

Emotions and sustainability are keywords for luxury in 2018 - report

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Emotions - “a brand’s ability to spark an emotional connection with consumers” - will be key to the luxury sector in 2018. That’s according to Positive Luxury, which promotes ethical and sustainable business practices among consumer-focused companies.

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Christian Dior - Fall-Winter2018 - Womenswear - Paris - © PixelFormula

It also believes that sustainability will become even more important and will feed into the emotions trend, while also widening out to cover more than just the environment.

Its new 2018 Predictions Report said that achieving “influence through emotion” should be a major focus for luxury firms this year, signalling new thinking after 2017 was driven by “truth” and 2016 by “storytelling”.

But while truth was strong last year, the power of emotion was already taking hold.

“In everything from politics to retail we saw numerous examples of the power of emotion to influence in 2017 – and it’s a neuro-linguistic trend that will continue to take hold in 2018,” the report said. “We believe a brand’s ability to spark an emotional connection with consumers - especially around the social and environmental factors that are increasingly important to them – will be the single most important factor for not only successful growth but also survival.”

And it said that this is especially true for brands looking to engage younger, Millennial, consumers – those who are the future of the luxury marketplace, not to mention the workforce that will be behind the creation of fashion and luxury products and experiences in the future.

GETTING THE MESSAGE RIGHT

This won’t just affect the products themselves but very much the way they’re communicated. Positive Luxury believes that “the very concept of top-down advertising is beginning to look antiquated. Instead an emotionally charged, authentic interaction between brand and stakeholders – ideally in both the digital and physical world – is what’s now necessary to successfully sell and retain brand loyalty.”

[See catwalk](#)



Burberry - Fall-Winter2018 - Womenswear - Londres - © PixelFormula

While social media's fast growth in recent years has made it easier for brands to "build and then influence an ecosystem of members around a common sentiment," this "on-demand, real-time world where consumers are increasingly in control" also confronts brand with major

challenges, it said.

The report claimed that while pure emotion “is the single most powerful and persuasive feature for a brand to capture and convey,” making it authentic and genuine isn’t so easy and it can backfire on brands if their messaging doesn’t ring true. That problem sees the overriding theme of 2017 (truth) and this year’s emotion concept converging.

WHAT MATTERS TO MILLENNIALS

This convergence can be seen very clearly as brands target Millennials, a market with \$2.5trn in spending power. Positive Luxury said recent research shows 70% of Millennials are willing to spend more time and money with brands that support causes they care about and that’s a crucial emotional connection with potential customers.

Those causes include the environmental impact of brands’ operations and their efforts to reduce their environmental footprint to acceptable levels. It cited the Hartman Group’s Sustainability 2017 report for this view saying it found that 87% of adults now say that sustainability-related concerns impact their values, attitudes and actions in at least some measure.

But sustainability doesn’t mean what it used to. The report said it’s now a “much more holistic concept that encompasses interconnected sets of issues related to diversity, gender equality, philanthropy and animal welfare.”

That means the decision of brand such Gucci and Net-A-Porter to go fur-free are seen as sustainable thinking. And taking it further, Christopher Bailey's bow-out Burberry show that was dedicated to LGBTQT issues, and brand campaigns that connect with local communities, that promote size inclusivity, and that use imagery that’s not been retouched are also likely to be wrapped up in the emotions-meet-sustainability theme.

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