

EVENTS / CAUSES

G.H.Mumm taps experiential marketing for branded events

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By TRICIA CARR

High-end spirits brand G.H.Mumm is tapping affluent consumers' preference for experiential marketing with a new event tactic that will show guests the rituals of Champagne tasting.

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The first G.H.Mumm Ball was held earlier this month in Paris. The brand's execution of the new events centers on its Champagne Protocoles de G.H.Mumm guide to sabering, selecting, serving and storing the spirit that is available on a mobile application, Facebook app and its Web site.

"We believe that this new ambition will attract our customers," said Stephanie Mingam, communications director at G.H. Mumm Champagnes, Paris. "Our research has shown that there is a growing interest from consumers for a return to traditions and a certain form of formality – for instance, traditional weddings, picnics, cooking at home and balls.

"We believe that our target consumers find it fun and enjoyable to know about [Champagne]," she said. "They are keen to know about the authenticity of the brand, its origins, values and expressions.

“Playing with rituals is a distinctive way of educating them, and the success of the iPhone app demonstrates it.”

G.H.Mumm is part of Martell Mumm Perrier-Jouët, a brand of the Pernod Ricard group.

Having a ball

Through its first invitation-only ball, G.H.Mumm is looking to immerse guests in its branded rituals of Champagne tasting.

The inaugural ball was held at the Pavillon Cambon Capucine in Paris. The interior was designed to reflect the company’s private guest house Maison Cordon Rouge in Reims.



G.H.Mumm ball

The brand invited the Maison’s guests and close friends with a total of 300 attendees.

Pernod Chairman/CEO César Giron and the house’s cellar master, Didier Mariotti, greeted guests. Also in attendance was Israeli artist and Champagne Protocoles de G.H.Mumm illustrator Noma Bar.



G.H.Mumm ball

French actor Lambert Wilson gave a toast to start the event and introduced the tasting

guide to guests.

Additional guests included artist Louis-Marie de Castelbajac, jet setter Emmanuel de Brantes, AarRON group members Olivier Coursier et Simon Buret, film producer Regis Wagnier and French actors Stanislas Merhar and Christopher Thompson.

During the event, G.H.Mumm put on a show of waltzing wine waiters choreographed by Stéphane Jarny. The dancers showed the audience G.H.Mumm products during the performance such as the Protocoles Deluxe Case and the Protocoles gift box.



G.H.Mumm ball

It makes sense that the brand is marketing via events at this time since luxury in the form of premium experiences is seeing the most spending action while high-end goods are lagging in comparison, according to findings from a recent study by the Boston Consulting Group.

The key finding of BCG's Luxe Redux report is that there has been a shift in spending habits, where 55 percent of spending comes from luxury experiences rather physical goods. In addition, experiential luxury purchases grew 50 percent faster worldwide year over year than sales of luxury goods ([see story](#)).

"The brand will be able to reach its target market more strategically as consumers will have either attended one of these affluent events, or have heard about the experiences from past attendees," said Dalia Strum, president of Dalia Inc., New York.

"This will create the desire for its clientele to recreate similar experiences for themselves, as well as to share with others, starting with the elegant G.H.Mumm branded Champagne," she said.

"This has proven to be an efficient form of experiencing and enjoying not only the products that a brand has to offer, but the lifestyle that is associated with it."

That's the spirit

Scottish spirits brand John Walker & Sons is also using experiential marketing to attract affluent consumers at this time.

The brand is inviting select guests in Asia-Pacific on board a branded yacht to partake in activities that will explore the history of the brand and showcase the new triple malt John Walker & Sons Odyssey.

The path of the John Walker & Sons Voyager yacht follows the original trade routes taken by ships that first distributed its whiskeys around the world.

John Walker & Sons' strategy combines one-on-one interactions with brand centric-entertainment with a goal of reaching the surge of millionaires under the age of 45 in Asia-Pacific ([see story](#)).

Additionally, Portón Pisco is leaning on experiential and event marketing as primary awareness and brand-building channels to draw awareness in the United States market.

The high-end spirits brand believes that allowing consumers to experience the product will help to portray the luxury image ([see story](#)).

However, spirits marketers should be careful not to create an experience that is purely aspirational so that consumers can see their product as a part of their everyday lives and eventually make a purchase, per Pam Danziger, president of [Unity Marketing](#), Stephens, PA.

"Sure, it gives G.H.Mumm an opportunity to reach an exclusive audience and make an impression with them, but I do not think it really translates into a brand-building effort across its potential target market of Champagne buyers," Ms. Danziger said.

"It looks to me like they are counting on the aspiration factor as the key driver for building the brand – for example, 'I want to go to the ball but was not invited so I will drink G.H.Mumm Champagne to vicariously participate in the ball,'" she said.

"Today's more eclectic luxury consumer is looking for inspiration from luxury brands, not aspiration."

Final Take

Tricia Carr, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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