

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Bricks-and-mortar remains important for apparel, accessories but online is vital

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*Image courtesy of Neiman Marcus*

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

Apparel and accessories brands need to progress much further in an omnichannel strategy, as millennials' shopping experience spans a multitude of channels, starting online for product discovery and ending with purchasing on any given platform.

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According to the new Criteo Apparel Trend Report, millennials are now more omnichannel than ever, looking up product information and trends on social and online, but any on whichever platform they choose. Retailers and brands need to close the gap between these platforms and focus on an experience that spans all channels.

"Millennial shoppers are complete omni-shoppers," said John Roswech Executive vice president of brand solutions at **Criteo**, New York. "They rely on online for trends and product information and to connect directly with apparel brands, but they buy through whichever channel fits their needs at a given moment.

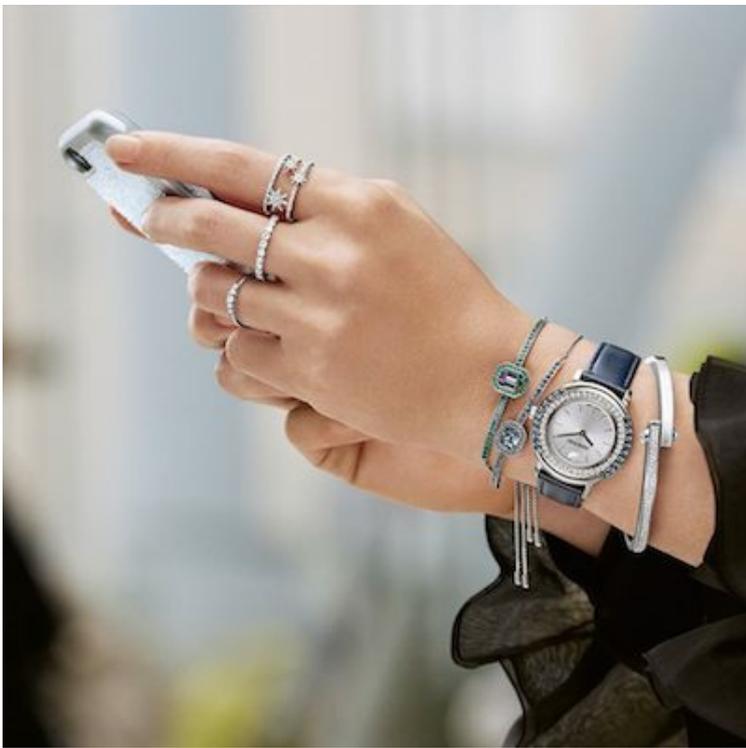
"To capitalize on apparel ecommerce opportunities, brands and retailers must stop marketing to the channel, and start finding connections between all available data sources to market to the shopper," he said.

### Omnichannel shopping

It is extremely important for luxury brands to cater to the millennial audience, even as their omnichannel behavior grows.

While luxury buyers are primarily older, millennials will soon make up 40 percent of all luxury purchases, according to research from Bain & Company and online retailer Farfetch.

Additionally, older consumers are tending to adopt the shopping trends of younger consumers. This means that luxury brands will have to pay even more attention to the ways that millennials shop for luxury goods ([see more](#)).



*Swarovski image of consumer on mobile*

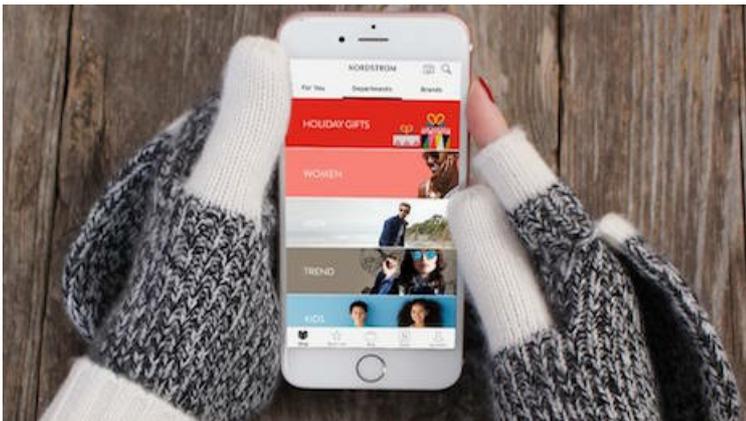
The space for cross-sell opportunity is growing. In 2016's third quarter, carts with three items or more averaged a total of \$95.21.

Most carts now have three or more items at checkout. Consumers often like to bundle their purchases, and the complementary products are becoming more popular and easier to market.

Brands should focus on cross selling items that complement each other, especially online.

While many consumers, especially millennials, often discover products and trends on their mobile devices, the number of those who actually purchase on mobile is growing. For instance, purchases on mobile made up one third of all apparel buying during December weekends in 2016 during the holidays

Retailers need to enhance their mobile offerings, now more so than ever.



*Nordstrom's mobile app*

Sundays are proving to be a crucial day for retailers and brands, with the day seeing the largest cart sizes. For instance, average cart size saw a high of \$126 on Sunday, Nov. 3, with Sunday, Dec. 7 following close behind.

Criteo believes that consumers are interacting with products in stores and coming back to online to solidify their purchases without lines and more product inventory at a convenient time.

Additional insight

Immediacy is one of the most important aspects of the modern retail process, according to another report from Euromonitor, and for luxury brands this presents a challenge in balancing convenience with exclusivity.

The report covers the top 10 consumer trends globally, ranging from personalization to privacy and other pertinent

topics. One thing that the report concluded was the now, more than ever, consumers expect a certain level of immediacy and convenience with their purchases, giving luxury brands an extra obstacle to negotiate ([see more](#)).

"As we are witnessing with the retail industry overall, the apparel and accessories category is undergoing a major transformation," Criteo's Mr. Roswech said. "While physical stores remain a significant asset, we are seeing changes in shopper behavior and online technology advancements that deliver more personalized experiences.

"As more shoppers embrace digital, retailers and brands must merge online and offline experiences to fully capitalize on apparel sales opportunities," he said.

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