

INTERNET

Salvatore Ferragamo pushes video ads via email campaign

September 23, 2010



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High-end designer Salvatore Ferragamo is promoting its new W bag that launched at a Fashion's Night Out event this month with an email campaign that was sent to a list of dedicated subscribers.



The email prompted consumers to click an ad, bringing them to the Ferragamo Web site that detailed the event and included a video. When it comes to luxury brands, their email campaigns do not stray too far from the path followed by non-luxurious brands.

"Basic best practices [such as getting the] right message to the right audience at the right time and place aren't different for a luxury brand than any other," said Dave Lewis, chief marketing officer at **Message Systems**, San Francisco. "But your margin for error is much tighter, as are the consequences if you get it wrong."

"Affluent individuals tend to be busy and the competition for their business is intense," he said. "So everything from your targeting criteria to your message, offer and choice of channel must be spot-on."

Email works

According to the **Direct Marketing Association**, email continues to deliver the highest

return on investment of any marketing channel, bringing in \$43.62 for each dollar spent in 2009. This figure is more than twice the ROI from Internet search advertising, which came in second at \$21.85 per dollar spent.

Forrester Research recently reported that spending on email marketing in the United States is expected to expand to \$2 billion by 2014. This is an annual compound growth rate of nearly 11 percent.

A **MarketingSherpa** survey found that email is one of only two tactics where more marketers increased budgets than decreased budgets in 2009. The other was social media.

Forrester has also found that including video in email messaging can double or triple click rates. Even better, fancy technology was not necessary. Clickable screenshots of video, which directed readers to a Web page where the video played, were just as effective.

Luxurious challenges

San Francisco-based Len Shneyder, product marketing director at **Unica**, said that when it comes to marketing, luxury brands face the same problems as any other brand.

“A luxury brand is not a different category of email per se,” Mr. Shneyder said. “It’s still promotional, but if I were to guess, I’d say that the overall volume of recipients might be somewhat smaller, as the product is more exclusive and appeals to a smaller customer base.”

Message System’s Mr. Lewis said that luxury brands invest in understanding their audiences’ needs and wants, going beyond simple demographics and honing in on their psychographics, preferences and behaviors.

He said brands need to integrate that intelligence into how they position themselves and every aspect of their program.

For any email campaign to be effective, a brand first needs to understand how the message will be consumed and then must optimize it across all platforms.

This ensures that, regardless of where it is opened, the message conveys the primary calls to action and branding.

The **Ferragamo** email campaign sent out last week is not mobile optimized, which may be damaging to the brand. When a message is not accessible in various forms, consumers are put off and less likely to click the link.

The question is, has Ferragamo missed its target entirely?

“Email contains elements of all other forms of marketing,” Unica’s Mr. Shneyder said. “Branding is conveyed through look and feel, and depending how the email is constructed, it can help or harm that branding.”

“If upon opening a message a customer sees a layout that doesn’t render well on a mobile

device, or their Hotmail or Gmail account, they will be put off and less likely to click on a link to the message,” he said. “What gets hurt, besides the bottom line, is the branding.”

Ferragamo might have lost points in failing to optimize the email, but it did succeed by incorporating video into its campaign.

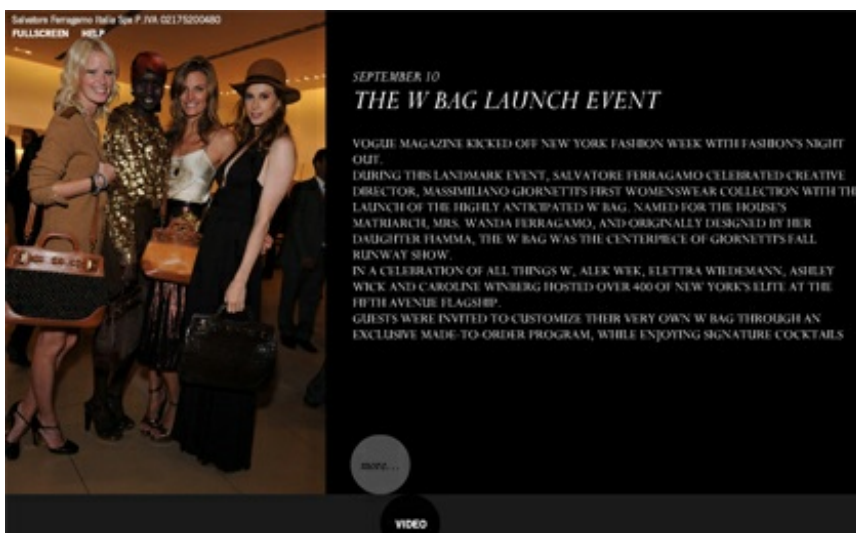
“Make your message as personal as possible, appealing to the intangible benefits of your brand and how it complements their lifestyle,” Mr. Lewis said.

Once the consumer clicks on the link with the email, they are navigated to the Ferragamo landing page.

The landing page features a brief overview of the W bag’s premier at Fashion’s Night Out on Sept. 10. It explains how the flagship store on Fifth Avenue hosted a party with more than 400 guests, who were able to create custom W bags.

The bags and event highlighted creative director Massimiliano Giornetti’s first women’s wear collection.

Here is a screen shot of the landing page on Ferragamo's Web site:



Below the event write-up, the site prompts consumers to watch the video.

The Fashion’s Night Out video features interviews with three guests, who each praise Massimiliano’s contribution to the collection, their W bags and the event.

The video can be viewed via the link that was included in Salvatore Ferragamo’s email campaign [here](#).

Once the video finishes, consumers have the option of locating a store, reading about the history behind Ferragamo, or purchasing a Ferragamo bag directly.

This tactic proves effective because brands need to think in terms of multichannel, specifically with email campaigns.

Multichannel efforts make getting information to the consumer easier and help provide a personal touch in lieu of a sales associate.

Message System’s Mr. Lewis advises brands to construct their campaigns around that

outcome.

For all brands, email campaigns prove to be a cost-effective and immediate marketing channel, delivering targeted communications to engaged customers.

“More and more, users are checking email on the go, on mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets like the iPad,” Unica’s Mr. Shneyeder said. “Email is becoming ever more immediate and, as such, should be an important component of any brand's marketing efforts.

“Because of the relative low cost of email marketing it also makes it affordable and a very rich medium to communicate with customers,” he said. “Yes, communication is the key and in order for it to be successful, it should be a conversation, not a one way bullhorn.”

“Listen to what your customers are telling you, hone your message and create a preference center so you know how and how often your customers want to hear from you.”

Final Take

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