

LUXURY BRAND MANAGEMENT EVENT PLAN: PATRÒN TEQUILA

by Maya Kapur

MGT6B2 Luxury Brand Management and International Events

Susan Seel

Regents University London

London, England

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Short Executive Summary

This report will explore alcohol as a luxury sector. The global consumer and brand positioning will be examined in the market through an in-depth analysis of the brand Patrón Tequila Spirits. The analysis will also include a history of luxury events hosted by the brand. Lastly, based on this information, an event management plan will be proposed.

Introduction

The competition for consumer goods is rising. To be a relevant brand, they must be consumer-centric to promote differentiation. Customer loyalty is built on the multi-dimensional experience they receive by engaging all five senses. The “‘customer experience’ could be defined as a set of interactions between a customer and a product, a brand, a service, a company or part of its organization, which provokes a reaction as a result of an ordinary or extraordinary experience [which is strictly personal and subjective.]” To enhance this loyalty, the brand must design experiences that create value that a consumer will pay for (Ferreira et al., 2013). By utilizing events as an effective communication tool with their consumers, they can expand their awareness and consumer base.

To understand a brand and its positioning, event managers must consider the question ‘what is luxury?’ While there is no one definition, according to the Oxford Latin Dictionary, “the roots of the word ‘luxury’ derive luxury from ‘luxus’, which means (...) ‘sumptuousness, luxuriousness, opulence’, but (...) is commonly used by marketers in most product or service categories to communicate to consumers a particular tier of offer in order to persuade them to ‘trade up’”. This is important to a brand that launches products each season and, at the same time, needs to maintain its consumer’s interest in consumption as well as the brand’s level of exclusivity. Luxury considers how, when “the demand for a good falls as the number of buyers increases, [... the elite] disassociate themselves from the masses.” Furthermore, the awareness of

the brand increases due to the “bandwagon’ effect, where (...) consumers follow others in their reference groups who have already bought the good” (Tynan et al., 2010).

A luxury brand, specifically, its product or service possesses the following proposed characteristics:

- “1) be high quality
- 2) offer authentic value via desired benefits, whether functional or emotional;
- 3) have a prestigious image within the market built on qualities such as artisanship, craftsmanship, or service quality;
- 4) be worthy of commanding a premium price;
- 5) be capable of inspiring a deep connection, or resonance, with the consumer.”

This research can be used to build a brand image, on social media for example, and influence the consumers’ mindsets. The marketing of a brand should be impactful by focusing on the values in which a consumer aligns themselves with (Ko et al., 2019).

Patrón Tequila as a Brand

The original Patrón Tequila started as Tequila Siete Leguas distillery in 1989. The owners of St. Maarten Spirits, John Paul DeJoria and Martin Crowley, bought the brand. Tequila Siete Leguas moved production in 2002 when Patrón built a new factory to keep up with the growth (Tequila.net, 2017).

In 2000, Ed Brown became CEO, who recently stepped down at the end of 2018. He wanted to change the image that tequila had in the alcohol market because its reputation was bad-tasting and what consumers drank to quickly become intoxicated. The strategy that Patrón executed was similar to Grey Goose's advertising (Spivak, 2012). Patrón is an embodiment of sophistication, through its quality and technical innovation in the authentic process. The brand values artisanal craftsmanship and its distinctive heritage from Jalisco, Mexico (Refer to Appendix A: Brand Identity Prism).

Most recently, in 2018, Patrón was sold to Bacardi, the largest privately held spirits company, for \$5.1 billion. Bacardi recently gained a new CEO, Mahesh Madhavan in 2017. According to Bacardi, Patrón is "world's top-selling ultra-premium tequila" and they "will continue to pursue perfection as the guiding light in everything Patrón stands for" (News Desk, 2018). Patrón Tequila offers a variety of products including the original tequila, Gran Patrón, XO Cafe, and Citrónge (Patron Tequila, n.d.). The company "now enjoys 'an almost 70% share in the US', the brand's chief marketing officer, Lee Applbaum, said in an interview with *The Spirits Business* last year." Additionally, the brand has presented an outstanding performance in 2016 with global sales of almost 2.5 million cases (Bruce-Gardyne, 2018).



Figure 1: Ed Brown, 2018.



Figure 2: Mahesh Madhavan, 2018.

History of Previous Luxury Events Hosted by Patrón

To measure the success of an event, a brand can explore its effect on specific customer experience dimensions including “emotional, affective, spiritual, physical, sensorial, behavioral (e.g., lifestyle), intellectual, cognitive, rational (functional and utilitarian), and relational or social” (Ferreira et al., 2013). They can utilize these marketing strategies to fulfill their role that the consumer has expected from the brand’s involvement.

