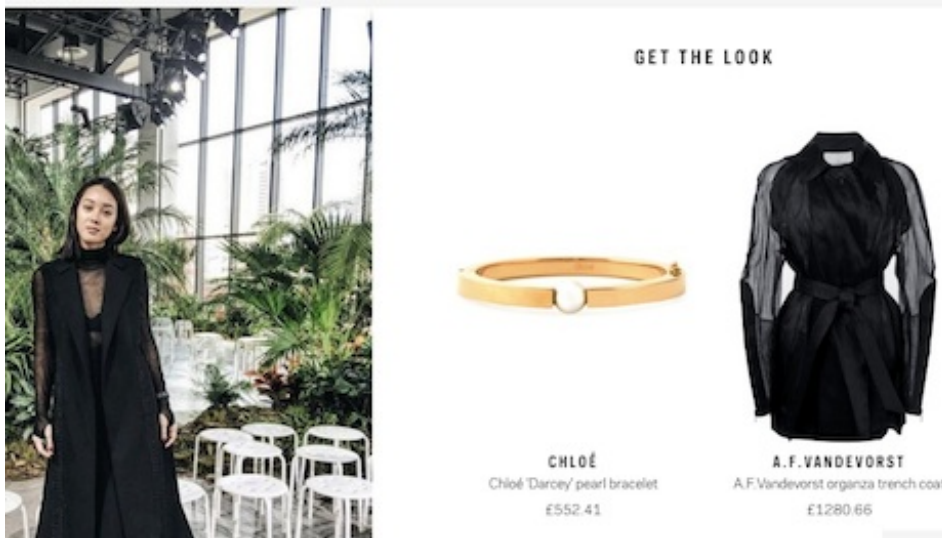


MARKETING

Luxury needs to look to heritage, authenticity to cut through noise

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Farfetch looks to influencers and consumers for its The One campaign

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

NEW YORK – Now that content creation is in the hands of consumers and word-of-mouth has been escalated to a point where it is a "marketing monster," it is more important now than ever for brands to be authentic.

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During the panel "The Delicate Balance Of The Sell Through Authentic Content" at WBR's Luxury Interactive 2017, executives in luxury discussed how keeping a consistent brand ethos throughout all interaction points is vital. The pervasiveness has changed the meaning of transparency and authenticity for brands.

"We all know tech and social media changes the way the brand tells our story. We have lost control," said Amy Romero, chief marketing officer of CreativeDrive. "Consumers are now a part of that story, but brands need to make sure they are authentic in the messaging they are sending out."

“We like to use our clients as word-of-mouth marketing,” she said. “We want to make sure that what we stand for is something that will come through when you visit with the brand.”

Consumers in control

Consumers now have the power to control a brand’s image through the vast reach that social media has provided. Marketers have lost that control of their own brand to the connected consumer.

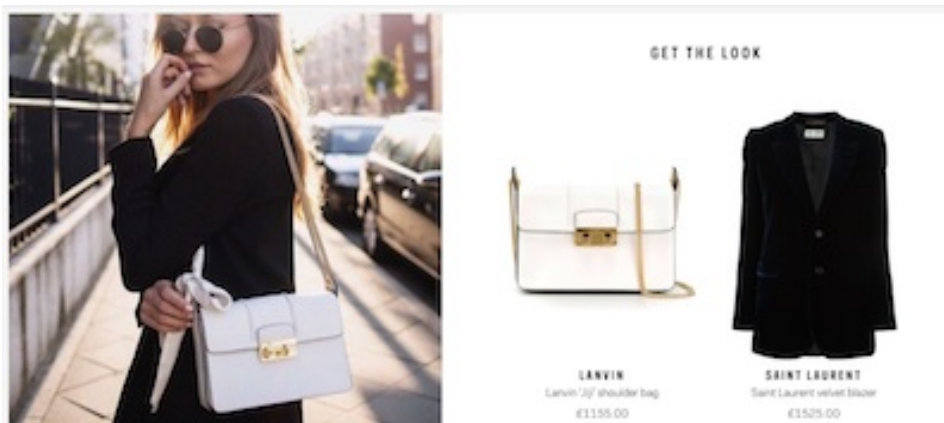
The only way for marketers to ensure content surrounding their brand reflects the image it is hoping for is to make sure this representation is apparent through all aspects of interaction. For instance, store associates and the online shopping experience should reflect an authentic vision of the brand.

While the rise of social media has opened up the opportunity for brands to lose control of their own image, it does however enable them to connect to a wider reach of consumers.

For instance, an executive from Farfetch detailed a campaign example in which the retailer encouraged social media users to share their purchases. The campaign had influencers, brands and social media users all share products they considered “The One” item they could not live without for that season, along with hashtag #TheOne.

Farfetch sought help from social influencers to inspire the campaign for last year’s fall and winter using imaginative imagery and organic activity.

The retailer also aggregated content posted on Instagram on its Web site, giving the campaign legs. Influencer partners made an impact on purchases and sales through direct links as well ([see more](#)).



Farfetch's The One campaign looks to social media users for word of mouth

Farfetch was able to reach almost 15 million consumers with this campaign, which was largely user generated. This reach is equal to a paid media ad, which would require significantly more resources.

The campaign is simple and offers significant authenticity in which the brand is empowering consumers to be an extension of the brand. Consumer recommendations can have a strong impact on peers, making this campaign extremely influential.

Heritage in luxury

An executive from Jonathan Simkhai also noted that with so much content overload today, it is important to scale back. Brands should be focusing on sharing fewer but more powerful pieces of content.

Luxury brands in particular need to be sure to create a high-end marketing campaign that stands out among so many others who are now adopting the same strategy. For instance, mass market and ready-to-wear brands such as Zara and H&M are leveraging high fashion models in their marketing content, making this strategy for luxury brands less effective.

The executive notes that brands should focus on their heritage and their brand story instead of letting big name models carry their marketing content.

For instance, Italian leather goods maker Furla celebrated its 90th anniversary by recounting the fashion trends of the past nine decades.

Over the last 90 years, Furla has designed leather goods that have evolved with women's tastes, whether that be the romance of Art Deco or the boldness of punk rock. Taking a look back at its history, Furla chose to create a series of nine handbags that retell past fashion trends in the form of its Metropolis silhouette ([see more](#)).



Furla's 90th anniversary bags celebrate heritage

“We come from small place and we do not have the spend to bring our influencers into the marketing mix. But we do know who our customer is,” said Daria Fain, director of ecommerce and digital at Jonathan Simkhai. “Our founder, Jonathan knows who our customer is and what we are putting out there.

“We know we are dressing women who come from all walks of life,” she said. “We have been able to have these organic relationships that have really worked in our favor.

“Having that trust that you know they will do what is expected is where you will find success.”