

fuse + AVON

Undeniable data:

How Avon accelerated sales with
engaged learning



AVON



Fuse is more than a learning solution for Avon. I see it now as our **key digital engagement solution** because it's creating a means for us to engage our beauty entrepreneurs with our brand and product in a way we haven't been able to do before.



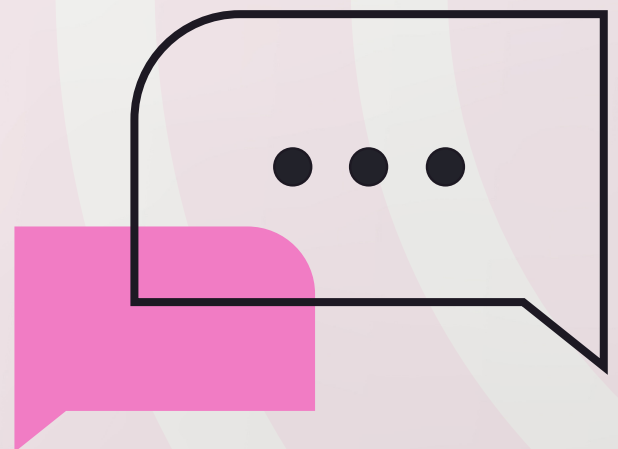
*Andy Stamps,
Digital Experience Manager, Avon*

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Introduction

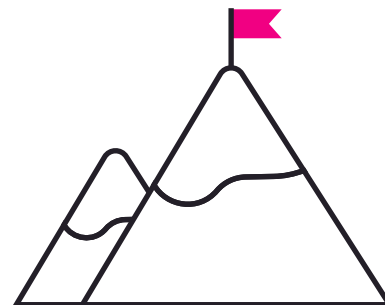
This is a story about Avon joining forces with Fuse to create engaging and continuous learning habits for the benefit of work.

Like every good story, there's a 'jaw-on-the-floor' moment. **And in this case, it's a BIG one.**



Challenges

Siloed and sporadic learning



Avon is the original direct to consumer beauty giant and has more than 5 million beauty entrepreneurs spanning 53 markets. It's a fast moving environment and Avon's sales representatives need to continually learn about new products and campaigns. To do this at scale and with speed was proving increasingly difficult and the team had identified a number of learning-related issues that were hindering business performance:

11 different Learning Management Systems across 30 countries

Training was too formal and sporadic

No social or community-led learning

High dependency on field leaders to drive or deliver training

Inconsistent measurement of training making it difficult to evaluate impact on performance

Avon's Digital Experience Manager, Andy Stamps, who led the learning transformation in partnership with Fuse, explains:



We had too many learning management systems and they weren't engaging our beauty entrepreneurs in any meaningful way. We knew we needed a different, more appealing model - one that would create positive and habitual learning behaviours.



Business Objectives

Driving revenue and retention

Andy and the Avon team began their search for a learning platform that would support a culture of engaged learning. The primary objectives were two-fold and included:

1. Increasing Average Order Value generated by Avon's beauty entrepreneurs
2. Improving the retention rate of beauty entrepreneurs across all 53 markets

Explaining the focus on increasing retention, Andy said:

“ We'd identified a 90 day tipping point with retention so we knew we had to create better experiences for our beauty entrepreneurs.

Many have 9-5 jobs and childcare responsibilities on top of the work they do for Avon, so it was about making their lives easier by integrating the right learning content at the right touch points. ”

Getting Fused

Learning in the flow of life

The Avon team realised that a social and collaborative learning platform would provide the best fit, enabling not only learning in the flow of work, but 'learning in the flow of life' - a term coined by Andy to describe beauty entrepreneurs' need for engaging learning experiences that, crucially, also fit into their busy lives and promote a sense of belonging.

The chosen platform would also need to cater for a wide spectrum of learning content from formal training courses to accessible 'bite size' content, and even 'in-themoment' peer-to-peer learning.



