

RETAIL

## Custom Curated Experiences to bring guidance to innovation-seeking executives

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*Oak Labs promotional image*

By JEN KING

Omnichannel retail is no longer a strategy off in the distance, and this realization has caused retailers to track down appropriate technologies, vendors and service providers needed to ensure their business' future.

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Retailers are increasingly in tune with consumers' expectations of personalized, seamless experiences across channels, with 56 percent of brands citing this as a top digital priority going forward, according to an October Boston Retail Partners report ([see story](#)). However, becoming fully omnichannel involves improvements in point-of-sale hardware, software and the increasing support of mobile technologies, which has left some brand retailers scrambling to find the best partners for innovation.

"Custom Curated Experience is a program created for luxury companies based on their business objectives," said Dan Hodges, CEO of [Consumers in Motion Group](#). "The client feedback has been very positive with our program earlier this year at Mobile World Congress.

"One participant said, 'We achieved four months of business development in three days,' and another said that it helped 'identify future products and services in line with changing consumer expectations and technologies,'" he said.

"We work with luxury brands to identify their goals and evaluate all the organizations and potential partners attending The Big Show. We then facilitate meetings and work with the brands during the meeting process. Afterwards, we provide a summary and next steps and follow-up to support a productive outcome."

Under The Big Show's top

Entering the exhibition hall of a trade show can be daunting. The overwhelming amount of information and innovations can leave retail and brand marketers grasping at straws as to which booth to visit, and which new, blossoming technologies could work best with their established, developing or future practices.

A show such as the National Retail Federation's annual expo in New York, scheduled for Jan. 15-17, 2017, brings together more than 500 exhibitors and attracts 33,000 attendees over its three days. The sheer amount of information

available at "Retail's Big Show," as it is called, can overcome a marketer's good intentions of making the most out of attending.

Recognizing the potential of The Big Show, now in its 106th year, for retail and brand marketers, Mr. Hodges' Consumers in Motion is offering a solution to the vastness of the expo's exhibition hall.

For the first time in the United States, Consumers in Motions' Custom Curated Experiences will assist in reaping the benefits of The Big Show's exhibitors by setting up a course of action for attendees.

Custom Curated Experiences operates as an immersive learning and business development program designed for luxury executives seeking innovative solutions. At the core of its program is seeking out cutting-edge startups, identifying strategic partnerships and technologies as well as saving time and resources to allow marketers to focus on the big picture.

By attending with a plan, curated ahead of time, brands and retailers can interact with only vendors appropriate or capable of meeting the needs of their business. Not only acting as a time saving measurement, booking a Custom Curated Experiences tour ensures pitches and meetings are worthwhile by avoiding those that are not a good match.

Additional information and booking details can be found [here](#).

Custom Curated Experiences has also helped retailers and brands cull knowledge from the Mobile World Congress "classroom" in Barcelona ([see story](#)). The program will be continued at CES, SxSW, CeBIT and Cannes Lions.

#### Forward-looking

Custom Curated Experiences was inspired by a session at Cannes Lions in summer 2016. During the fireside chat between Burberry CEO and chief creative officer Christopher Bailey and Anna Wintour, editor in chief of Vogue and artistic director of Conde Nast.

In Mr. Bailey's opening remarks he said, "While many people have been resistant or fearful to change, Anna has been fearless. She and her colleagues have driven Conde Nast into the digital age with clarity, authenticity and innovation.

"Moving organizations forward is a challenge to many companies, including Burberry," Mr. Bailey continued ([see story](#)).

It is there, that Mr. Hodges' saw the potential of Custom Curated Experiences for the the Big Show, noting that there is "no better event in the retail and luxury industry to move your organization forward."

In regard to technologies he foresees as holding the key for organizations to move into the future, Mr. Hodges said, "The technologies at The Big Show for luxury brands fall within several key categories. Technology for store associates can be used to improve the customer experience.

"Integrated CRM, indoor location technologies will improve the store shopping experience," he said. "Predictive, retail and social media analytics will change how users find and purchase products as well as guide retailers with respect to inventory management.

"Importantly, we connect luxury brands with the people and partnership from global retail brands attending The Big Show."