



ModernRetail
Awards 2021



ModernRetail **Awards 2021**

This year's Modern Retail Awards honors the retailers that powered through the changes and uncertainty brought about in 2021 while finding ways to address social injustice through marketing campaigns, pivot to keep pace with shifting consumer habits and more.

Some of this year's winners transformed from legacy retail to omnichannel, while others focused on utilizing personalization to identify consumer needs. Among the throughlines in this year's selections was a renewed focus on personalization. Innovative approaches to audiences also marked the judges' favorites. And, as advertisers' focus shifts toward first-party data and delivering exceptional customer experiences, retailers are getting more creative with their offerings. In a year where travel was mostly stifled, for example, retailers came up with campaigns to ignite the excitement that planning a trip brings while consumers were still on their couches.

This guide presents the winning programs and offers insights into how and why the programs became the Modern Retail Awards judges' picks. In each entry are pointers and lessons for organizations everywhere, and inspiration for organizations working on shopper-focused campaigns of their own.

Best Use of Social

Pura Vida

puravida
LIVE  FREE

Program

Bracelet brand Pura Vida developed licensing and influencer collaborations in an effort to reach new customers through social media channels and align campaign messaging on Instagram and TikTok. To drive engagement among its younger audience, the brand launched collaborations with Disney and influencer Charli D'Amelio, and to attract new customers in the 20–29-year-old demographic, the company also debuted partnerships with Sivan Ayla, Madison Bailey and Sanrio, which owns kawaii franchises such as Hello Kitty.

Insights

By aligning collaboration campaigns across social media channels with content tailored to specific platforms — and not limiting certain collaborations to certain platforms — Pura Vida was able to meet its engagement goals. The brand's Charli D'Amelio campaign, #ShowUsYourHappy, marked its first major TikTok campaign, which has garnered more than 51 million views and increased the brand's TikTok following by 130,000 people since March 2021. The Hello Kitty partnership involved using TikTok-specific creators to create content around Pura Vida and Sanrio values and aesthetics, while Pura Vida supplemented their efforts with a PR Box giveaway on TikTok and Instagram. This campaign improved content views by 1.8 million for its duration, which is a 13% increase compared to average benchmarks.



Best Use of Social Media for Commerce

Petco and Horizon Media

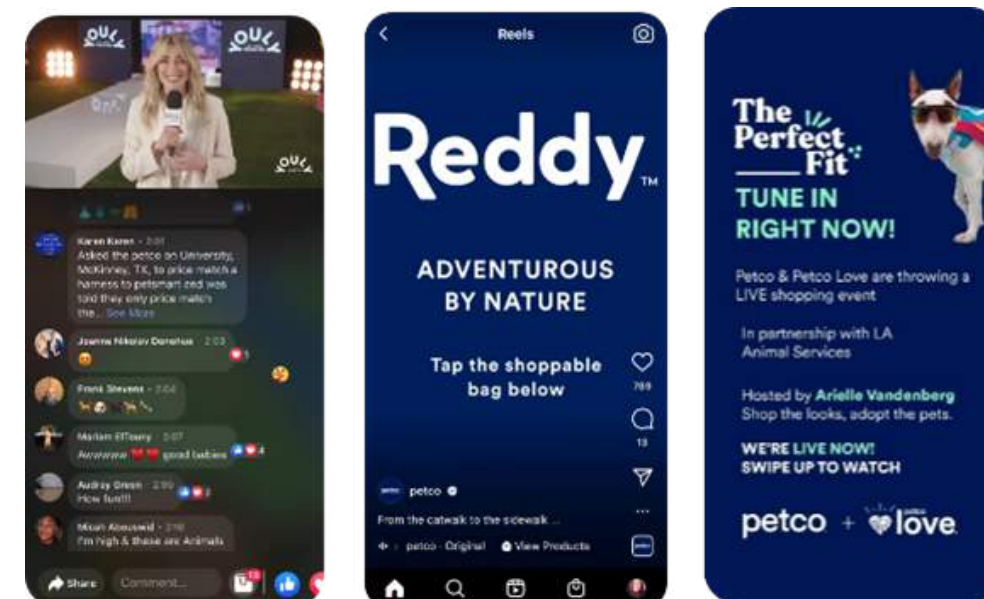
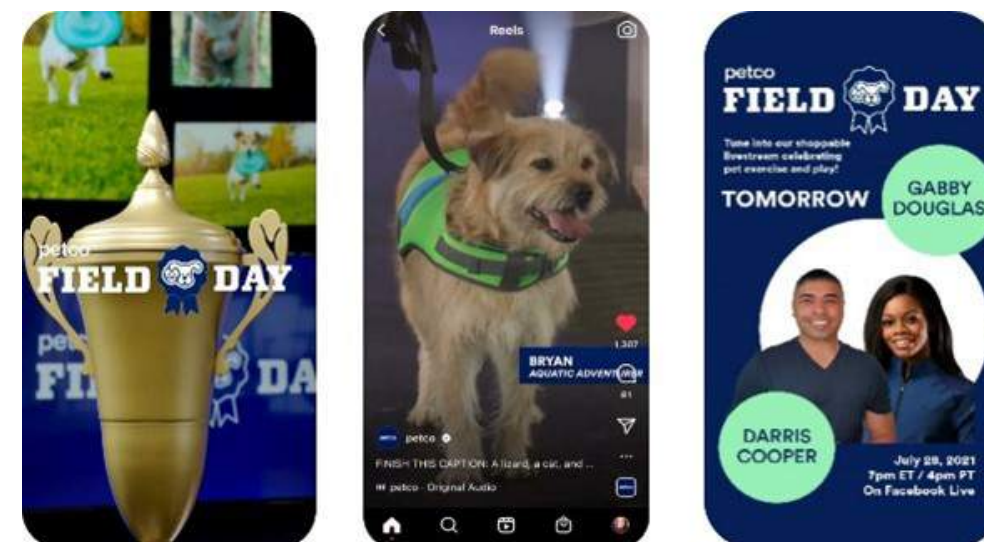


Program

To stand out among competitors in the pet retail space, Petco created new shopping channels for customers via social media. The company has launched a series of shoppable social media activations including two Facebook livestreams — Perfect Fit, a live dog fashion show featuring products from Youly & Reddy, and Field Day, an Olympics-themed shopping event that extended a campaign educating pet owners about the importance of exercise and healthy habits. Additionally, Petco has created shoppable social videos highlighting Halloween costumes for pets and a Snapchat augmented reality lens that invited consumers to purchase summer products.

