

COLUMNS

## How luxury brands engage the mobile-savvy customer

July 21, 2016



*David Harouche is founder/CEO and chief technology officer of Multimedia Plus*

By **David Harouche**

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**  
Plus: Just released  
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

As luxury retailers already know, there is no replacement for a stellar in-store experience. No omnichannel technology can replace the effect of stellar face-to-face customer experiences provided in stores, where the majority of consumers still do their buying.

Several surveys, including one by TimeTrade, found that 85 percent of consumers say they prefer to shop in stores because they like to touch and feel product before deciding what to buy.

Setting store by

Shoppers want to feel an emotional connection with their favorite brand because it stands for the values in which they believe. This gives retailers the opportunity to create a unique brand experience and provide associates the tools to understand what is happening across all sales channels including the brand's Web site and social media platforms.

Combine these preferences with the growth of cross-channel shopping, a journey now involving in-depth product research before consumers even walk into a store.

The level of knowledge shoppers now possess requires retailers to transform their conventional sales staff into highly-trained brand ambassadors armed with the knowledge and ability to stay several clicks ahead of the contemporary educated, omnichannel customer.

Now that the concept of omnichannel has had time to mature, retailers are realizing the importance of a customer-centric model and are focused on putting the customer first by understanding a shopper's needs, wants and behavior.

Technology has become a force behind a customer-centric approach, particularly at the in-store level.

A new platform that has emerged, mACP mobile associate communication platform is changing the way in-store sales associates engage with mobile savvy-customers.

Capstone

What exactly is mACP? It is a sophisticated, highly branded, private broadcast network with instant-on, non-streaming video, a self-publishing interface, granular targeting, real-time metrics, field accessibility, instant, internal global

broadcasting from an iPad or desktop, and a simple dashboard interface, all and more from a well-established service training expert.

MACP is possible with the acceptance of iPads and custom applications as a training and communications tool.

iPads and apps have become a major force in creating the ultimate customer experience, by developing an engaging and interactive way to train and communicate with sales associates.

These programs can recognize each associate, their role, channel and even language. Employees can see what they need to know now to be successful.

App-based digital resources such as mACP create a communications environment in which most associates are familiar, comfortable and interested.

Studies have found that retail employees are much more likely to interact with peers and employers if communications are digitally delivered through mobile devices.

Another key factor to the success of mACP is the ability to track who has taken the training modules and how much information was absorbed.

Leveraging the span of control and providing data by region, district, store and associate allows field managers to be accountable for their team's performance.

Ultimately, this ensures a consistent brand image by maintaining a high level of competence related to the product, customer service, guided selling technique and store operations processes.

A KNOWLEDGEABLE, well trained and brand savvy sales force increases customer satisfaction and sales by providing the in-store experience for which the consumer is looking.

Only those retailers who invest in effective associate training and evaluation strategies, and in providing up-to-the minute, on-floor communications can keep their employees one step ahead of today's demanding, tech-savvy consumers.

Such communications also bridges the online experience and in-store experience by meeting the needs of consumers who have done their shopping or discovery online, then go into the store to get help with their final purchase decision.

*David Harouche is founder/CEO and chief technology officer of [Multimedia Plus](#), New York. Reach him at [dave@multimediaplus.com](mailto:dave@multimediaplus.com).*