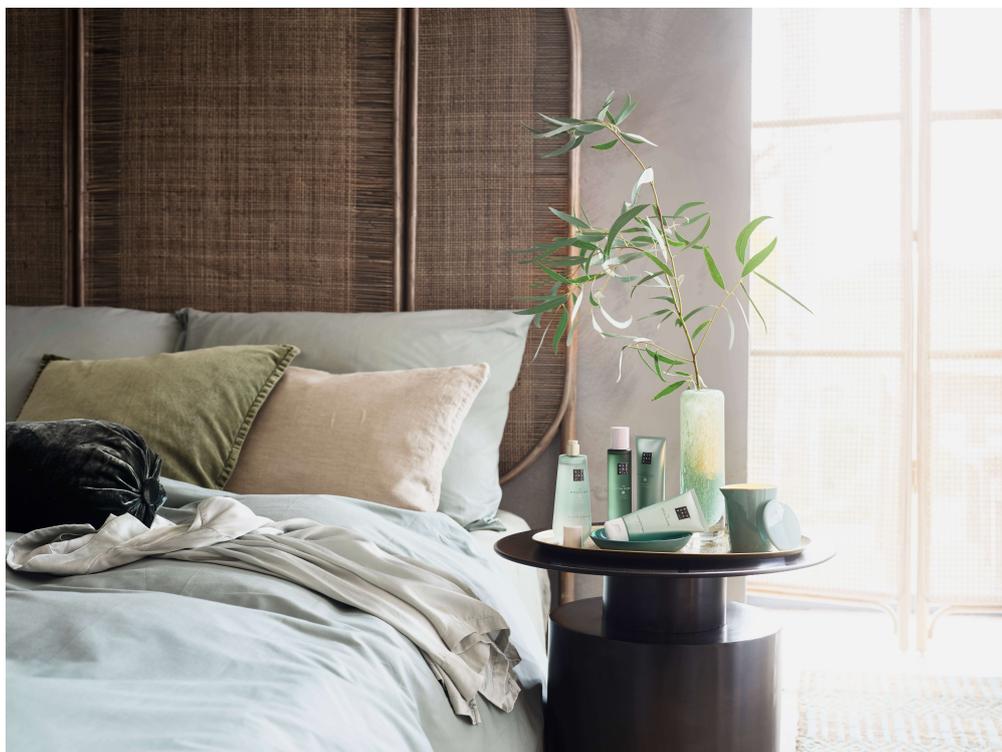


# Rituals Cosmetics talks digital integration & the concept of wellbeing



Melvin Broekaart, Director of Global Travel Retail, Rituals Cosmetics



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Following the departure of Neil Ebbutt, Melvin Broekaart recently took on the position of Director of Global Travel Retail at Rituals Cosmetics. With more than a decade of experience in travel retail, Broekaart is well known in the industry because of his time at Heineken, Philips and Aircommerce Group. Last month, both Ebbutt and Broekaart attended TFWA World Exhibition & Conference 2021 in Cannes to ensure a successful transition.

With a strong interest in digital innovation and integration, Broekaart aims to enhance the passenger journey and promote synergy between travel retail and domestic markets. As the fastest-growing European beauty brand, Rituals Cosmetics values digital acceleration and strategic collaboration, which is why Broekaart says the brand has the opportunity to recover at a faster rate than the overall travel retail industry. At the top of his agenda, Broekaart will lead the development of digital collaboration with channel partners in Europe and the evolution of Rituals' digital strategy in Asia via livestreaming, KOL partnerships and more.

"The affordable luxury category, in which Rituals plays a leading role, has been experiencing robust growth in duty free and travel retail and will continue to significantly contribute to the industry's overall recovery. With the support of the team, I will boost the rollout of standalone Rituals stores in airports, helping to shape the luxury environment that inspires today's traveler to make a purchase," he explains.



By engaging with travelers at all touchpoints of the journey and leveraging the digital experience in-store, the brand will elevate the iconic Rituals experience

Striking a balance:

Although Rituals is prioritizing and practicing digitalization, the brand is still in the discovery phase. Pre-COVID, the theme was a reoccurring topic of discussion; however, Broekaart says the industry lacked a “truly compelling” global vision to combine the possibilities of digital with the power of physical presence. Fast forward to the present, travel retail has fully embraced e-commerce and the need to implement a hybrid business model.

When asked about striking a balance between the in-store experience and digital integration, Broekaart notes that the best way to do this is by thinking about what we as passengers would like to be offered. “There are specific parts of the passenger journey that can be offered better digitally, which will make physical activities – possibly one of the industry’s greatest strengths – more visible,” he adds.

Representing a holistic view of body, mind and soul, Rituals looks to engage consumers with relevant stories and meaningful content, rather than simply telling a brand story. By engaging with travelers at all touchpoints of the journey and leveraging the digital experience in-store, the brand will elevate the iconic Rituals experience.

“Travel retail is unique in that consumers have lots of time on their hands before catching their flight to discover and explore a brand”, says Broekaart. “We have a captive audience that can touch, smell

and sample products – this is important for a brand such as Rituals, which is based on a sensorial journey and requires physical exploration to fully understand and appreciate it.”

“At the end of the day, there are certain elements of the customer journey that are best-suited to in-store and other parts – such as the transactional part of conducting a purchase – that work better digitally. E-commerce gives consumers convenience and offered in conjunction with a strong physical experience, results in an appealing shopping experience,” he adds.



When asked about new brand opportunities, Broekaart elaborates on the changing consumer habits caused by the pandemic; across the globe, travelers are planning more purpose-driven, domestic trips via train, coach or car

A broader look at travel & tourism:

When asked about new brand opportunities, Broekaart elaborates on the changing consumer habits caused by the pandemic. Across the globe, travelers are planning more purpose-driven, domestic trips such as wellness retreats and weekend getaways via train, coach or car and organizing extended stays in private accommodations where they can combine work and holiday. He explains that these new trends offer brands like Rituals the chance to target travelers in new ways.

“Travel retail is one of the world’s most scalable environments for conveying the concept of wellbeing to a large consumer group who – especially in a post-COVID travel era – welcome a stronger wellbeing component to their lives and their travels.

“When we consider private accommodation such as holiday homes, we see an opportunity to help transform these places into temporary homes with our products and ranges – particularly, our home assortment, which includes fragrance sticks, scented candles and room sprays. Our goal is to create an enticing, welcoming sanctuary for guests wherever in the world they are currently residing,” states Broekaart.

Outside of the home, Rituals is reviewing the potential to expand its offering in airport lounges to include wellbeing bundles and sleep care kits in order to enhance the traveler experience. The brand is also working with hotel partners to provide sustainable in-room amenities like refillable shampoo and conditioner dispensers. Whether at home, on vacation or in-transit, Rituals supports travelers in

finding meaningful experiences in the world around them.