Patrón has hosted successful luxury events in the past that has allowed its audience to immerse themselves in the brand and therefore built a steady, reputable following.

One example of this is the Secret Supper, presented by the Roca Patrón Series. Each sunset dining experience is three and a half hours long with live mariachi music, held at a different location. The details are kept a secret — the menu is unique to each event, lodging and arrival time are recommended but any other information is released only forty-eight hours in advance. During a guest’s stay, they should expect a bar, gym, and coffee shop that is always open as well as an in-depth tour of the plantation and process behind the making of tequila. Specifically, guests can watch the agave harvested by hand, the roller mill and original centuries-old ‘tahona’ technique for extraction, fermentation, aging using five types of casks, bottling with hand labeling and corking, and the water treatment process using reverse osmosis (Secret Supper, 2019).



Figure 3: Supper



Figure 4: Mariachi band



Figure 5: Fireplace

The Secret Supper is located at Patrón’s invitation-only hotel, La Casona. The property has hosted a variety of celebrities ranging from Guillermo del Toro and Padma Lakshmi to Robert Irvine. The location has twenty rooms, with ceilings at thirty feet in height, beds five inches longer than a standard king size, and all the chairs in the hotel are deep and leather lined. There is a VIP lounge for extremely important guests as well as a warm fire pit that they can gather around sipping custom cocktails made by a mixologist. The “property is invite-only (...), designed solely for people whose connections or digital platform can help promote Patrón as emblematic of true luxury. [... The brand applies] the same spare-no-expense details of making the tequila to building La Casona” (Miller, 2018). They recently added the Francisco Alcaraz Barrel Room, which is a 16,850 square foot expansion and will “allow Patrón to nearly double the rate of production of its aged portfolio.” This addition includes a tasting room and an exclusive speakeasy (Patrón Tequila, 2019).



Figure 6: La Casona hotel



Figure 7: Bar

As a brand, Patrón focuses on sustainability and ethical efforts while creating their product. First, the distillery employs and supports the local population of 51,000 people. The company provides flexible work hours, free transportation to and from work, and partners with teachers and universities to allow for continuing education to 1,600 employees. The environment is also important to them, where safety is tested following rigorous standards and the workplace is noisy with chatter and music. Second, they have taken steps to reduce their environmental impact including installing a natural gas pipeline and reverse osmosis treatment system to recover up to 70% of water, as well as placing reusable water bottles with hydration systems and acoustic screens to manage noise. Third, they turn more than 22,000 tons of waste into 5,500 tons of compost that is also free for employees to use in their gardens. Fourth, the company has reforested by donating over 16,000 trees. Lastly, Patrón funds an agricultural research center in Mexico to better understand the agave plant (Gabriele, 2018).



Figure 8: Harvesting agave



Figure 9: Tequila process



Figure 10: Workers bottling

Ferreira et al. explain how “the more senses an experience engages with, the more effective and memorable it can be. [... It is the] key to building customer commitment, retention, and sustained financial success” (Ferreira et al., 2013). The following examples of luxury experiences connect to various dimensions.

First, the attention to detail in the design of the dinner and hotel creates a sensorial experience. Experiential design should have the intention of bringing people together that successfully excites the five senses. By doing this, participants can gain more holistic knowledge of the subject as well as interact with one another to break down barriers, bringing the tactile aspect back to the brand experience. Specifically, the creators of the dinner party would have to consider that food is not only for your health and nutrition but also an experience in sensory involvement. By focusing on the texture and taste of the food or physical elements of the hotel, we can elevate small encounters that may seem insignificant.

Second, Patrón has created experiences that are intellectually stimulating by educating their guests. The company includes a detailed informational tour of their facilities. Participants can also observe that which is unique to Patrón, such as the ‘tahona’ technique. By knowing about the effort and care that goes into each bottle, consumers understand the brand and its luxury status better which ultimately influences brand loyalty.

Lastly, the brand has created a more meaningful relationship with their consumer because of their social and ethical efforts to connect with their heritage and provide support to the surrounding community. According to *Forbes*, “88% of consumers want [brands] to help them make a difference” by buying that which is sustainable and ethical (Townsend, 2018). The advantage Patrón gains by highlighting these efforts are not only the good that it does for the planet and its people but for its reputation with its consumers.

Patrón's Global Consumer

Consumer Trends

The luxury market is comprised of “nine segments [... accounting] for more than 80% of the total market” (D’Arpizio et al., 2018). It is at the forefront of spending, “[growing] by 5 percent at constant exchange rates in 2018 to an estimated €1.2 trillion globally, with overall positive performance across all segments. This (...) is expected to continue (...) through 2025 (...) to reach €320-365 billion” (Ibid). Overall, sources believe that “between 2016 and 2020, Tequila’s growth is poised to consistently outperform the wider spirits market year on year” (The Spirits Business, 2019).

