Future insights in the pet industry

Two trends – the end of ownership and omnichannel – have significantly impacted the fashion industry. Will they impact the pet industry as well?

Fashionable pets
Pets and fashion, two words that only ten years ago were not affiliated with each other. As millennials are taking centre stage on the world’s consumer market the fashion industry is heavily shifting. What can we learn from this changing industry? What future demands can be foreseen, in order to serve consumers the best we can?

Let’s have a look at two trends that have significantly impacted the fashion industry and, more importantly, how these could impact the pet industry in future.

End of ownership
In every industry, ‘end of ownership’ is a trend that is being embraced by millennials. Ride sharing apps, private car lease, Airbnb, Spotify and Netflix are just some of the examples to show that ownership is no longer necessary to create meaningful relationships with consumers.

The fashion industry is featuring a similar trend. According to a McKinsey (2019 fashion) report: ‘The average person today buys 60 percent more items of clothing than they did 15 years ago. But keeps clothing for only half as long as they used to.’ After usage, more and more of these clothes are given to – now widely accepted – thrift shops and other concepts that give clothing and accessories a second life. An increased understanding of limited resources, a fast-growing awareness on textile waste and, last but not least, the downfall of the economy in 2008 have led to an influx of reused textile all over the world.

Could all this mean that in the pet industry we could also see an increase in sales of second hand leashes and pet toys? Maybe, but it will definitely lead to durable products made from sustainably sourced textile for the eco conscious millennials. The development also paves the way for the renewal, repair, rental and buy back of pet products.
Global trends

Omnichannel
The rise of e-commerce has increased the need for brands and retailers to develop their omnichannel strategies. In the past few years, digital has been ‘the only way to go’ and major retailers in the fashion industry are now increasingly combining their online marketing tools and features with physical stores, in order to create a true brand experience.

Many brands are investing heavily in the creation of digital innovation with a high ‘share factor’ on social media. A great example of this is Wanna Kicks’ augmented reality app, in which you can select any shoe you like and see in real-time what the shoe looks like when you wear it. Big and small brands take the opportunity to use Facebook and Instagram as direct sales channels and can now grow explosively, while keeping the cost of sales low.

In order to make omnichannel marketing work properly, successful brands make sure that existing software and platform services are interlinked. That means, linking the different communication channels together, from payment system to machine learning algorithms, from website, mobile app, voice technology to social media and more. When all touchpoints in the customer journey are mapped, it is only a matter of time before data scientists can predict future shopping behaviour of target audience persona’s – or even individual customers.

The future is here
‘Mobile Point of Sales’ (mPOS) and Beacon technology will play a significant role in the near future. Based on online search behaviour of customers, the in-store experience will change and customer offers and loyalty incentives will soon be much more personalised. The concept is illustrated in the Hollywood hit ‘Minority Report’ (2002), where Tom Cruise, the main character, is walking through a mall and is targeted with personal offers based on eye-recognition technology. This may seem farfetched, but the future is here and this technology is already being implemented by major retailers like Urban Outfitters.

Watch and learn...
Today’s pet industry has the opportunity to watch and learn from fashion industry successes and failures. Based on headlining trends like end of ownership and the omnichannel approach, there is an opportunity for pet businesses to align their strategies and make sure they think about how to engage with customers, both online and offline. Also, there is opportunity in developing products that do not contribute to global waste. Combining these trends, the pet industry can create future proof businesses.

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