Insights

Social commerce is a growing channel that can help brands drive engagement and conversions among new and existing customers. This is particularly important during the ongoing pandemic and given the surge in online shopping. In both scenarios, simply relying on traditional media channels is seldom sufficient in a competitive industry such as pet retail. Petco's social commerce efforts paid off for the brand: the 'Boo-tique' Halloween videos drew a 17.3% add-to-cart rate, while the Facebook livestreams delivered a 14% engagement rate, a 12.2x return on ad spend and 5.9-point lifts in brand favorability and recommendation, which are twice the retail norms.



Best Use of Video

NTWRK



Program

Livestream shopping platform NTWRK creates original franchise content that highlights celebrity and brand partnerships, festivals and special events, and product drops. The platform's weekly shows include 'Unhinged,' focused on sex and dating; 'Soled Out,' focused on sneakers; and 'Meltdown,' which spotlights comics and nerd culture. The weekly shows spotlight NTWRK's investment in strengthening audience engagement through culturally relevant content. The company has gained 2.2 million users since launching three years ago.

Insights

Investing in live, shoppable entertainment creates a new e-commerce outlet for companies to engage with existing customers and unlock new audiences. NTWRK's weekly programming allows consumers to connect with the shows' hosts, who are also experts in the spaces they cover. Additionally, the platform consistently hosts two-day livestream shopping festivals, which have achieved ROI benchmarks since launch.



Best Use of Technology

Bollé, M7 Innovations and QReal



Program

Sunglasses and ski helmet brand Bollé has debuted five augmented reality campaigns since December 2020 in an effort to deliver customers safe, touchless shopping experiences from home. The brand partnered with QReal and M7 Innovations to create Instagram and Snap AR campaigns that provided realistic try-on and try-out experiences for customers. The campaign invited people to see how the glasses looked on their face with a selfie view (try-on) option, and also offered a front-facing view (try-out) to test out lens technology with different effects such as high contrast and anti-fog. The brand's most recent AR experience showed how its goggles are deconstructed based on a customer's facial gestures.

Insights

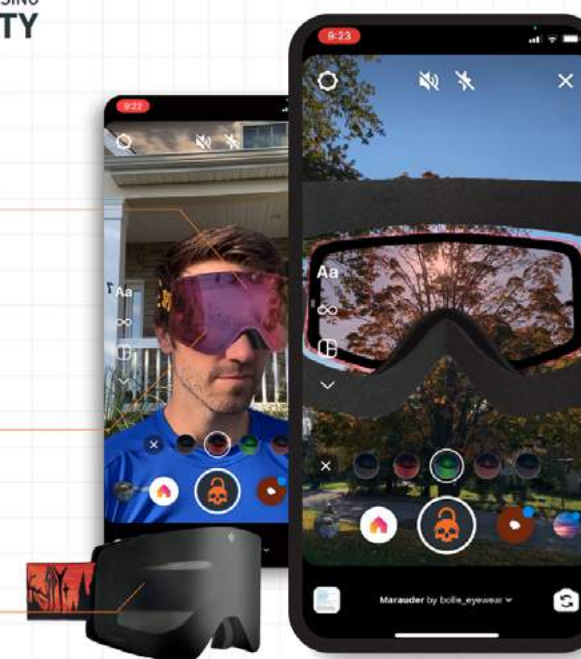
Investing in creative AR campaigns that allow customers to virtually experience products can drive sales. These experiences are beneficial during the pandemic, which continues to shift consumer shopping preferences online. Bollé used lessons from its first two AR campaigns in summer 2020 to inform the latest iteration, which expanded the ad creative to offer a variety of options for consumers. The third and fourth campaign, in December 2020 and May 2021, respectively, drew 100,796 organic impressions on Instagram Stories and a 313.6% year-over-year sales increase.

SPY+ RESULTS OF MARKETING CAMPAIGNS USING AUGMENTED REALITY

313.6%
YOY SALES INCREASE
Source: Jan 1 - Feb 8, 2021 National SG Retailer

18MM
INTERACTIONS WITH 3D PRODUCT ON TILLY'S.COM IN FIRST 30 DAYS
Source: June 2021 QReal AWS Usage Report