To create a meaningful event that will have the most impact on Patrón’s consumer, the company will have to consider the upcoming food and drink trends that will influence their consumer.

One trend is “new delivery formats and sensorial [surprises] are bringing novelty and functionality to sectors including scent, supplements, and alcohol” (Food & Drink Frontiers 2019, 2019). In fact, Patrón is already implementing this with their margarita Cocktail Fizzer where the flavor fizzes like a bath bomb in a drink.

Another trend is cinematic drink experiences where brands “convey taste or scent in visually immersive formats” (Food & Drink Frontiers 2019, 2019). According to Bain & Company, “online remained the fastest-growing channel, increasing 22% and reaching 10% penetration of luxury sales globally” (Refer to Appendix B: Global online personal luxury goods market growth). To capitalize on this, brands must adapt to “the preferences of younger consumers in terms of product offerings, communication and engagement strategies, and distribution channels” (D’Arpizio et al., 2018). “Generations Y and Z accounted for 47% of

luxury consumers in 2018 and 33% of luxury purchases” (Refer to Appendix C: Global personal luxury goods consumers and sales value by generation). Part of Patrón’s strategy is to be a relatable luxury brand. To connect with their millennial consumer base between the ages of 21 and 37, Patrón utilizes apps and digital technology to tell a story, which increases consumer engagement. The brand pushes this idea further and “is currently exploring ways to connect with consumers through augmented reality” (Shaw, 2019).

Lastly, Patrón has included the trend ‘agroecology’ in their mission when producing alcohol products. It is “a farming practice informed by ecological principles, is gaining ground as a way to regenerate land and improve the long-term efficiency of crop growth” (Food & Drink Frontiers 2019, 2019). They focus on climate change as a rising issue and have taken an effort in regrowth of trees and implemented a water treatment system.

Brand Positioning of Patrón

Current Market and Climate

The segment report presented by Statista for 2019 shows the spirits sector achieved an average of 3.8% revenue growth per year (Refer to Appendix D: Worldwide revenue of spirits). “2018 was another record-setting year (...) for tequila exports from Mexico. Over 224 million liters of tequila were exported last year (...) and the industry is predicting those numbers will only continue to grow, particularly as tequila finds its way into more international markets. According to the IWSR, a trusted authority in beverage alcohol data, total ultra-premium tequila was expected to grow by 14.7% in 2018” (Micallef, 2019). “Competitors including Don Julio 1942 and Herradura are growing, but they aren’t close to cracking Patrón’s market share” (Miller, 2018).

Challenges

One particular challenge that Patrón faces is expanding to the Asian market because they have to “adapt to different palates, styles and drinking rituals,” according to Lee Applbaum, global chief marketing officer at Patrón Tequila (The Spirits Business, 2019). They have much room to grow, with the “[potential to] provide a massive boost in its future. But it hasn’t managed to crack [China] just yet, perhaps because emerging markets have historically tended to embrace products that they see as premium” (Ibid). Tequila is still seen as a quick way to get intoxicated. Patrón should continue its efforts to educate its consumers about “the versatility, (...) the diversity of variants, and increased quality available to them” (Ibid). By introducing the nuanced elements of the spirit, Patrón can transcend its reputation in this specific market.

Brand Business Model

A big part of evaluating brand business models is seeing how larger brands, in comparison to smaller ones, are able to sustain a price fluctuation in the plant used to make their product. If costs keep rising, the prices of the product will soon follow. However, the CMO of Patrón has expressed that it becomes a matter of survival of the fittest, where “those who are ‘ultimately committed to producing world-class, artisanal spirits from those just harvesting short-term profit and putting a flashy bottle on the shelf’” (Kiely, 2018). Furthermore, he explained that the spirit sector is growing, and larger companies are much more permanent competition. The key to this success is “[dependant] on the category maintaining its quality standards, providing new and innovative offerings, and bringing to life the history of Tequila and Mexico” (Ibid). Specifically, Patrón Tequila as well as their new parent company, Bacardi Limited, have had sustainability “at the core of their original business model” (Wunderman, 2019). By continuing to highlight this aspect, they will maintain its luxury standard.

Patrón's Event Management Plan

Event Concept and Product

To ensure that the experience is successful within Patrón's existing brand, they can take “five steps to develop a coherent theme (...): 1) theme the experience; 2) harmonize impressions with positive clues; 3) eliminate negative clues; 4) mix in memorabilia; and 5) engage all five senses” (Ferreira et al., 2013).

