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„It is the lives we encounter that make life worth living.“

- Guy de Maupassant



01 Editorial

After months of not being touched, hugged, physical closeness and yes, going without lipstick and extravagance and everything that releases happiness and cuddly hormones, not even a package from Amazon or Zalando can make us „cry with joy“.

Oh, how we long for real human contact, for freedom, for meetings with like-minded people, for singing and dancing, for parties and celebrations. Oh, how we long to meet customers, friends and employees again and to give them a smile. Now all of us have first-hand experience of the fact that only real interpersonal contacts and encounters make our lives worth living.

But could it be that in the last few months, with all the video conferencing, tracksuit pants, double and triple workloads and being alone, we've forgotten to pay attention to our body signals, to the little signs we can use to make others and ourselves happy? Are we actually aware that 2-4 seconds of eye contact releases the happiness hormone oxytocin, triggering emotional jumps of joy and pleasure?

My recommendation therefore is to flirt with your customers and give them „love at first sight“, as this will trigger a „long-lasting cry of joy“. I would like to present to you how you can achieve this in a personal meeting. Your customers will be the stuff of envy.

Sincerely,
Monique Fischer

02 A look says more than 1,000 words

Are you aware of the great power our gaze can have? Because it's only the gaze—called cabaceo in the language of tango that enables encounter, touch and a mutual dialogue without words. It's effects are extremely powerful: it conveys emotions, captures attention, is the easiest way to show respect, appreciation and love, and most importantly, it builds bridges to other people. Paired with a smile, it even connects hearts and is therefore an important success factor for sales pitches. Curious? Learn more about this in [my new blog post](#).

03 Is Digitalization becoming obsolete in the Luxury Market?

This question is currently the subject of much debate, as Bottega Veneta, for example, has discontinued all social media channels. This has been done in favour of offline campaigns and the creation of expensive and valuable customer magazines as well as sophisticated POS with lots of entertainment, in order to celebrate „coming together“ and to sell mood and emotion.

My opinion on this is clear: customers expect excellent service and constant innovation on all channels—both offline and online. It is imperative that retailers take advantage of this development. Who hasn't been annoyed by not meeting anyone at the entrance of a store and having to struggle through its variety of goods? Or even turned on their heel and placed their order online instead, possibly even with the competition? In this case, many a customer or business owner would have wished for a Pepper or an Alexa to be on-hand to point people in the right direction. What digitalisation and AI cannot replace is personal customer contact. Today's sales staff today are true all-rounders: they're everything from users of digital devices and product range experts, and above all they're relationship managers, best friends and body-language experts. These skills need to be trained and practised. Read more about my „Mindstep“ sales training or why sales people should dance the tango. [Click here for more](#).

04 Preferences shift towards Online

This is confirmed by a recent study carried out by the Handelsverband.swiss, the market research institute GfK and Swiss Post, which reveals that online retail in Switzerland grew strongly last year.

Sales news WORLD!

Agnelli sees red

The Agnelli family of Fiat heirs is investing 541 million Euros in the Paris-based luxury shoe manufacturer Christian Louboutin through its holding company Exor. This amounts 24 per cent of the shares.

Purism meets eccentricity

Luxury brand Jil Sander goes over to the Italian fashion group OTB of Diesel founder Renzo Rosso. The Italians are buying the label from Japan's Onward Holding, which had owned Jil Sander since 2008.

Street Art: TIME TO SHINE

The three luxury department stores—Alsterhaus, KaDeWe and Oberpollinger—welcome the spring/summer 2021 season with the art cooperation TIME TO SHINE. Ten internationally renowned street artists display their interpretations of the experiences of the past year in the windows.



A finding that is certainly not surprising, given that many high-street retailers had to keep their doors closed for weeks and months. In terms of sales, home electronics is in first place, followed by fashion/shoes. Third place goes to food. The study also finds that high-street retail continues to predominate as the preferred shopping channel, but preferences keep shifting toward online year after year. This is a development to which high-street retail must react with all its vigour, if it does not want to lose its customers to the internet.

That's why I say: „The new power lies in improvisation!“ Attitudes such as „We've always done it this way“ should no longer exist. Instead, new beginnings and openness to new creative solutions are required, the business model has to be reinvented and individual concepts with a strong, authentic profile must be developed. “Out-of-the-box thinking and acting”, constant development and learning—whether it be in retail or industry—are the skills that are needed now. After all, as the soul of city centres, retail forms an important social anchor in the maelstrom of a contactless world. An anchor full of emotion, affection, empathy, appreciation and love. And that is exactly what people, namely your customers, are looking for. Take advantage of this unique opportunity!

05 Sustainability as a Competitive Advantage

I would like to once again bring up the topic of sustainability, because it is a typical example of how the information flow can impact from outside, namely that consumers force companies to act. The new motto is: don't consume more, consume better; quality over quantity. It's all about buying the ecologically, economically and socially „right“ goods and services. Sustainable products are appealing to an ever-growing community. They must create meaning and identity, be individually adapted to the customer's wishes and thus be fit for the future. And above all, they must distinguish themselves from mainstream products.

The fact is that many companies have always produced sustainably and don't mention it, because it goes without saying for them. However, the issue is so relevant and so present in the collective consciousness that clearly communicating these facts is a decisive competitive advantage.

“Sustainable“ products are still niche products. Not even one person in ten in Germany owns such a garment. Why is that? To ensure sales success, companies must communicate consistently and provide transparency. Value chains must be clearly visible to customers on all sales channels and product labels: Certifications, information on how, where and under what circumstances a product was manufactured, references to processing (for example handmade), manufacture, recyclable packaging and materials as well as transport routes are crucial for building trust and price acceptance. As well as a well-trained sales team at the POS. This strengthens customer confidence, creates sustainable customer loyalty and promotes the active involvement of customers in shaping a better future.