

INTERNET

Amazon's beauty store poses next ecommerce hurdle for luxury brands

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By JEN KING

Online retailer Amazon launched its luxury beauty store Oct. 10 to expand its luxury offerings to aspirational consumers aiming to save money on high-end products while still obtaining a piece of the luxury lifestyle.

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The highly-anticipated launch may spur luxury brands to heavily promote their ecommerce platforms to retain sales and prevent products from slipping toward everyday commodity status. With Amazon stepping into the luxury beauty sector, brands and high-end retailers should look to increase levels of consumer engagement and customer service via ecommerce so brand allure is not diluted.

"At Amazon we are always increasing our selection and evaluating the opportunity to add new stores to our site based on the needs and demands of our customers," said Nell Rona, a public relations spokesperson for [Amazon](#), Seattle.

"We know that our beauty customers are searching for luxury beauty brands on Amazon and are excited to introduce this new experience that allows them to browse and purchase the brands and products they're looking for," she said.

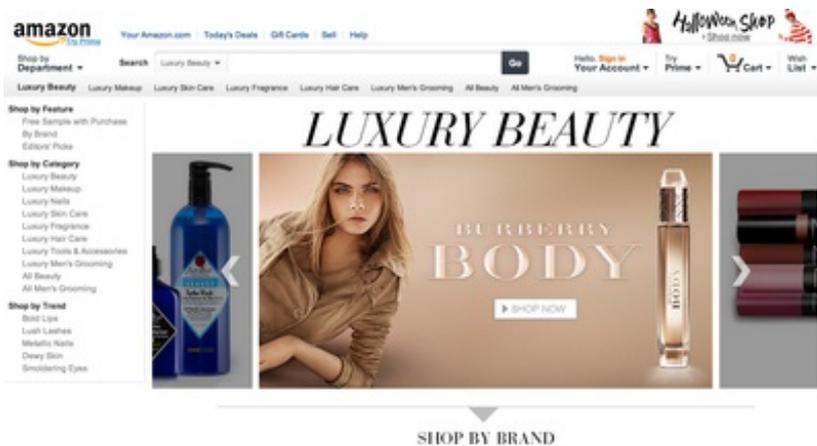
"Amazon also wanted to offer our brand partners an elegant and refined place to

showcase their products to our more than 215 million active customers."

Beauty with a click

Amazon's luxury beauty store can be accessed with a click-through on the retailer's sidebar.

Consumers are able to search by "feature," "category" or "trend," allowing for a personalized and customizable experience. The guided search may also help consumers discover new products.

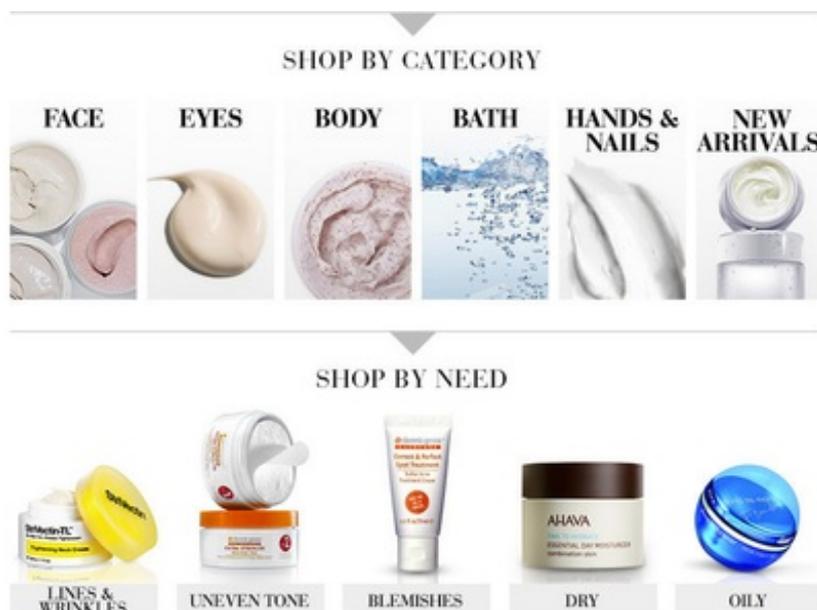


Amazon's luxury beauty store homepage

In the feature section, consumers can shop by free samples with purchase, by brand and pick's by Amazon's 12 beauty editors. Categories break down the search to specific products such as skin care, nail polish and men's grooming.

The third section, trends, will change seasonally to represent the most current beauty styles. Current fall trends include bold lips and metallic nails.

Once a category is selected the search becomes even more specific to that consumer. For example, in skin care consumers can search via type of product or skin care need.



Skin care search filters

Brands available on Amazon's luxury beauty store includes Burberry fragrances, L'Occitane, NARS and Stila. There are 24 brands available in total.

Although many consumers turn to Amazon to save money, the beauty Web site does not show a significant difference in price for many of the products available. For example, a 100ml. bottle of Burberry Brit women's fragrance retails for \$94.00 on both Burberry's Web site and on Amazon.



Burberry product page on Amazon

Even with near identical pricing, Amazon is likely to see a great amount of interest in its Web site due to the ease of its one-click shopping and one-stop shopping capabilities.

Hot commodities

Diffusing luxury products to other channels does not have to diminish allure as long as brands maintain a high level of consumer engagement for ecommerce purchases.

Though it is unlikely that Amazon will harm the ecommerce sites of luxury brands, the luxury sector should look to enhance their online shopping presence to better compete with the online retailer.

Furthermore, as Amazon grows its high-end product range, luxury brands that rely on ecommerce for sales must be sure to offer a shopping experience that matches the digital retail giant's site.

In May, the company's Amazon Fashion division had been stepping it up to provide affluent consumers with high-end products, especially in the contemporary clothing and accessories categories. Luxury goods makers should keep an eye on the site, but it will be a while before Amazon develops a reputation as a luxury marketplace (*see story*).

Like bricks-and-mortar retailers, the shopping experience is a pivotal aspect of the luxury sector.

"The luxury beauty store features a curated selection and an enhanced shopping experience where customers can shop a complete look from a single destination," Ms. Rona said.

"Shoppers will also find more product information, visuals and editorial content to help with their purchasing decisions," she said.

"We want every customer that is searching for luxury beauty brands on Amazon to be able

to find what they they're looking for."

Final Take

Jen King, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/-GyiZdG3YCI](https://www.youtube.com/embed/-GyiZdG3YCI)

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