apps are successful while others are commercial and that is they have to provide something for the user," appssavvy's Mr. Bowman said. "And the experience is one that only mobile can deliver, that ability to create and be involved.

"The app provides utility for the user, and that's the key theme," he said. "It's engaging in a lot of ways, and everyone loves to be able to look an app as a bit of an escape, and be creative even if they are not a designer."

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