

A busy trade show floor with a large red circular graphic containing the text "Grocery shop". The background shows a crowded exhibition space with people walking, talking, and interacting. In the foreground, there are large green and yellow geometric shapes, including a grid of squares and a large gear-like shape. The overall atmosphere is professional and energetic.

Grocery shop



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Breaking Down Silos: Closing the Gap Between Haves and Have Nots



Jill Cruz
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If your organization isn't actively working to break down silos after Groceryshop 2024, then you weren't picking up what they were putting down. A common theme throughout sessions was "Siloed teams drive metrics and KPI's. Cross functional teams drive business outcomes." As digital and in-store experiences converge, now is the time to integrate strategies across national media, retail media, and shopper marketing, ensuring a unified approach to the customer journey from discovery to consumption to loyalty.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Cross-functional Collaboration Drives Outcomes: It's essential to engage multiple departments in retail media to understand its impact on overall business performance. Begin by identifying overlaps between teams, aligning on objectives, setting measurable targets, and thoroughly mapping the customer journey from end to end.

Additionally, determining who controls the overall budget is crucial, especially as funds from national media are becoming limited. It's important to elevate channel strategy earlier in the planning process to ensure adequate resources are allocated.

Since retail media serves two primary functions: media and sales, [Francesca Hahn](#), VP of Digital Commerce at Mondelez International, highlighted the value of creating a center of excellence to guide organizational strategy and processes. This center can provide expertise, training, and education across all levels of the organization.

Define best practices for managing complexity by establishing a single source of truth for data and analytics. While it's important to leverage your agency and their tools, it's also important to ensure your team has logins to access and control the data directly. This enables your organization to make informed, data-driven decisions with confidence

Integration Requires More Than Strategic Alignment: [Ashley Becker](#) from Kraft Heinz emphasized that becoming an integrated organization involves more than merely aligning on high-level goals. It is crucial to understand how each function contributes to these objectives, ensuring that all departments are working toward a common purpose.

Achieving true integration necessitates changes to compensation structures. Collaborating with senior leaders is essential to ensure that compensation reflects a commitment to integration. This cultural shift must be driven from the top down and extends beyond merely holding joint annual planning meetings.

[Tammy Ackerman](#), VP of eCommerce & Loyalty Marketing at Treasury Wine Estates, advocated for celebrating small victories to demonstrate progress over the pursuit of perfection. Emphasizing the importance of rewarding teams both financially and through recognition awards can foster a culture that values cross-functional collaboration. ▶

Breaking Down Silos: Closing the Gap Between Haves and Have Nots

KEY TAKEAWAYS - Continued

Brands Should Lead Organizational Integration: Simply assembling agencies into Integrated Account Teams (IATs) or issuing a single Request for Proposal to one holding company for multiple business units is no longer sufficient. While these practices have their benefits, true integration occurs when brands proactively drive organizational synergies and cultivate growth.

Achieving integration may require a cultural shift that encourages collaboration across departments. Implementing training programs or workshops can help break down existing barriers and facilitate better communication.

While integrating teams and processes is not easy, it is certainly achievable. For those willing to take on this challenge, the rewards are significant. Embracing a more unified approach can pave the way for enhanced collaboration and innovation, ultimately leading to improved customer experiences and better business outcomes.

The Bifurcation of Customers Is Creating a Loyalty Divide: Customers today are divided based on their focus—some prioritize value and savings, while others are driven by convenience and experience. This split is reshaping loyalty in different ways. For example, value-driven shoppers may expect larger pack sizes featured at the beginning of the month and smaller, more affordable sizes as budgets tighten toward the end. In contrast, for time-starved customers, order accuracy and seamless convenience are paramount, particularly in online shopping.

A strong example of this is Lidl's transformational journey. According to [Frank Kerr](#), Chief Customer Officer, Lidl US, it was critical to reconnect with their core identity as a fast-value grocer. Lidl undertook significant changes by reevaluating their brands, SKUs, and packaging, ensuring they were aligned with customer needs. In the past, such changes might have been made in isolation, but now, they leaned heavily on customer and merchant insights to guide these strategic decisions. This approach ensured that consumer loyalty remained intact despite the shifts.

