

Luxury Institute ‘State Of The Luxury Industry’ Report Reveals What Affluent Consumers Want From Luxury Sales Professionals

(NEW YORK) March 3, 2020 – The New York-based Luxury Institute’s *State of the Luxury Industry 2020* report, based on surveys of more than 3,100 affluent consumers around the world, details the critical role played by luxury salespeople as brand ambassadors and catalysts for sales in dozens of industries.

For example, one out of three (33%) high-income shoppers likes to interact with sales associates when shopping for luxury goods, 35% cite helpful sales professionals as a top factor in doing business with a brand, and 15% of consumers say that a relationship with a sales associate is a primary driver of luxury goods buying decisions.

The preference for personal interaction is strongest in China, where more than half (51%) of shoppers say that they like to be guided by a salesperson while shopping for luxury goods, and 46% will even go to a store to shop online with an associate. On the other end of the spectrum, only 22% of affluent U.S. shoppers desire to interact with a sales associate, while 29% strongly prefer to be left alone. Nearly three-fourths (70%) of affluent consumers agree that luxury brand sales associates deliver a personalized and relationship-oriented experience, a sentiment most widespread in China (86%) and Italy (80%).

More than one-third (36%) of affluent consumers worldwide report having a specific salesperson that they prefer to work with when making a purchase from any luxury brand, a propensity that rises to 80% in China. Affluent Chinese consumers are also most likely (37%) to receive “frequent” personalized offers from luxury salespersons, while U.S. consumers are least likely (9%) to receive such offers.

Regarding the attributes required of a top salesperson selling a luxury product, a majority (51%) of consumers cite expertise in product domain. Also essential are trustworthiness (49%), experience (48%), and behaving in a polite and courteous manner (47%). Additional characteristics of luxury salespeople cited by affluent shoppers are a professional demeanor (44%), reliability (42%), and helpfulness (37%).

Which luxury categories have the best salespersons? Jewelry and watches (29%), and hotels and resorts (25%) are most frequently cited as industries in which the top sales professionals can be found. Fashion apparel (22%) and automotive (19%) and are also widely viewed as having high concentrations of superior sales professionals. By contrast, home appliances, entertainment, and insurance are categories with the lowest percentage (7%) of consumers indicating that salespersons are exemplary.

“Outstanding products and services are the bare minimum of what is required for luxury firms to thrive today. The sales associate remains relevant, although in some countries,



the expertise of emotionally intelligent luxury

such as the USA, brands have a huge opportunity to transform their transactional methods into emotionally intelligent relationship building experiences," says Luxury Institute CEO Milton Pedraza. "Despite the gains made by online commerce, stores and sales associates remain central to the success of luxury providers."

The complete State of the Luxury Industry 2020 report, including detailed information by country, is available for purchase. For more information, visit www.LuxuryInstitute.com.