

INTERNET

## Childrensalon lets consumers' "adorable" children drive sales

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*Photo from The Adorables social network*

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By FORREST CARDAMENIS

Online retailer Childrensalon is looking to user-generated content to spur loyalty and sales with the launch of a new social network.

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**Luxury Daily**

"The Adorables," which launched Sept. 28, allows parents to upload pictures of their "Adorables" – that is, children – wearing luxury brand clothing and even create individual profiles for each child. The user-generated content, which will eventually make its way to product pages on Childrensalon.com, will strengthen bonds between consumer and retailer by making the brand an active and social part of consumers' lives.

"Just as ecommerce is becoming more social, social is becoming more sales-centric," said Juliet Carnoy, marketing manager at [Pixlee](#), San Francisco. "Increasingly, we see top brands leveraging their customers' on-brand photos and videos to bridge this divide. The incredible thing about user generated content is not that it is a seemingly endless stream of high quality content– but rather that its authenticity generates so much trust."

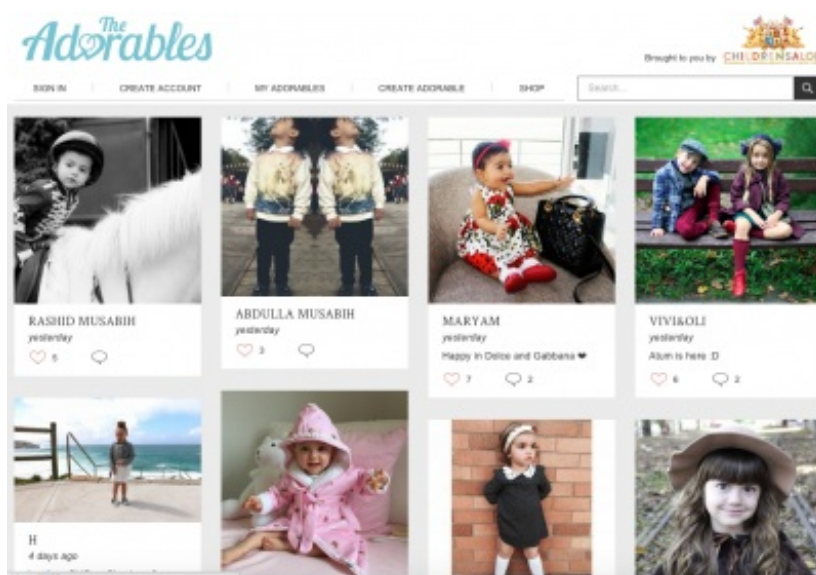
Whilst "The Adorables" was inspired by the idea that every customer has a child they're proud of rather than an initiative to increase sales, research has shown that UGC has more

influence over purchase decisions than any other media," said Sorcha Harriman-Smith, digital & brand director at **Childrensalon**. "Creating a community where our customers can engage with each other in an environment that brings our products to life has a powerful potential to spur sales."

## Adorables

The Adorables Web site is hosted and created in-house and is laid out similarly to an Instagram profile, with the name of the Adorable, the date taken and location appearing just beneath the photo. As on Instagram or Facebook, pictures can be "loved" or commented on, although this information is available without hovering the mouse over or clicking on the picture.

Users can also access the profile of an Adorable by clicking on his or her name, where they can scroll through all his or her pictures.



### *The Adorables homepage*

Photos represent Childrensalon's global clientele, with photos of children in Belgium, United Arab Emirates, the Philippines, Kuwait, South Africa and Brazil all intermixed without any particular region or country dominating.

The top right of the home page includes the text "Brought to you by Childrensalon" and the retailer's logo, as well as a "Shop" hyperlink on the top menu that redirects to the host Web site. Featured items will soon be displayed on the social network, with links taking users directly to product pages.

Childrensalon sells children's wear from leading luxury designers such as Armani, Burberry, Chloé, Dolce & Gabbana, Fendi, Gucci, Kenzo, Marc Jacobs, Missoni, Ralph Lauren, Tod's and Versace.



*Apostolos, Greece; photo taken from The Adorables*

In addition, photos from The Adorables will soon be included on Childrensalon's corresponding product pages, with direct links to product pages from photos presumably to follow.



*Nicole, U.S.; photo taken from The Adorables*

Incorporating user-generated content into a brand Web site makes consumers feel like they are a part of the brand instead of merely a market for it, generating loyalty as a result. Additionally, directly linking to product pages from the photos could lead to impulse purchases from some of the social network's users.

Our future, luxury's present

Childsalon's creative marketing combined with recent trends could position them for growth in the near future.

Luxury apparel has found a surprising new consumer in recent years, with many brands creating collections specifically designed for young children, including toddlers and infants.

While children may have been relegated to hand-me-downs in the past, they now have access to the same luxury brands that mom and dad have treasured for years. This has opened a new market for retail for companies such as Petit Maison Chic, which is now leading the way in providing luxury apparel for children with an online boutique ([see story](#)).

For some luxury brands, children are visible as more than just consumers.

A cultural obsession with celebrities has led many luxury fashion and accessories houses

to collaborate with brand ambassadors who can use their large followings of fans to bring attention to the brand name and its latest products.

Recently, however, some brands have begun reaching out to younger brand ambassadors, some even as young as infants, often the children of celebrities who already have large fan bases of their own, regardless of their ability to speak in full sentences or stand on their own. As brands begin to market more heavily to children, will these fashionista celebrity toddlers truly have an effect on brand perception and publicity ([see story](#))?

Photos and user-generated content have been proven to be effective marketing tools, and there is no reason to expect that to change when the product is childrenswear.

"Customer photos of your products are the purest form of earned media," Ms. Carnoy said. "When a customer posts a photo of your product, it's a visual endorsement of your brand. As a result, we consistently see conversion rates increase 2x when brands use Pixlee to market with their customers' photos."

"The Adorables' site is like a gift to our customer, but it also creates a way for us to engage with them beyond the point of purchase and share special moments they have experiencing our products," Ms. Harriman-Smith said. "We believe the deeper the relationship this creates with our customer, the more it will naturally strengthen loyalty."

Final Take

*Forrest Cardamenis, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

Embedded Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/vj4UcMQGsFE>

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