Smart Tech

By JENNY CUSACK

The new technology trend isn't about the latest **buzzword**–it's about retailers integrating real-world solutions that make stores more human. ***Amen to that!***

The ease of e-commerce has conditioned customers to expect a lot. Buying online is often personalized, frictionless and conveniently tailored to the individual. Can physical retail now match up? Just how do you build relationships with consumers in this new retail climate, where expectations are sky high? Smart retailers are using applications of technology, e-commerce and social media that really resonate in the real world.

[1] FRICTIONLESS SHOPPING

Frictionless shopping is a means of controlling the way consumers experience your brand. The customer journey is enhanced by cutting out the time-consuming and unpleasant formalities of physical shopping. Processes can be sped up and, when desired, slowed right down. This way, retailers can appeal to a generation of consumers whose expectations are conditioned by the ease of online shopping.

[Hellmann's] The Recipe Cart is an intelligent shopping cart from Unilever-owned Hellmann's Mayonnaise that suggests unexpected recipes as the customer approaches certain shelves. Currently in use in Brazil, jars of RFID-tagged mayonnaise were placed around a branch of the country's largest supermarket chain, Pão de Açúcar, next to items it could be combined with. When the Recipe Cart picked up a digital signal from the jars, it displayed a recipe including Hellmann's on a screen in the cart.

When customers passed the fresh fish aisle, a recipe for fish cakes was shown, for example. The screen also displayed a map of the supermarket that directed customers to the other ingredients required for the dish. Recipes could be shared with friends via email directly from the Recipe Carts. During the one-month campaign, sales of Hellmann's at the store increased by 68 percent.

Designed by **OGILVY BRASIL/OGILVY.COM.BR & CUBOCC/CUBO.CC**

[Fiat Live Store]

The Fiat Brazil Live Store website has showroom salesmen with webcam headsets to help customers explore new cars from their homes. These human avatars work in a 6,400-sq.-ft. studio beside Fiat's factory in Betim. Their MyStream headsets have high-resolution cameras, microphones and headphones. Customers who log in to the Fiat Brazil Live Store website can direct in-store staff to explore five car models on their behalf. The customer can then find the nearest dealership on the website and book a real test drive. Fiat knew 70 percent of its customers researched online before visiting a dealership, and developed Live Store to shorten the gap between research and purchase. The site attracts 6 million hits per month.
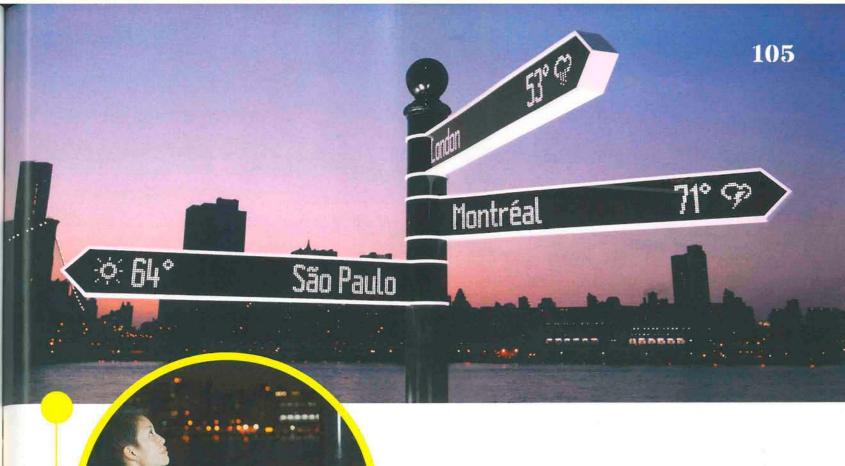
Designed by **AGÊNCIA CLICK ISOBAR/AGENCIACLICKISOBAR.COM.BR**

LIVESTORE

[Estimote]

Estimote Beacons resemble small silicone limpets that can be fixed to the walls of a retailer's store. These devices emit a signal in which there is an identifier that allows a device, such as an iPhone, to detect when it is near the beacon. This enables the mobile device to receive messages about products, discounts and coupons. There even is the potential of allowing for contactless payment. Beacons like those made by Estimote enable a retailer to influence how customers navigate its store. Bluetooth Low-Energy (BLE) provides the same type of location awareness as GPS, but is much more accurate. BLE can pinpoint location to a few centimeters, making it appropriate for indoor use. Estimote is piloting its beacons with some of the largest retailers in the United States and Europe, but it's not the only sensor on the market. Macy's tested another beacon, ShopBeacon by Shopkick, in November 2013. Both Android and Apple smartphones can detect BLE automatically. Apple's iBeacon technology is a component of Apple's mobile operating system, iOS7.

Designed by **ESTIMOTE/ESTIMOTE.COM**

Welcome Lucas, thirsty?

