

*How to create a
product launch
experience with
impact*

Harnessing the power of experience

Launch programmes now require more planning than ever to deliver better return on investment and an effective operational system.

Customers are increasingly overloaded by new brands, products and content, and as a result, brands need to find new ways of cutting through the noise. It's vital to embrace new technologies and connect with customers across every touchpoint.

In the following report we discuss the five challenges facing product launch strategies today.

Challenges

- 01 *How do I ensure my launch experience has depth and reach?*
- 02 *How can I educate new customers about my product whilst still inspiring them?*
- 03 *How can I create an experience when I have limited product availability?*
- 04 *How can I accelerate customer interaction to create transaction?*
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How do I ensure my experience has depth and reach?

Connected experiences with share-worthy content

The value of offline experiences has risen, as consumers engage on a deeper level with brands in the physical world. This means there's a huge opportunity to place the launch experience at the heart of your communications and harness the depth and reach of engagement that it can create.

Why it's interesting

To ensure your product launch has depth and reach, you need to create a personal experience that your visitors will remember and love as well as one they feel compelled to share. Getting the balance right of creating something that connects to people personally, has social currency, tells a compelling story and is also visually impactful enough for them to want to capture and share is key.

Encouraging everyday customers to generate lots of content will give your experience credibility, however when it comes to amplification that will move the needle, partnering with the right media and influencers is essential to reaching a wider audience.

A visitor at Google Curiosity Rooms.



The High Low podcast with Pandora Sykes and Dolly Alderton live at Google Curiosity Rooms.

70% of teens trust influencers more than traditional celebrities.

Google Social Report

Treat these partners just like you would a consumer, you want them to be compelled to share the experience, so that the content they create is truly authentic and resonates with their followers.

Google successfully amplified its Pixel 3 phone launch by choosing the right partners. The Google Curiosity Rooms was a five week experience in London that featured a range of events hosted by publishers such as Hypebeast and Condé Nast, and influencers such as Pandora Sykes and Dolly Alderton.





How can I educate customers about my new product whilst inspiring them?

Interactive experiences that encourage learning through play

It's common wisdom that interacting with a product is the best way to understand it, note the Confucius proverb, "I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand."

Yes, customers have access to a load of product information online, however, when they need to get a better understanding of features, they tend to want to visit an expert in person. According to a study by Mintel, 47% of consumers view an electrical product in store but will then buy it online.

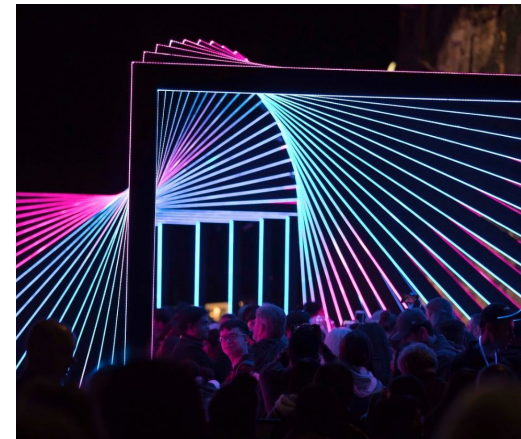
Why it's interesting

In order to really leave an impression on a customer your launch experience needs to balance product education with the power of compelling storytelling, connecting to them on an emotional level. Advertising veteran Dave Trott said "If you look at an ad and fall in love with the brilliance of it, try taking the product out of it. If you still love the ad, it's no good. Don't make your ad interesting; make your product interesting." The same can definitely be applied to launch experiences.

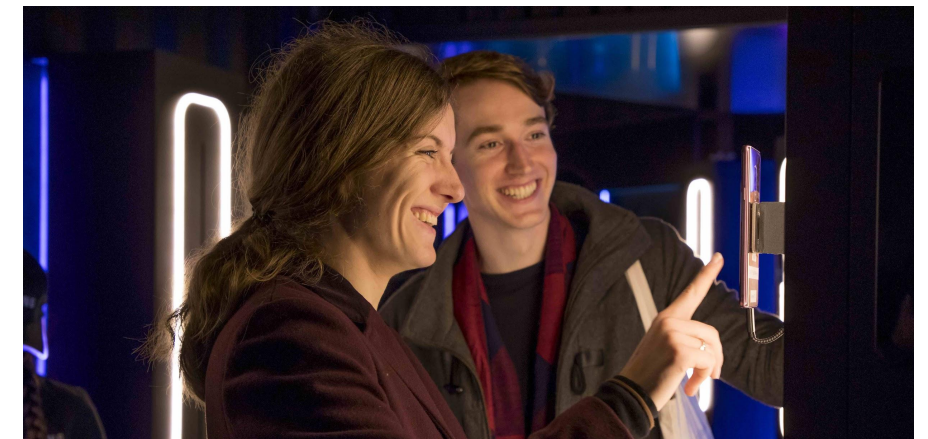
Samsung created a unique sensory journey to evoke emotion whilst also exploring the amazing features of the new Galaxy S9 / S9+. Guests got hands on with the product through multiple immersive rooms which allowed them to create their own AR emoji and super slow-mo content. Importantly the product was at the heart of the experience.

"I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand."

Confucius



All images: Imagination's Samsung Galaxy S9 launch experience.