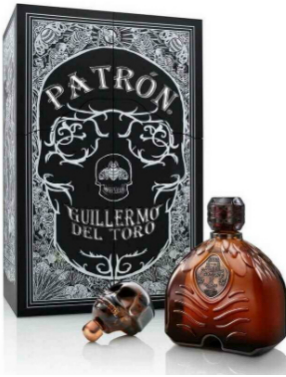
Patrón would partner with the cast and crew of the movie *Halloween Kills* premiering the 20th of October in 2020 (Refer to Appendix E: Social media matrix and Patrón examples).

October is the month for both Halloween and the Mexican holiday, Día de los Muertos, and they can connect two different audiences for their event. The event would take place as two-parts.

First, two to three months before the premiere date, when the movie is being promoted, Patrón would fly the celebrity cast out to their hotel in Jalisco, Mexico. Patrón would use this opportunity to create a short film on this experience that will be used in the second part of this event (Refer to *Patrón x Guillermo del Toro | Patrón Tequila*, 2017). The company would educate them about Patrón and expose them to the process behind making tequila. They would also learn about the Mexican culture surrounding Día de los Muertos and have exclusive experience with Guillermo del Toro, the designer behind a limited-edition bottle specially made for the movie and Día de los Muertos. The cast would enjoy a themed dinner and drinks prepared for the occasion and would be gifted a limited-edition bottle of tequila.

The bottle would be designed by a native from Jalisco, filmmaker Guillermo del Toro — who the brand has worked with in the past. The collaboration will be “multi-dimensional, as it incorporates an exquisite physical package, (...) highlighting the meticulous art and artisanal skill that goes into every bottle of Patrón. [... It will reflect del Toro's] creative storytelling and

hauntingly poetic beauty, much of which was inspired by his early years growing up in Guadalajara, Mexico, and the vivid culture and tradition that surrounded him” (Patrón Tequila, 2017) (Refer to Appendix A: Brand Identity Prism). Patrón had previously decided to work with del Toro because he was not only “talented and recognized [... but] had a keen interest in learning and gaining a firsthand appreciation for [their] artisanal process, and [their] commitment to quality and craftsmanship” (Ibid). Patrón has stated that they “carefully consider partnership opportunities and only collaborate on projects that perfectly align with [their] brand and resonate with [their] consumers” (Corbin, 2018).



Figures 11-13: 2017 Guillermo del Toro x Patrón collaboration

The high-profile celebrity cast will act as brand ambassadors, releasing details of the collaboration on their social media pages. This will create a hype around the upcoming event. The second part is the VIP premiere party of the movie, where Patrón will be sponsoring the event and the limited-edition bottle will be featured. The short film will be released on social media to generate consumer interest in the brand and product after the premiere party.

This is a collaboration that could be described as a “meeting of two masters, one of monsters and film and the other of tequila” (Ibid).

Collaboration

The Brand Ambassadors

The brand ambassadors of the event must have a connection to the collaboration between the movie *Halloween Kills* and Patrón. They will include the main cast including Jamie Lee Curtis, Nick Castle, Judy Greer, Kyle Richards, and Charles Cyphers, with David Gordon Green, the director and screenwriter (Refer to Appendix G - L: Social media profiles). The role that they would play would be use their credibility to say positive things about a product they have tried. This passion and confidence can be a powerful tool for brand awareness (Newton, 2016).

The Venues

The venue for the first part of the event will be located at Patrón's invitation-only hotel, La Casona. They have hosted many celebrities in the past and have the capacity to provide an experience they can film. These are the main facilities for their distillery and plantation.

The venue for the second part of the event is chosen by the executives of the *Halloween Kills* movie, and Patrón will not be able to direct the details.

Consumers

Similar to the previous collaboration with Guillermo del Toro, the bottle of tequila created for this event will have a limited number produced and will be available for purchase at "fine spirits and liquor retailers across the country for the suggested retail price of \$399" (Patrón Tequila, 2017). Patrón is also the first alcohol brand to sell its product on Instagram. They utilize software to analyze who is swiping on their ads and the average order value and "[hope] to make 20% of its business e-commerce in the next 10 years" (Shaw, 2019).

Discussion and Conclusion

This event will connect to its consumers on a new level. According to Ferreira and Teixeira, by connecting Patrón and their Mexican heritage with an upcoming movie of a similar nature, this theme can make the experience much more memorable. Furthermore, by flying the

cast to the Patrón hotel, the brand can engage their senses to the fullest extent with the detail put forth in the Secret Supper and décor, for example. The bottle will act as memorabilia that both the cast and consumers will cherish and become a collector's item.