Kroger also excels in balancing loyalty between value and experience-focused shoppers. Their loyalty program, one of the most well-established in the industry, drives repeat business not only through discounts and offers but also by partnering with brands like Disney+ to offer unique experiences. Additionally, Kroger's ability to tailor in-store and online experiences to seasonal trends resonates well with consumers across their paid, owned, and earned media channels.

An important question to consider: "How are you approaching newness to drive customer loyalty?" ♦

When Frictionless Meets Fun: A New Shopping Paradigm



Debra Hughes
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Groceryshop 2024 was buzzing with industry executives from around the world, representing retailers of all sizes and the CPG brands seeking space on their shelves, whether physical, digital, virtual, or even...floating! Across the three days, a few key themes emerged:

- Consumers are stressed.
- Retailers continue to innovate at whatever pace they can afford.
- “GenAI” and “Omni” were tied in buzzword bingo.
- Disruption might just be the missing ingredient.

We heard a lot about the price sensitivity of consumers and the reality that time may be their most precious luxury. Retailers are investing heavily to help optimize both frontend and backend systems to alleviate both pressures. But speakers throughout the conference shared ways they were re-thinking the customer’s experience, removing barriers, and sprinkling joy into the mix, both online, offline, and everything in between.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Private Label: Let’s start with private label brands. The emphasis on private label brands is not new, although innovation seems to be outpacing conventional brands. Retailers are using their customer data and market trends to create products that deliver. Beyond attractive price points, we’re seeing an emphasis on quality ingredients, local flavors, and refreshed branding. Whether catering to Gen Z’s desire to buy sustainably or feeding a family with dietary restrictions, we’re seeing retailers double-down on delight.

Every Surface is a Channel: As retailers and emerging technologies discover more surfaces to illuminate and transform, is "more" always better? Despite the increasing number of networks and technologies to test, budgets aren't growing exponentially. In fact, overall spend remains relatively flat. The key factors for success are measurability and data transparency. The retail networks that will thrive are those offering data that brands can seamlessly integrate and trust.

GenAI for All: There was a steady hum of GenAI, almost as loud as the sound from the thousands of MeetUps taking place at Groceryshop. While GenAI has been around for years, we saw many brands embracing it in both big and small ways to help eliminate friction in the industry. We saw examples of using AI to craft more effective email, reduce legal and compliance risk, analyze feedback to mine for trends, and create more relatable imagery. Dynamic pricing with regard to custom offers was an area seeing success, paired with caution. •📧

When Frictionless Meets Fun: A New Shopping Paradigm

KEY TAKEAWAYS - Continued

[Chris Nicholas](#) of Sam's Club highlighted how AI is eliminating 100 million tasks, reducing the mundane and accelerating the digital progress. [Ramesh Kollepara](#) from Kellanova captured the essence of this shift, stating, "GenAI is a team sport." Success requires building a coalition across your organization. Start small—solve one business problem, demonstrate value, and create advocates along the way. This isn't a passing trend; it's the present reality.

Make It Fun: Outside the U.S., the line between shopping and entertainment is increasingly blurred. Could we make a trip to the grocery store an adventure? [Fidji Simo](#), CEO of Instacart, encouraged conference attendees to rethink everything—from grocery and search to the overall customer experience. Sounds simple, right?

After years of teaching people how to use search engines, she questioned whether we're at a turning point with the rise of natural language search. This shift could allow us to retrain customers, moving away from simple shopping lists to creating personalized planograms. It's less about checking off items and more about curating meal ideas—how to pair ingredients, add to what's already in your pantry, and craft great meals for your family.

[The Caper Cart](#) by Instacart was on full display in the store of the future. Not only is it scanning and tallying the cost of items placed in your cart, the digital screen offers gamified coupon wheels, shopping lists, and recommendations. No self-check-out required here. In fact, Sam's Club refers to the newfound retail space where the checkouts used to be as their "dance floor" where merchants can experiment. Currently they are using the space to let customers see exclusive merchandise available online and buy in store.

