

MULTICHANNEL

“Endless aisle” approach future of omni-experience marketing

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Image courtesy of Michael Kors

By STAFF REPORTS

NEW YORK Today's luxury market is undergoing a massive shift, with consumers becoming less brand loyal, placing transactions on-the-go and being influenced by multiple sources and engaged on multiple devices.

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During Luxury Interactive 2015 Oct. 13, Melissa Feemster, senior vice president and general manager of Rakuten Affiliate Network, stressed the growing importance of engaging luxury consumers at the right time with the right message. Through affiliate marketing, display, search and attribution brands can leverage available data that will assist in engagement and capturing consumer market spend.

Golden nuggets

A main element of Ms. Feemster's "Success Stories Reaching Today's Luxury Shopper" opening address, which was meant to give attendees an overview of Rakuten as well as set the stage for the three-day conference, was that omnichannel is becoming tired. Instead, marketers should narrow their efforts on an omni-experience to speak to consumers.

By taking away channel silos, a brand is better equipped to communicate effectively with a consumer.

An example of omni-experience that a number of brands have implemented is the notion of increased discovery that links online with in-store interactions.

For instance, chain department store Target encouraged showrooming for its summer patio furniture by displaying the sets in-store while prompting consumers to purchase online for at-home delivery.

In comparison, U.S. fashion label Michael Kors vets in-store browsing via mobile but does not offer free shipping on such purchases, thus creating a blip in consumer experience and expectation.



Michael Kors' Jet Set Tokyo

These examples are backed by a statistic shared by Ms. Feemster that shows that 71 percent of in-store shoppers say their device has become more important to them during the in-store experience.

Another important "nugget" Ms. Feemster urged marketers to consider is also connected to the in-store experience. She shared that 78 percent of digital consumers will provide personal information while shopping in-store to create a personalized experience.

But, omnichannel retailing is difficult because brands need to change internally so consumers do not view a brand in silos. By rethinking brand parameters, leveraging all available data and personalizing consumer experience, these changes can be made.

Research prepared by L2 suggests that many brands have taken a step back due to the cost and complexity of retooling their approach. In 2013, 38 percent of brands said they were in the development phases of an omnichannel strategy, but that dropped to 32 percent in 2014 ([see story](#)).

Despite this, brands cannot continue to think in channels, but rather create an "endless aisle." By leveraging consumers' entertainment interests, taking placement where they frequent online in terms of communities and rethinking goals and objectives, brands will be better equipped to engage today's luxury consumer.