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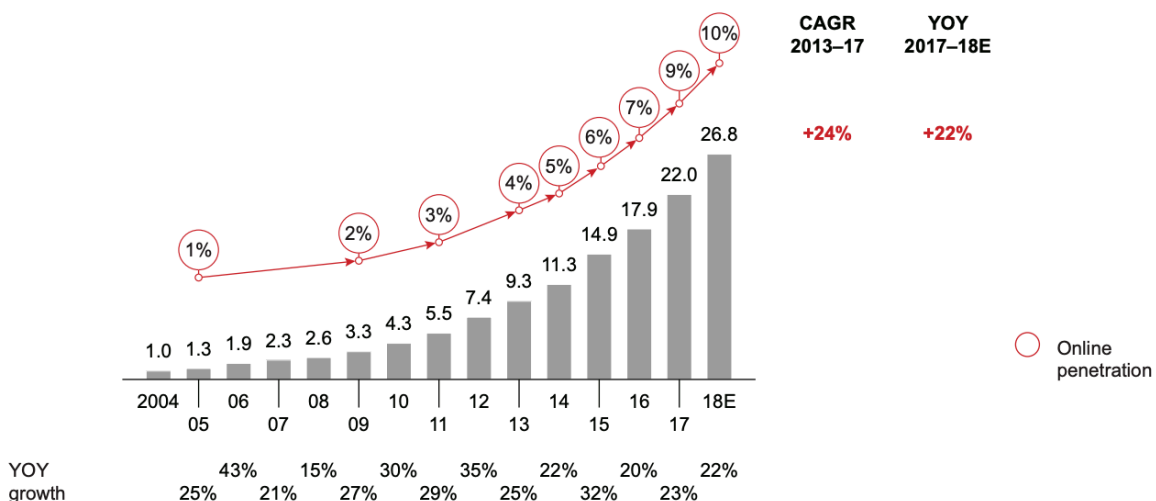
Appendix



Appendix A: Brand Identity Prism

Figure 10: Online luxury posted another year of double-digit growth, reaching 10% of the total market

Global online personal luxury goods market
(€ billions)



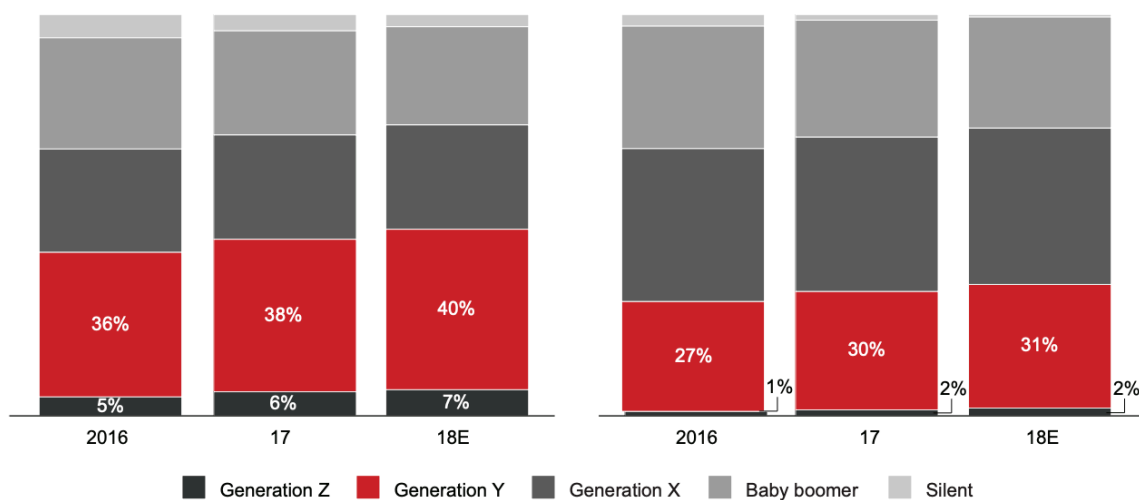
Note: Growth shown at current exchange rates
Source: Bain & Company

Appendix B: Global online personal luxury goods market growth

Figure 15: Generations Y and Z represented 47% of global personal luxury goods consumers in 2018, accounting for one-third of sales

