



Super Stylin'

With its innovative retail environment, SUPRÉ stores have captivated the youth market. Now, with a unique persona-based shopping concept, its award-winning e-commerce site is poised to set the online world on fire.

With lights dimmed against a black and silver backdrop and glamorous young things bopping to popular tunes, stepping inside a SUPRÉ store is akin to walking into a nightclub. The Australian and New Zealand market leader in teen female fashion has changed the concept of a clothing store – and, with it, the face of shopping.

With 170 Australasian stores (145 in Australia and 25 in New Zealand) catering for 12 to 25 year olds, SUPRÉ has not just tapped into the youth market; it has connected with it and, most importantly, captured it. However, as SUPRÉ's international brand manager, Catherine Taouk, points out, the ongoing challenge is generating fresh ideas and responding to the fast-changing trends of the market.

"Over the years, we have used our retail space as an advertising platform for our products," explains Taouk. "However, at the moment a lot of our marketing is also based around social media, particularly Facebook and online."

She says the integrated online strategy achieves two main objectives. "Facebook is used as a research platform and an engagement tool to communicate daily with our consumers, and the website's main purpose is e-commerce."

While online sales have been available since the early noughties, it was not until November 2009 that SUPRÉ really launched itself into fashion cyberspace.

Previously, the site had enjoyed a lot of traffic but the conversion rate to sales was comparatively low. With a new e-commerce site offering a unique persona-based shopping concept, high-quality photography and catwalk videos, the conversion rate has quadrupled.



Lights, music, action ... SUPRÉ stores take on a nightclub vibe.

TOMBOY

Tomboy girl is not afraid to be one of the boys but still loves to look great. She has a competitive streak and a beachy edge. The tomboy is fit, healthy and fun but that doesn't mean she isn't into fashion. You'll see her wearing cute shorts, funky tees and casual trainers. Her laidback style is perfect for weekends spent outdoors at the beach or chilling with friends.



ROCKER

You'll catch her in a few years at Splendour, Coachella and Glastonbury – this funky festival chick is up on all the latest tunes and loves to rock out to her favourite artists. Her style is loud and trendy and reflects her quirky personality. She'll work the latest fashions with her own signature spin.



FEMME FATALE

You'll catch our Femme Fatale immersed in the latest fashion mag. She knows what's hot and what's totally not and has a passion for accessorising. She'll spend Saturdays deliberating over that perfect outfit and she'll always get it right. She loves to have a good time and dress up with her girlfriends.



FASHION PROFILES

Building a whole world around fashion personalities has been a marketing coup for SUPRÉ. By prioritising style and order, the site is more relevant to individuals.



Split personalities: the SUPRÉ website has different versions to cater for their profiles – Tomboy, Femme Fatale and Rocker.

Justus Wilde, managing director of digital agency Amblique and the brains behind the SUPRÉ website, explains that the typical SUPRÉ customer wants to be “individual and different”.

Tapping into the customer’s desire for distinction, Amblique built a customisation model that would primarily cater to the consumer’s ever-changing needs.

“We created three personalities – Tomboy, Femme Fatale and Rocker – and three versions of the site, which have a completely different look and feel,” says Wilde.

Depending on which fashion profile a customer selects, the background, music, promotional offers and, most importantly, products vary. Customers still have access to the 1200-odd styles of clothing, adds Wilde, but the emphasis is on getting the customer to the relevant product faster.

Emphasis is also placed on bringing the product closer to the consumer. Achieved through online videos, a selection of products have 10-second footage showcasing the outfit on the catwalk. This, along with magazine-like photography of models wearing the clothing, makes the product as appealing as possible.

Taouk says the videos also keep customers online for longer, which has had a great effect on converting traffic to sales. Importantly, she says, with many retailers trying to take a chunk of the fashion pie, it provides SUPRÉ with a necessary point of difference.

“Whether it’s the in-store environment, the experience or the quality and price of the product, it’s about being competitive without losing sight of your core business.”

Taouk says the new, inventive marketing approach also adds to the online experience

for customers not familiar with their in-store environment. “A lot of people who are shopping online in Singapore – where we have a huge market – don’t know what a SUPRÉ shop looks like,” she explains. “By creating this online environment, we’re providing that retail experience through music, personalities and the ability to look at the fabrics [through colour swatches, guides and information].”

With a strong online presence in the US, UK, Singapore and Malaysia, SUPRÉ has reached its international market without a single retail store outside Australasia.

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Featuring *Gossip Girl*-like language, the online store serves as both fashion hub and youth forum, and includes a reward points system for online customers, newsletter, job opportunities, competitions, promotions and a link to the SUPRÉ Facebook page.

Enjoying a 300,000-plus fan base, the SUPRÉ Facebook page is arguably one of Australia’s largest and most active online fashion communities. Encouraging communication – comments, questions,



SITE TO BEHOLD

Justus Wilde, the brains behind the SUPRÉ website, offers these tips on how to create an engaging online brand experience.

- **MAKE IT RELEVANT**

Find a way to segment your audience and deliver customised content to each segment. This will drive engagement and conversions (that is, sales).

- **INVEST IN MEDIA**

Quality photography and video will make it easier for your visitors to imagine the products. Take multiple photos to show all features (different colours, angles, styling combinations) and attributes.

- **KEEP IT SIMPLE**

Implement consistent navigation and structure. Keep text to a minimum on overview pages and use rich media, such as video and animation, when possible.

- **DRIVE ACTION**

Ensure that each page has a clear call to action that will see visitors continue browsing or convert (to sales).

- **LEVERAGE SOCIAL MEDIA**

Integrate with Facebook and Twitter to drive viral content and discussion.

- **MEASURE AND REFINE**

Constantly analyse your statistics and refine the website and content to capitalise on any insights gained (top exit pages, most searched terms, highest converting products, and so on).



praise or complaints – among fans, the invaluable market research enables SUPRÉ to respond quickly to the wants and needs of its avid followers.

“We’ve integrated our website with Facebook, so there’s a Facebook ‘like’ button on the actual SUPRÉ page,” explains Wilde. “If you click that button and you’re logged into your Facebook profile, it posts a link to that product. Then all your friends will see it and they can either comment or start a conversation on Facebook.”

It’s a simple tool that generates more traffic and if friends click on the link it will take them back to the SUPRÉ website.

Winning the 2010 SmartCompany Best e-Commerce Site award for its commercial success, Wilde says retailers are commonly concerned that the online environment will take away from “core” business. He maintains, however, that a good online presence will only make the business prosper overall and add to the bottom line.

A recent online promotion – where fans were sent a \$5 voucher via SMS for registering their email address, mobile number and joining the mailing list – showed that SUPRÉ customers are not necessarily favouring the website at the expense of the stores. Rather, the website serves as a good adjunct.

“Customers could redeem the voucher either on the website or in the store, but we found that for every online redemption, SUPRÉ received three redemptions in-store,” he says. “All the work we’re doing online is actually driving traffic and sales into the store, which is important to recognise because people don’t realise how effective these online forums can be for business.” ■