To round out the fun category, consider a floating grocery store! [Mustafa Bartin](#), CEO of Migros in Turkey, shared that their floating full-service grocery store—a 40-meter yacht—has been so well received that they are developing five more. While it may not become a widespread trend, it's certainly a fun concept!

Make It Meaningful: We've also seen brands like Ahold Delhaize integrating technology into their app to scan the contents of what's in your refrigerator to figure out what to prepare and hopefully eliminate food waste. The USDA estimates between 30-40 percent of the food supply in the U.S. goes to waste. For those concerned about food origin and sustainability practices, Ahold is also experimenting with technology to scan the eggs in your refrigerator to learn about the origins of your eggs (think farmers, chickens, recipes).

To quote [Gregory Guidotti](#) from Ferrara, "When you know who you are, you know what to do." While he was speaking about brand innovation, that mantra can be applied more broadly across the retail ecosystem. There are so many ways for the industry to continue innovating to make physical, digital, and virtual experience more meaningful, more personal, and frictionless. ♦

Loyalty Brings Loyalty: Cultivating Connection in Today's Commerce Landscape



Soche Picard
CEO North America
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In an era where consumers are increasingly discerning and on-the-move, brand loyalty isn't a given. In the "Building Brand Loyalty" session at Groceryshop, brand leaders [Kimberlie Le](#) (Prime Roots), [Sarah Ahmed Holman](#) (Bobbie) and [Michael Craig](#) (BlueTriton Brands) shared how brands must adapt by fostering genuine connections. Loyalty is a two-way street. Each panelist spoke about how they strive to loyally serve their customers. This session highlighted key strategies for building loyalty, including leveraging life moments, understanding regional influences, and embracing authenticity. These insights can help marketers navigate modern brand loyalty and build lasting customer relationships.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Life moments, big and small, are opportunities to personalize experiences: Life events shape consumer choices, offering brands the chance to deepen loyalty by aligning with these moments. Whether it's a big celebration or an everyday event, brands that lead with empathetic marketing and experiences can create lasting connections. For marketers, this means developing strategies that are not only reactive but also predictive of consumer needs, fostering loyalty through personalized experiences.

Sarah Ahmed Holman, Chief Commercial Officer, shared how Bobbie, an organic formula brand, does just that—like delivering formula via Uber to a mom-in-need at the airport or celebrating a subscription cancellation with a graduation party when a child moves to solid foods. Such dedication builds deep ties. Marketers should craft strategies that anticipate consumer needs and foster loyalty through personalized experiences.

Adapting to regional nuances provides a deeper connection: Understanding and leveraging regional nuances can significantly boost brand loyalty. BlueTriton Brands does this well by getting involved in the community, whether it be partnering with the local sports teams or supporting a community in a time of crisis. Partnerships with local sports teams have enabled BlueTriton to tap into team fandom by providing access to athletes the community loves and memorable sporting experiences. BlueTriton's regional focus has also allowed them to respond proactively during challenging times, such as natural disasters when water is urgently needed, leaving a lasting impression on the community for their commitment long after the crisis has passed.

Michael Craig, VP Marketing, BlueTriton brands, shared the importance of listening at a local level to be better stewards of the brands and the communities they serve. This localized approach helps marketers gain a deeper understanding of regional consumer identities, fostering stronger connections and building a more loyal customer base. By developing strategies tailored to specific communities, brands can enhance their relevance and strengthen their ties with the audiences they serve. ▶

Loyalty Brings Loyalty: Cultivating Connection in Today's Commerce Landscape

KEY TAKEAWAYS - Continued

Authenticity and transparency are table stakes in building loyalty: Authenticity and transparency are key to driving brand loyalty. Marketers need to ensure that brand messaging aligns with actual practices, which builds consumer trust and sets brands apart in a crowded market.

For instance, Bobbie's brand promise is that a consumer will never run out of formula when they subscribe to Bobbie. During the 2022 infant formula shortage, Bobbie made good on that promise to its existing subscribers when the manufacturer made the tough business decision to prioritize the formula needs of their current subscribers over driving new customer acquisition. They did not bring on any new subscribers until inventory stabilized.

