

Engaging with digitally literate shoppers

 By Leigh Andrews 9 Feb 2015

If a 'digitally literate shopper' sounds like a trend of the future, read this quickly as your business may already be behind the times...

The third keynote speaker of day two of the eCommerce Africa Conference was Elizabeth Lee Ming, head of iChannel at Momentum. She spoke of trends, tactics and take up. She sees herself as a behavioural scientist fascinated by data and insights, and leveraging technology in order to enhance relationships with consumers.

The focus of Ming's talk was on how to engage better with digitally literate shoppers. Before delving into the topic, she asked the audience "who is this digitally literate shopper?" Ming says the video embedded below will give you an idea:

Getting a clear picture of the digitally literate shopper

Ming says this advertising message, which went on to win a Cannes Lion, truly defines not just the internet things but the internet of everything, showing just how technology has blended into our everyday life. Key among these are the millennials or what she termed 'the best generation ever,' who she says are [truly disruptive](#).

It's important to understand who these digitally literate shoppers are, in order to better target them with specially tailored trends and tactics. Relevance and real-time are crucial in this regard.

Ming then asked for a show of hands from the audience for those who had not just heard of but also made use of [Uber](#). She called this a powerful example of a business succeeding in the age of digital disruption, it's already valued at US \$40b, "not bad for a five-year-old".

Finding that physical-digital sweet spot



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Ming also listed [Stitch Fix](#) as an example of a business that looked at the digital consumer and came up with an offering that enhanced engagement through deep understanding of its consumers. There are also stories that mastered the online model so well they went on to open physical stores, such as the 'continuous commerce' offering from Bonobos, which [partnered with Nordstrom](#), highlighting the trend towards partnerships. Interestingly, Ming said that of their online visitors, only 5% result in a purchase, compared to 83% in their physical stores. This shows that digital retail or ecommerce isn't merely taking over from the traditional physical model but instead a vital component of total retail.

Overall, effective online and offline retail hinges off of the synthesis of a well-maintained catalogue and in-store inventory. This essentially only works due to the integration of digital or mobile and physical, and Bonobos-Nordstrom have found the sweet spot that allows them to truly differentiate. Ming says to expect much more of this type of collaboration in the next decade.

“ Insightful [@ElizabethLMing](#) [@Momentum_za](#) on value of [#MarketingStrategy](#) tech of 2day is CMO of 2morrow
[#eComConfex](#) pic.twitter.com/Xn8Fe7Zac6 - Melvin Kaabwe (@Kaabwe) [February 4, 2015](#) ”

Warning: Tearjerker alert!

Ming mentioned that Momentum believes in financial wellness and offers [online tools](#) to help people save better, also sending out personalised mailers across the range of users' activity and usage and sees good results from this. It's now also enabling online application to its loyalty programme, [Multiply](#), with all sorts of benefits, and is actively testing and dabbling in the space.

Ming's favourite example of tapping into the digital shopper's lifestyle and way of thinking is depicted in British Airways' ad which raised awareness of its VFR or 'visiting family and relatives' programme to those who'd left India for work opportunities and found it difficult to return home to visit their parents. Following an initially low take-up online of the flight and a high drop-off rate of those who did take it up, they opted to raise awareness of the flight through their ['home is where your mum is, go for a visit' campaign](#). You can view the video embedded below:

Following the video, tweets in the conference hall were along the following lines:

“ Oh god, I need to call my mom... Who's cutting onions in here?! [#britishairways](#) [#eComConfex](#)- Cat Murray (@cat_murray) [February 4, 2015](#) ”

Impressive for a largely male audience, and proof that emotion' still a strong pull for advertising today.

Ming said the campaign increased sales by 65% and created consistency across all of British Airways' digital platforms. She added that it's not just about focusing on ROI but instead, on return on relationships. These are the new currency and social allows us to scale to reach, so get cracking.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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