“ We recognised that Fuse is a very rounded, blended product that brings together all of the aspects of informal and formal learning through many different types of content - both business and user generated. The platform also accommodates all manner of learning styles and we knew that would be vital to achieving widespread engagement across our global network. ”

*Andy Stamps,
Digital Experience Manager, Avon*

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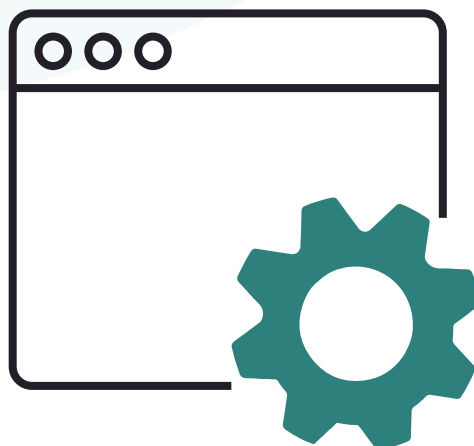
In particular, Andy and his team wanted a solution that would **spur users to keep coming back to the platform**, whether that be to learn something new or simply to refresh their knowledge on a particular product or campaign.



“ [Our beauty entrepreneurs] need quick and easy access to the thing that is going to help them when selling again next week. That’s what Fuse was offering us - a hassle-free way for them to access helpful information and content, either at home or on-the-go - and crucially, all within the natural flow of life. ”

Another key factor in Avon’s decision to engage Fuse was the platform’s ability to customise learning experiences in line with local market preferences and cultural norms:

“ The fact that we operate across 53 markets meant that any one global solution we chose would need to be highly scalable yet also flexible enough to adapt to local market customs and preferences. Fuse really stood out for us in this regard. It can be moulded to create the right fit for the particular audience - it’s agile enough to do that. ”



Business benefits

Adoption at scale

The partnership began in May 2019 with Mexico being the first country to adopt Fuse's platform, known internally as 'Avon Connect'. Implementation across additional markets quickly followed, leading to rapid adoption at scale.

45/53

45 of Avon's 53 markets onboarded within 16 months, each offering a best-fit, learner-centric experience

700k

700k users worldwide (140k engaged users in September 2020 alone)

+200

+200 individual learning communities across Avon Connect

+1 Mil

+1 million pieces of learning content per month (75% of which is user generated)

As well as product-related learning, Avon's beauty entrepreneurs can also access content on broader issues such as advanced sales techniques and leadership training.

“ There's a wide range of content available and around 75% of it is user generated videos or suggestions that gain traction with comments, likes and shares. This resonates in a way our own content doesn't because it's one beauty rep passing information to another beauty rep who needs it. That's a great way to build peer-to-peer trust and it makes for a more engaging learning experience. ”

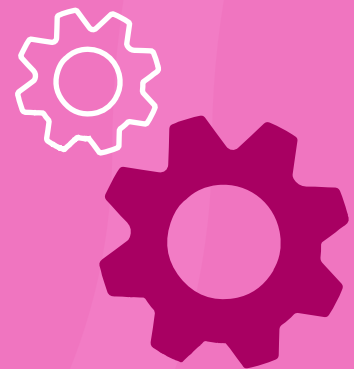
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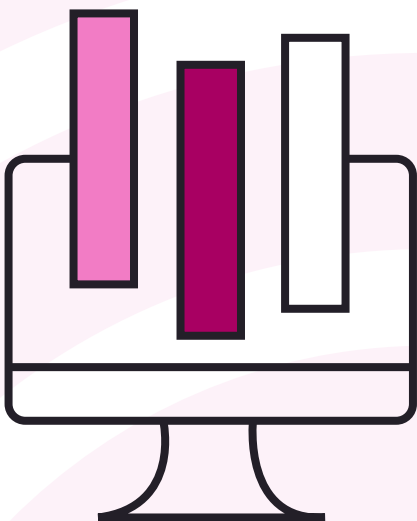
We looked at beauty reps who had joined at the same time, in the same country, selling the same product set. There was a 20% retention increase amongst those who engaged with Avon Connect and although there may be minor personal differences, that's a strong indicator overall.



Recent data pulled from Avon Connect across five markets is already showing a 20% retention increase amongst beauty reps who engage with the platform versus those who do not. The same group also produces around 6% more revenue in terms of Average Order Value.



Think that's compelling?
**Get ready for what
happened next...**



The frequency factor

(it's a jaw-dropper)

