

COMMERCE

Plukka marries online tech, jewelry for sensory commerce

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Ring by Sophie Birgitt available on Plukka

By JEN KING

Omnichannel jewelry retailer Plukka is disrupting the divide between online and bricks-and-mortar shopping with the introduction of an at-home preview service.

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Plukka was established in 2011 as a multichannel fine jewelry retailer, offering consumers access to more than 2,000 fine jewelry pieces from more than 40 plus designers, and offerings international shipping. The retailer has positioned itself as an online destination for jewelry lovers, and is working to continue building its brand's high-touch service with the launch of View On Demand, or VOD.

"[VOD] basically bridges the gap between online and offline seamlessly and is the next best thing to having a hand come out of the computer screen proffering the piece of jewelry under consideration to the viewer," said Joanne Ooi, founder and creative director of **Plukka**, Hong Kong.

"Jewelry, especially at higher prices, continues to be a high sensory involvement category according to a McKinsey report about the sector published last year," she said. "The consumer, whenever it's possible, prefers to see, touch and try on a piece of jewelry before buying."

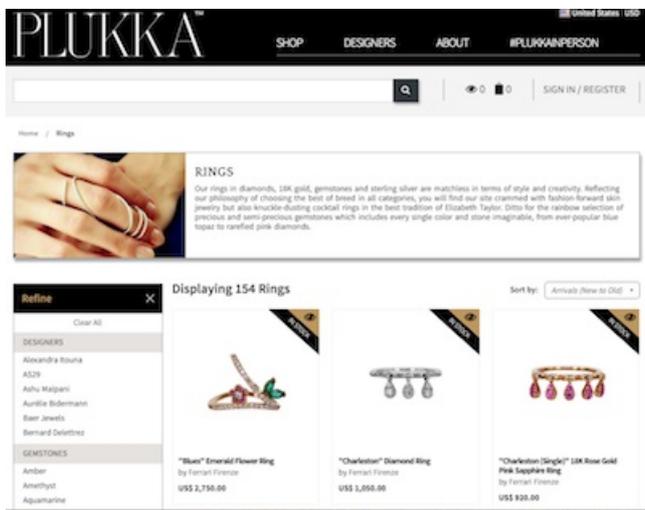
Try it on for size

VOD was launched Dec. 1 in New York, and allows Plukka consumers to see, touch and try on the pieces available through the Web site. One downside of ecommerce has been that consumers are unable to interact with their intended purchase prior to delivery.

Available in Hong Kong, London and New York, Plukka consumers can add up to five items, or the equivalent of \$15,000 worth of jewelry into a VOD shopping cart. Items available for VOD previews are marked with a black and gold eye icon in the upper right hand corner of the product's thumbnail, and again on the full description page where the icon turns into a call to action bar.

After the piece or pieces have been selected using VOD, the consumer can schedule a 45-minute appointment for time and location, at a minimum of seven days in advance.

Plukka's VOD is complimentary for current consumers while the service for new clients are subject to a \$38 service fee. But, if a purchase is made during the VOD appointment, the \$38 will be deducted from the total order.



Rings available for VOD on Plukka's Web site

The retailer carries selections of rings, body chains, bracelets, necklaces and earrings with aesthetics ranging from edgy and contemporary to classic and artistic. Designers include Bochic, L'Dezen, Moonsoo Kim, Vassiliki and Jossi.

Similarly, mobile solutions service LiveLux is providing luxury brands with a much-needed tool to link the in-store experience with mobile and ecommerce.

LiveLux is a business-to-business tool that vies to close the gap between premium in-store service and affluent consumers who enjoy the ease of personalized shopping but may be too busy to visit a bricks-and-mortar boutique in person. Designed with the on-the-go consumer in mind, LiveLux aims to enhance the consumer sales associate relationship by providing personalized shopping experiences remotely ([see story](#)).

With many jewelry houses still being wary of ecommerce, services such as VOD may be a welcome edition to the sector's retail strategy as it moves away from in-store only transactions.

At your service

Services such as Plukka's VOD and LiveLux present brands with increased omnichannel capabilities, bridging the physical realm with online shopping. But, many retailers are reluctant to adapt.

According to a new study by Yes Lifecycle Marketing, many retailers are still unwilling or unequipped to tailor customer service to the individual.

The study looks at retailers in a variety of different sectors and finds that many have not sufficiently tracked clientele and are thus unable to provide sales associates with the personalized data that will help initiate and close a transaction. With consumers navigating freely between mobile, Web and in-store shopping, and brands therefore able to gather more information than ever before about frequent shoppers, properly cataloguing clientele has emerged as a way to provide the best possible customer service and showcase a great branded experience ([see story](#)).

"We believe that VOD intersects at the sweet spot of tech and fine jewelry and that it is a service which can definitely engender long term, intense customer loyalty," Ms. Ooi said. "We expect it to catch on through word of mouth and that's why we're extending the service gratis to existing customers."

Final Take

Jen King, lead reporter on Luxury Daily, New York