

MOBILE

Estée Lauder exec champions the power of personalization

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By JEN KING

NEW YORK - A senior executive from Estée Lauder Cos. at the Luxury Interactive 2013 conference stressed the importance of creating a seamless mobile commerce experience for everyday purchases to heighten the overall consumer experience.

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During the “Building a Brand’s World Presence Online” session, the executive highlighted Estée Lauder Cos.’ achievements that have kept the brand at the forefront of mobile commerce. Brands seeking to increase consumer engagement should optimize mobile platforms to engage consumers in various markets.

“The mobile platforms are one process, it’s really an art to cadence together the 30 brands while keeping consistency,” said Swan Sit, executive director of strategy and planning at **Estée Lauder Cos.**, New York.

“Estée Lauder drives digital traffic with unique programs to create a deeper brand experience and our ability to foster new consumers,” Ms. Sit said. “Personal is powerful.”

True to the core

Building off its brand heritage of innovation through high-touch, Estée Lauder claims it is driven by creativity and innovation while tailoring its products to fit social needs and

connect digitally to recreate its high-touch services online.

To remain true to its core, Estée Lauder uses physical and virtual storytelling to create brand equity and foster personal connections.

For Estée Lauder, personal is powerful and to achieve personal engagement with consumers, the brand has successfully balanced art and science in terms of ecommerce.

The brand has created hundreds of ecommerce Web sites in 24 countries, all with a set of local preferences that are virtually integrated across all platforms. The consistency of its engagement drives consumers.



Estée Lauder's Ms. Sit speaking at Luxury Interactive 2013

Estée Lauder's digital platform is claimed to be scalable and flexible, allowing the brand to add newly acquired brands or new markets with ease. As Ms. Sit explained, ecommerce is typically a company's largest store in the world and must be approached with the mindset of a retailer.

To truly succeed digitally, brands need to have a strong mobile presence and be aware that consumer behavior fundamentally changes with a convergence of devices.

Ms. Sit noted that Estée Lauder has mobile commerce sites in more than 20 countries, a 75 percent increase from last year. In this aspect, it is important for brands to monitor the digital trends of emerging markets.

With this in mind, brands also need to create content that is relevant and accessible to local consumers. The accessibility should go beyond just language optimization, but appeal to the local consumer's sensibilities, whether it is in unfamiliarity with a product line, value and authenticity of the brand or payment methods.



Estée Lauder's Ms. Sit at Luxury Interactive 2013

Furthermore, mobile should not be simply a scaled-down Web site but rather creative friction-less navigation with clear call to action, larger pictures and used with common smartphone movements.

Content found on mobile needs to be multi-dimensional and should include product information, user reviews and a store locator. To further engage consumers, adding a mobile wishlist, an in-store guide or gamification can recreate the in-store counter experience.

An omnichannel experience that moves seamlessly across devices engages consumers in a way traditional Web sites cannot.

The capabilities of a mobile device also enhance the consumer's experience and alters the level of engagement due to the device's mobility. This is effectively shown in how-to videos curated by beauty marketers to create a high-touch digital experience.

The story of beauty

To build digital differentiation, brands should seek to create an engaging story with a curated look and an editorial focus. Doing this creates confidence in the brand's products while engaging brand enthusiasts.

For example, Estée Lauder relaunched its Advanced Night Repair serum campaign through a digital magazine on social magazine application Flipboard that included editorial content from Hearst's beauty editors.

The featured content found on Flipboard is likely to appeal to new consumers through the app's sharing and consolidating capabilities ([see story](#)).

For the holidays, it is essential for brands to remain consistent across all platforms and maintain customer service practices.

"Estée Lauder Cos.' has a unique online platform and our holiday strategy is across all platforms," Ms. Sit said.

"Our global calendar has different cadence ideas for each of the 30 brands," she said. "The holidays start earlier and are bigger than ever, so each brand has a strategy with specials, events, gifts with purchase, et cetera.

"We need to regulate traffic, but maintain our level of customer service."

Final Take

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