Bobbie's customers are only buying formula for a year, and the loyalty received from putting the customer first outlasts their customers' need for the product. Moms will recommend the product, leave reviews and testimonials, far after they have stopped buying Bobbie.

In a completely different category, Prime Roots, which offers plant-based deli classics, can show up for its customers by proudly standing by and not apologizing for who they are. Prime Roots is a brand designed for a loyal following of flexitarians who are meat eaters looking for alternative choices for meat. They engage the loyal members of their community to inform business decisions, ask where those shoppers purchase their meat, and give those shoppers kits to take to retailers to demonstrate demand. Kimberlie Li, Co-founder and CEO, shared that Prime Roots avoids paid influencers, instead encouraging organic engagement from their customer base. By doing so, they build trust and loyalty and turn their customers into loyal brand ambassadors. ♦



Navigating New Digital Landscapes: Harnessing Emerging Platforms for Consumer Engagement and Commerce



Rulynn Hansen
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As consumer media consumption shifts from traditional TV to digital platforms like social media, connected TV, and gaming, marketers must innovate to sustain engagement. In the Groceryshop session "New Platforms Driving Engagement and Commerce," Cann's SVP of Marketing, [Danielle Nicoll](#), discussed the strategic use of emerging channels—such as TikTok and shoppable video—to effectively connect with audiences and drive commerce. Below are key insights on how to leverage these trends to boost brand visibility and conversion rates.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Embrace Emerging Platforms for Audience Engagement: Platforms like TikTok are proving invaluable for brands like Cann, offering access to previously untapped audiences. With users consuming content akin to traditional TV, marketers should capitalize on the platform's potential to double revenue through strategic content planning. Marketers must innovate with platform-specific strategies, such as geo-targeted campaigns, to drive both engagement and in-store purchases.

Utilize User-Generated Content (UGC) for Authentic Brand Storytelling: UGC has become a powerful tool for brands seeking authentic ways to connect with consumers. By encouraging real consumers to share experiences, brands like Cann foster trust and trial among skeptical audiences. This trend emphasizes the importance of leveraging genuine, relatable content over polished advertising, as it resonates more deeply with consumers and influences purchase decisions.

Integrate Technology for Efficient Consumer Reach: The session underscored the role of technology in optimizing reach across diverse audiences. Brands are blending content creation with strategic platform use, using algorithms to identify effective formats. As seen with Cann's integration of Doordash, placing products in consumer-friendly spaces enhances accessibility and boosts sales, emphasizing the need for marketers to align digital strategies with consumer habits.

Prioritize Authenticity and Consumer Education: Authenticity is essential in building consumer trust, particularly in emerging product categories. Cann's emphasis on educating consumers through video content on platforms like TikTok addresses common misconceptions and alleviates hesitations. For marketers, this highlights the importance of transparent communication and educational content to demystify products and enhance consumer confidence in trying new offerings.

By tapping into these trends, marketers can create dynamic, engaging experiences that not only capture attention but also drive meaningful consumer interactions and conversions.

Ensuring Authenticity in the Age of AI



Meg Lajoie
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As expected, AI was a central topic for many panelists at Groceryshop 2024. Discussion ran the gamut from AI's role as an operational accelerant via demand forecasting, inventory optimization, pricing strategy and fulfillment - to its array of marketing superpowers, including consumer segmentation, personalization, predictive analytics and ability to drive assorted efficiencies within the comms process. AI can harness the speed of machine learning to expedite the marketing process, enabling brands to keep pace with culture and remain visible and relevant. However, if human brand stewards leave too much to the algorithms, there is some inherent risk of messages becoming too flat and transactional, losing sight of what makes brands their special selves. To avoid this pitfall, marketers should reinvest AI-generated time savings into time spent developing authentic relationships with consumers through meaningful acts and ideas.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Bigger influence from smaller influencers: For marketers with modest budgets, or simply not looking to spend it all in one place, the good news is brands may be able to realize a bigger bang for their buck when partnering with influencers like “Betty-down-the-street” than Beyonce. While Betty may not be as well known, smaller, community-based influencers often have significant, and potentially more engaged, followings. As [Alicia LeBeouf](#), Head of Industry, Retail, Grocery and Marketplaces at Meta explained during the Best in Class Digital Capabilities panel, “people want to be able to see themselves in someone else.” For this reason, a hyper-local influencer strategy can not only bolster message relevance, but drive a more seamless transaction, and ultimately, more intimate interaction with the brand. An influencer sharing a recipe that features familiar ingredients available at a local grocer is likely to garner more excitement and feel more authentic than one that is overly general.

