

l'œil

by L'Observatoire Cetelem

July 2018

in depth study of new
consumption trends

www.observatoirecetelem.com

Five quick marketing lessons



**“Focus on the minutiae.
Address the details first
and then move on to the rest.
Reject the arrogance of ideas
that claim to describe
all reality. Trust the intuitions
that are born and the embryos
that continuously emerge”.**

La nuit est encore jeune, Collectif Catastrophe

It's summer. When better to slow down time, take stock, think and learn the lessons from the preceding year. That is what L'Œil decided to do. What do the forty or so snippets of news reported between September 2017 and June this year tell us about the way brands do things, but also about us as consumers? After reading through these articles, L'Œil came up with five marketing lessons, which were published every Monday in July.

L'Œil de L'Observatoire Cetelem analyses micro-facts on consumption, revealing the emergence of new manners of spending.

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After consumers and consum'actors, here come consum'authors

Consumers are increasingly well placed to stand in defiance against big brands. Their feeling is that these brands' interests are not in line with their own or those of society. This increasingly prompts them to explore new paths, while also fostering new expectations. **Feeling acknowledged by brands is the first step. Being able to take part in the design of products and the services linked to them is the second. This is the new challenge facing brands.**

At a time when horizontal trade is rapidly gaining ground, how can brands continue to "look down" on consumers if they are to have any hope of convincing individuals to adopt their vision of the world or pick up the behaviours they wish to see in them? Brands and retailers must now learn to stand side by side with consumers. Not as equals, but as allies. By taking on board their perspectives, their opinions and their ideas. A way of acknowledging them and establishing a relationship built on trust. This approach will lie at the heart of all future business models.



Getting buyers involved

The September issue of L'Œil described the strategy implemented by Glossier, a US cosmetics brand founded in 2010 (but only recently available in France) on the back of a blog that stands out, in an environment that could not be more competitive, by regularly asking its community for input. Members can organise FaceTime calls with advisors from the brand and chat to each other on a Slack channel. **This is about more than simply buying products. Individuals can also give their opinion, take part in a project and get involved in the brand's workings.** Every new proposal prompts conversations, sharing, exchanges and criticism, all opportunities to create a buzz, capture the attention, and boost the brand's notoriety. This is a model that will inevitably appeal to Millennials. www.glossier.com



Enriching one's offering with fresh perspectives

In November 2017, French rail company SNCF called upon bloggers and influencers to come up with ideas for city break packages in places such as Limoges, Vichy and Caen with its Intercités service. Christened "*Les Echappées Intercités*" ("Intercity Escapes"), these offers took the form of themed gift boxes that included a return train ticket, a night in a hotel, two restaurant meals and two activities to enjoy over the course of the weekend. By asking bloggers to help design these offers, SNCF was looking after its image, making the most of the vibrancy of social media and adding fresh charm to real-world services. Who can say whether destinations such as Caen, Vichy and Limoges would seem as attractive were they not being lauded by bloggers? Reality is all about opinions. This was a cunning way for SNCF to get closer to customers and **turn a destination into an event.** www.sncf.com/ressources/cp_box_echappees_intercites.pdf



Recruiting a sample family

In April, L'Œil reported on the scheme launched by household appliance brand Bosch, which recruited a sample family and asked its members to go on social media to talk about their experiences of the Bosch products they chose. A second family was also selected from among the brand's influencers. In the past, brands would look for ambassadors in the celebrity world. Today, they are finding their way into the homes of families. After the era of dazzling advertising images and carefully crafted storytelling, there is now a shift towards customer testimonies and **real-world product testing.** By recruiting families as ambassadors, Bosch is strengthening its bond with customers and developing a friendly image that could never be achieved through traditional communication. www.bosch-families.fr
www.jauraispumappelermarcel.com/2018/01/et-si-vous-deveniez-la-prochaine-famille-ambadrice-du-programme-bosch-families.html

Living spaces rather than points of sale

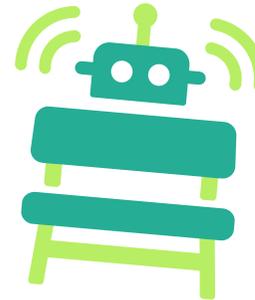
With the rise of the web and social media, shops are no longer alone in allowing consumers to take a closer look at the products they covet and benefit from the advice of sales assistants. Neither are they the only places that allow brands to showcase their products and know-how. Stores are gradually moving away from their purely transactional preoccupations to become bona fide living spaces.

