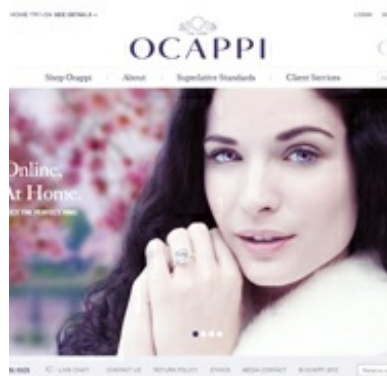


MULTICHANNEL

New online diamond ring retailer fills service void with home try-on

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By TRICIA CARR

Ocappi, the just-launched ecommerce site for diamond engagement rings, is looking to distinguish itself on the crowded digital medium with a home try-on service.

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The retailer is centering its launch activities on its “One&Only Home Try On” service since the brand commissioned New York University research and found that 91 percent of those surveyed said that they would like to have a few rings at home to show family and friends. The new brand is also starting a digital ad campaign April 11 on “The Knot” to reach its target audience at the start of bridal season.

“We are launching with our One&Only Home Try On replica ring service at the center of our strategy because we believe that this service is going to change the way people shop for engagement rings,” said Isaac Gurary, founder/CEO of **Ocappi**, New York.

“People are going to see the dedication to quality craftsmanship, customer service and overall attention to detail that we bring to the table,” he said.

“We plan on building Ocappi by word of mouth, and this service is going to have people talking about what we do and the quality of the product that we offer.”

Diamond in the rough

Ocappi is tapping the growing consumer interest in purchasing diamond engagement rings via digital means by offering online-only sales.



Ocappi.com

However, the brand's home try-on service is an "industry first," per Ocappi, that is meant to add ease to the shopping process.

Consumers can browse six replica rings at a time at home that are shipped for free and can be held for five days. The replicas are sterling silver with cubic zirconia, while the actual rings are made with top-quality diamonds and metals.



One&Only

Ocappi offers rings priced at \$5,000-\$45,000, including single-diamond styles and The Ocappi Halo for up to \$34,925.



Ocappi Halo

The demand for diamonds is expected to grow 6 percent every year until 2020, according to a 2011 report from Bain & Co.

Not surprisingly, Ocappi and other engagement ring marketers are letting consumers shop in unique ways.

For example, Van Cleef & Arpels stepped up to its competition by launching a mobile application that acts as a size guide, catalog and lifestyle resource for brides-to-be.

Consumers can see an engagement ring as it is being worn and find a matching wedding band and other jewelry. There is also a size guide for brides that do not know their finger width ([see story](#)).

In addition, De Beers launched iPhone and iPad apps at the start of last year's wedding season that serve as a wedding jewelry finder as well as a consultant on diamonds and the brand.

Consumers can look at engagement rings, wedding bands and jewelry, but there is also access to videos and other details about the De Beers brand, history, design and the diamonds it uses ([see story](#)).

Diamond ring marketers are letting consumers browse beyond bricks-and-mortar stores.

"There are plenty of brick-and-mortar jewelers, but as you know, getting to the store is not always convenient," Mr. Gurary said. "Furthermore, unless you are in a large city or metropolitan area, it isn't always possible to get to a luxury jeweler.

"We think that discerning consumers should be able to shop wherever they are," he said. "We are providing a service that allows people to shop on their own terms."

Behavioral analysis

Prior to its launch, Ocappi commissioned research on the behavior of engagement ring

shoppers that uncovered voids in the industry.

The survey was conducted in March by New York University sociologist Dr. Anna Akbari among 704 adults who have shopped for an engagement ring.

More than two-thirds of respondents said that the engagement ring shopping experience does not have their needs in mind and more than 70 percent strongly disagreed that the ring buying experience is effortless.

Ten percent of respondents bought an engagement ring online and 36 percent considered it.

Also, 71 percent of those who bought an engagement ring online reported the experience as “rewarding” or “highly rewarding.”

Furthermore, 85 percent of those surveyed disagreed that engagement ring shopping is “guy-friendly,” 78 percent said “the groom was an afterthought” in the experience and more than 50 percent said that it was stressful.

“What we think has held back online sales of engagement rings is the inability, until now, to get a tangible sense of what you were buying,” Mr. Gurary said.

“For many people pictures alone aren't sufficient information on which to base a purchase of this magnitude,” he said. “The One&Only Home Try-On solves that problem.”

Final Take

Tricia Carr, associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York