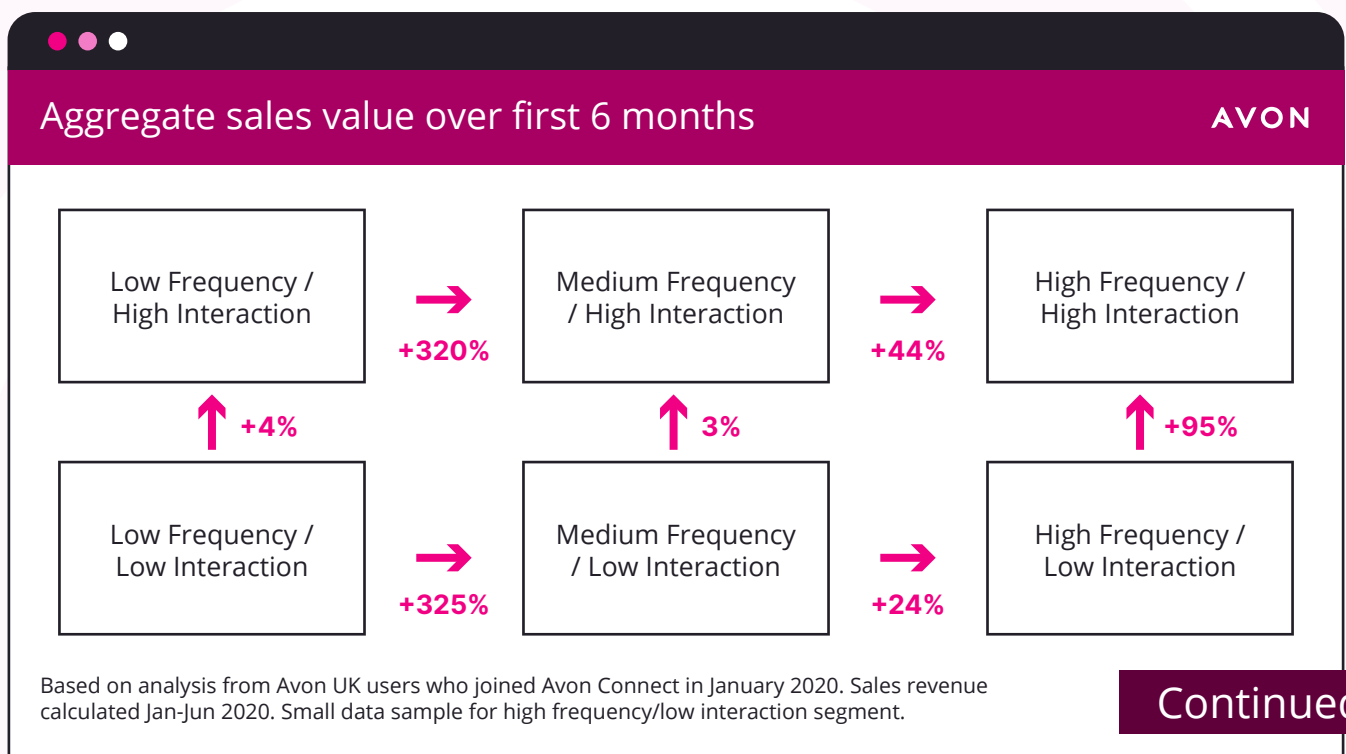
Digging deeper into the data, the Avon team went on to look into both frequency of visits to the platform and interaction with it.

Andy and his team realised that even an incremental increase in monthly visits to the platform - the difference between low frequency (1 to 2 visits per month) and medium frequency (3 to 4 visits per month) - had created dramatic uplifts of +320% in aggregate sales over a 6 month period.

To make sure it wasn't a rogue result, Andy ran the same data across five markets. It told the same story each time.

Whoa, right?

“ We analysed different metrics such as completion rates, consumption of content and levels of interaction, but the data very clearly showed that it was the frequency with which our beauty entrepreneurs were coming back to the platform that made the biggest difference - this is where we saw the really dramatic uplifts in business performance. It was definitely a jaw-on-the-floor moment. ”



