

A portrait of Marie Gulin-Merle, the CMO of L'Oréal USA, with short, light-colored hair, wearing a dark blazer over a striped shirt. She is smiling slightly and looking off-camera to the right. The background is a solid orange color.

L'Oréal's Digital Transformation

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Consumer experiences on digital—and more specifically mobile—are becoming much more personalized and assistive. Marie Gulin-Merle, the CMO of L'Oréal USA, shares how her company is reinventing its marketing to keep up with these accelerating trends.

think with **Google**

There wasn't a single instance that made me realize we needed to rethink our customer experience if we wanted to remain relevant—it was more a series of discoveries.

It started with the recognition that digital, and especially mobile, has fundamentally changed the way people consume media, develop brand preferences, and choose products. Being able to help a consumer as they test a hairstyle in front of the mirror anytime, anywhere in the world used to feel like an unattainable dream for beauty marketers. But thanks to mobile, it's now a reality.

Because of this, we recognized that digital couldn't continue being its own channel—it had to be a part of everything we do.

Pretty quickly, we realized we needed to digitally transform to truly reinvent the way we meet our consumers' needs in the moment.

Digital transformation tip #1: Make it personal

Because of mobile, consumers now have a personal stylist, hairdresser, and makeup artist right at their fingertips, 24/7. To make sure we are there and useful whenever our customers need us, we must offer more than just customized products. We need a personalized digital experience, too.

We launched Makeup Genius, a mobile app that allows consumers to virtually try on makeup. The app scans a customer's face, analyzes more than 60 characteristics, then virtually displays how various products and shade mixes can be used to achieve different looks, in real time. Consumers can select a look they like and directly order the right products with just the press of a button. As the app tracks how the customer uses it and what they buy, it learns their preferences, makes inferences based on similar customers' choices, and tailors its responses.

The important takeaway is that we didn't build Makeup Genius to mirror

our mobile commerce experience. This app is a unique asset both as a branded channel for engaging with customers and as a "fire hose" of incoming information about how our customers engage. It allows us to understand the needs of our loyal users and tailor meaningful, assistive experiences for them. We now have more than 20 million customers that we can provide a customized experience for.

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Digital transformation tip #2: Harness the power of data

For most of our customers, the purchase journey starts online—so we have to pay attention to what they search for and watch. To launch our Maybelline Master Contour makeup line, we partnered with Google to learn about the specific contouring questions and concerns consumers had, so we could better identify, predict, and meet their needs.

We segmented our audiences into three groups, and decided to focus on the "contour-me-quick" consumers. These are women who express a desire to acquire contouring skills, but think it's too hard or time-consuming for them to learn. We made a series of quick how-to YouTube videos that demystified the art of contouring in three simple steps. The videos were personalized by intent and demographics, to ensure we answered the primary question the shopper had, and gave them the best advice for their skin color and type.

This data-driven approach resulted in more than 9 million views of our videos across this key customer segment. That's more than 9 million times we were able to help consumers find the contouring tips they were looking for, and lower the barrier to purchase.

Master Contour |
Maybelline New York



Digital transformation tip #3: Reimagine storytelling

While we're able to reach consumers throughout the many moments in their day, competition for their attention is stiffer than ever. For consumers to engage with a story, its relevance must be proven quickly. So, we have to align our message, creative, and media in a compelling way, and that means speeding up our storytelling.

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And sometimes it only takes a few seconds to deliver that message. Recently, we created a six-second ad on YouTube that showed consumers how to use our new Root Cover Up spray. Very quickly, we were able to demonstrate the value of this product, how it would fit into consumers' lives, and give them the opportunity to learn more if they were interested.

Cover Gray Roots in
Easy Root Cover Up |
L'Oréal Paris



Digital Transformation Recap

Make it personal. The best and most memorable experiences are the ones that feel personal. Find ways to be relevant and assistive to individuals in their moments of need.

Harness the power of data. Your customers are leaving digital footprints every time they search or watch a video. These actions contain powerful insights, which can be used to predict customer needs and inform your marketing strategies.

Reimagine storytelling. Test new creative ways to tell stories to better engage mobile consumers.