

RETAIL

Le Bon March spotlights in-store interactions with help from documentarian

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Loc Prigent at Le Bon March

By SARAH JONES

LVMH-owned department store Le Bon March Rive Gauche is putting a spotlight on its customers and Parisian culture by preserving overheard moments.

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Documentary filmmaker Loc Prigent observed conversations that transpired within the retailer's store and curated a series of quotes for an in-store exhibit titled "Heard at Le Bon March." This lighthearted project brings the atmosphere and characters found within the retailer's walls to life in an authentic way.

"Today, retailers face the challenge of creating an in-store experience that helps them compete with the online experience," said Dave Rodgerson, a retail business development executive at [Microsoft Canada](#), Toronto. "The retailers that are creating a true omnichannel experience are figuring out how to bridge that in-store and online experience."

"One way that is accomplished is through content development and storytelling," he said. "By partnering with Loc Prigent, Le Bon March has certainly found a credible and well respected brand in the film industry to make that happen."

Mr. Rodgerson is not affiliated with [Le Bon March](#), but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [Le Bon March](#) was reached for comment.

Fly on the wall

Mr. Prigent is a fashion journalist who has worked with brands including Fendi and Longchamp on films. Now, he is lending his talents to Le Bon March in his fourth collaboration with the retailer.

The collaborator spent several days within Le Bon March, using his powers of observation to capture tidbits spoken by locals, tourists and the store's own staff.

Mr. Prigent then took hundreds of quotes gathered and turned them into a display in-store. The mostly white exhibit space allows the sayings to stand out in black. Within this display, merchandise becomes part of the art piece, as

quotes placed on pencils, tote bags, t-shirts, mugs and postcards are on view.



Heard at Le Bon Marché exhibit

One quote finds a customer asking for an ashtray after he has already lit his cigarette, while another reads in French, "Where is the central escalator? I searched in every corner."

An individual was found doing a makeover, promising to turn the subject from a "biscotte" to a "baguette."

"Je veux du sublime, pas du no-sUBLIME, pas du post-sUBLIME, du sublime. Je suis pas complique" : "Entendu au Bon March" par @loicprigent. ? ? ? "I want sublime, not neo sublime, not post sublime, just sublime. I'm not that complicated": "Entendu au Bon March" by @loicprigent. #LeBonMarche #EntenduAuBonMarche #LoicPrigent

A post shared by Le Bon March Rive Gauche (@lebonmarcherivegauche) on Mar 6, 2017 at 4:02am PST

"What I heard was all the people who make Le Bon March such a vibrant hub of Parisian lifestyle," Mr. Prigent said in a statement. "You have regulars who are very much at home, tourists who are discovering what it means to feel Parisian', seasoned sales staff including some who could sell you anything! as well as momentarily neglected children: Are you lost? Where's your mom?' She's in the shoe department'

"It's lighthearted, it's frivolous, sometimes wacky and sometimes just common sense," he said.

On Le Bon March's social media accounts, these sayings have been turned into short videos, bringing the statements to life. For instance, one customer's request to pay by cash, since it would make their bag lighter, featured a backpack with googly eyes that floats up and out of the frame.

The exhibit will be up in-store until April 2.

Customer appreciation

While not always a focal point, customers have been the subject of other retail campaigns.

Department store chain Nordstrom showcased the relationship it shares with its customers in a thankful holiday effort.

"Love, Nordstrom," launched in the United States and Canada, turned the lens on more than 30 of its real customers, celebrating their personal style. As an increasing percentage of shopping moves online, pausing to celebrate the bond between store employee and customer may help to maintain the personal element of retail ([see story](#)).

Also, department store chain Saks Fifth Avenue heightened its sense of community through a new content hub that streamlines social media interactions with consumers.

Saks' content page, housed on the retailer's Web site, launched during New York Fashion Week in 2014. This aspect of Saks' Web site, dubbed a "fanreel," creates a center for the retailer's fashion-forward consumers to gather and share via social media ([see story](#)).

"The thing that was very clever about this collaboration is the way that customer input became a part of the content," Mr. Rodgerson said. "Collaboration can also extend to the shopper. It's actually one of the things I speak about on a regular basis when I'm helping my clients get a better understanding of what drives customer loyalty."

"By curating a community of interest and allowing customers to contribute their ideas, the retailer is actually helping to drive increased loyalty," he said. "In this case, they not only accomplished that, they did it in a way that promoted the brand in a unique fashion."

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