JEWELRY

How Engage Studio bridges gap between online, offline jewelry shopping

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Engage Studio's unique design process should be a lesson to other brands. Image credit: Engage Studio

By DANNY PARISI

Jewelry company Engage Studio is looking to disrupt ring shopping by bringing elements of the in-store experience to ecommerce.

As more commerce shifts online, it is becoming increasingly important for luxury brands to be able to offer the same level of service, personalization and care online as they do in person. Engage Studio has a unique take on testing out a replica product at home that can serve as an example for other luxury brands in how they can make use of online shopping.

"We're helping consumers move beyond the marketing myths that surround diamonds to really figure out what makes sense for them," said Ji Song, co-founder of Engage Studio, Toronto, Canada. "Our mission is to eliminate the intimidation and anxiety that can be associated with making such an important purchase, and transform the journey to creating the perfect engagement ring into a memorable one."

Engaging replicas

For many luxury brands, the slow shift towards online commerce has been welcome. Luxury brands do a healthy amount of business online and the ease and convenience that ecommerce affords has been a boon to the luxury business.

However, online shopping comes with its own unique challenges. For one, luxury consumers are used to receiving a certain level of high-end customer service from brands.

At bricks-and-mortar stores, customers walk in and are treated to a totally personalized experience where every need is met and every question answered. It is much harder to offer the same level of service online.
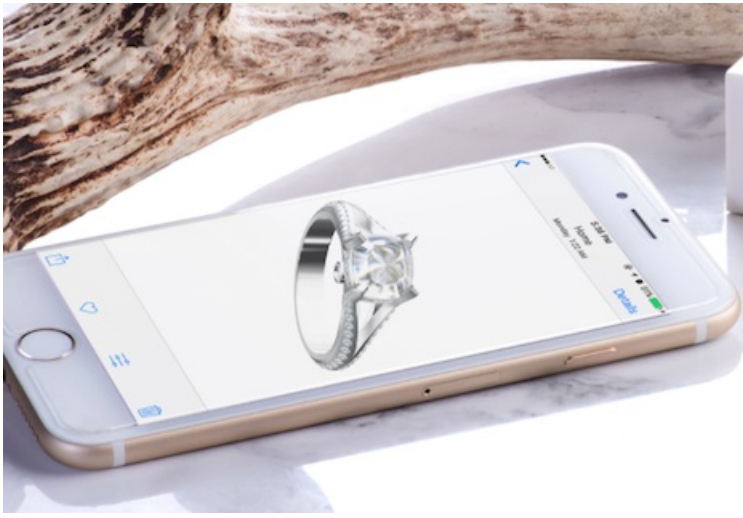
Customers can see digital renderings of the jewelry first. Image credit: Engage Studio

Engage Studio has come up with a novel solution for helping customers get high-end service for their jewelry purchases online.

When customers purchase a piece of jewelry from the company, they first have a long consultation with the studio. Then, digital renderings of the piece are sent to the customer for examination.

Finally, Engage Studio will send the client a cubic zirconia replica of the piece so they can examine its dimensions, color, weight and other parameters that are not easily communicable online.

In this way, customers can be exactly sure of what they are getting before they buy without ever stepping foot in a store.

Disrupting ecommerce
Engage Studio's take on personalizing the online shopping experience should serve as inspiration for luxury brands to come up with their own ways to bridge that gap.

For instance, mobile solutions service LiveLux is providing luxury brands with a much-needed tool to link the in-store experience with mobile and ecommerce.

LiveLux is a business-to-business tool that vies to close the gap between premium in-store service and affluent consumers who enjoy the ease of personalized shopping but may be too busy to visit a bricks-and-mortar boutique in person. Designed with the on-the-go consumer in mind, LiveLux aims to enhance the consumer sales associate relationship by providing personalized shopping experiences remotely (see story).

Engage Studio's replicas. Image credit: Engage Studio

Luxury brands have previously explored ways to engage with consumers over ring shopping in a virtual format.

U.S. jeweler Tiffany & Co.'s Engagement Ring Finder mobile application highlights why its rings are "worthy of eternal love."

Through the app, consumers can take a photo of their left hand to virtually explore ring pairings. The app includes filters that can be applied to the image to highlight characteristics of the ring.

Consumers can also save or share the image with family and friends, or their significant other (see story).

As ecommerce becomes more prevalent, luxury brands may seek more ways to bring the in-store consultation online.