

# A Sweet Partnership

## Godiva reimagines business in the digital age

by D. GAIL FLEENOR

Successful retailers — and those that want to be — are seeking ways to digitally transform their customer experience in all channels. Whether mobile, in-store or online, these retailers are striving to build a multi-faceted relationship with customers that will keep brands fresh and hold customer interest.

Chocolatier Godiva began creating its sweets in Belgium almost a century ago, and today has more than 600 owned boutiques and a retail presence in over 100 countries. The New York-based company is in the process of unifying its selling aspects — online, mobile and in-store — concentrating on its website and mobile views to begin the transformation.

Godiva's overall objective was to design an online experience to meet customer needs and anticipate their preferences. From introducing visitors to new products to helping them with mobile checkout, the chocolatier sought to put the customer at the center of the experience, says Brita Turner Fielding, head of Godiva's North America e-commerce.

To accomplish its goals and objectives, Godiva partnered with digital/creative firm SapientRazorfish to design and launch an enhanced e-commerce site. Fielding says the goal was to showcase product while addressing customers' most pressing challenges with its previous online and mobile experiences.

### TRANSFORMING PER CUSTOMER

SapientRazorfish began as a digital technology company and transitioned to an experiential company over the last 10 to 15 years.

"I believe it has expanded our range that our roots are in technology," says John Conroy, associate creative director for SapientRazorfish. "It has helped us know what we can do in technology for clients and how to do it to handle creative projects." The company has over 100 clients ranging from global conglomerates to niche fashion brands and usually has



projects going for 20 companies at any one time.

"When SapientRazorfish kicks off an e-commerce project, we start by learning as much as we can about the brand — their business goals, existing strategies and technologies, pain points," Conroy says.

"At the same time we're gaining a deep understanding of the customer's goals.

We need to evaluate from both points of view to build something successful for the business and the customer."

The company has worked with Godiva for five years, says Lauren DeGeorge, senior account director for SapientRazorfish, and has concentrated

on Godiva's website design and performance over the last two to three years.

"We knew we had to upgrade Godiva's e-commerce platform and brand presentation," DeGeorge says. "Each webpage must be customer-centric, and Godiva's has targeted content for its diverse loyal fan base."

Enhanced filters and sorting capabilities were created to help visitors find specific products within different categories, such as chocolate type and price, to further condense their selection. To simplify navigation on the Godiva website, the number of top-down categories was reduced and a left-hand menu incorporated to help people quickly find what they want.

"Godiva has made a significant investment in beautiful photography and content, and that's key to elevating the experience. The photos are helping the customer 'taste' the chocolate with their eyes," Conroy says.

"In user testing we saw again and again the customer attempting to zoom into chocolate boxes, and reacting super-positively to all the images, so we knew this was a high-value area."

The website was further enabled to be fully responsive across all devices, especially mobile. "With a new e-commerce platform, customers can now browse the site anywhere and have the content automatically fit their screen," Fielding says.

"It is important to build the entire digital experience around customers. You can make something truly amazing (and expensive), but if your user is not clicking, you have just wasted a lot of money," Conroy says. "Sometimes it is the little things, like copy in the navigation that can make a huge difference in where traffic is being driven on a site. Consistent testing helps validate we're making the right decisions."

With the changes to its online presence, mobile traffic to Godiva.com has surged in recent years; Fielding says there has been an over 25 percent increase in mobile traffic from 2014 to 2015. Site views from mobile devices increased by 45 percent.

## MAKE IT EASY

Since Godiva is known as a gifting destination, "It's important to give customers the tools to understand the breadth of product, and help them choose the right gift. Or if they know what they want, get them in and out as quickly and easily as possible," Conroy says.

"Ultimately we try to strike a balance between brand storytelling and transacting. Sales and gifting are important for a brand like Godiva, but it's also a prestige purchase, so we endeavor to keep the digital experience elevated, as if you were purchasing from a physical location."

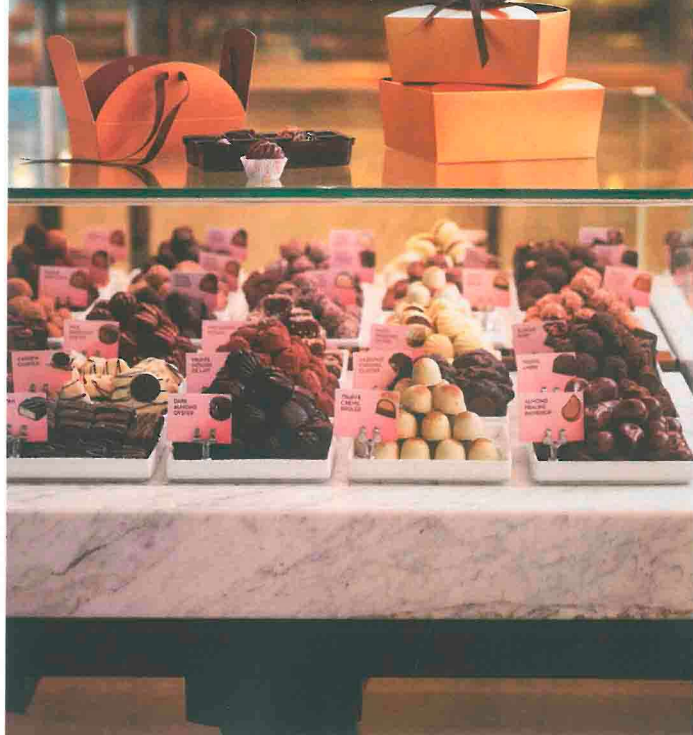
SapientRazorfish made enhancements to Godiva's checkout process, featuring a new streamlined order summary page so that customers can review and edit their order — including delivery options — without leaving the checkout flow. With checkout and shipping enhancements, Fielding says, customers can make mobile purchases with the same ease as in a store or on a desktop.

Godiva's research showed that one of customers' biggest checkout issues was in shipping orders to multiple addresses, a process that can be both time-consuming and cumbersome. To make the process more intuitive, saved addresses and scheduling calendars are now included within purchase pages, allowing customers to easily send their orders where and when they want.

"Checkout is often overlooked in a redesign process, but we often find it a point of heavy frustration, particularly when you're buying multiple items," Conroy says. "Prioritizing an improved checkout flow is a win for users and the business."

The enhancements translated into real results for Godiva, including a Cyber

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Monday sales increase of 8 percent and a conversion rate increase of almost 5 percent, according to Fielding.

At the same time, cart abandonment fell by nearly 15 percent.

Godiva continues to promote its physical locations with store-only items to entice customers, DeGeorge says. Spur of the moment self-treats are an important in-store indulgence. Since much of Godiva's business is naturally centered on cooler weather holidays, summer is a time for attractions such as Godiva soft serve treats to keep the brand top of mind and customers loyal.

Digital transformation, for Godiva and other businesses, is a must for retail now. "At the end of the day, a website is a living, breathing thing," Conroy says. "You can't set it and forget it. Your site is never done." **STORES**

Virginia-based D. Gail Fleenor has written hundreds of articles about retail, technology and consumer research following nearly two decades as a supermarket research manager.