

Deployment Company Overview



Company: Merrell.
Executive: Max Wallder, Trade Market Executive, U.K Ireland.
Website: <http://www.merrell.com>
Location: Global.
Products: Footwear, Apparel & Accessories.



Building better brand awareness and product knowledge with retail staff.

In early 2015, Merrell was looking for new and scalable ways to boost perceptions of its brand in retail stores. This would entail improving store staff's awareness and knowledge of Merrell products that would lead to an increase in sales. Merrell sought to target different people at different levels with different media, since people learn in different ways and there are some who don't respond well to classroom instruction. Merrell discovered Myagi's online learning and development network when a key outdoor retail partner in the U.K., Blacks, invited Merrell to join and provide training to its store associates. Merrell started with a pilot program and soon discovered that Myagi delivered the best universal learning outcomes. It was the perfect compliment to Merrell's own brand ambassador program of in-person, in-store training.

Putting the learner in the driver's seat for faster and better outcomes.

Merrell discovered that the Myagi network could help it target a generally younger generation of staff that it wasn't able to reach as well before. Myagi was also an ideal tool for new staff as it rapidly gave them the requisite baseline knowledge to start working in retail, and this solved an acute problem in outdoor, sports and leisure retail, where staff turnover can be high. With Myagi, it doesn't matter if a retail associate has worked for 10 days or 10 years, it enables instant access to relevant learning instead of waiting months for a brand ambassador to check in with training materials. "Myagi puts the learner in the driver's seat and it's their tool to be used as and when and how they see fit, which works very well for most. It's quite different to someone coming into the store, standing in front of you and giving you a bunch of information," revealed Max Wallder, Merrell's Trade Market Executive, U.K & Ireland.

Reaching maximum retailers at minimum cost and highest ROI.

Merrell's goal in implementing Myagi was to reach the highest volume of retail staff at the lowest proportional cost. "If you look at what it's costing Merrell to train store staff on a per person basis, Myagi does that at a much more effective rate," observed Wallder. As a result, Merrell is now promoting the Myagi network to all its retailers as it seeks the highest return on its investment from creating retail training content for distribution on Myagi.

"We've increased the amount of individual store staff trained over a given season by at least 100%, if not more," observed Wallder. "We've also become one of the brands store staff know are providing content, which gives them a more positive attitude towards Merrell, which is very important for us." To top things off, since implementing Myagi, Merrell has seen a significant increase in season over season sales for the products that its retailers have trained on.

Creating compelling content for better retail sales and service.

Merrell sought to create quality and relevant video content for the target audience of mostly millennial retail staff, which was new for it. Indeed, there are very few brands that make training videos, as resources typically go to consumer marketing materials. Merrell decided to invest in doing it properly as the amount of retail staff using its content on Myagi would make it worthwhile. The strategy paid off as Merrell has received positive feedback on its new learning content which has been compared favorably with other brands on the Myagi network. It helped that Merrell was open to feedback from its retail partners and soon realized that staff like short, sharp and sweet content that's challenging, but not overly complex. "We're quite keen to keep learning and make better content on the back of feedback from our retailers," noted Wallder.

Channeling content for increasing Merrell staff brand awareness.

Once Merrell had created learning content and seen its beneficial impact on retail staff, it realized that it could also be used to develop its own employees. Merrell now uses content created for Myagi with its sales and customer service staff. In addition, all new Merrell staffers will complete Myagi training as part of their onboarding process and this helps to increase brand awareness. "The last thing we'd want is for our brand ambassadors to go into a store and the retail staff to know something they don't, so all brand ambassadors have to complete Myagi training" declared Wallder. This also allows them to know what's already been covered with retail staff so they can focus on other things to discuss when they do call in on a store.

Reporting delivers critical insights and confirms training ROI.

Merrell regularly reviews the analytics and insights available through Myagi's reporting suite. It can now report back on exactly what bang it's getting for its learning and development buck. While particular attention is paid to the retail reach or number of stores and staff that are covered by Merrell, the analytics also uncover interesting insights about which particular products staff are the most interested in. "It's essential for us to know what store staff perceptions of products are and what initially grabs people's attention" observed Wallder. Merrell also investigates actual sales for these favored products to see if more sales occur. Myagi reports also aid in deciphering how good or bad Merrell's training content is and in identifying areas for improvement. "One of the difficult things for us from a training perspective in the past was the inability to get quantifiable data back, whereas now for the first time, Myagi was able to give us that," noted Wallder.

Creating a retail industry Network to showcase and improve brand content.

Merrell welcomes having other brand content, even if competitive, on Myagi. It means it's more likely that all brands will be incentivized to make even better content to attract retail staff engagement. Moreover, by having more brands in the network, it means more retailers are going to use Myagi, which means more retail reach for Merrell. "If someone goes onto Myagi looking for another brand, they're more likely to discover Merrell content there" noted Wallder, "and that's a good thing for us." As Myagi increasingly becomes the network for store staff learning in the retail industry, it opens up a powerful communication channel for brands to get their message across. This remains critical for brands even in these times of rapid e-commerce growth. "We're a footwear company and because of that, brick-and-mortar will always be relevant to us. So having store staff know about our products, how to fit them and what shoes are the right ones for the customer will always mean that we'll never be an industry that's just online," affirmed Wardell, "and training is a big part of staff making sure that their shop remains relevant to the consumer."