Share of global personal luxury goods consumers, by generation

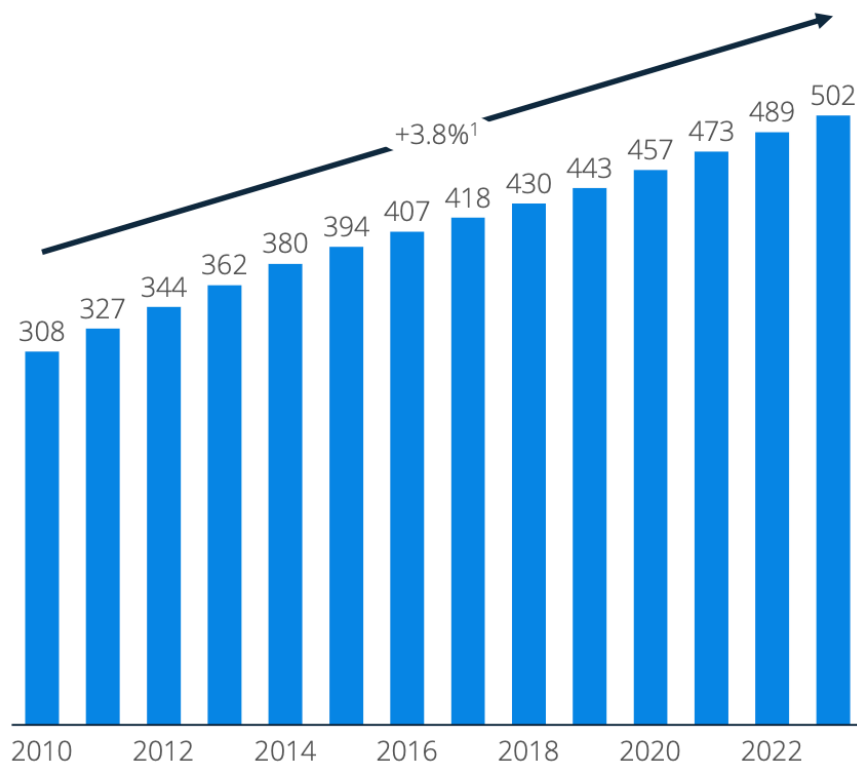
Share of global personal luxury goods sales value, by generation



Note: Growth shown at current exchange rates
Source: Bain & Company

Appendix C: Global personal luxury goods consumers and sales value by generation

Worldwide revenue in billion US\$



Appendix D: Worldwide revenue of spirits

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Appendix E: Social media matrix and Patrón examples

Collaboration with filmmaker Guillermo del Toro and the movie *Halloween Kills*



Design a limited-edition bottle of tequila themed for Día de los Muertos



Fly out the movie cast to Jalisco, Mexico at the Patrón hotel La Casona.



THE PATRÓN SPIRITS COMPANY



Create a short film about the process of making the limited-edition bottle and the cast experience.

