

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

Building shopping experiences that tap into your audience's senses

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There is a reason for that new car smell. Image credit: ScentAir

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More than any other factor, experience shapes consumer perceptions of brands. This perception is of even greater importance for a luxury brand's marketing strategy.

Customers are not just paying for your product they are paying for the experience that accompanies it. To match these expectations, your luxury marketing plan must build innovative, engrossing connections with your audience.

Generally speaking, the customer experience of luxury brands should evoke feelings of aspiration and exclusivity.

Marketers are getting better at creating that luxury brand customer experience, which has resulted in a rise of luxury purchases from **64 percent in 2017** to 68 percent in 2018.

Luxury brand marketing strategies must be innovative to compete with other brands and successfully engage customers.

High five

How can you create an innovative luxury marketing plan that helps your brand stand out from the crowd?

Focus on the details of the shopping experience by tapping into your audience's senses and never compromise on quality.

Get started with these five tips:

1. Learn what your customers want from a luxury experience

Once you understand your customers, you can build an engrossing environment around their needs and desires.

Ask yourself, "What will dazzle customers?"

If they long to escape the grind, you might want to build an experience that somehow connects with nature. You could do that by creating an aspirational in-store experience that makes customers feel like they are one step closer

to their next adventure, for example.

2. Engage the senses

In luxury brand marketing, all five senses matter. They help you gather information and detect quality: You can feel the difference between high-quality silk and cheaper alternatives, and you probably recognize the rich fragrance of a real leather sofa as you sink into its folds.

It stands to reason, then, that fully activating the senses adds texture to the luxury shopping experience.

Your luxury brand marketing strategy should focus on engaging your client's senses to create the feelings they seek which you should be familiar with after step one.

If we continue with the earlier example involving clients who want to feel closer to nature, a great strategy would be creating displays made of natural materials.

Set the lighting and music in your store to enhance those feelings, and carry these engaging details through the entire shopping experience.

3. Explore scent marketing

Luxury brands use the retail space to build a personalized relationship with customers, and nothing is more personal than scent.

Scent reaches into the brain's limbic system, tapping into memories, behavior and motivations.

If sensory details help create engrossing experiences, then a scent marketing strategy is one of the most important aspects.

Scent marketing allows you to instinctually communicate your brand's personality and put shoppers in a specific state of mind.

An "attractive" fragrance can even encourage customers to linger up to **44 percent longer in your store**.

Going back once again to our luxury brand that wants to reconnect shoppers with nature, a touch of pine scent in the air can be incredibly effective.

Look into other types of scent marketing to find the best fragrances that align with your experiential goals.

4. Elevate your packaging

The moment that customers interact with a product's packaging is an invaluable touch point.

Up to **72 percent of U.S. consumers** say a product's packaging and design influences their decision to purchase.

The power of packaging goes beyond influencing purchasing decisions, though.

"Unboxing" moments have become vital parts of consumer interactions with luxury brands.

Your packaging needs to extend and enhance people's connections with your brand.

Remember to root your experiences in the five senses: Use cardboard or gift bags that are surprising to the touch.

Include crinkling tissue paper to engage customers' ears.

If you can include scent in the mix, you can create an even deeper connection.

5. Enhance with other luxury brands

Pairing with or including other luxury brands can elevate your customer experience and go a long way toward creating a 360-degree luxury experience.

Seek out complementary luxury brands that share similar values and customer bases.

Leverage those compatible brands to build out the details of your shopping experience.

In a recent trip to Turks and Caicos, I experienced the true power of co-branding to create the ultimate luxury experience. The mini soaps were phenomenal, the water was name brand, the drinks were top shelf.

Surround your own products with luxury to best embody and convey the aspirational lifestyle your customers seek.

LUXURY BRAND marketing strategies must create an engrossing customer experience.

Marketers should innovate by playing with the senses, including using a scent marketing strategy.

The goal is to build an all-encompassing shopping experience rooted in customer desires and aspirations.



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