19.95 SECOND
DWEELL TIME ON 3D MODELS



85%
INCREASE IN UNIQUE WEBSITE VISITORS TO SPYOPTIC.COM



5.6%
CTR ON FACEBOOK AR AD UNIT



100,796
ORGANIC IMPRESSIONS OF AR LENS EXPERIENCE ON INSTAGRAM STORIES



91%
OF ENGAGEMENT WITH AR LENSES CAME FROM SPY'S CORE AUDIENCE
Source: M+F Aged 13-34



Best Use of Mobile App

NTWRK

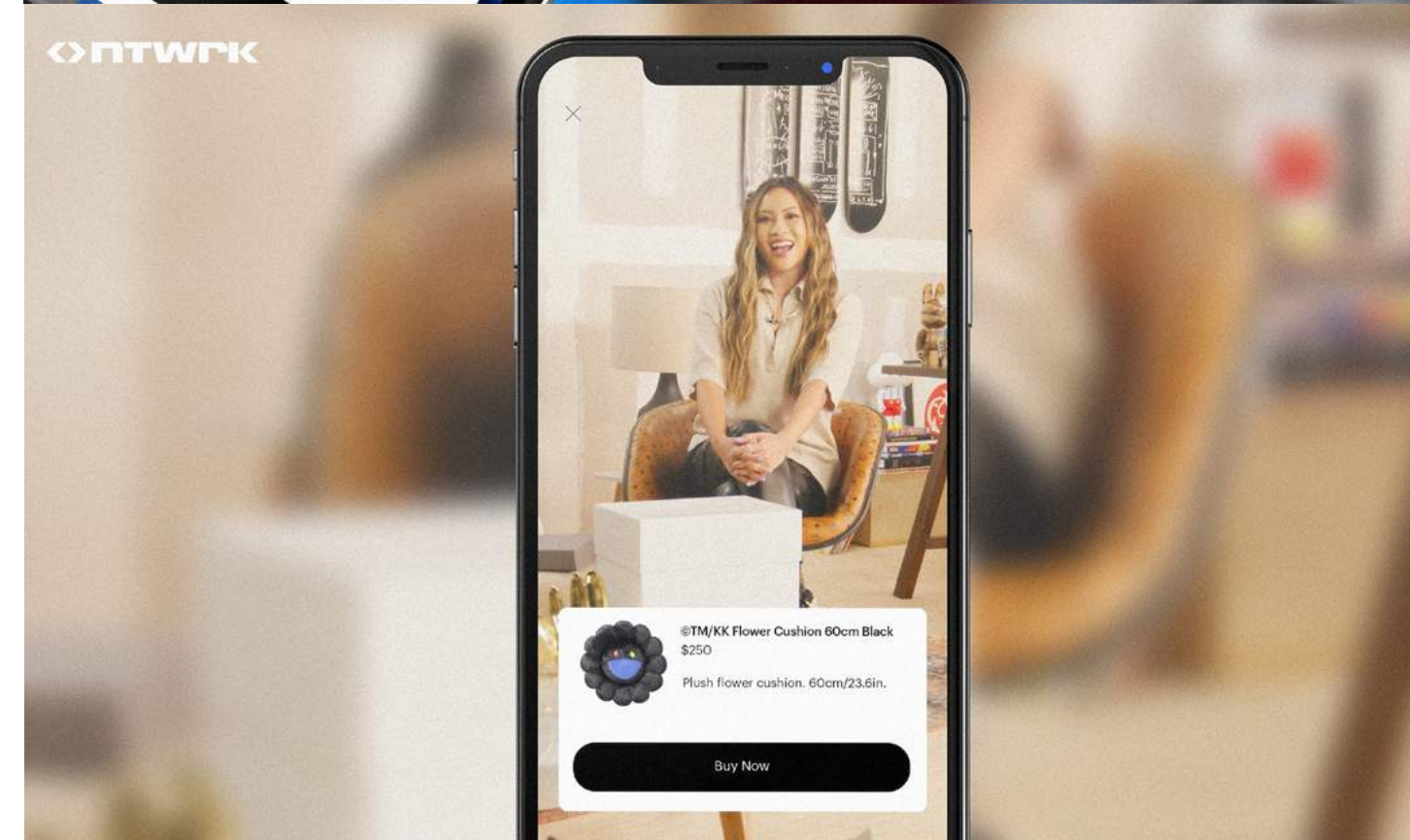
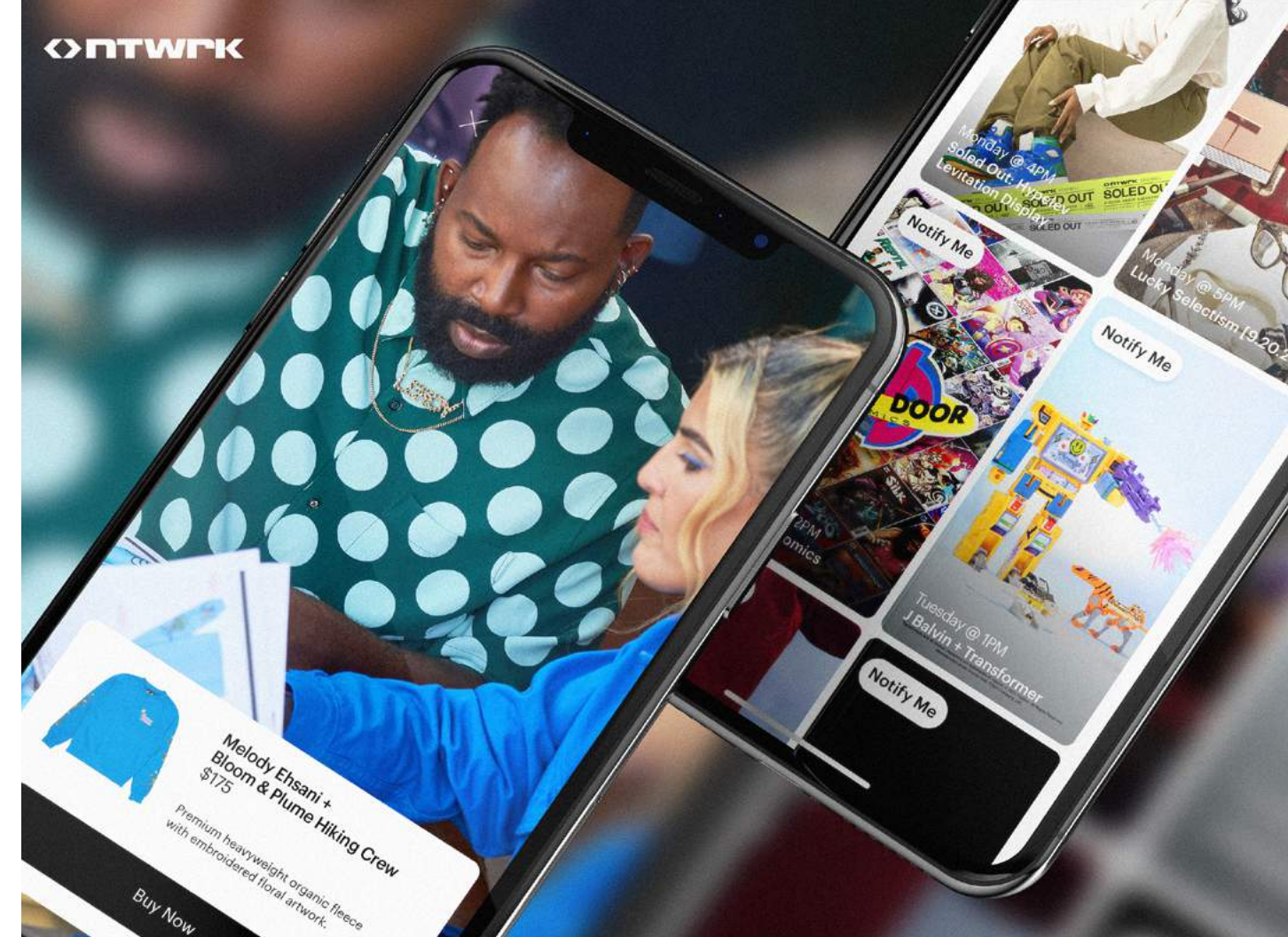