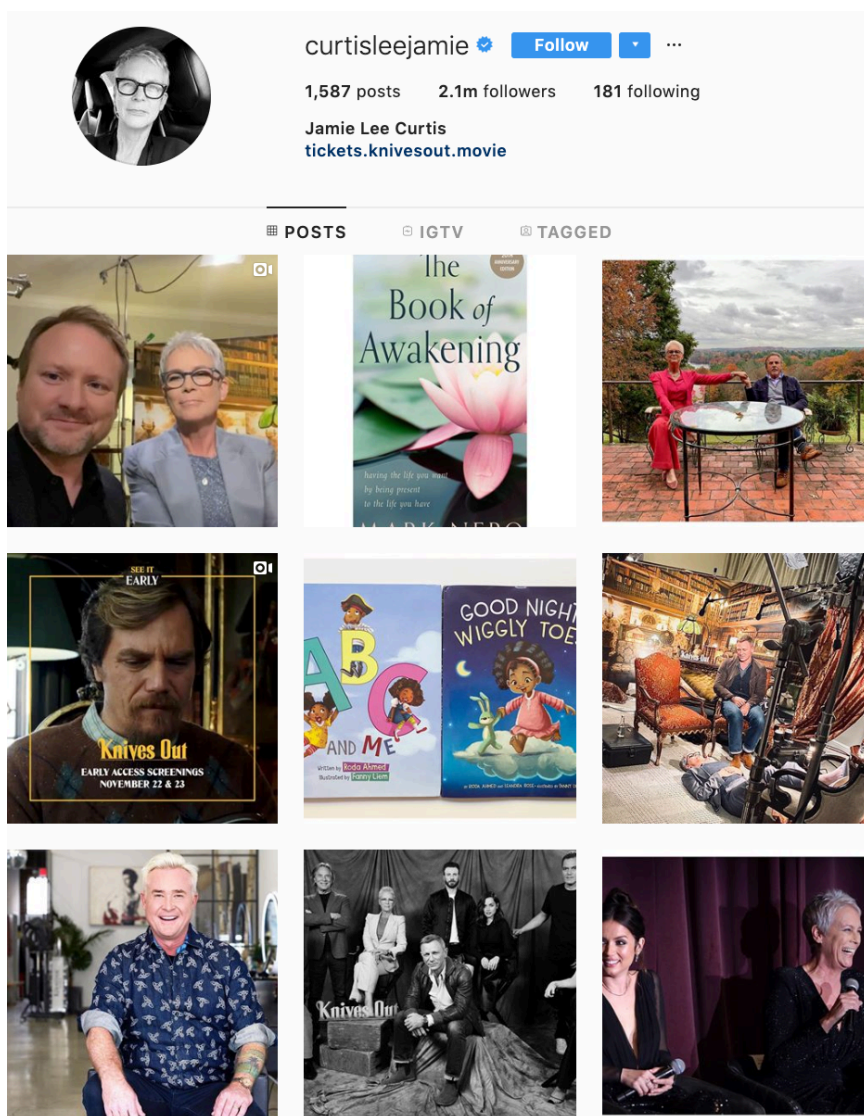


Patrón sponsors the VIP premiere party for *Halloween Kills*.



The short film will be released on social media to generate consumer interest in the brand and product.

Appendix F: Original event concept








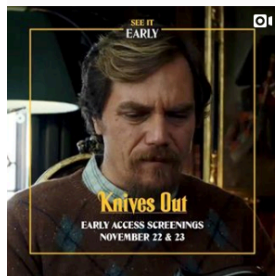

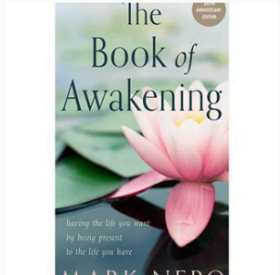

The image shows an Instagram profile for 'curtisleejamie'. The profile picture is a circular portrait of Jamie Lee Curtis wearing glasses. The bio includes the name 'Jamie Lee Curtis' and a link to 'tickets.knivesout.movie'. The statistics show 1,587 posts, 2.1m followers, and 181 following. The post grid contains nine images: a selfie with a man, a book cover for 'The Book of Awakening', a photo of Jamie Lee Curtis and a man at an outdoor table, a 'Knives Out' movie poster, two children's book covers, a photo of a man on a film set, a man in a patterned shirt, a group photo for 'Knives Out', and a photo of Jamie Lee Curtis speaking into a microphone.

curtisleejamie [Follow](#) ...

1,587 posts 2.1m followers 181 following

Jamie Lee Curtis
tickets.knivesout.movie

POSTS IGTV TAGGED



Appendix G: Jamie Lee Curtis profile



Appendix H: Nick Castle profile

missjudygreer [Follow](#)

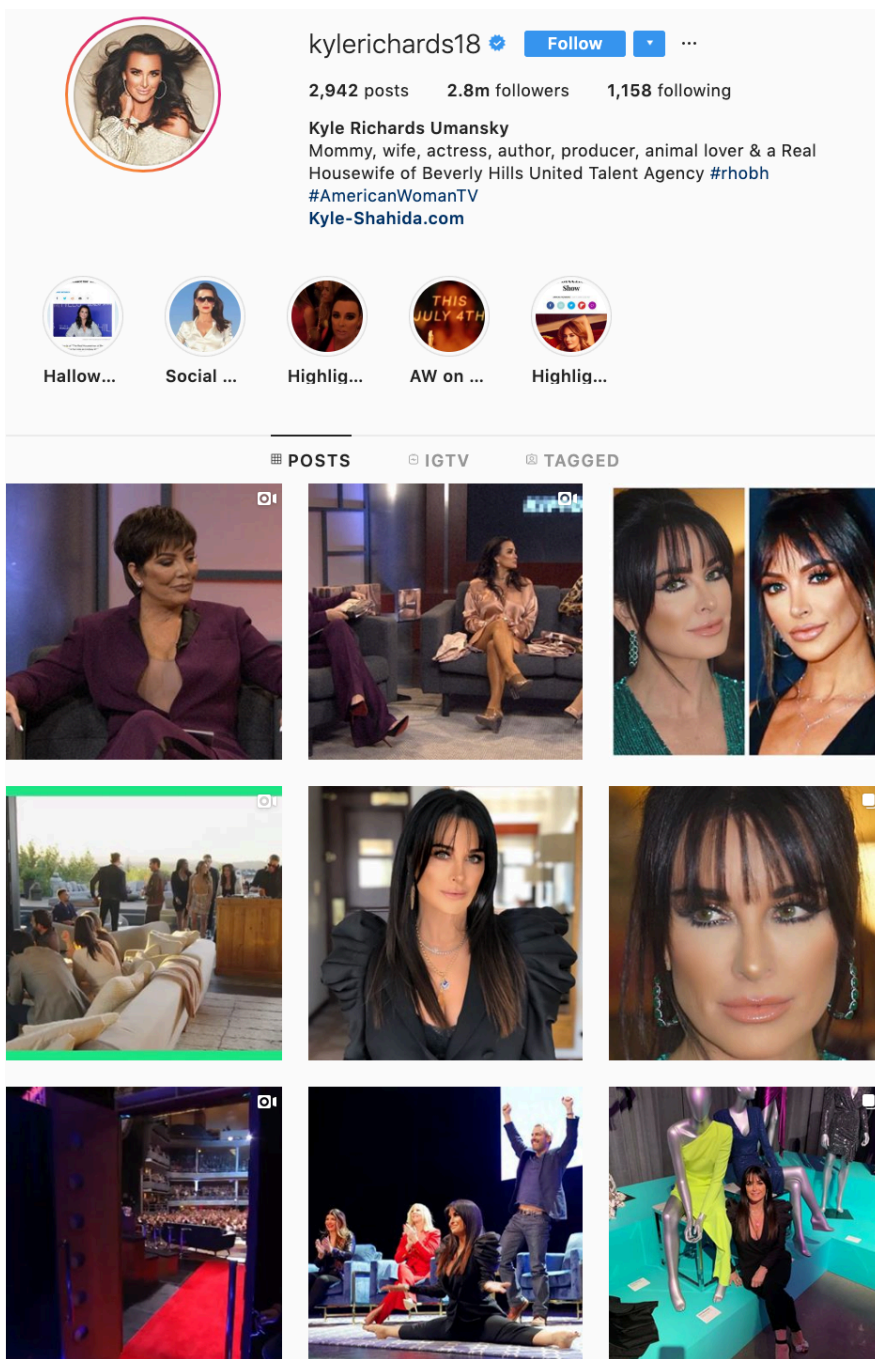
605 posts 302k followers 1,277 following

