

RETAIL

Heritage brands follow online retailers in pop-up inventiveness

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Window display for Prada's Galeries Lafayette pop-up. Image credit: Prada

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

NEW YORK A panel of experts during Luxury Interactive 2017 stressed the importance of taking time to develop an authentic pop-up that represents the brand before undertaking such an endeavor.

During the Oct. 18 panel "Footprinting Retail Experiences of the Future," executives explained that the connection with customers that can be had through the creation of a pop-up store is vast. However, it is essential that the experience is an authentic representation of the brand.

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"I think the heritage brands are interested to see in how the retailers are dipping their toe into pop-ups," said Francis Scire, junior vice president of Leasing at [UpMarkets](#). "I think they are more innovative, in a way.

"They are more nimble and are very much about creating activations, partnering with the community socially from a clientele perspective," he said. "I think they're very inventive compared to heritage brands."

Offline activation

It is highly risk for a brand to launch a pop-up store that is not within their branding or is in a bad location. These experiences take a lot of resources to put together.

Prada-owned fashion label Miu Miu recently displayed its bejeweled accessories alongside the jewelry offerings at Costa Mesa, CA's South Coast Plaza for its interpretation of a pop-up.



Miu Miu's South Coast Plaza installation will be up Oct. 6-17. Image credit: South Coast Plaza

With shopping center foot traffic declining, pop-ups and branded installations are an ideal way to spur interest and visits from discerning consumers. As part of South Coast Plaza's ongoing celebrations of a half-century in business, the shopping mall has collaborated with many of its brand partners on pop-ups, installations and exclusive products ([see more](#)).

Porsche also opened its own pop-up shop, or "pop-up experience," in Liverpool to give customers a taste of owning a Porsche vehicle.



Porsche's pop-up experience in Liverpool. Image credit: Porsche

The pop-up experience offers customers the chance to inspect a Porsche car as well as browse a variety of related products and images all related to owning a Porsche. The idea is to give customers a glimpse of what their lives could be like if they were to own a Porsche with the hopes that they will then purchase a Porsche in the future ([see more](#)).

New versus heritage

Luxury brands who have a long heritage in the industry are lagging behind retailers, startups and newer brands who are leading in pop-up activations in terms of innovation.

These brands are creating activations around a community that make an impact on consumers with a truly branded experience that lasts in their minds.

An executive from luxury real estate brand CORE who specializes in commercial real estate lent an example to this notion with Louis Vuitton. The heritage brand created a recent pop-up that felt more like a museum than a hands-on experience.

MM.LaFleur, luxury retail startup, took a unique approach to the pop-up notion that catered to their special audience, which is a key point in creating a pop-up.

The retailer, who is known for taking the time out of shopping for office apparel, used their pop-up to create a highly tailored experience that lacks any in-store merchandise. The pop-up concept allowed women to schedule one-on-one appointments with associates from MM.LaFleur in which they discussed their tastes, sizes and lifestyle in detail.

With no merchandise in the store, women did not have to look through an assemblage of clothing they would not be interested in. While they did spend an hour with MM.LaFleur, their time was well spent and offered a highly tailored experience that took out the wasted time in shopping.

"Everyone and their mother is doing a pop-up so you have to be interesting," said Sarah LaFleur, CEO of [MM.LaFleur](#). "This is what is tricky."

"Our woman is very busy and is actually the woman that needs to shop," she said. "So the traditional tricks that retailers pull out of their hats do not work for our consumer."

"So what works best is having no technology in our store, it's really a one-on-one conversation with associates. She felt that her hour was really well spent."

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