Program

Livestream shopping platform NTWRK merges e-commerce and entertainment on a mobile platform. The company's iOS and Android app streams original franchise content — these include livestreamed shows, daily product drop episodes and shopping festivals. The platform's series include 'Late Lunch,' focused on streetwear, and 'Wild Cards,' spotlighting trading card culture. Through its app, NTWRK's goals are to popularize livestream shopping for millennials and Gen-Z consumers in North America.

Insights

Investing in mobile, livestream shopping can drive engagement and sales, particularly among younger demographics that use mobile devices to shop. NTWRK's entertainment-focused approach is paying off for the platform, as its series topics and speakers resonate with its target audience. For example, NTWRK recently expanded its content focus to highlight new trends, including the debut of an NFT-exclusive marketplace that sells crypto art. NTWRK has amassed 2.5 million global users since launch and as it continues to grow, the platform recently hired its first chief marketing officer, Jason Brown, joining from Footlocker's executive team.



Best Product, Category or Sub-Brand Launch Campaign

francesca's®

Program

Franki by Francesca's is the tween girls' brand started by Francesca's about a year ago. The company's CEO, Andrew Clarke, noticed that data indicated the brand would be appealing to a younger demographic. To capture that market, they launched Franki, the younger sister of Francesca's, a clothing line for young teens who want to dress like their older sister. The Franki shops debuted with a 100-style holiday collection and is slated to add styles for spring 2022. The collection includes sportswear, dresses, outerwear, jewelry, accessories and shoes and aims to cater to tweens transitioning to teenagers.

Franki by Francesca's

Insights

The first retail location for Franki by Francesca's opened in Houston, where Francesca's fashion boutique is based. The second will open near Washington D.C., and both will be considered pop-ups, with an option to remain open as revenue steers. The Franki by Francesca's website, frankishop.com, recently launched and, when looking to the future, Clarke said the new brand is a nationwide and potentially an international opportunity — an evolving chapter of the Francesca's brand.



Best Email Campaign

Canadian Tire and Movable Ink



Program

With increased e-commerce traffic due to the pandemic, Canadian Tire wanted to increase engagement across their Triangle program and partnered with Movable Ink to create a hyper-personalized monthly newsletter to do so. The revamped newsletter was deployed to a segment of the most loyal members of their new rewards program and showed the recipient's account statement, highlighting the benefits of the program, what perks were already redeemed as well as what rewards were still outstanding. Focusing on engagement and informing customers rather than conversion helped make this campaign a huge success with an open rate of 85.5%, a CTOR of 7.5% and an unsubscribe rate of less than 0.01%.

Insights

It was important for Canadian Tire to ensure their customers understood the digital benefits of their loyalty program as they once did with their in-store one. Instead of amassing Canadian-Tire-printed money, they were quickly racking up points. Delivering hyper-personalized newsletters, with recommendations around which other brands the customer might like (based on previous shopping behavior), helped customers understand the program better and turned them into brand loyalists. With these newsletters reaching 11 million Triangle members — one-third of the Canadian population — creating a seamless and informative experience was essential to their success.

DANIEL J'S

October Triangle Select™ Tracker

Value received since you joined the program.



10x In-store Everyday Bonus

10x

\$154.39
CT Money¹ collected

25x In-store Brand Boost

25x

\$62.70
CT Money¹ collected

Shipping Reimbursement²
at Canadian Tire



\$0.00
CT Money¹ collected

Welcome Gift Value[†]



\$50.00

[†]The value is based on the regular sale price as of November 12, 2021

Best Collaboration

Aki Technologies and Family Dollar

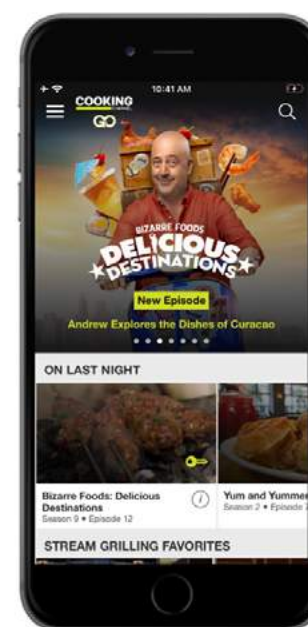


Program

Family Dollar and Aki Technologies collaborated on a localized incentive program for Clorox that utilized personalized video ads and standard banners, each generating store locator maps to direct recipients to their nearest Family Dollar location. With the creatives structured around a \$1-off Clorox coupon — aimed to resonate with the Family Dollar shopper — the Clorox portfolio at Family Dollar experienced an overall 11.9% sales lift during the six-week campaign that resulted in more than 3 million impressions served to nearly 2 million unique devices.

Insights

In addition to delivering compelling, value-based calls to action, the campaign increased foot traffic and boosted sales, specifically for Clorox products and their advertised bleach product. The target audience was determined in tiers, first identifying Family Dollar buyers through the retailer's CRM, then layering in Clorox buyers and bleach buyers who purchase elsewhere. Aki then used geotargeting to flood the market around each location to increase scale, awareness and foot traffic. The result was a 6.7% visit rate — 17.6% higher than the matched control group — translating to more than 100,000 total estimated visits driven by the campaign.



Best Retailer/Agency Collaboration

Belardi Wong and Backcountry



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Program

When planning to release a direct mail catalog for the first time in a long while, Backcountry reached out to agency Belardi Wong for their deep experience with the channel. The agency provided strategy and planning assistance in addition to full creative expertise, which resulted in a premium 36-page catalog depicting all of Backcountry's outdoor gear in-depth. The company's holiday catalog brought in sales — up 300% from plan — with meaningful performance across all customer segments targeted, including extremely lapsed buyers (notoriously hard to engage via digital channels) for the vast majority of Belardi Wong clients.

