

Creative Ways to Display Inventory through Online Channels

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An e-commerce company needs to find a way to close the divide between the inventory on its warehouse shelves and consumer need. A digital marketplace often promises shoppers convenience and a wide selection, but until recently it's been difficult to offer online audiences the same product interactions that come with in-store visits.

New technology, popular communication channels and innovative ideas provide consumers with ways to view, sample and get excited about online inventory. E-commerce organizations should learn from the examples of successful brands and small businesses to find inventory management and marketing campaigns that work in tandem to give audiences a close look at what's actually available. Companies need to devise their own ideas as well, because sometimes brand have to think outside the box to pop off the screen.

Show Products in Action

Images are a great place to start with an online inventory, but videos allow consumers to see how products actually work. With both photos and video, companies must be sure to use proper lighting, sizing and Web design elements to

give viewers an accurate representation of merchandise. After that, businesses should find creative ways to make pictures and videos informative and persuasive.

While online shoppers can't try clothes on, Amazon has found a way to deliver the next best thing, according to Business Insider. The online retailer plans to launch its own streaming fashion show called "Style Code Live," which will provide direct links to the products showcased and experts to describe the particular details of pieces for sale. Companies should evaluate Amazon's success with this tactic to see how similar options may apply to their products.

Instructional and review videos provide practical insight into product information. If companies can find ways for users to create their own content, it reduces marketing costs while creating an honest form of advertising.

Can't Get Enough Data

What customers really want - whether shopping in-store or online - is information about each possible purchase. Surveys conducted by the ERP software company Oracle found over two-thirds of consumers believe data about products and services is the best way for brands to add value to their shopping experience, according to Chain Store Age.

The more details e-commerce companies can add to online product displays, the more likely Web pages will appeal to informed shoppers. Consumers want detailed descriptions about products, delivery schedules and online service options. The information has to be accurate, so organizations need data collection solutions to integrate warehouse and inventory management activities with sales and marketing channels.

Blocks of text could definitely dissuade audiences, but data does not have to be boring or monotonous. Delivery schedules, inventory levels and numbers on business success can be turned into eye-catching charts or interactive buttons so consumers can drill down for more information.

Don't Forget the Packaging

Besides videos and pictures of products, consumers might go online to share positive experiences about fast deliveries or excellent online service. Any time a

company goes above and beyond, it encourages shoppers to share stories of specialized treatment with their contacts.

Shopify suggested an innovative way to get people to share product images with friends and family is to give them appealing packaging. Unboxing videos are a recent trend where customers unpack a purchase in front of a camera. Users show audiences exactly how the item was packaged, so brand-centric materials or interesting materials really stand out.

There are entire social media campaigns devoted to sharing engaging packaging - particularly for health and beauty products - with a network of interested parties. Referrals are always a great source for unexplored audiences, and thanks to fun images and videos, new consumers start with an accurate idea of what they're looking for.