

MARKETING

Leadership must spearhead CX transformations

September 26, 2019



Store teams are at the forefront of the customer experience. Image credit: Bloomingdale's

By SARAH RAMIREZ

NEW YORK As the importance of customer experience becomes more apparent, a growing number of luxury brands are navigating changes in their emotional identities.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

It can be difficult for organizations to decide how to approach customer experience transformations. Speaking at LuxeCX/AMCX 2019 on Sept. 25, the CEO of Customer Experience Group reiterated the importance of customer experience in today's competitive business climate.

"Which brand doesn't want their clients to be happy?" said Christophe Cas, CEO of [Customer Experience Group](#), Dubai. "Happy does not cut it.

"You need to find something more precise, that is linked to your brand identity," he said.

LuxeCX/AMCX 2019 was produced by Luxury Daily and sister title American Marketer, with venue sponsor UBS

Team transformation

Changes in company culture often coincide with the rise of new management teams. These transformations often have a negative connotation since change in business is often associated with fear, explained Mr. Cas.

Leadership, particularly a company's CEO, should create a sense of urgency and lead the messaging regarding changes in customer experience.



Customer experience transformations need to engage all employees. Image credit: Hugo Boss

It is important to measure the current state of an organization's customer experience and to evaluate strengths and weaknesses. From there, a team can select which areas a brand wants to excel in.

While the C-suite must lead the change, customer experience transformations need to engage all levels of employees to be successful.

Store associates are increasingly overlooked as brand ambassadors, but are often the way consumers most engage with a brand. Mr. Cas suggests that brands have store teams that are receptive to change.

While digital tools may be appealing, a report from the Luxury Institute shows that many consumers value the personalized touch of a human sales associate to guide them through the shopping process.

Half of all affluent consumers surveyed by the Luxury Institute said that sales associates give a relationship-driven experience that is inimitable by online tools and ecommerce. While luxury brands should certainly not neglect the benefits that technology can bring, it is just as important to remember to keep the human element in-store ([see story](#)).



Emotional intelligence should be incorporated across company culture. Image credit: Ralph Lauren

In addition to customer experience, brands should also measure team experience. This is different than team satisfaction.

Successful strategies should be incorporated throughout the company culture and be ingrained in human resources practices.

C-suite commitments

A number of luxury brands have made management changes that have kept customer experience in mind.

One relatively new concept is the position of chief brand officer. Typically reporting to the CEO, these individuals are tasked with leading brand image as it relates to creative and customer experience.

For instance, Hector Muelas is LVMH luggage label Rimowa's chief brand officer and oversees all of the brand's marketing.

Michael Kors similarly hired Francesca Leoni as its senior vice president, chief brand officer to lead its strategic communications and marketing ([see story](#)).

Two of the key focuses of companies today are digital and innovation. These priorities are reflected in the C-suite,

as companies hire chief digital officers and chief innovation officers to tackle forward-thinking efforts.

Ralph Lauren recently hired its first chief digital officer, appointing a former Burberry executive to the position.

In the newly created role, Alice Delahunt will oversee the corporation's digital platforms around the globe and focus on the digital customer experience. As digital and ecommerce are becoming an increasingly integral part of luxury operations, Ralph Lauren sought out additional talent in the space ([see story](#)).

A company's leadership needs to be onboard with changes to successfully implement an overhaul.

"Management cannot be resistant, or you'll have to remove them," Mr. Cas said.

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.