$2

Get one drink for only $2

London 53°

Montréal 71°

☀ 64° São Paulo

HYPER-PERSONALIZATION

[2]

Shoppers have come to expect a retail experience tailored to their individual needs and preferences. Retailers are discovering that by providing reactive, hyper-personalized tools that help customers, they are keeping customers, too.
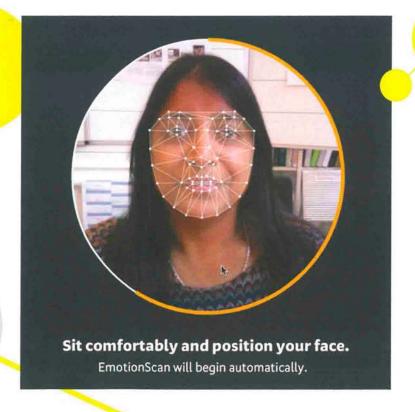
[Points]

Points is a street sign that rotates according to the time of day and who is looking at it. Tourists can use Twitter to ask Points for street directions or suggestions while standing in front of it, or use a control panel on the column. In both cases, Points' arms will then spin to show them the way. Points can be pre-programmed to direct people to coffee shops in the morning and restaurants in the evening. As well as directions, Points can display rolling news or a social media feed. Currently a prototype, Points is designed for use at shopping centers, city centers, hotels, theme parks, concert venues or festivals. All the system needs to work is an Internet connection and a power supply. Its developers are currently working on a weather-proof version.

Designed by **BREAKFAST/BREAKFASTNY.COM**

[ALDI Lunchbox]

ALDI's free Lunchbox iPhone app and website, launched January 2013 in Australia, helps parents plan nutritious and filling meals for children. Profiles can be created for up to four children–personalized by name, photo and color. The app generates a week's worth of balanced-diet lunchbox ideas and a shopping list of products that can be viewed on the website, app or emailed. Finding these products in-store is made easy as they are highlighted on shelves with Lunchbox stickers. The app frequently is updated with new meal ideas, products and seasonal lines. Research by ALDI Lunchbox's partner, the Healthy Kids Association, suggests that only 5 percent of lunchboxes include vegetables and more than half of the parents surveyed were regularly stuck for ideas of what to serve. By July 2013, 56,000 users had downloaded the app.

Designed by **BMF/BMF.COM.AU**

[BNZ Bank]

New Zealand bank BNZ used facial scanning technology to record and analyze its customers' attitudes toward money. Emotion scanners were installed at bus stops in Auckland's downtown Britomart shopping precinct, where passersby were invited to listen to questions about the state of their finances, including "What would you do if your best friend asked you to fly to Las Vegas this weekend for her wedding and you couldn't afford it?" while their emotions were recorded using facial-recognition software. Even tiny facial movements were detected and indicated how the person was feeling. Afterwards, the scanner dispensed a printout with an overview of the user's results and a prompt to book a MoneyReview in-store to discover the best financial services for them. EmotionScan also was available online via the BNZ website, where customers received their results as a detailed, interactive infographic report.

Designed by **COLENSO BBDO/COLENSOBBDO.CO.NZ & NVISO/NVISO.CH**

[3] SURPRISING NEW CHANNELS

Brand messages are getting lost in news feeds cluttered with unwanted pop-up and paid-for ads. Using new channels is about cutting out the middleman and going directly to customers in ways that demand to be seen or heard.

[E-Mart]

South Korean supermarket chain E-Mart opened three remote-controlled, flying stores–truck-shaped balloons with WiFi routers–that floated over busy parts of Seoul. Text on the side of the balloon encouraged people to connect to the WiFi using their smartphones or tablets and download the E-Mart app to receive coupons. During the one-month campaign, in-store sales rose by 9.5 percent and mobile sales more than doubled, rising by 157 percent. The app was downloaded 50,000 times. In South Korea, smartphone penetration is very high, particularly among 16- to 34-year-olds. With two-thirds of the population using smartphones, WiFi is becoming a "commodity." South Koreans also work some of the longest hours in the world, so they often shop at a store closest to them.
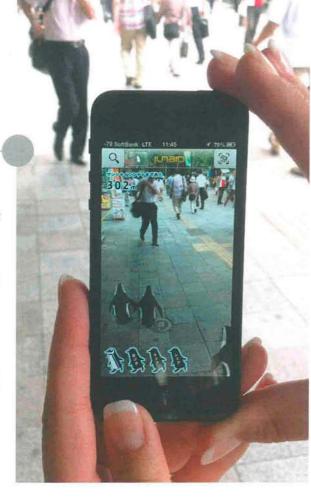
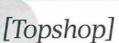Designed by CHEIL WORLDWIDE/CHEIL.COM

[Sunshine Aquarium]

The Sunshine Aquarium is a well-known attraction in Tokyo, but, at more than half a mile from the nearest metro, many tourists miss it. To encourage more visits, it enlisted penguins–its most popular animals–to show people the route. While the street-guide penguins only existed in augmented reality, visitor numbers were real–they increased by 152 percent. When tourists arrived at the station nearest the aquarium, they saw posters encouraging them to download an AR smartphone app. The app, which needed an Internet connection to work, showed penguins walking along the pavement when the user held up their phone, leading them to the aquarium via GPS.

Designed by **HAKUHODO TOKYO/DOAR/HAKUHODO.JP**

[Topshop]

Topshop was the first retailer to use the digital birdsong app, Chirp, in-store and online during September 2013. It sent real-time images from its London Fashion Week SS14 show to customers' smartphones via two-second sounds. Backstage, beauty and runway looks from the show were sent to a Digital Garden space in the Oxford Street flagship store. Customers with the Chirp app downloaded the content as it appeared and were entered into a drawing to win accessories. The Chirped messages also were shared on Pinterest and Facebook. In five days, the app was downloaded 22,000 times. The Chirp app entered the Top 20 in Apple's app store in more than 60 countries worldwide.

Designed by **CHIRP/CHIRP.IO**

[CONCLUSION]

Providing consumers with helpful, tailored tools and channels that streamline clunky, traditional methods of shopping makes everyday life easier and more enjoyable. That's one way clever brands are evolving with consumer behavior to build relationships that are human, meaningful and, therefore, durable.

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