

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Laura Troy Woman to Watch 2018

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Laura Troy, senior manager, social media, St. Regis and The Ritz-Carlton

By STAFF REPORTS

Laura Troy

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"Consumers are looking for experiences that create lasting memories that elevate their lives. They are looking for authenticity"

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What do you most like about your job?

From Instagram to LinkedIn to Twitter, I love being able to bring a campaign to life across our social media channels.

It is a great honor to lead our social discipline and to have partners around the world and throughout the organization that help fuel our success and tell our brand stories on our social platforms.

I drive the creative process and determine which element works for each specific channel and how to piece it all together to tell a nice narrative.

Working with influencers like renowned photographer, Trey Ratcliff, on a photo walk throughout Europe, along with unique events such as a Jason Wu fashion Show at The St. Regis New York, I have the opportunity to tell the story of our luxurious brands and destinations.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

Social media is constantly evolving, and it is exciting to see the platforms continue to be enhanced. The luxury space presents its own unique challenges, so we need to have a strong point of view to remain true to the brand.

Risk-taking is necessary, but it is important to remember brand positioning and why you are in the social space to begin with. With more than 100 hotels across two brands and five continents, it is important to keep up with trends and stay current.

For example, I need to be up to date on WeChat just as much as Snapchat. Understanding the response to content including things like photo usage and how it is relevant around the world is both challenging and of utmost importance in an increasingly interconnected global community.

I then need to be able to share this information with our teams so everyone is consistent and on the same page.

What is your work priority for 2018?

Working on two luxury hotel brands, I want to continue to evolve our storytelling, but keep both brands distinct and true to their consumers. It is important to continue to dive deeper into the stories and share in a unique way that is appropriate for each channel.

We will also continue to monitor and evolve our relationships with digital influencers, while maintaining a focus on how it helps us connect with our audience. We want to work with influencers that have similar brand missions to ours.

For St. Regis, we may look at collaborating with fashion influencers that can bring our Live Exquisite inspiration to life.

At The Ritz-Carlton, we will consider the next evolution of our partnership with Mr. Ratcliff and continue to work together to inspire people to travel and create everlasting memories.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

My proudest moment is I have been a champion for social media for the past eight years and helped create the original social media strategy for The Ritz-Carlton.

Starting with one Facebook page and a Twitter account which has now evolved into more than 70 hotel pages, thousands of tweets, and almost 100,000 pieces of user-generated content tagged with The Ritz-Carlton brand hashtag, #RCMemories and more than 20 million interactions with the hashtag across social channels.

This led to numerous years in which The Ritz-Carlton has been named the most engaging luxury travel brand in the social space.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2018?

I see luxury continuing to evolve with a sharper focus on experiential luxury. Consumers are looking for experiences that create lasting memories that elevate their lives. They are looking for authenticity.

Luxury travel brands are uniquely suited to create experiences that keep consumers coming back and reliving their memories by conversing with brands they are passionate about.

With advances in social media, we in the luxury travel industry are able to fine-tune our communications to resonate with consumers on a more personal level.

In the next year, we are looking to continue using social media platform enhancements in innovative ways to deepen connections with our consumers.

Luxury today and in 2018 will continue to be driven by inclusion and experience, versus exclusivity and features of a product.

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