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*How can I ensure customers
can get hands-on with limited
product availability?*
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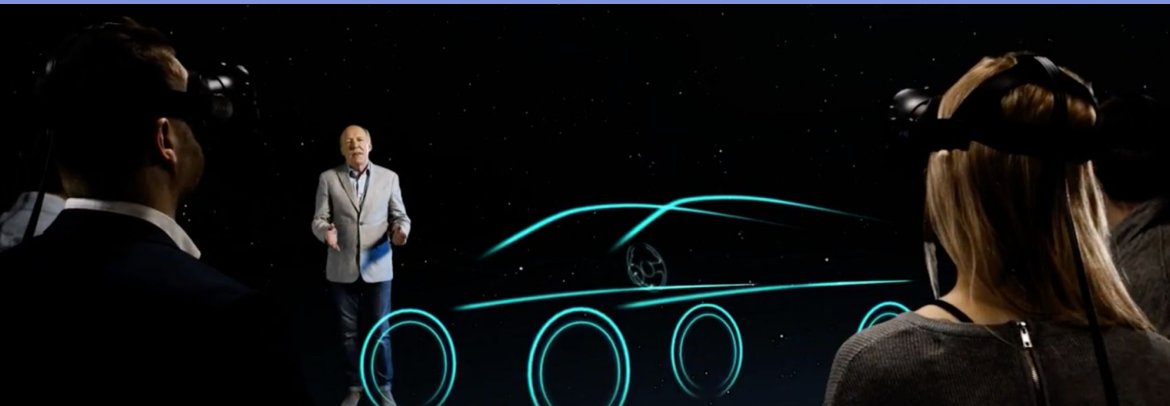
Product experiences driven by immersive technology

Launch planning can be limited by a lack of product availability and during the initial phases it can be prohibitively expensive to transport certain types of products.

On the other hand, today's customers are able to engage instantly with a product through a brand's website and social channels, and are increasingly impatient when it comes to being able to get to know new products. Immersive technology such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) offers a new way of getting to know a product, satisfying consumers' needs to have access to a product without it necessarily needing to be physically present.

Why it's interesting

AR has seen rapid customer adoption thanks to Apple's ARKit, whilst VR has seen rapid growth in the B2B sector and growing adoption amongst customers driven by the gaming and entertainment sectors. There is a huge opportunity for your brand to create an immersive technology-driven experience to amplify launch programmes and fast-track to product familiarity.



All images;
Imagination's
Jaguar Land Rover
I-PACE launch.

28% of smartphone and tablet owners have used AR to view content.

R/GA Ventures

Jaguar Land Rover launched its new all-electric concept vehicle, the I-PACE, via a world-first VR reveal. It created a virtual studio joined in real-time by journalists from Los Angeles and London. Customers were able to explore an AR and VR version, 6 months before the demonstration vehicles arrived in retail showrooms.





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*How can I accelerate customer
interaction to create transaction?*
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Drop culture and the business of hype



A young Supreme customer.

The reveal of your product or service at a launch experience is the peak moment. Behavioural science indicates that there are two critical rules when it comes to turning customer interaction at experiences into sales.

Firstly the ‘attribution of arousal’ or the moment when people are most receptive to take action. Secondly ‘distance from purchase’ whereby sales are increased when purchase is brought closer to the product reveal moment. Streetwear brands are leading the charge when it comes to taking advantage of these behavioural biases by embracing ‘drop culture’.

Why it's interesting

Drop culture refers to a carefully controlled product launch system that centres on exclusivity. Some brands orchestrate elaborate product releases (drops) that require customers to jump through hoops in order to find out the location of a drop building incredible hype around that product.

The quest to access the product is often gamified, combining the on and offline worlds. For instance, a customer might need to make their way to a certain location and then scan a QR code before they can access the product to purchase online, this in turn builds high levels of excitement and anticipation.



A billboard from Anti Social Social Club.

Streetwear brand Supreme, a pioneer in drop culture, is now valued at \$1 billion.

Plus, if your customer has already invested hours trying to access your product, they're unlikely not to buy it at the last moment.

Anti Social Social Club has increased the hype around its products by gamifying the process. For one drop, the brand plastered a phone number across billboards in LA which customers had to phone, then they were given morse code that provided details of the product drop location. It was only when standing in that location that they could unlock the product and purchase it online.



*How can I create and
deliver a truly scalable
launch programme?*

Elevating launch experiences to create brand experience platforms

Product life-cycles are shorter than ever, and planning launches involves a wide number of variables.

Creating an experience platform for your brand allows you to elevate your launch to become a more powerful programme based around a single core idea, delivered within a flexible framework to suit different levels of budget, market and team skills.

Why it's interesting

Customers are increasingly focusing on experiences as a way of spending their time and money, so creating a programme of different tailored experiences designed for them is a powerful way to drive brand engagement. Customers are also willing to pay for the right experience, creating a revenue opportunity which can offset investment or generate a profit.

Ford placed brand experiences at the heart of its marketing campaign, with 'Go Faster'. Customers could feel what it was really like to star in their own movie trailer as a getaway driver and spent half a day training and filming in the ST and Mustang cars. They were then able to take home and share their personalised trailer.

For trade shows and pop-ups we created a smaller-scale 'studio' experience with the same premise. Visitors were placed in a jump seat in front of a green screen and filmed in a similar getaway scene. They were still able to get a slice of the action and take home a personalised souvenir.



All images: Imagination's Go Faster experience.

The Ford Go Faster Experience led to 92% increase in brand favorability.





So, what next?

Imagination has been helping brands such as Samsung, Rolls-Royce and Ford create experience-led launch programmes for over 50 years. We strive to truly engage customers on an emotional level whilst exceeding business objectives through a blend of depth, reach and conversion.

If you want to discuss the challenges featured in this report and find out how we can help create solutions for your brand, we'd love to hear from you.

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