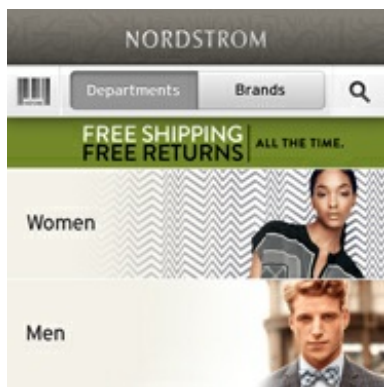


MOBILE

Nordstrom Direct president: social media is word of mouth on steroids

November 8, 2013



By JOE MCCARTHY

NEW YORK – The president of Nordstrom Direct discussed the retailer's prescient embrace of a single consumer experience across all channels when ecommerce first arrived and its customer-centric culture at the L2 Forum 2013.



During the "A Conversation with Jamie Nordstrom" session, Jamie Nordstrom explained that, far from viewing Amazon as an enemy, Nordstrom takes cues from the behemoth online marketplace to improve its digital customer service. The president also declared, when pressed, Twitter to be the most effective social media platform for engaging consumers.

"To be customer-centric today means investing in technology, Big Data, social and areas that customers find relevant," Seattle-based **Nordstrom Direct's** Mr. Nordstrom said.

"It's not about channels," he said. "Nobody calls themselves an Internet customer. They're loyal to brands.

"We built our business on word of mouth," he said. "Social media is that same word of mouth on steroids."

Customer-centric

Mr. Nordstrom explained that the retailer began in 1901 as a shoe seller that distinguished itself from competitors by offering actual shoe sizes. The brand embraced this commitment to consumer preference from that point on.

Unlike competitors who had viewed ecommerce and in-store commerce as distinct entities, Mr. Nordstrom said that the retailer married the two channels from the beginning and treats emerging channels in the same way.



Nordstrom iPad app's virtual dressing room

Since many brands often hire different teams to work on different channels, internal competition can arise as channels grapple for market share of the same consumers.

Furthermore, the executive dismissed the notion that channels cannibalize one another because they all contribute to building brand loyalty.

"The customer doesn't care who gets credit for the sale," Mr. Nordstrom said. "When silos compete against each other, there will be a lot of seams in [the path to purchase]."

Forests

Mr. Nordstrom said that Twitter holds an advantage over other social media platforms because it fosters dialogue rather than one-sided monologues. Unlike other channels, Twitter allows a brand to build up trust with consumers, according to Mr. Nordstrom.

Although Amazon is sometimes regarded skeptically by luxury brands, Mr. Nordstrom expressed his admiration for the online marketplace.

Amazon on Oct. 10 launched its luxury beauty store 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.

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 ([see story](#)).

Mr. Nordstrom stressed that the brand's most successful stores are located near competitors.

"Amazon has been great for retail," Mr. Nordstrom said. "It has raised the bar for customer expectations. We want to be where the customer is."

Final take

Joe McCarthy, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/BpAtupf31ZQ](https://www.youtube.com/embed/BpAtupf31ZQ)

© Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.