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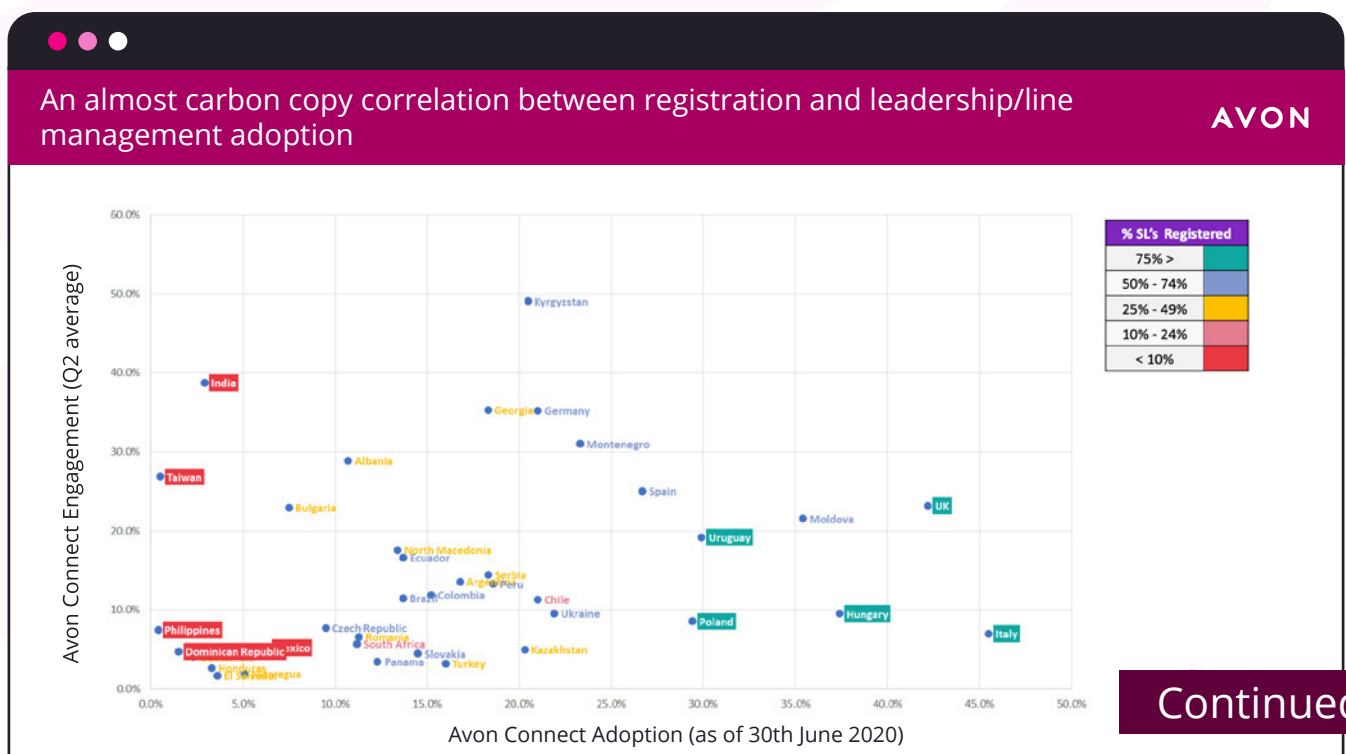
Armed with the knowledge that frequency was the 'secret sauce' and aware that this now presented a huge opportunity for Avon on both the top and bottom lines, Andy and his team set themselves an immediate research task: to find out what factors were driving beauty entrepreneurs to keep coming back.

This revealed two things:

1. A 'follow the leader' effect

“ When we mapped sales leader engagement against beauty rep engagement in any one country, we saw a near carbon copy correlation. In markets such as the UK and Italy where sales leaders were using Avon Connect regularly, so were the beauty reps in those markets. In countries like Taiwan and India though, where sales leader engagement was low, we could see that engagement amongst our entrepreneurs was also low. ”

This was a key discovery and it highlighted a need to educate sales leaders based in markets with low engagement. The goal was clear: demonstrate the value of Avon Connect, create positive learning habits, and bring about that all-important filter down effect.



