

Getting Conversational About Conversational Commerce with Cynthia Rowley

ARTICLE |

Rimma Kats

When retailer Cynthia Rowley saw that mobile comprised roughly 72% of its traffic, the company decided to launch a text message channel, giving consumers another form of communication beyond email.

“We want to give customers options,” said Allie Egan, president and CEO of Cynthia Rowley. “Some people prefer email; others prefer texts. A lot of people actually want both. Our goal was to get some experience with the channel, but then very quickly—in less than a year of doing this—we’ve grown our listserv to almost a quarter of our email listserv. And revenues generated from that channel are matching email.”

“Now we’re thinking about how to maximize revenue conversions and clickthroughs,” she said. “If you look at open rates, for example, of course on mobile they’re falsely high because no one wants to see an unread text message. But when we look at clickthrough rates, they actually are almost four times that of email, too. That’s attributed to maybe forcing us to be even more concise with our messaging to customers.”

Cynthia Rowley president and CEO Allie Egan recently sat down with eMarketer executive editor Rimma Kats to discuss a variety of topics, including mcommerce, a text message channel and the need to maintain an active conversation with retail customers. Listen in.

The conversational commerce channel has helped the company with an issue troubling nearly all retailers—cart abandonment.

“On mobile, you're so much more distracted,” Egan said. “We're trying to test that window that people find as a helpful reminder vs. something that's annoying. We only send one cart abandonment message, and we're testing when that should be sent—an hour after? Is it 24 hours? And then, we will customize that messaging for that particular customer going forward. We've seen huge success with about a 30% conversion from those cart abandonment messages.”

But Cynthia Rowley is keeping an eye on the **frequency of the messaging** it sends—an issue many marketers grapple with.

At the moment, the company is sending roughly three brand messages. “They're not [all necessarily] promotionally driven. For example, we just had our annual influencer surf camp in Montauk, and we share that story [via text],” Egan said.

“We'll get better over time as we learn what types of brand messages people are reacting to.”