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Interactive TV emerges as the most powerful' way to engage customers, brand exec says

Paul Demery | May 19, 2014

The first-ever IRCE:Focus Brands & B2B conference and trade show kicked off today with a keynote address by Xcel Brands CEO Robert D'Loren, who said the combination of TV, e-commerce and social media is creating a new way of engaging buyers.

Nothing compares with exposure on TV shows that are also presented online and interact with social media, Robert D'Loren, CEO and chairman of Xcel Brands, said today at the IRCE Focus: Brands & B2B conference and trade show in New York.

Xcel Brands runs dedicated programs featuring its Isaac Mizrahi designer apparel, handbags and accessories every week on QVC TV, which is run simultaneously on QVC.com ([../..../2014/03/06/qvcs-us-web-sales-climb-12-fiscal-2013](http://www.qvc.com/2014/03/06/qvcs-us-web-sales-climb-12-fiscal-2013)). On average the programs attract 2.5 million people, mostly women, with sales processed either online or through a contact center, Xcel says. "It doesn't get any better than this," D'Loren said during his keynote address.

Xcel, which launched two years ago and recently acquired the Judith Ripka brand of fine jewelry, estimates that 45% of its sales from QVC programs occur after the original program aired. The reason, he said, is that buyers return online to view archived programs or search for featured products.

But QVC's social media tie-ins are also important to the brand company's sales ([../..../2014/01/28/twitter-offers-new-ways-b2b-companies-reach-customers](http://www.qvc.com/2014/01/28/twitter-offers-new-ways-b2b-companies-reach-customers)), D'Loren said. On Xcel's Facebook page, as well as on QVC.com, Isaac Mizrahi brand designers engage consumers with comments posted online, helping to keep consumers engaged with the brand.

This helps produce a 95% repeat visit rate among viewers of the QVC program, Xcel says. “Everything I’ve learned about marketing has changed,” D’Loren said. All marketing programs “have to tie back to social media. It’s all about customer engagement,” he said, adding: “You have to be honest with customers. Customers want you to listen and talk with them.”

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D’Loren added that Xcel also extends social media and other forms communication to its product manufacturers, sharing ideas on product designs and manufacturing processes.

In addition to interactive TV sales, Xcel last week launched an e-commerce site for the Isaac Mizhari brand at IsaacMizrahi.com.

QVC is a unit of Liberty Interactive Corp., No. 6 in the 2014 Internet Retailer Top 500 Guide (../../top500/?cid=2014T500-IRA-Intro).

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