

COLUMNS

Marketing to the Smartphonista: A new generation of digital buyers

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Photo courtesy of Estée Lauder

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Fashionistas are known to always be ahead of the curve, rocking New York Fashion Week styles before they even get off the runway. And now, these buyers are starting new trends in online and digital shopping as well, positioning mobile to become the next must-have accessory.

New data shows that more United States fashion shoppers are now buying on mobile devices (52 percent) versus desktops.

In the high-fashion world, shoppers have adopted a see-now, buy-now mentality to stay on top of the hottest trends from top designers, wanting to instantly buy no matter where they are.

Instant gratification and on-demand fashion are clearly high priorities, so much in fact that 30 percent of mobile shoppers are more likely than desktop buyers to consider swift delivery as very important.

As New York Fashion Week introduced the newest trends of the season, luxury brands should also brace for the introduction of the newest generation of digital buyers.

New generation

A new generation of fashionistas is emerging: Smartphonistas. These shoppers who make purchases on smartphones account for 63 percent of fashion shoppers under 35, and will only continue to grow to represent the bulk of all fashion shoppers in the near future.

Smartphonistas are true high-fashion advocates, vying for the best of the best and are dedicated to their mobile phones to guide them through the entire shopping process.

Marketing to this growing group of prime purchasers is key to any brand's success, but first we must understand the key traits and behavior of the generation.

Live for fashion: Smartphonistas do not just buy clothes, they are truly invested in high fashion, with 59 percent saying they love buying clothes, compared to only 46 percent of desktop buyers.

Additionally, dollar signs do not seem to faze these mobile users, as 42 percent claim they are not cost-conscious.

Use smartphones for smart buys: Smartphonistas approach online shopping in a strategic fashion, never taking risks on size or style.

Thirty-two percent of mobile shoppers are more likely than desktop buyers to order several sizes for a single piece and then return those that do not fit.

Mobile the whole way: Smartphonistas use their phones throughout the entire customer journey, from search to purchase: 68 percent use their smartphones to research new clothes before buying, more than half (51 percent) prefer buying on their phones versus other devices, and Smartphonistas are almost twice as likely to share images of their buys on social networks.

Courting Smartphonistas

With Smartphonistas making up a large and growing market of the fashion landscape, they are a critical audience for any successful luxury brand to attract.

When marketing to this generation, it is critical for high fashion retailers to develop campaigns specifically for mobile, allowing them to instantly buy no matter where they are even if it is alongside the runway. Retailers should:

Offer quick delivery: Staying up to speed with the latest fashion trends is no easy feat.

Smartphonistas will appreciate any offering that will make their mobile order faster. Deliver fast, and they will return for more. Plus, slick packaging does not hurt either.

Help them find the right size: We know these buyers will do whatever it takes to get the perfect fit, so make their experience as easy as possible.

Make sizing straightforward, and offer free returns as a backup to keep them satisfied and styling.

Simplify social sharing: Smartphonistas are tied to their phones for more than just finding fashion.

Like the majority of their generation-peers, they spend their down time on social applications such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Use these trends to your advantage and make it easy for Smartphonistas to show off their purchases and share with their network.

IN THE FAST-PACED fashion industry, it is crucial for luxury brands to stay on top of the trends, and that means staying in style with Smartphonistas.

This new generation of digital buyers is setting the stage for a mobile-first world of high-fashion, quickly dominating over desktop purchases and other devices.

Marketers must market to mobile to meet the needs of this growing market, or risk going out of style.



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