Insights

Backcountry sought to drive additional revenue with this new direct mail catalog and achieve a positive incremental ROI from retention as well as new customer acquisition. They also hoped to build a scalable catalog program for the company's seasons to complement their other marketing channels. The catalog performed phenomenally well, with ROAS well over the profitability threshold and driving a significant amount of incremental demand that Backcountry wouldn't have seen if only using its other marketing channels.

BW
belardi wong

Best Customer Insight Strategy

Babylist



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Program

Babylist utilized panel discussions with customers to develop a solution catering to a common question and concern many new parents have — registering for a set of bottles, which can be expensive, only to realize that their baby doesn't like them. Their first go-to-market product, the Babylist Bottle Box, saves new parents time and money by offering a variety of shapes and styles to try out with their baby. After launching this product, Babylist has since created a variety of other sample boxes to help parents test multiple items with their little ones, such as swaddles, pacifiers, diapers and more.

Insights

Babylist is driven by connection and empathy to deliver the best customer experience while parents prepare for their baby's arrival. They've developed a granular perspective on new and expecting parents' behavior by making a conscious effort to understand their role and unique insights. Their main priority is to provide the most relevant product and content offerings, with the goal of the Babylist sample boxes being the one-stop-shop solution for parents and gift givers, providing new parents peace of mind by allowing them to try before purchasing.



Best Personalization Strategy



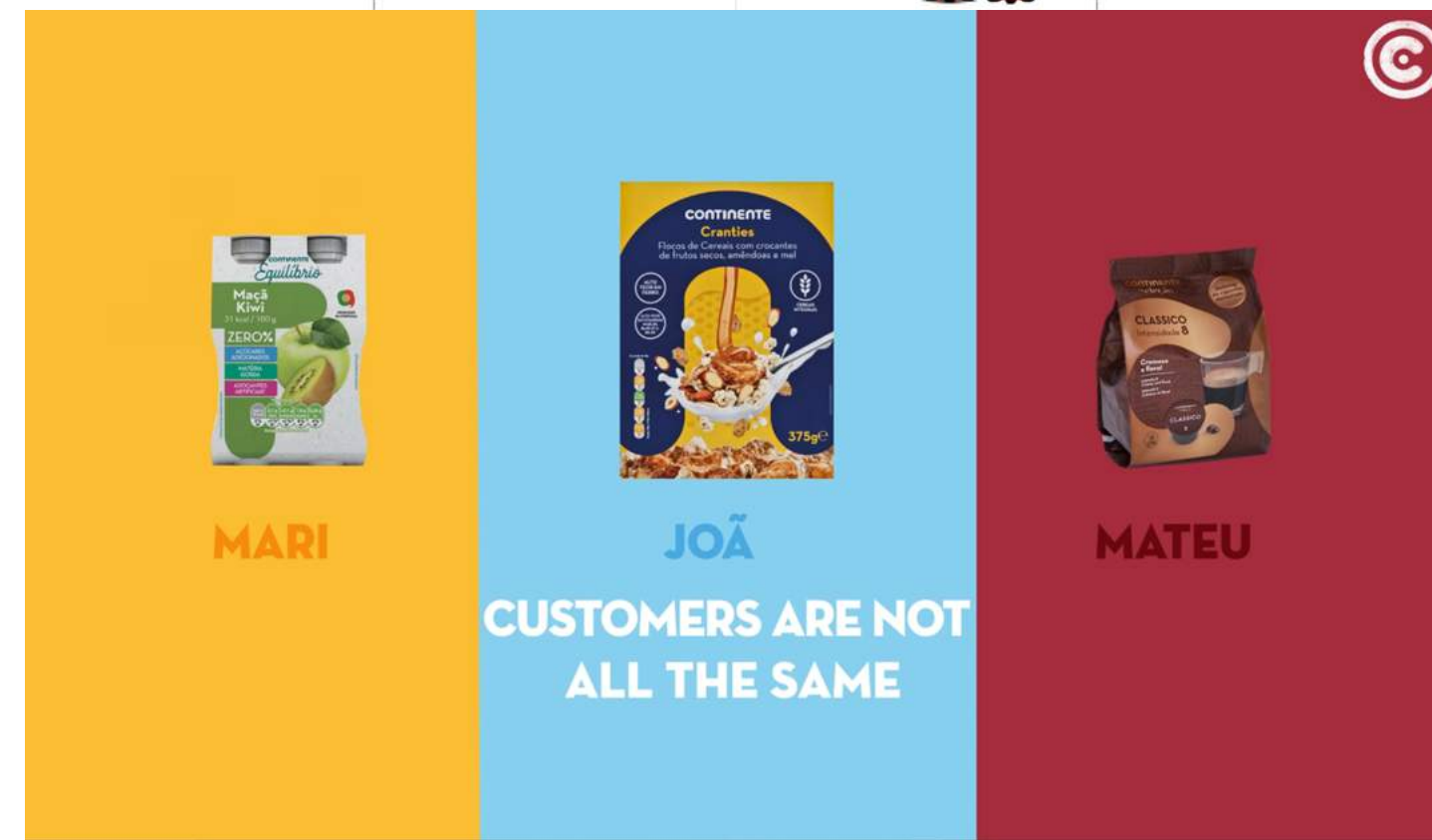
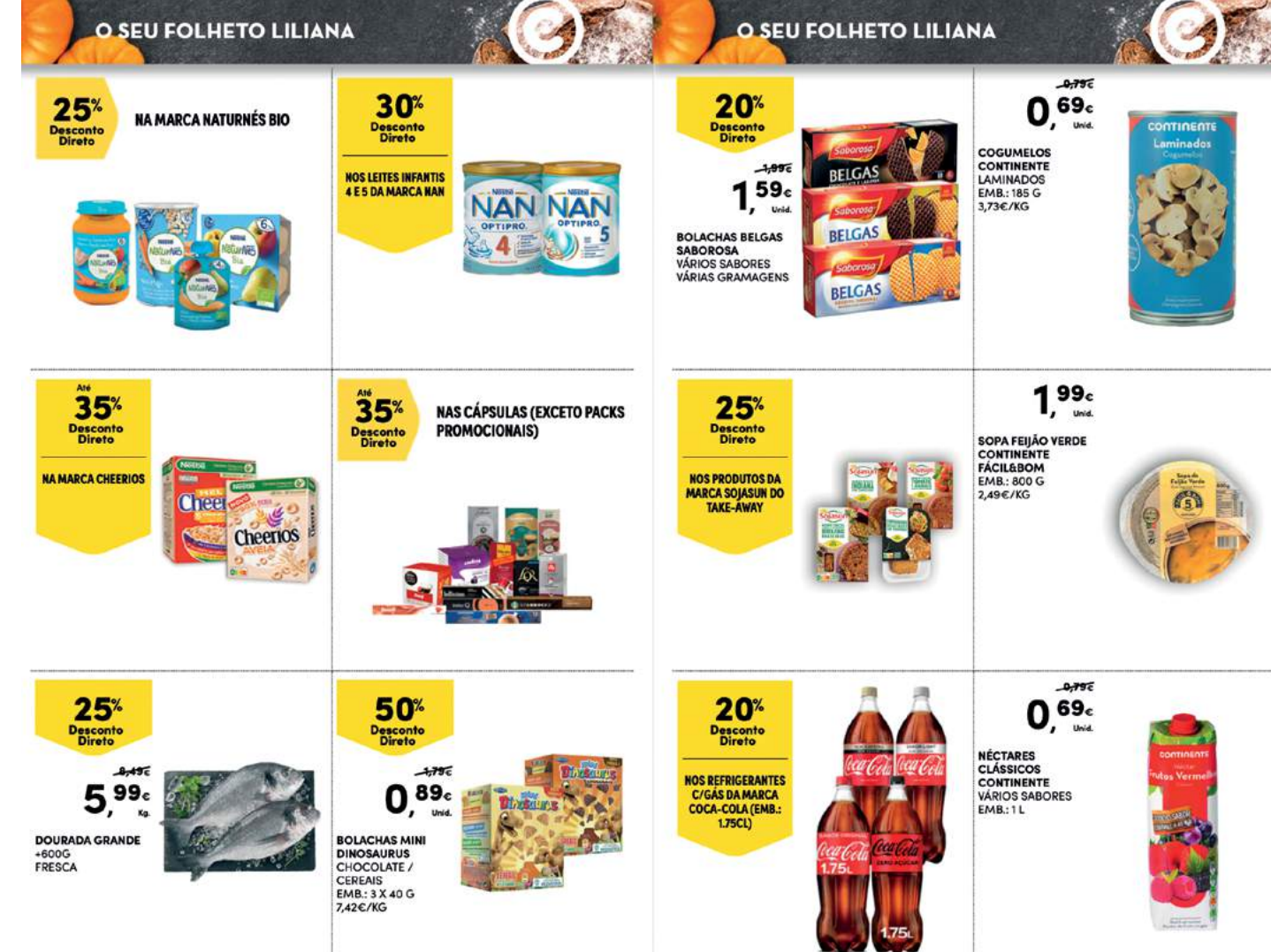
Program

