

COLUMNS

## 7 fundamentals of effective luxury brand communication

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*Camilla Carboni*

By **Camilla Carboni**

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Effective communication has always been fundamental in commerce, but today, as the uncertainty of current times prevail and a growing number of purchases take place online, the art of communicating effectively is truly being put to the test.

Not long ago, many luxury brands had the benefit of building in-person relationships with their customers luxury retail stores welcomed the affluent with the promise of personalized assistance and privacy.

Now, digital consumerism has disrupted the purchasing experience and luxury brands must adapt to new standards of communication.

Below are seven fundamentals of effective luxury brand communication that have become increasingly essential as the role of digital marketing and ecommerce expands in the retail ecosystem:

**Highlight what matters most to affluent consumers**

Effective luxury communication requires an understanding of what matters most to affluent consumers.

Unlike mainstream communication, which targets the commodity-driven consumer, luxury communication is not driven by price.

Discounts, close-out deals and hard-sell sales language simply are not appropriate, as those are not the key driving factors in luxury consumerism.

Instead, luxury brand communication needs to showcase an understanding of what matters most to affluent clientele in the buy cycle, such as the quality of the product, experience of purchasing from the specific brand and the connection to the brand itself.

**Curate an alluring brand narrative**

Since price is not the driving factor in luxury consumerism, establishing a strong brand identity is paramount.

Over the past year, this need has become increasingly essential, as the shift to digital consumerism continues to

accelerate.

The ecommerce environment can quickly reduce a luxury brand to commodity status, if the brand's values are not upheld.

To curate an alluring brand narrative, luxury brands should look to their consumers, origin, materials, processes and beliefs.

Accentuate uniqueness to showcase distinction

To set themselves apart in the digital landscape, luxury brands need to highlight the uniqueness of their products or services. This can be done by showcasing their brand narrative, value and quality of their offerings and the experience that their brand offers, but not through a process of comparison.

Unlike commodity-based brands, luxury brands differentiate themselves by uniqueness, rather than engaging in comparative communications.

Instead of reducing a luxury brand to the status of one of many, luxury brand communication should elevate the brand to a status of one of a kind.

Consider every touch point along the consumer journey

Communicating effectively, particularly in the luxury market, takes careful consideration of every touch point along the consumer journey.

It is not sufficient for luxury brands to refine one aspect of their communications, such as their Web site copywriting, yet neglect to consider their purchase confirmation email, shipment notification messaging, product packaging or customer service responses.

A well-thought-out and thoroughly orchestrated communications strategy is essential to preserving the identity of luxury brands in the digital age.

Remain consistent and on-brand in all communications

While consistency of experience is key for any brand, it is even more crucial for luxury brands, whose consumers expect uncompromising quality, outright authenticity and acute attention to detail.

This holds true for all touch points along the consumer journey, both in-person and online and, as such, brand consistency should be carefully considered prior to any communication being published or delivered.

Every single communication should be thought of as part of the overarching brand strategy and should always enhance not detract from the experience of the brand.

Cultivate a sense of exclusivity, while remaining uniquely personalized

Luxury brands, by nature, have always been desired by a greater number of individuals than those who have the means to access, partake in and experience their offerings.

In an era of digital marketing and ecommerce, luxury brands must cultivate a reputation of unwavering excellence, or their aura of exclusivity can quickly be forgotten.

Importantly, however, luxury brands must simultaneously be both welcoming and personalized, as relationships remain at the forefront of luxury consumerism.

Nurture customer relationships, digital relationships included

As digital marketing, automation and artificial intelligence gain prominence in the luxury sector, the importance of developing and nurturing personalized relationships with consumers heightens.

Luxury brands now face new challenges and must find new ways to retain relationships with consumers.

As engagement shifts from in-person to online, communication needs to be consistently evaluated and optimized to bridge the gap between automated digital consumerism and personalized human connection.

AS THE ROLE of ecommerce expands in the retail ecosystem, so must the role of communication.

Luxury brands need to stay true to their essence, while embracing new opportunities to cultivate relationships with their customers in a digital age.

*Camilla Carboni is a luxury brand copywriter and founder of The Copy Curator, Denver, CO. Reach her at [camilla@camillacarboni.com](mailto:camilla@camillacarboni.com). She is an honoree on Luxury Daily's 2021 Luxury Women to Watch list.*

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