Follow the UGC: When shoppers find brands they love, they want to tell the world. They take to their socials and, in their own voices, speak enthusiastically about the role these beloved brands play in their lives. This could take the shape of anything from a quick demo to a more comprehensive unboxing. [Sara Ahmed Holman](#), Chief Commercial Officer from Bobbie, explained how happily surprised she was to come across one very passionate subscriber who created a video of herself unboxing her organic baby formula, capturing everything from the box's arrival at her home to the packing tape, cheeky message stickers and nicely packed baby formula inside. When consumers aren't asked, paid nor scripted to create content, their commentary naturally embodies a spirit of authenticity. As such, the opportunity for marketers is to bottle this up and share it with others by reaching out to passionate creators and requesting permission to use their content to drive new shoppers to the brand. ▶📧

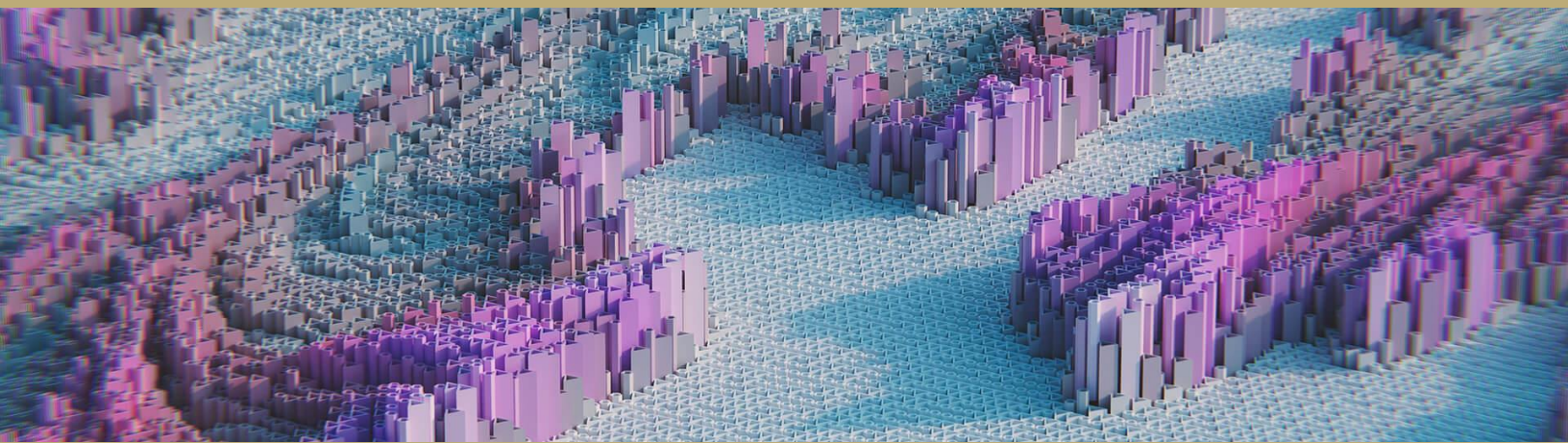
Ensuring Authenticity in the Age of AI

KEY TAKEAWAYS - Continued

Walk the talk: When it comes to ensuring every act is an extension of brand promise, few stories are as powerful as the one Sara Ahmed Holman of Bobbie shared about how the company chose to respond to a baby formula crisis a few years ago. Virtually overnight, 1 of 2 major infant formula manufacturers was forced to shut down due to product contamination. As a new brand, heavily reliant on repopulating its subscriber base every 12 months as families graduate out of infant formula, Bobbie could have seized the opportunity to attract a flood of new shoppers in a time of unprecedented need. But rather than focus on acquiring new subscribers, Bobbie elected to do the opposite: they shut off their storefront to preserve supply for existing subscribers who were not only counting on the product to feed their babies, but counting on the brand to make good on its promise to never fall short on meeting families' supply needs. This is a terrific example of following through on brand promise and proof that when you act with authenticity, growth will follow as consumers become evangelists.

