INTERNET

Armani motivates consumers to embrace experiences with inspirational content

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Cate Blanchett models for the Giorgio Armani Si print campaign

By SARAH JONES

Italian fashion label Giorgio Armani is helping consumers find the source of their inspiration and the driving force behind their actions through a digital campaign surrounding its Sì fragrance.

A follow-up to the brand's Cate Blanchett-fronted effort for the scent's debut last year, Armani has put out a new film featuring the actress, a Google Chrome browser extension and a social media tie-in designed to push consumers to actively pursue a life of yesses. Going beyond product, this effort is likely to stick with consumers for a lengthier time period.

"This campaign is all about finding unique inspiration and beauty in each and every day," said Austin Paley, director of corporate marketing at Blue Fountain Media, New York. "By integrating social and digital assets into their Sì campaign, Armani is connecting with the audience on a much more personal level than you'd find with most traditional campaigns.

"The interactive elements encourage viewers to watch a reel of moments and choose which ones they find most inspiring, creating a personalized effect as each user can find their own inspiration in the clips provided," he said. "Each user can choose moments that they most closely associate with and which activities fit most closely mirror their own lives. This interactive aspect is how users can associate the product with their own life.

"Across social, the brand urges users to find their own inner beauty, and in an abstract way focuses on the journey not so much the destination. The campaign is about a lifestyle, not just a product–more specifically a lifestyle that encompasses a little bit of what every users finds in their everyday life."

Mr. Paley is not affiliated with Armani, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Armani did not respond by press deadline.

Spur of the moment

Armani first began promoting Sì late last year. The brand's original campaign effort, running in publications such as Harper's Bazaar, saw Ms. Blanchett saying "yes" to a number of life experiences (see story).

Earlier this year, the concept was extended with "The Courage to say 'Sì,'" a video which shows a number of women in various situations attempting to work up the confidence to do something they are unsure of (see story).

In this vein, Armani's latest effort for Sì also speaks to collective experiences and hurdles.

On a microsite for the scent, consumers are invited to "Discover the sì that is driving [them]."

Consumers can connect their Facebook or Twitter accounts to get a personalized Sì inspirational message, or they can continue to a generator. They are directed to watch a film, clicking on a sì button the three times they are moved most.
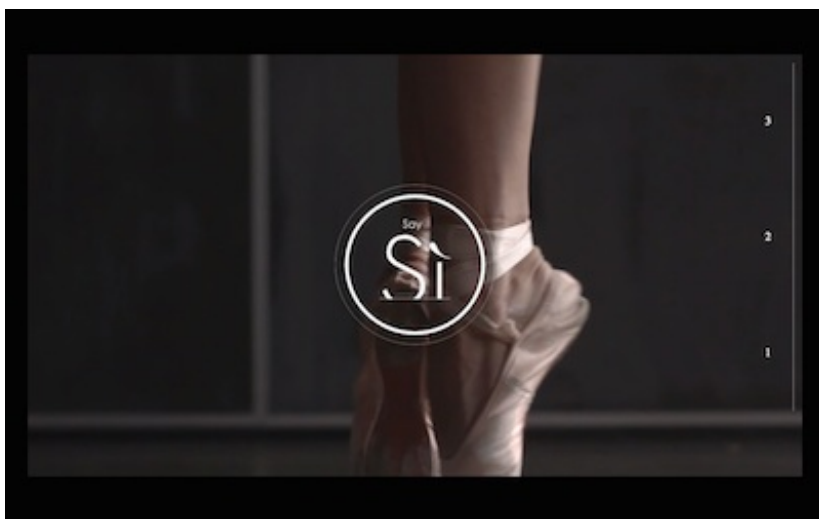
Screenshot of Armani video

Vignettes include a woman diving into the water, a ballerina's feet, a bustling city street at night, ocean waves and a runner. Once three moments have been chosen, the consumer

gets their own words to live by, which can be shared on social media.

The microsite also invites consumers to get weekly inspiration. Clicking on the link takes them to Armani's Google Chrome browser extension specifically for Sì.

Once downloaded, words of wisdom such as "Let curiosity be your guide in life" will appear each time a new tab or window is opened, becoming a constant presence in users' lives. These quotes, updated weekly, can also be shared via Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest and email.

Armani Chrome extension

Below the interactive social campaign on the microsite, consumers can view the new campaign film, still featuring Ms. Blanchett.

At the beginning of the 45-second social film, the camera watches from behind as the actress steps downstage in front of a packed house.

Next, the video cuts to Ms. Blanchett frolicking in the rain with her jacket held above her head. As she gives in to the rain and basks in the drops, a voiceover says "Yes to life" in Italian.

"Yes to us" shows the actress in a restaurant having an animated conversation with an unseen companion.

"Yes to sun" shows her catching rays outside and indoors, while "Yes to lightheartedness" captures the protagonist playing with a shoe in her closet.

Other vignettes show her saying "Yes to seduction" and to love, sharing a passionate embrace with a man.

Portraying an independent spirit, the film ends with "Yes to freedom" and "Yes to myself" as the actress drives down the coast in a red convertible and walks across a plush lawn barefoot.

> Say Sì to a new extraordinary journey every day.
> http://saysi.armanibeauty.com/

"By taking a strategic approach that focuses on individuals as opposed to a broader, general group, the team at Armani is able to reach their audience in a way that makes each person feel unique," Mr. Paley said. "The strategy focuses on the uniqueness of beauty, and finding it in unconventional places.

"By using this overarching theme across digital and social platforms, the brand is able to connect with users in a way that wouldn't happen in a traditional advertisement, and highlights the fragrance to be one that is suitable for an adventurous, luxurious and inspirational lifestyle."

Constant presence
Branded browser add-ons enable avid consumers the opportunity to participate with their favorite labels on a daily basis.

LVMH-owned Kenzo is giving fans a branded browsing experience with a new Google Chrome extension that showcases its Tiger watch collection.

Kenzo Time shows consumers an animated depiction of the time and weather in their location when they open new tabs. This free installation reaches brand enthusiasts at all price points, enabling the label to be a part of their daily lives (see story).

Other brands have used measurements of sentiment surrounding external ideas to give consumers a personalized response.

British automaker Bentley Motors is promoting its new Bentayga SUV with a mobile application responsive to consumer emotion.

The "Inspirator" app shows a series of images ranging from beaches, surfing and yachting to music and dancing to chinaware and furniture to parties and discos in four separate chapters, using facial and emotional recognition technology to capitalize on the viewer's preferences as it goes on, generating a custom Bentayga for the viewer at the end. The app represents a technologically innovative and creative way for the brand to promote its new model (see story).

This type of interactivity enables brands to offer a personalized journey via digital media.

"The interactive effect with this particular campaign is undoubtedly what helps users to personally relate to the advertising initiatives presented by Armani," Mr. Paley said. "That element allows users to more closely envision their daily life and the things that they find most inspirational throughout their day. From compelling language in each social post to strong imagery and visuals on social and on the microsite, the brand effectively creates a connection with the user and the journey, inspiration and beauty that the campaign is all about.

"The products highlighted throughout this campaign almost represent a lifestyle more than

anything else," he said. "This is done in a way that the brand doesn't even need to showcase their products as the main focal point in each element of the campaign.

"It instills the belief in the user that this product is for their distinct lifestyle, their personal interest and their favorite hobbies. #SaySi focuses on "saying yes" to different adventures, exciting journeys, new experiences for women everywhere. The branded hashtag creates even more unity and ties together all of their efforts in a way that each user is likely to be familiar with."

Final Take
Sarah Jones, staff reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: https://www.youtube.com/embed/3jQ4HP0-pXs