

MULTICHANNEL

Market to consumers' hearts, not their smartphones: Mot Hennessy CMO

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Veuve Clicquot Polo Classic

By JEN KING

NEW YORK For cross-channel efforts to succeed, panelists at Luxury Interactive 2015 Oct. 14 agreed that marketers must concentrate less on silos and more on internal collaborations.

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During the CMO panel titled "The Role to Build Cross-Channel Collaborations," senior executives discussed how their brands have evolved as omnichannel strategies have become commonplace in the luxury landscape. As technology has advanced, brands across industries have had to restructure internally to streamline consumer expectations within the digital and physical realm.

"You have to realize what's best for the customer, so it sometimes might not be what feels best for the company, even though it is, but because you're in different channels, you have to figure out how that works," said Buffy Sash, CMO of [Alice & Olivia](#).

"If the customer is happy, then the company is going to be happy because [it's] doing a better job," she said. "[There's] channel conflict and I think that's the most important thing.

"You realize that if you can't be company-centric, you have to be consumer-centric."

Omnichannel togetherness

Led by [Elo Interactive](#)'s CEO Craig Witsoe, the conversation gave Luxury Interactive attendees insights into how luxury brands have adapted to omnichannel's introduction through business practices.

Omnichannel is firmly rooted in consumer experience, with that being expressed through both in-store and digital channels. The panelists agreed that although company culture may have changed to meet consumer expectations, the primary goal of a brand remains doing what is best for its customers.

Jon Potter, CMO at [Mot Hennessy](#), explained that while the LVMH spirits brand is very brand-centric and focused on the image its brands project, omnichannel has caused a shift in focus. Now that omnichannel is more prevalent, Mot Hennessy brands have become increasingly consumer-centric, putting the consumer on a field equal with that of the brand.

This has been expressed through a number of branded events that allow consumers to interact with social happenings such as Mot Hennessy Champagne house Veuve Clicquot's annual Polo Classics in Los Angeles and

New Jersey ([see story](#)).

By moving away from thinking of the Mot Hennessy brands and third-party distributors, as well as embracing technologies such as mobile applications and social media, the spirits group has concentrated less of its silos and more on collaborative efforts to reach consumers.



From left to right: Craig Witsoe, Buffy Sash, Jon Potter, Andrea Ward and Amy Chernoff

Experiential marketing has proven itself as the leading way to connect with consumers by forging a memorable and emotional connection between a brand and its target spenders. As Andrea Ward, vice president of marketing at [Oracle Marketing Cloud](#), suggested, you cannot separate consumer experience from market spend because "love and money go together."

A seamless brand experience is also expected digitally and should be consumer-focused. This notion largely links internal silos with marketing departments looking to IT and technology divisions more so than ever before.

With this in mind, [Gracious Home](#) CMO Amy Chernoff stressed that while efforts should enhance consumer experience, brands should be weary of introducing new digital elements without a clear purpose. Marketers should make sure that these touchpoints are necessary and relevant to the larger picture instead of just an add-on to appear increasingly competitive among peers.

Events for emotion

As suggested by Mot Hennessy during the Luxury Interactive 2015 panel, event and experience-based marketing is vital for consumer engagement.

Data provided by Wealth-X showed that 84 percent of luxury marketers host events to reach ultra-high-net-worth individuals.

For the 62 percent that calculate ROI from their events, the most successful parties were product-centric, either launches, displays or educational. Even though events typically revolve around merchandise, the focus is usually more about making a connection.

When those surveyed were asked about the efficacy of their events, product displays were cited as the most beneficial at 29 percent, followed by product launches at 26 percent. The most popular purpose of events is to expand client bases and reinforce the loyalty of current customers ([see story](#)).

"For us, and this sounds old fashion, but it's actually spending time out in the field, meeting people, connecting the dots," said Mot Hennessy's Mr. Potter. "We spend a lot of time spending time with distributors and retailers as well as then social media listening, and all the technology that can help you.

"But, nothing beats being out in the marketplace with your partners, with your customers and seeing how consumers react," he said. "There's a temptation these days to get caught up too much in data and technology.

"You always have to remember you're talking to someone's heart, not their smartphone. The smartphone is a way of getting to them, but it isn't the end goal. You have to remember that brands are about emotions."

Final Take

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