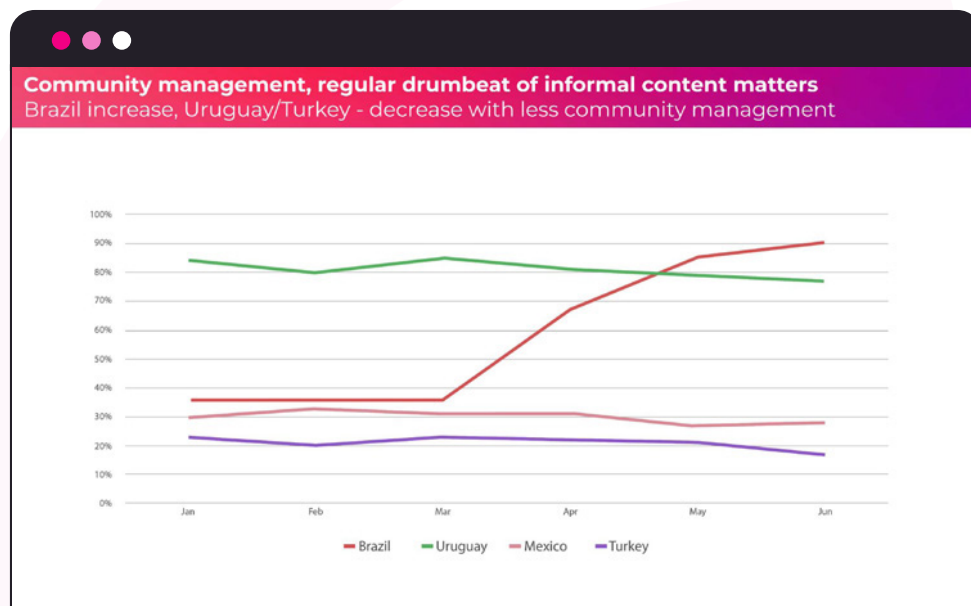
2. Community management matters

The data also showed that levels of engagement with Avon Connect varied depending on how well the platform was managed in local market communities.

“ The engagement uplift we saw in Brazil confirms that good community management is essential. It’s what keeps people coming back to learn - and we now know that that is what really moves the needle in business performance terms. ”

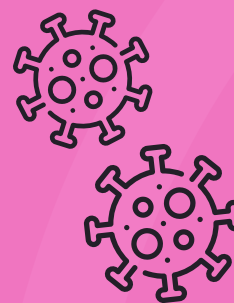
So what did Brazil do that made all the difference?

- Custom content strategy informed by robust research (call centre feedback and focus groups)
- Purpose-driven content and clearly defined outcomes
- Promotion of Avon Connect and its benefits via internal marketing campaigns
- Regular drumbeat of fresh, relevant and search-friendly content
- Frictionless access and consumer-like experience



The COVID curveball

So here's the second twist in the story: the not-so-small matter of COVID-19 putting pay to face-to-face selling. While Avon had been moving towards a hybrid digital + in-person sales model for some years, COVID was to provide a digital transformation catalyst like no other.



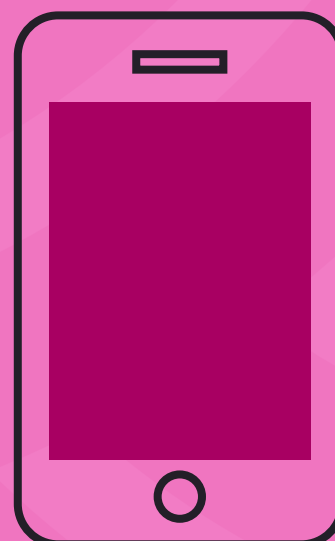
Avon's beauty entrepreneurs had to adapt to remote selling overnight - a monumental task that involved rapidly re-skilling 5 million beauty reps located across 53 different countries and speaking 30 different languages. It's an undertaking that would not have been possible without the Fuse platform.

Data pulled from Avon Connect paints a picture of the pandemic unfolding:

“ We saw a very quick change in learning behaviours. Engagement with the platform skyrocketed and we could see that beauty reps were consuming a much higher volume of content than usual - in fact we had over one million content views in April alone. ”

According to Andy, beauty entrepreneurs were turning to Avon Connect to learn and share helpful knowledge and experiences - something that also created a vital sense of belonging and community spirit:

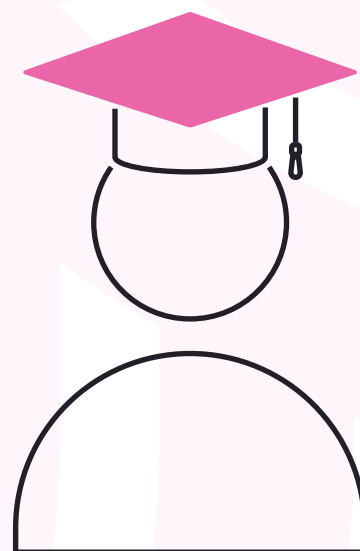
“ The collective focus was on finding new ways to sell in an online setting. Avon Connect was critical to that because it provided an engaging environment for our reps to learn, connect and collaborate and that really helped us to keep going as a business during lockdown. ”



The future: laser-focused learning

Clearly the story doesn't stop here, so what's next for the Avon/Fuse partnership? Andy says the Avon team will continue to correlate its learning data against business performance to better understand impact and unearth new findings:

“ We've only scratched the surface so far so we plan on drilling down on the data even more over the next 12 months. We want to really hone in on what's working best so that we can deliver great learning experiences that are laser-focused on the needs and wants of our beauty entrepreneurs. ”



Want to know more?

To learn more about the tangible business benefits that Fuse is helping to create for Avon, watch our recent webinar on demand [here](#), or get in touch with the team [here](#).