Own your truth: [Kimberlie Le](#), Co-Founder & CEO of Prime Roots is unapologetic about the plant-based brand's positioning "by meat lovers, for meat lovers." Despite criticism for not catering to vegetarian or vegan audiences, the brand has stood its ground with intention to attract a distinct audience – people who happily enjoy meat but may be looking to incorporate plant-based if it can be done without sacrifice. The brand wants to ensure this audience sees Prime Roots as a brand "for them" and not "something for other people" – even if doing both could ultimately mean more sales. In line with its focus on meat eaters, Prime Roots is sold in the deli – a place no other plant-based product has shown up. Interrupting the experience of someone shopping for deli meat and getting them to consider a plant-based product requires a well-orchestrated strategy that Le says requires strong partnership with the operators and an engaging sampling program that gets the delicious products into their mouths before they can conclude its "not for them."

While AI can help marketers accelerate their processes and make smarter decisions about things like audience composition, what those groups value and how best to reach them, maintaining an authentic brand ethos requires empathy and human intervention. ♦



The Rise of In-Store Retail Media



Christa Klausner

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Retail Media continues to be the fastest-growing digital media channel, taking share from the biggest players and projected to reach \$70-80 billion by 2025. While some of this growth comes from new retailers entering the space, the majority is driven by retailers expanding their offsite and in-store inventory, enabled by innovative partnerships. At Groceryshop, significant progress was evident, especially in terms of in-store format, experience, personalization, and measurement—marking a breakthrough for Retail Media Networks within physical retail environments.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

iBotta Brings Offers to Store Shelves: [iBotta](#), traditionally focused on digital offers, is now extending its reach to the physical store shelf. More retailers, like Walmart, are rolling out digital shelf tags across their entire store footprint. While these tags currently serve operational purposes, iBotta aims to shift this functionality toward consumer benefit. Soon, shoppers will be able to scan these tags to find products on their shopping lists, clip digital coupons directly to their mobile devices, and discover relevant offers within the aisle—ultimately driving incremental purchases and adding value for both consumers and retailers.

TruRating: Capturing Real-Time In-Store Feedback: [TruRating](#) is transforming the in-store feedback loop by inserting a single question at the point of payment to gather insights from validated purchasers. Integrated with multiple payment systems, this technology triggers questions based on the items in the shopper's basket, delivering actionable insights on consumer behavior. This real-time feedback gives brands and retailers a more precise understanding of purchasing decisions.

Advertima - Using AI to Enhance In-Store Ad Personalization: [Advertima](#) is upgrading existing in-store screens with AI-enabled cameras to capture and act on anonymized shopper data. The technology can track multiple shoppers at once, predicting walking paths and identifying which customers are most likely to view an ad within the next 10 seconds. This anonymized recognition is then linked to in-store sales, allowing advertisers to measure if a shopper viewed a particular screen before making a purchase. Additionally, Advertima's system continuously learns from this data, refining its targeting capabilities to predict segment behaviors and improve the effectiveness of in-store ad displays over time.

This blend of technological innovation, partnerships and personalized shopping experiences is setting the stage for Retail Media's next growth phase, creating immense value for retailers, brands, and consumers alike.

Effectiveness in RMN Offsite and In-Store Media



Michele Roney
EVP Retailer CX
Mars United Commerce

Onsite media has become the foundation of Retail Media Network (RMN) offerings to CPG advertisers. However, as retailers expand into a full-funnel strategy, there is often a limited understanding of what it takes to deliver effective offsite and in-store media. A key priority for retailers is to truly grasp their unique customer experience, both in-store and online, ensuring their media offerings are not just "check-the-box" items on a roadmap but are genuinely relevant to their customers. This relevance will, in turn, make the offerings more valuable and effective for brand advertisers.