But designing a living space is not just about arranging a few sofas around a shop and offering customers a cup of coffee. The idea is to provide a unique experience in existing premises or elsewhere, so as to strengthen the relationship with customers. Showing them something completely new, organising a temporary event with a cultural or entertainment slant, fuelling their desires... Why should a customer only be seen as someone who spends money?



Places that give the urge to act

In September, L'Œil highlighted the initiative set up by website My Little Paris, which had opened an ephemeral venue dubbed Mona for a period of three months. It was designed not to present the brand's offering, but to give women a taste for entrepreneurship through readings, conferences and workshops. A coworking space, a café and a meeting area were also provided. In 2016, My Little Paris had already created a "holiday home" on the outskirts of Paris, to encourage its readers to spend time together. With Mona, it went even further by giving women the urge to go into business. Opening a physical space to embody one's brand can be a great thing in itself. But using it to encourage members of a community to start a business breathes new life into the strategy and opens up fresh opportunities to pass on the brand's messages. **It is no longer enough for brands to tell their own story. Today they must enable customers to write their own.** Brands have always talked a lot. Some have put this into action. Should they now be encouraging their customers to do the same?



Places that feel like home

In December last year, UK department store John Lewis made a splash in three of its branches by setting up temporary mock apartments showcasing all its collections. Dubbed "The Residence", each could be accessed throughout the day or booked for an hour after closing time, together with a personal shopper. The retailer also offered a few lucky customers the chance to sleep there (to help them make their mind up about its sheets, duvets, mattresses, etc.), or to enjoy dinner or brunch in the apartment with friends, thanks to a partnership signed with supermarket chain Waitrose. With this initiative, the department store pushed the "try before you buy" approach to its limits, straddling the line between public and private space for the duration of the campaign. **By endeavouring to change their customers' perceptions, retailers can stand out and strengthen their relationship with them.** With the "shop in a shop" strategy now commonplace, could more retailers embrace the "home in a shop" approach to make customers feel at home? www.johnlewis.com/content/the-residence



Places of discovery

Fico Eataly World was unveiled in Bologna in February. This 100,000-square-metre food park is entirely devoted to Italian cuisine. The site boasts around forty restaurants, various delicatessens and workshops producing charcuterie, wine, beer, pasta and patisseries, as well as offering educational activities. Visitors can also explore the park's two hectares of fields and farms to see animals and cultivated products. Fico Eataly World offers brands a new forum for expression **that allows them to break free from strictly product-based communication and their usual points of sale, while enabling them to showcase their history and know-how.** In the past, brands were keen to expand their offerings. Today they are seeking to enrich them by taking consumers on a journey through their culture, thus catering for people's growing curiosity (and mistrust) about the origin of their food. Here, the Farm-to-Table concept becomes a reality.

www.eatalyworld.it/en

Knowing how to harness one's community

Inspired by the internet and social media, brands are now less concerned with the idea of targeting consumers than with creating fan communities. For brands, having a community can be a new, "softer" way of selling their products and services, one that signals that they are progressively minded, driven by empathy and easy going when it comes to relationships, never seeking to impose themselves on anyone. But how do you prompt a consumer to come out of isolation and join a community?

Building a community is not about recruiting indiscriminately or trying to secure the loyalty of buyers through clever sales ploys, it's about giving them meaning and a *raison d'être*. What is the brand's role, its mission within its market or its environment? What do its members do when they meet? And what do they genuinely share?



Turning one's community into a sales force

In December 2017, when Adidas launched Glitch, its latest football boot, the brand followed a unique approach founded on rarity and a network of local influencers. Indeed, in order to acquire the boots, buyers had to retrieve a code from one of around thirty Instagrammers and YouTubers from the Parisian football scene, via the dedicated Glitch mobile app. Each influencer had ten codes to give out and new buyers were given ten codes of their own to share, thus creating a viral distribution network. Buyers could then download an app to customise and order their boots. The campaign demonstrated that **it is not always necessary to have points of sale or even a website to sell a product**. It also showed that people can be persuaded to make a purchase without even having touched a product or tried it out. **The opinion of peers on social media is as good as a foolproof recommendation to some** and is enough to ward off the risk of disappointment. This is especially true in the case of enthusiasts and members of local clubs (rather than professionals, who tend to be viewed as having a vested interest in brands) who see the campaign as creating a sense of exclusivity.