Portugal-based grocery chain Continente shook up the way they created and distributed their promotional brochures to do something more innovative and personal. They focused on delivering a completely individualized experience to each customer by creating personalized brochures to simplify their customers' lives when planning their shopping lists. This weekly digital brochure included a selection of promotions that met the individual interests of each consumer. More than 1 million are now generated each week, with more than €14.5 million in incremental sales in the first 12 months of the program.

Continente

Insights

Rather than increase the number of in-store promotions, Continente designed a way to communicate promotions more effectively to their customers in a more relevant way. They wanted their customers to be satisfied with the new brochures and wanted to increase purchase frequency. A satisfaction survey was included in each brochure, resulting in a satisfaction level of 4.4 out of 5. Comments from customers included thanking Continente for helping them manage their purchases and for being treated as a person in an increasingly algorithmic marketplace.



Best Subscription Strategy

Quip



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Program

One of the fastest-growing modern oral care brands, Quip expanded its subscription offerings to enable users to schedule refills for its entire portfolio of products, including recent additions of mouthwash, gum and floss. Introducing the idea of subscribing to refills for every product available allowed Quip to help people build consistent, lifelong positive habits. As the company expands to new categories, users are able to bundle their refills and add them to their current subscription. Due to the success and popularity of its subscription model, Quip has been a profitable company since early 2020 and have been able to expand into professional services with its Aligners pilot and digital health program.

Insights

As a brand focused on oral health and accessibility, Quip aims to create services that combine safety, quality and success with the convenience and affordability of at-home care. The brand's overall subscription model goal is to encourage healthier habits by providing users with fresh refills every three months on a dentist-recommended schedule, which consumers are more inclined to keep up with when they receive refills on a regular basis by mail.

QUIP

Best Omnichannel Strategy

Verizon



Program

In 2020, Verizon reimaged the in-store shopping experience through a digital lens and introduced Touchless Retail. By leveraging technology, Verizon was able to create a way to pay bills, make purchases, accept terms and conditions, all without handing over cash or credit cards, sharing POS tablets or using pens to capture customer signatures. Customers could use the My Verizon App on their own phones to set appointments, check-in, scan products, complete purchases and more. They could even connect to product specialists in retail stores remotely through smart video-assist solutions.

Insights

The customer experience was at the center of the Touchless Retail strategy for Verizon, providing a seamless in-store experience and reduced transaction time to make all of their customers feel at ease. In addition to fast and efficient payment and checkout processes, it was important to provide personalized experiences. The retail store remains an important part of the customer journey and this new touchless strategy sought to enhance the experience with at least one digital touchpoint in the sales journey 65% of the time. This change was rooted in purpose — delivering results while also improving both the customer and employee experience.