In-store media remains the least developed, as minimal effort has been dedicated to understanding its relevance and measuring its effectiveness. Currently, there is no targeting or audience segmentation available for in-store media, which makes it an evolving space with significant potential.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Challenge RMNs to be channel-relevant: Brands should push Retail Media Networks to ensure their offerings align with the specific characteristics of the retailer's channel, customer base, and broader business goals. Expanding on the existing [Mars United Retail Media Report Card](#), developing channel-specific report cards that reflect the nuances of each retail environment will help brands make informed investment decisions. For instance, in-store radio may be more relevant for small-box retailers than for large-box stores. Retailers, in turn, must avoid "checking the box" and instead provide clear insights into why specific offerings are suited to their RMN and channel.

Foster collaboration and "test-and-learn" opportunities: Retailers need to embrace greater collaboration with their brand partners, offering more opportunities for experimentation and feedback. Brands have become customers of RMNs, and their voices are increasingly important. In some cases, their input may be as critical as that of shoppers when it comes to refining RMN offerings.

Develop a brand-specific Retail Media scorecard: Brands should create their own Retail Media scorecards that highlight what's important for their specific objectives and KPIs at each retailer. This will open more productive Joint Business Plan (JBP) conversations and provide a framework for identifying investment guardrails.

Maximizing Budget in a Growth-Constrained World



Mike Black
Chief Marketing Officer
Profitero

"Dollars are harder to get. We've got tough choices to make." These words from an eCommerce VP at Groceryshop sum up the challenge CPG commerce leaders face today. Overall retail growth is slowing as demand softens and inflation stabilizes, yet digital penetration (the percentage of sales coming from online channels) continues to grow, creating more demand for digital shelf and retail media investment. This tension between maintaining the core physical retail business while accelerating digital commerce creates tough trade-offs, with no clear guidance on where to best allocate budgets. A similar turf war exists between where brands should best allocate media dollars: is budget best spent on upper funnel, brand awareness channels or with retailer-owned channels that can be directly tied back to transactions? There are no easy answers but there are some things brands can do to navigate the complexity.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Connect Leading with Lagging Indicators: Media, digital shelf, and shopper marketing spend often happen in silos, without clear connections to outcome metrics like incremental sales and market share growth. This needs to change. Brands should integrate digital shelf and retail media KPIs into market share data, like Circana, to track how these investments drive share growth relative to traditional investment areas. Next, they should explore next-gen marketing mix solutions that measure the impact of both traditional media and newer retail media and shelf levers, helping prioritize spending.

Maximize Organic Growth Levers to Offset Paid Expenses: Getting a product from Page 2 to Page 1 of retail search organically drives 3x the sales lift compared to paid sponsorships. Brands should invest in digital shelf optimization—ensuring products are in stock and content is SEO-optimized—so they can scale paid sponsorships efficiently when needed. When investing in sponsored search, brands should time bids when competitors are out of stock or priced out and pause bids when their own products aren't ready to convert. Solutions like [Shelf Intelligent Media](#) can automate this.

Unify JBPs and Media Discussions: Profitero benchmarks show only 37% of brands discuss digital retail media in their joint business plans (JBPs) with retailers. Brands should integrate retail media, trade, and shopper commitments into one holistic JBP discussion focused on shared category and shopper growth goals. Retailers should invest in reporting tools that help brands measure ROI across omnichannel levers to differentiate their offerings and command more share of spend amongst brands.

Leveraging and Scaling AI Responsibly



Sabrina McPherson
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At Groceryshop 2024, discussions about AI dominated the conversation, as expected. The consensus was clear: AI holds immense potential to enhance speed and quality across enterprises (with fastmoving companies achieving 2.5x higher financial performance compared to peers). However, 87% of AI projects never reach production. Given these scaling challenges, learnings from Groceryshop focused on how to effectively build AI capabilities and remove roadblocks during this period of accelerated change.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Cut through the hype cycle by setting a clear north star: Companies must adopt an enterprise-wide, strategy-led approach to identify where AI can deliver the most value. Prioritizing use cases at the intersection of cost, growth potential, and feasibility is key to driving meaningful outcomes.

