

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Prada, Louis Vuitton opt for personality-driven present pushes

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Prada's "A Gift to Give" campaign. Image credit: Prada

By SARAH JONES

Taking a realistic approach towards their holiday marketing, Prada and Louis Vuitton are linking with influential individuals to present gifting ideas in a social media-friendly fashion.

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Prada has gifted celebrities and models with the caveat that they need to pass on the present to someone they love, while Louis Vuitton gathered influencers to inspire consumers' wish lists. Both efforts lead with the personalities' opinions, allowing consumers to hear about merchandise from third party voices rather than directly from the brand.

"Both Prada and Louis Vuitton have shifted their focus this holiday season to the personal and human act of giving and choosing, employing actual people instead of models and characters or highlighting hero products alone," said Daymon Bruck, chief creative officer and partner of **The O Group**, New York. "This choice feels very in-touch with today's luxury customers who want their brands to show them a deeper level of empathy and proof that can relate to consumers as actual people and not just affluent shoppers."

Mr. Bruck is not affiliated with Prada or Louis Vuitton, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. **Prada** and **Louis Vuitton** were reached for comment.

Natural over narrative

Prada's "A Gift to Give" project is a twist on its typical gifting to members of its extended brand family. While the house explains that it normally sends products to its friends, this year it has decided to shake things up.

Instead of holding onto the gift, the recipients are supposed to pass them on to someone else. Model Sara Blomqvist describes it as "quite a wicked idea" since she would rather keep her present for herself.

The videos follow as the individuals unwrap the gifts and mull over who to regift them to, explaining their decisions. They are also shown hand writing a note to the recipient.

For instance, Pixie Geldof receives a backpack and chooses to gift it to her husband because he is "practical" and he will appreciate all the pockets. Jokingly, she adds that by giving it to him, she can "keep it in the family."

Singer Bakar gets a small handbag and chooses to bestow it upon his 11-year-old niece. He explains that this is probably her first Prada bag, as she is on the edge of adulthood.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

#Bakar (@bakarr) opens a package intended for re-gifting. Keep watching to see #Prada friends #unbox #PradaGifts and give them to loved ones in #PradaGiftToGive. - Discover more via link in bio.

A post shared by Prada (@prada) on Nov 23, 2019 at 1:41am PST

Instagram post from Prada

By showing the recipients struggling to part with their Prada gifts, the brand is reinforcing that its designs are covetable. This series is also a twist on the popular unboxing videos seen on YouTube.

Louis Vuitton's campaign has assembled a "cast of friends" that includes influencers such as Aimee Song, Leonie Hanne and Emma Chamberlain and model Alton Mason.

The brand filmed the individuals trying on looks from its collection. The personalities playfully pose in Louis Vuitton merchandise and share their thoughts.

These shorts, which are running on the label's Web site and its social media channels, are intended to help inspire consumers' own wish lists.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

Making a Wishlist for the Holidays with #AimeeSong. This year, #LouisVuitton is celebrating the season with a cast of friends around the world. Follow along for #LVGifts inspiration via link in bio.

A post shared by Louis Vuitton Official (@louisvuitton) on Nov 27, 2019 at 7:30am PST

Instagram post from Louis Vuitton

"Even though both brands tapped influencers to star in holiday campaigns, the overall impression is closer to an 'actual' consumers than a cast of fictional campaign characters," Mr. Bruck said. "The added benefit of leveraging these carefully selected influencers is, of course, increased reach to Prada's and Louis Vuitton's target audience, but the human factor of using non-scripted individuals is the larger takeaway for these campaigns."

Influencer input

Although social media engagement has declined, interactions on influencers' sponsored Instagram posts outpace non-sponsored content, underscoring the importance of authenticity in influencer marketing.

According to InfluencerDB's 2019 Influencer Marketing Benchmarks Report, the average ratio of likes to followers declined from 2018 across sectors. In most countries, engagement from sponsored Instagram posts also outperforms non-sponsored posts as organic reach decreases ([see story](#)).

Aside from considering the format of videos for each platform, research finds that different types of content resonate better within certain social media communities.

According to a report from Gartner L2, consumers engage more with Instagram videos featuring real-life footage, while YouTube and Facebook videos that feature products and plot-driven narratives fare better in comparison. Gartner L2 attributes this partly to the Instagram audience's lower attention spans and desire for visually stimulating content, which marketers should keep in mind as they roll out video campaigns ([see story](#)).

Research shows that more than half of social media users find user-generated content to be more trustworthy and

authentic than brand images.

According to a report from Olapic, 44 percent of social media users follow influencers, including the majority of U.S. respondents. More than half of users have directly mentioned or tagged brands on social media ([see story](#)).

"Luxury brands looking to increase sales this holiday should find new ways to increase relevancy with their audience base and reflect deeper and authentic brand values on every platform," Mr. Bruck said. "Placing imagery of exquisitely styled products in whimsical environments is just not cutting it anymore with consumers in a new luxury culture where substance is the new status."

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