Giving one's community a visible role

Early this year, L'Œil mentioned an initiative launched in Colmar, on Route de Neuf-Brisach, where six farmers had acquired a former Lidl supermarket to sell their own produce, all of which is grown in Alsace. Christened Cœur Paysan, the shop is run by thirty producers, identifiable thanks to their green aprons. They are involved in the project as company shareholders and have to spend at least two half-days in the store per month. By selling itself as a community of producers, the shop **shows that retailers can operate differently**, because its members contribute not only to supplying the store, but also to its staffing and management, and to the promotion of agricultural know-how as a whole. **What better than a community of producers to spark the curiosity of customers**, encourage them to find out more about production conditions (fair prices rather than low prices) and enhance their product knowledge?

www.coeur-paysan.com



Sharing one's culture with one's community

Last April in Paris, the Duc Hotel (a short walk from the Garnier Opera House) hosted the first Vogue Experience, a public evening event that offered three hours' access (in exchange for a €39 entry fee) to a range of workshop-based experiences created by the publication's partner brands. Levi's set up a tailor shop, Nike brought its customisation workshop and, on the beauty side of things, René Furterer, Guerlain, Nyx Professional Makeup, Dyson and Lierac offered consultations and product tests. Meanwhile, Vestiaire Collective and Galeries Lafayette held style masterclasses and workshops. Vogue Experience was also a great opportunity for fashion fans to meet editors of the group's various titles and be photographed in Leica's ephemeral studio. All of which proves that shopping has become a cultural pursuit in its own right and **that a magazine can become a point of convergence for a community** who share the same values and interests.

www.vogue.fr/vogue-experience

The quest for new territory

Ever keen to reinvent themselves and surprise consumers by appearing where they are least expected, today's brands are heading for new horizons that they would never have dared to look towards just a few years ago. Forgotten is the obligation to prove their credentials before entering a new segment and the need to have gathered know-how over many years. What matters today is moving fast, getting people talking and creating a buzz.

To move beyond their natural territory, brands do not always have to invest a great deal. Now they can simply join forces with other brands that they may appear to have nothing in common with, but with which they might share target markets or areas of interest. They can also enter into a relationship that already exists and thus alter the perceptions or habits of their customers.



Joining forces with another brand to enhance one's image

Last December, a different breed of store opened on the Champs-Élysées. The store is shared by Pierre Hermé, who is renowned for his macarons, and L'Occitane en Provence, which is famous for its traditional cosmetics from the South of France. Christened 86Champs, this 280-square-metre hybrid boutique showcases the process of distilling and manufacturing cosmetics, as well as featuring an exclusive range of hand creams inspired by the flavours on offer in the cake shop. Customers can also have breakfast, lunch or dinner in the store. At 86Champs, each brand can take advantage of the flow of customers the other attracts, and visitors can enrich their sensory perception of the products they wish to purchase, thus altering the way in which they view them: the cosmetics range gains a culinary quality and the cake range is judged according to the ingredients selected. **Concept stores sometimes juxtapose themes. This particular example blends them together** based on the areas of interest shared by their respective customers: a taste for artisanal know-how, flavours, colours and textures. Could this be one of a number of models that retailers will follow in the future?

<https://fr.loccitane.com/bienvenue-au-86-champs-pierre-herme-loccitane,74,1,91244,1184739.htm>



Venturing into new lines of business to dampen criticism

In May this year, L'Œil reported that Airbnb had raised capital for its Niido project, a property development programme designed to make subletting easier, thanks to services such as secure storage, smartphone-based room access, as well as cleaning and greeting services. V Starr Interiors, a firm launched by tennis star Venus Williams in 2002, will be in charge of interior design and furnishings. This incursion into property construction illustrates Airbnb's capacity to reinvent itself and **continually devise new ways of addressing an evasive physical market**. This allows it to deflect the criticism it receives (complaints from neighbours, reduction in the supply of rented accommodation, etc.) and **serves as a veritable "showroom" for its philosophy**, not only in terms of the services on offer (to foster greater sharing), but also when it comes to its aesthetic codes (cool and trendy, of course).