Identify a few high-value use cases (you only need 5) and pilot quickly: GenAI has four key "superpowers," and it's crucial for enterprises to prioritize their most impactful use cases across these areas and swiftly move to testing and learning:

- **Automate:** Task automation in all forms, from small tasks to large processes.
- **Synthesize:** Automated data summarization, recommendations, insights, and decision support.
- **Generate:** Summarizing, generating, or optimizing content in various formats.
- **Assist:** Supporting sales, service, compliance, and other functions through cognitive agents.

Assess maturity across the five key building blocks required for scaling AI and create a plan to close the gaps:

- **Experience:** The ability to deliver a seamless and cohesive user experience across service lines and business functions.
- **Intelligence:** The capacity to deploy AI agents using complex models for intelligent, high-speed decision-making.
- **Data:** Establishing high-quality, curated datasets as a single source of truth, linked through a unified identifier.
- **Technology:** Scalable cloud computing resources paired with robust data management systems.
- **People, Organization, and Governance:** Strong governance, ethical guidelines, an efficient operating model across capabilities, and a skilled talent pool. ▶

Leveraging and Scaling AI Responsibly

KEY TAKEAWAYS - Continued

Create an AI-first culture: It's essential to address the growing fear within teams—help them understand that GenAI won't replace their jobs, but someone who uses GenAI better might. Ensure there are clear executive champions for AI and foster a culture of experimentation and risktaking with AI technologies.

Establish clear governance and an operating model to avoid slowdowns caused by lack of accountability: AI execution requires cross-functional collaboration. It's crucial to define clear ownership to prevent delays due to governance confusion. Typically, AI strategies and roadmaps need joint ownership between Business and IT teams.

Engage a strategic data/AI enablement partner: Getting this right is crucial, and leveraging expert partners can accelerate success. Don't limit your focus to large, established leaders in the field—also consider smaller, digital-native AI startups that are driving innovation in the market.

How can your business overcome scaling challenges and achieve real results? [Contact us today](#) to learn how we can help you leverage AI responsibly and drive meaningful outcomes. ♦



Off-Site Retail Media = The “Not-So-Gold” Rush



April Carlisle
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For most established Retail Media Networks (RMNs) — typically those that have been around for 3-5 years, which is considered mature in the fast-paced retail world — owned and operated inventory has reached a saturation point. As a result, growth is now shifting to offsite channels, where there’s essentially an endless aisle of inventory. Retailers’ highly coveted first-party audiences are increasingly available through partnerships with platforms like The Trade Desk, with new collaborations being announced almost daily.

The challenge? Offsite inventory is significantly less profitable for RMNs. This presents a dilemma, as the ambitious growth targets that brands will soon receive (it is JBP season, after all) must factor in this profitability issue. Walmart's strong presence and leadership at Groceryshop this year underscored their emphasis on offsite growth. Another key player at the event was Fetch, which announced its offsite partnership with Albertsons Media Collective.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Growth Is Undeniable: The growth targets are in the double digits, and retailers are constantly finding new ways to achieve this. Naturally, this raises the question—where will the funding come from? The likely answer is brand media budgets. That’s why RMNs are eager to go beyond shopper and ecommerce leads to reach brand budget decision-makers. Despite the premium CPMs, RMN off-site performance is often driving positive KPIs. The key to success is taking an audience-first approach, ensuring RMN audiences are included in any off-site media activities.

Performance Is Improving: As targeting capabilities evolve, performance continues to improve. Additionally, true closed-loop measurement with POS data is now possible. Connected TV (CTV) advertising, using QR codes to direct users to product detail pages (PDPs), is drawing significant attention from both brands and retailers, gradually carving out a larger share of video investments.

Partnerships Will Continue: RMN partnerships are crucial for off-site growth. Just this year, we've seen collaborations like Instacart x Google, Amazon x Meta, Kroger x Yahoo!, Walmart x Paramount Plus, and even Chase Sapphire and Burger King. Everyone wants a piece of the action. It's a gold rush for RMNs that can effectively position the incremental audiences and traffic they can deliver.



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