

MARKETING

Print is here to stay, will become a precious commodity: NY Times

October 17, 2017



Print will always be an important part of NY Times. Image credit: New York Times

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

NEW YORK - While many experts believe print is dying, a panel at Luxury Interactive explained that in the luxury world, the medium will only become more precious.

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Print is becoming less prominent and common in terms of marketing and media today, but panelists during the Luxury Interactive session "The Creative Combination—Experiential, Innovative And Disciplined" on Oct. 16, stressed that it is never going away. Luxury brands have a stronger need to remain true to themselves to stay on top in such a cutthroat industry.

"The thing about print is that it will just become more precious," said Elizabeth Lunny, vice president luxury publisher at The New York Times. "It will not go away. The luxury landscape is big.

"In terms of engagement, there is value there," she said. "It is survival of the fittest. Know who you are and don't deviate from that."

Print and luxury

An executive from John Varvatos explained how the brand was able to create a special experience with consumers in stores and at home through a print campaign.

The print campaign became special and more luxurious because consumers could feel the quality in their hands. Print has become a commodity.

Consumers are comfortable with their screens because they spend all day with their computers and mobile devices. However, print is becoming rare and more of a commodity, making it a special experience.

Print will likely never completely disappear but its purpose has changed. Similar to John Varvatos, luxury brands can now use print as a way to create a luxurious experience.

"We wanted to reach people in-store and at home with a luxury item," said Stephanie Seliskar, digital creative director at John Varvatos. It was about how we printed it and how the paper felt in your hand.

"It became very emotional and really special since you have your laptop and mobile screen in front of you all the time," she said.



John Varvatos looks to omnichannel marketing. Image credit: John Varvatos

The New York Times' Ms. Lunny explained that bounce is much more difficult with print. The action of throwing out printed content is much more final and dramatic than simply exiting out of a browser.

This can help make more of a dramatic impact.

Conde Nast-owned W magazine enhanced the print experience and demonstrated the potential augmented reality has for the print industry with a September cover that speaks to the reader.

W magazine's September edition, featuring singer Katy Perry, was brought to life through an augmented reality effort that enhances the reader's experience via interactive features. The fashion and beauty sector, as well as the retail, travel and automotive industries, have all benefitted from applying augmented reality to campaigns as a way heighten the effect of an initiative, thus increasing the chances of making an impression on today's consumer ([see more](#)).

While New York Times made a dramatic impact with AR and VR last year with its Google Cardboard initiative, which was the first of many, it plans on making a similar impact with artificial intelligence in the future.

The executive alluded to a significant innovation with AI coming out in roughly one year.

Knowing your brand

Luxury marketers have a much more significant pressure to keep their brand ethos alive in everything they do.

Customers expect a higher level of service along with an experience that aligns with the brand's personality.

For instance, John Varvatos' ethos is welcoming consumers from all angles, meaning no matter how the customer interacts with the brand, whether that be online or in store, she should feel welcomed.

Mr. Varvatos himself calls the brand's strategy "The Hug," as if consumers are being personally greeted and welcomed into the brand.

In an example of celebrating its brand image, John Varvatos spoke to its rock n' roll aesthetic with a fall/winter 2017 advertising campaign starring a multihyphenate performer.

As the face of the effort, singer-rapper-actor Machine Gun Kelly is following in the footsteps of other performers such as Hozier and Ringo Starr, who have fronted ads for the brand. Like many of the brand's past campaigns, the effort focuses on shedding light on the artist in organic style content ([see more](#)).



John Varvatos' fall/winter 2017 campaign. Image credit: John Varvatos

"Although it does come down to sales at the end of the day, I think for us and the luxury market we want to make sure we're still building our brand and customer service as well," John Varvatos' Ms. Seliskar said. "We just have to make sure we're taking care of our customers.

"John Varvatos refers to it as the hug," she said. "We want them to feel like their being welcomed at all touch points."

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