

High street fashion profits from latest designer learning tactics A Mohive customer case study

Case Study



Lene V[®]

One of the leading names on Norwegian High Streets, Lene V is a long-established retail chain specialising in women's fashion. Operating a network of owned or franchised stores nationwide, the company has been spearheading new initiatives in web-based training for nearly two years.

Like most fashion-focused retailers, Lene V operates in a fast-paced industry: product cycles are seasonal, churn is rapid and peak sales periods are measured in weeks and days rather than months. As the company's understanding of what's possible via rapid e-learning has matured, so too have the business's e-learning applications.

Driven by Mohive's award-winning rapid e-learning solution, in early 2006 Lene V's training specialists embarked on a learning programme designed to ensure salespeople were completely up-to-date with all the company's marketing campaigns, customer relationship initiatives and new clothing ranges.

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A growing operation with a highly dispersed staff base, Lene V's challenge was to create an effective knowledge-sharing process to address the problem of time lag in the seasonal campaign cycle. Like most fashion retailers, Lene V's sales year comprises five promotional seasons: spring, summer, autumn and winter, plus special festive sales promotions over Christmas. Within these seasonal periods, numerous flashpoints occur as new stock arrives in-store and fresh marketing support goes live.



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In the fashion business, where sales cycles last approximately 90 days and peak sales opportunities are concentrated within the first month, a familiarisation period of even three or four days has a clear negative impact on the bottom line.

"It's during the first few days of each marketing campaign that potential for lost sales peaks in retail," explains Stine Antonie Ødegård, training and recruitment manager at Lene V. "This is the time when expectations from the customer are highest: they are eager to see the new products that we're actively marketing, learn more about a range's colours and combinations and how to accessorise and work with new products to create great new looks. Yet it's during this early stage of a marketing campaign that staff know-how can be at its lowest. Salespeople are just discovering new ranges for themselves: deciding how to mix, match and accessorise new items and even how best to display new stock in-store."

COLLECTIVE UNDERSTANDING

- Using Mohive's rapid content creation systems to produce short, snappy e-learning courses for sales staff, Norwegian retailer Lene V has boosted the average value of each customer sale by 20%
- Rapid e-learning courses have been seamlessly integrated into Lene V's promotional campaign process, dramatically improving campaign performance each season
- Salespeople are equipped with the expertise they need to advise customers with confidence, even on the stores' newest arrivals
- Focused on how Lene V products could be mixed, matched and accessorised, high impact e-learning modules that take only 20 to 40 minutes to complete have turned salespeople into knowledgeable fashion advisors that customers respect and trust
- Delivering detailed advice on how new marketing campaigns should be merchandised ensures that in-store look and feel remains constant, even across a network of company-owned and franchised outlets

Meeting the challenge of change

Lene V's solution was to integrate regular rapid e-learning opportunities into the promotional campaign management process. By supporting the company's sales force with the training they need to effectively advise customers from the first day a new marketing campaign starts, the operation has essentially eliminated the familiarisation period for staff whenever new promotions commence.



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“The challenge was to create a process capable of delivering high-spec training that ensured all staff in all outlets: knew exactly what kind of marketing campaigns were being launched; were completely familiar with the new product ranges coming in-store; could advise customers on how to put new items together and complement outfits with the right accessories; and knew precisely how new ranges should be merchandised.



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“With a limited number of business days available to create the courses that would support a new season’s promotion we needed to incorporate training into the timeline from the earliest stage possible. We found that making sure pre-promotion training modules were devised at about the same time as we briefed the creative department and advertising agencies made a real difference to a campaign’s impact. This is when we have the clearest idea of what’s coming downstream in terms of range, colours and accessories.

Cross-company take-up delivers 20% more sales

“While the process may seem rigorous, the system’s ability to manage ideas, comment and feedback fast means we’re able to create the courses we need in-house within days rather than weeks without any dependence



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on expensive external developers. Collaborative working over the web means the expertise we hold within the company can be captured quickly and easily disseminated through the sales force via the Mohive system.”

With a store portfolio made up of owned and franchised outlets, completion procedures are refined at branch level to ensure local staff needs are respected. Lasting between 20 and 40 minutes each, course modules ensure staff members are updated on latest product ranges or special marketing initiatives faster and have the ability to develop new sales skills designed to improve the customer experience for Lene V shoppers.

Lene V is shedding time-consuming processes without sacrificing quality, to deliver training to in-store staff just when they need it most - and it’s a tactic that’s winning universal approval from the shop floor: “From the reports generated we know that completion rates for the courses we offer have now reached over 95%. It’s a process that impro-



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ved the effectiveness of our salespeople and increased average spend per customer by 20 %. But it’s the less formal feedback that really drives home staff approval in terms of job satisfaction. Staff supported by great training are happier, more confident and better able to engage with customers from the very first day that the marketing campaign starts. They like to be able to advise customers with confidence, help them choose colours that suit and accessories that work. Our goal is to make them feel more like fashion advisors than salespeople these days.”

Find out more about Mohive at www.mohive.com