Self Check In



Best E-commerce Experience

MGA Entertainment and Brand3P

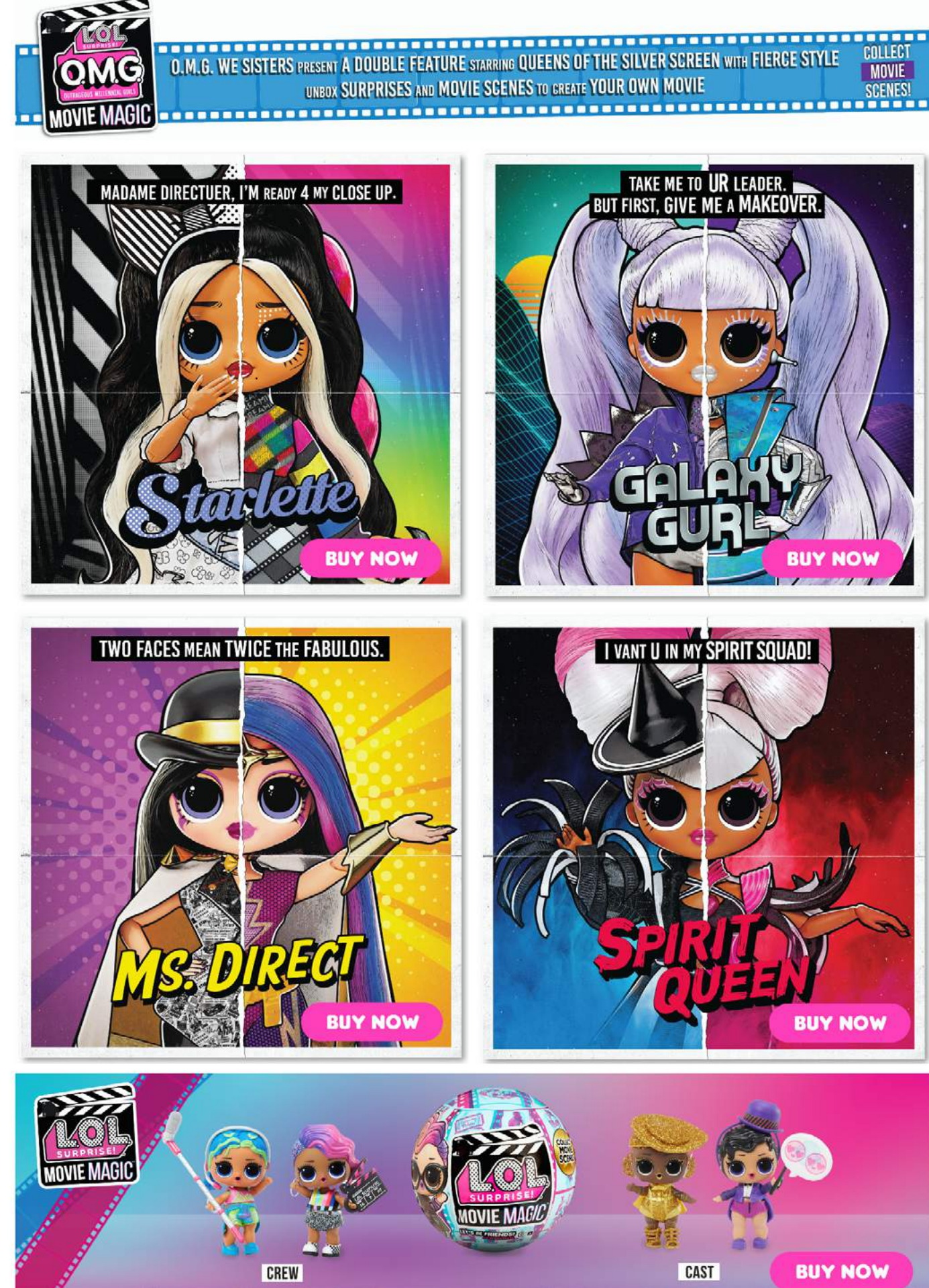


Program

Toy company MGA Entertainment partnered with Brand3P to create an e-commerce brand experience for its L.O.L Surprise! brand on Amazon and other global marketplaces. The resulting Brand Celebration Store leveraged Amazon's huge selection of core and licensed products, sourced from many business partners, to provide a safe, trusted online environment for the brand's fans to find new items. The brand store acts as a retailer laboratory of sorts, with shopper and browsing data from Amazon allowing for constant improvement to the L.O.L Surprise! brand experience that can be applied to other marketplaces as well.

Insights

The Brand Celebration Store was created to increase the toy brand's visibility and sales by providing a consistent and engaging omni-channel shopping experience for desktop and mobile. Once the store was launched and proved on Amazon, the concept could be repeated in other markets and with other retailers. After the initial February 2021 launch on Amazon U.S., nine other markets have followed, and a similar strategy was initiated with Target and Walmart, resulting in higher sales and brand visibility across the omnichannel consumer experience.



Best Customer Service Experience

PacSun and Linc Global



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Program

In order to ease the influx of inquiries received by its customer service representatives during the e-commerce boom, PacSun implemented Linc Global's Digital Workers solution to offload the burden. With the Digital Workers system acting as the first point of contact for customers, common, easily addressable questions were automatically resolved, while only high-priority, business-critical inquiries were passed on to live agents. With the additional benefits of an improved online buying experience and easy-to-use, self-service order support the platform allowed the retailer's inundated agents to focus only on what really matters.

Insights

For customers, questions about things like order status, delivery expectations and returns are critical and can make or break an e-commerce experience. As a result of the Linc solutions, PacSun's customer satisfaction scores increased across all of its conversational channels. By providing easy-to-use, automated tools for customers to resolve their inquiries, PacSun is building trust and loyalty, while also getting the most value from its workers.



**Most
Innovative
Retail Model**

Foxtrot Market

FOXTROT

Program

Foxtrot Market has created a new breed of convenience store with a focus on delivery and upscale offerings. With its on-site cafes, curated product selection of the trendiest brands and private-label products developed in collaboration with local chefs and small producers, Foxtrot emphasizes quality as much as convenience. Its beginning as a digitally native delivery service has ingrained the importance of data to understanding up-and-coming culinary trends and have made it the retail launch choice for a number of small e-commerce DTC brands.

