

COLUMNS

How luxury brands must navigate point of sale

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Customers expect to be blown away by the opulence of a luxury brand's retail store. No longer is it just a place to purchase products but can be a destination a must-see stop for consumers to soak up the luxurious experience created by the product displays.

This is supported by the Current State of Australia's Luxury Retail Market 2015 research report from Colliers International that reveals consumers covet the superior in-store experience and exclusivity of luxury shopping.

Generate sales

This research provides evidence to show luxury brands need to deliver an exclusive in-store environment that customers desire, to help attract more people in-store, effectively facilitate engagement with products and encourage sales.

A key part of creating an exclusive in-store experience is the brand's ability to create a luxury point of sale (POS) environment.

As the POS display is generally considered to be the permanent face of the brand to consumers, the display needs to engage them at the front line of the sales process.

In the absence of a sales assistant, the POS display can act as a silent sales person, conveying exactly what a sales assistant would do if he or she were there in person.

The POS display should also be designed to provide a unique and engaging customer experience with the brand to drive and convert sales.

With this in mind, here are some key strategies luxury brands can embrace to enhance their current POS solutions and build a superior in-store customer experience fitting of their brand.

Premium fixtures embody a sense of luxury

Creating a first-class in-store experience for customers is important to reinforce the premium nature of a luxury brand.

One way that this can be achieved is by incorporating superior fixtures into the brand's POS display that reflects the same quality as the product.

For example, Met Hennessy Australia wanted to bring the same luxury that clients expect from its product to its new POS units to enhance its first Hennessy experience.

POS units to showcase its finest Hennessy cognac range.

Moët Hennessy achieved this by using superior materials and strategic lighting for the new units.

These materials included Hennessy-designed aluminum laminates, mirrored and matte, screen-printed Hennessy lattice logos, polished acrylic feature displays, LED lighting to spotlight products and lumi-panel shelves to offset display bottles.

Try innovative solutions

Luxury brands are at the top of the range within the market and, as such, convey a sense of exclusivity to the customer.

Continuing this experience in-store is essential to maintain a consistent brand image, namely by providing customers with an innovative and unique POS experience.

For example, incorporating technology into POS displays can provide a new level of personal customer engagement, such as having an iPad built into the unit to demonstrate the products in an innovative and interactive way through video.

Experimenting with design is another option to build a unique and premium experience for the customer. This could include breaking away from the traditional rectangular gondolas or wall units on which most stores and retailers rely.

Skin care brand L'Occitane is a great example of a brand pushing the boundaries, where it worked with EDA to create a hexagonal unit with a separate circular header display standing out due to the unique design.

Refresh units regularly

To maintain a brand's status as exclusive and luxurious it is important to update POS displays regularly to stay ahead of the curve.

As soon as the POS unit starts to look old or outdated, brands may see a drop in sales, since customers are always looking for new luxury products.

Showcase the brand

Many luxury brands are well known for their iconic branding and positioning.

Showcasing this on the POS unit is a key consideration so that customers can instantly recognize the brand, wherever they are in the world. Customers need to be able to recognize the brand merely through its core colors and product design.

CONSUMERS EXPECT luxury brands to consistently shine and lead their categories.

Through refreshing POS displays and creating a luxury experience brands will be able to achieve this and more.

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