

MOBILE

Panerai directs in-store traffic with glorified product catalog

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By RACHEL LAMB



Italian watchmaker Panerai is directing traffic to its stores and

digital outlets with the launch of a new iPad application that serves as a puffed-up product catalog.

The app, though not commerce-enabled, is media-rich and gives tons of information on Panerai products. It is available for free in Apple's App Store.

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Luxury Daily

“An app is a good strategy for any catalog brand because there are probably enough consumers that want to look at things in a digital format, which could be online, tablet or smartphone,” said Neil Strother, Kirkland, WA-based mobile practice director at ABI Research. “The tablet is more engaging than a smartphone because the real estate is so

much bigger.

“It’s also important to have pictures and product information and availability,” he said. “It gives a marketer another outlet for their products and services and another touch point for consumers.”

Mr. Strother is not affiliated with Panerai. He agreed to comment as a third-party industry expert.

Panerai did not respond by press deadline.

Face time

Panerai’s app is stocked with media such as images and videos. It provides an in-depth look at different collections as well as information on how the products are made.

Users can browse through the history section that explains the conception of the company, a biography of founder Giovanni Panerai, the first designs and the evolution of the models.

There is also information on the inauguration of the manufacturing factory in Neuchatel, Switzerland as well as photos of Panerai-sponsored events such as the Panerai Classic Yachts Challenge.

Consumers and watch enthusiasts are able to browse through 96 Panerai models including specialties, contemporary, historic and special editions.

Tapping on a model will enlarge the image. Users can deploy pinch-and-zoom to further inspect the watch as well as look at it from the back.



Product page

There is an option to look at more images of the watch and to check out a detailed picture of the watch's movement.

At the bottom of the movement page, there is a gallery of the other Panerai models that use that particular battery.



Movements page

Users can watch a video of the movement that explains how the watch is made.

Indeed, there is an entire “Movement” section where users can fully browse Panerai batteries.

Panerai has its Web site and photography credits.

Hand over

Since many luxury consumers find that they have an emotional attachment to high-priced items such as watches and prefer to buy them in-person, it does not make sense for upscale watch manufacturers to enable commerce on their iPad apps.

Therefore, Panerai has chosen to puff up its iPad app so that its customers can get as close to the products as possible by digital standards.

That said, Panerai could make it easier on consumers by including a store locator or a link to the brand’s Web site instead of just simply listing it.

The brand could also add a telephone number where consumers can reach the brand if they have questions about finding or buying a product.

“After the product catalog, I’m just asking, ‘What’s the payoff?’” Mr. Strother said. “There’s

not a lot to it, and I feel like there should be something that tells you how to buy a watch.

“It’s important to provide clear and clean information about locations to buy the products so that you can actually drive sales,” he said.

Final Take

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