Insights

With the brand's affinity rooted in curating a space for customers to shop and eat local and small in a convenient setting, Foxtrot has experienced 100% year-over-year growth and has plans to add 50 new stores to its existing 14 in the coming years. The company has found its sweet spot in providing a quality and high-value audience to small brands and producers, whether it's as an in-store or online retail partner, or by collaborating on products for its private label, which accounts for 40% of the company's sales.



Best Digital Transformation

7-Eleven

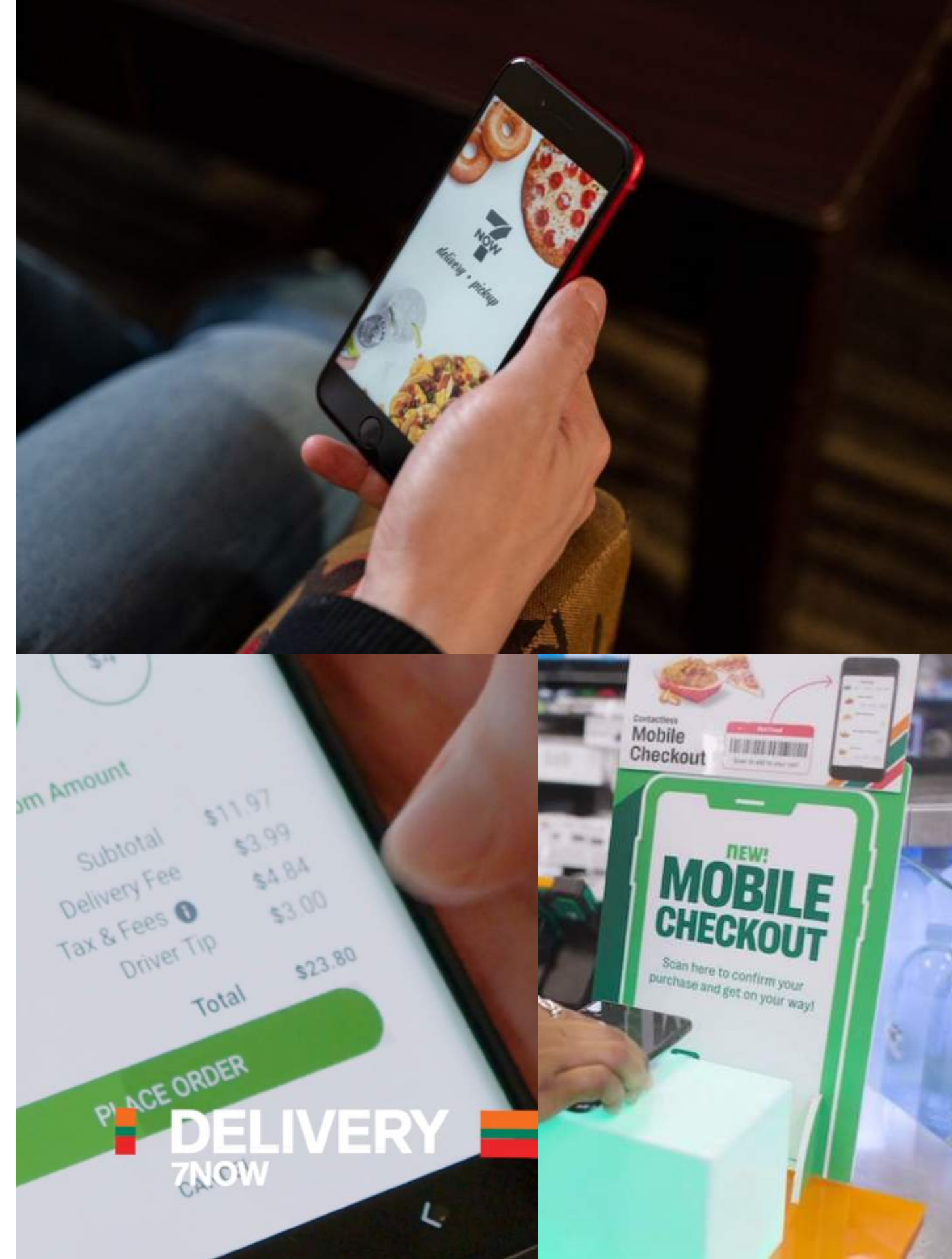


Program

Spurred by consumers' altered behaviors and expectations during the pandemic, 7-Eleven transformed its app in an effort to provide a safe and frictionless shopping experience. With its enhanced app features, shoppers can take advantage of an essentially contactless shopping experience, while also earning loyalty-based rewards. The app's mobile checkout and digital wallet features allow for a streamlined checkout experience, while 7NOW Delivery lets customers in more than 2,000 cities get items delivered straight to them, even if it's at a park, the beach or an outdoor concert using the Pins feature.

Insights

The app features that 7-Eleven introduced or enhanced help its customers personalize their shopping experience based on their own expectations of convenience and their own comfort with contact. With more than 3,000 store locations equipped with mobile checkout capabilities and 95% of the company's retail store footprint covered by 7NOW Delivery, 7-Eleven is taking its digital transformation to scale, while the app format allows the company to easily provide incentives to encourage repeat purchases.



Most Responsible Retailer

Paravel

PARAVEL

Program

In an effort to offset the negative environmental impacts of travel and retail, Paravel has integrated sustainability into every part of its business. This includes the selection of the eco-certified and upcycled materials its products are made from and shipped in, as well as extensive carbon offsetting initiatives. For example, Paravel offsets the emissions associated with sourcing, assembling and shipping its Aviator line of suitcases, in addition to offsetting an amount equal to their customers' average first trip with the luggage, making this a truly carbon-neutral line of suitcases.

Insights

Through initiatives like a product repurposing program, employing only low-impact shipping methods and utilizing solely recycled packaging materials, Paravel goes against retail norms and shows its true commitment to sustainability. To date, Paravel has offset 8,150 tons of CO2, which is the equivalent of pulling 1,772 cars off the road for a year, and has upcycled more than 3 million plastic water bottles to make its products. By combining an internal and external perspective on sustainability, Paravel demonstrates that its commitment to lessening its impact and making a difference is not just a marketing ploy.



AVIATOR | CARRY-ON PLUS
\$295

AVIATOR GRAND | CHECKED LUGGAGE
\$345



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