Judy Greer
Yes
projectchimps.org




Knittin... Inspira... Animal ... Do Good Kidding #hatno... Knit Al...

POSTS TAGGED

Appendix I: Judy Greer profile



The image shows an Instagram profile for the user 'kyle-richards18'. The profile picture is a circular portrait of a woman with dark hair. The bio identifies her as Kyle Richards Umansky, a mommy, wife, actress, author, producer, animal lover, and a Real Housewife of Beverly Hills. It also mentions her affiliation with the United Talent Agency and provides the website Kyle-Shahida.com. The profile statistics show 2,942 posts, 2.8 million followers, and 1,158 accounts being followed. Below the bio are five story highlights: 'Hallow...', 'Social ...', 'Highlig...', 'AW on ...', and 'Highlig...'. The main content area is divided into 'POSTS', 'IGTV', and 'TAGGED' sections. The 'POSTS' section contains a 3x3 grid of images: a woman in a purple blazer, a woman on a couch, two women in green and black dresses, a group of people on a set, a woman in a black dress, a close-up of a woman's face, a red carpet event, a woman on a stage, and a woman on a runway.


kyle-richards18  [Follow](#)  

2,942 posts 2.8m followers 1,158 following

Kyle Richards Umansky
Mommy, wife, actress, author, producer, animal lover & a Real Housewife of Beverly Hills United Talent Agency #rhobh
[#AmericanWomanTV](#)
[Kyle-Shahida.com](#)

Hallow... Social ... Highlig... AW on ... Highlig...

POSTS IGTV TAGGED



Appendix J: Kyle Richards profile



Appendix K: Charles Cyphers profile

The image shows the Instagram profile for Blumhouse Productions. At the top left is the profile picture, a circular logo with the letters 'BH' and 'PRODUCTIONS' below it. To the right of the profile picture, the name 'blumhouse' is displayed with a verified badge, a 'Follow' button, and a three-dot menu icon. Below the name, the statistics '2,791 posts', '315k followers', and '318 following' are listed. A bio section reads 'Blumhouse Productions' followed by 'Watch the trailer for #TheInvisibleMan now usanet.tv/35HTVPJ'. Below the bio are five circular icons for different content: 'RATE T...', 'Pick A ...', 'Hallow...', 'Purge ...', and 'POST MORTEM'. The main content area is divided into three tabs: 'POSTS', 'IGTV', and 'TAGGED'. The 'POSTS' tab is active, showing a grid of six posts. The first post is a woman holding a lit candle. The second is a text-based post titled 'HOUSE SECRET #002' with a paragraph of text and a spiderweb graphic. The third is a man looking down with the text 'So what do you want me to say?'. The fourth is a man and a woman with the text 'FANTASY ISLAND OFFICIAL TRAILER'. The fifth is a woman looking out over water with the text 'WHAT'S YOUR FANTASY?'. The sixth is a woman in a dark setting with the text 'SACRED LIES THE SINGING BONES FEB 2020'. The seventh is a woman in a dark setting with the text 'FANTASY ISLAND'.

Appendix L: David Gordon Green profile