Proposing new purchasing habits

Recently launched in collaboration with Dutch postal service PostNL, Stockon is a new subscription-based delivery service (with no sign-up fee). It includes an app that allows customers to receive fortnightly deliveries of a list of products they use regularly, via their postman. They can also add and delete items from their list up until three days before delivery. Stockon also suggests products according to the composition of the household and its purchasing history. Acting like a distribution hub, Stockon currently offers 2,000 items, from well-known branded products to Belgian retailer Colruyt's own brand. Fresh products will also soon be available. **Given that a proportion of our purchases are regular and repetitive, a subscription model could be a welcome solution**. By taking advantage of postal services, Stockon allows partner brands to initiate a new form of relationship with their customers, while also introducing them to new products without having to secure a place on store shelves. What's more, it enables them to collect data about their habits.

Non-consuming consumers

Fifty years after the civil unrest of May 1968, consumption has changed course. Once derided, it has now become a laboratory for experimenting with virtuous new practices. Car sharing, recycling, second-hand clothes sales, recovering damaged fruit and vegetables, and the zero-waste philosophy in general are all possible components of a blueprint for tomorrow's society. Consumers are no longer necessarily a group who destroy, deplete and endlessly accumulate. They can also choose to be more responsible, more aware of the repercussions of their consumption and more engaged. And they can also consume less. But this doesn't have to be to the detriment of their pleasure.

In this context, brands and retailers are gradually heading towards a situation that is as new as it is paradoxical, where they must continue to appeal to consumers, without necessarily pushing them to buy more. In some cases, they must even encourage them not to buy at all.



Learning to consume differently

In September 2017, L'Œil covered the new Parisian store "Maison du zéro déchet", which opened its doors on the initiative of French environmental charity Zero Waste. The premises have been divided into three parts. The first is the "store and deposit", which sells products with no packaging, jam made from unsold produce, meal boxes, flasks and all the products needed to recycle waste. The second offers training workshops for those keen to find out more about this approach to consumption. The third provides information and contains the offices of Zero Waste France, an association with a network of 800 entrepreneurs. The ultimate goal is to **help those wishing to adopt new consumption behaviours to make these resolutions a daily reality**. The organisation combines an educational approach with the sale of innovative equipment designed to enable individuals to follow through with their intentions. Could this inspire other retailers interested in supporting this movement, thus ensuring that it becomes more than just a dream or a recurring theme in magazines? <http://lamaisonduzerodechet.org>



Creating locations to spread a brand's culture

In March this year, L'Œil reported on the launch of A/D/O, or Amalgamated Drawing Office, by car brand Mini. It has been defined as a meeting place for talents capable of designing items and tools that will change the world, much like the original Mini did in the past. The premises are structured around a restaurant and a central open space that enables individuals to come and work freely. Various objects and items of furniture are also on offer, having been selected by partner designers or created by A/D/O members. Meanwhile, creative professionals can, in exchange for an affordable monthly fee, take advantage of work spaces at a startup accelerator and access services such as 3D printers. It is not unusual for a car maker to add a restaurant or café to one of its showrooms, at which it can organise cultural events. Mini's intention here is markedly different, because the aim is to **convey a philosophy and a lifestyle, rather than sell vehicles**. And although the emphasis is placed on sharing and interaction, words synonymous with vitality and creativity, any boost to the brand's image will by no means be coincidental. <https://a-d-o.com>



Encouraging consumers to buy smart rather than buy more

In Hamburg in early June, H&M unveiled its latest concept store, dubbed Take Care, marking its intention to use only recycled or sustainable materials by 2030. What Take Care offers is not just another range of clothes aimed at a particular age group or lifestyle, but cleaning products (the brand's first line of detergents, which are "Good Environmental Choice" certified), sewing workshops (led by influencers) and advice, both online and on tablets, to help customers keep fashion items for longer (removing lipstick stains, sewing on a button, darning, etc.) Customers can also have their clothes mended at the store by a professional, regardless of the brand. H&M's goal here is not to pass on a proportion of its profits to charity, to bring eco-friendly packaging products to the masses, or to place a spotlight on manufacturing conditions, but to **encourage buyers to take care of their purchases by helping them to extend product lifetimes**. After the quest for zero waste, **finding ways of extending the lifetime of products is the next challenge awaiting retailers**. www.hm.com/de/takecare#