

OUT OF HOME

Jolting jaded consumers with out-of-home displays, events

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By JOE MCCARTHY

SAN FRANCISCO - Brands are leveraging innovative in-store and out-of-home tactics to educate, build awareness and stoke sales, according to a session March 27 at ad:tech San Francisco.

The "Overstimulated: Winning over the Jaded Audience" session explored emerging tactics such as a virtual spokesmen, body sensor in-store installations and interactive subway displays. When seeking to create memorable experiences in a crowded retail space, luxury brands are increasingly turning to new technologies to appear innovative.

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"One of the biggest problems with experiential marketing is that ... as soon as you leave it's gone," said Sam Santarelli, executive vice president of [Brightline Interactive](#), Washington. "How do you keep people coming back and thinking about the experience?"

"When working in the luxury space, people want the experience to be deeper and more meaningful, and they're not willing to commit as much time and energy," he said. "It's hard to find the right balance."

Interacting on a new level

In-store events are essential for building brand loyalty and drawing the attention of unfamiliar consumers, especially in busy cities.

Luxury brands often seek to impart a sense of authority by adopting sleek new technologies or taking uncommon approaches.

For instance, British fashion label Burberry opened a new digitally enhanced retail location to showcase its beauty line.

The Burberry Beauty Box, located in London's Covent Garden, carries Burberry's beauty, fragrance and accessory lines, and offers consumers the ability to discover the brand's cosmetics through both sales associate consultations and digital touch points, including mobile checkout. By creating a space specifically for its beauty line, Burberry is able to encourage consumer interaction with its beauty products, drive sales of the new line and test out new retail tactics ([see story](#)).



Interior of Burberry's Beauty Box

Other times brands tap into popular, localized trends.

For example, department store chain Barneys New York added hard-to-get Cronuts, or a cross between a croissant and a doughnut, to its merchandise March 1 at a charity event to drive in-store traffic to its newly revamped former Co-op stores.

At Barneys' stores on the Upper West Side and Brooklyn in New York and The Grove in Los Angeles, consumers could buy an unmarked pastry box that might contain a Cronut or another type of baked good from Dominique Ansel, the baker behind the pastry craze. Even with the uncertainty of actually receiving a Cronut, Barneys sold out within minutes, with long lines of people waiting for the chance for the trendy food item ([see story](#)).

Activated content

Out-of-home advertising poses further challenges, since the outside world cannot be curated like a store. How does a brand stand out amid the crowd?

Mr. Santarelli said that the simplest way to stand out is by introducing an installation or object

that consumers have never encountered before.

For instance, some brands have installed virtual spokesmen at outdoor events. The spokesmen are programmed to respond to touch points in an app, relay brand information and prompt consumers to engage in other branded activities.

Instead of the usual posters that cover subway walls, some brands are creating interactive screens that track human movements.

Mr. Santarelli said that some screens feature an eye that follows people as they walk, registering movements and unlocking additional content if someone's attention is grabbed.

"As technology increases with sensors, you're beginning to do these things at daytime [and] not just at night," Mr. Santarelli said. "We're beginning to see meaningful results."

Final Take

Joe McCarthy, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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