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eCommerce Summit 2026

WELCOME TO PULSE

AN INTRODUCTION FROM JOSHUA HOBSON, GROWTH DIRECTOR AT VERVAUNT

When we launched Pulse in November 2022, the goal was simple: to create the kind of industry community we felt was missing. The traditional event circuit had begun to feel tired - filled with mandatory pre-booked meetings, endless booths and the same speakers appearing at every event. We were bored.

Pulse was built to bring together ambitious brands and retailers with the technologies and agencies supporting them, centred around honest conversations and real experiences from the people actually doing the work.

At the heart of the community is the Pulse eCommerce Summit, our annual gathering for high-growth retailers and brands looking for inspiration and practical insight. What began as a single event has grown rapidly, with the 2026 summit expected to welcome around 2,000 attendees across the two days. Across the year we also host breakfast seminars, invite-only roundtables and VIP events that keep the conversation going beyond the main stage.

The summit focuses on the challenges that matter most to modern commerce - internationalisation, customer experience, acquisition, measurement, performance marketing and more - with speakers drawn from some of the most exciting fashion, beauty and lifestyle brands in the world.

This magazine is our way of bringing that same spirit beyond the stage. Inside you'll find interviews with leading retailers, perspectives from the technology partners shaping the industry, insights and analysis from the Vervaunt team, and ideas designed to help ambitious brands think differently about growth. It captures many of the conversations, lessons and perspectives that make the Pulse community so valuable.

Building Pulse has been one of the most rewarding parts of my career so far, although that might just be because it led to me meeting B*Witched and Bradley from S Club 7.

In an industry that can often feel volatile and unpredictable, creating a space where brands can share experiences, learn from one another and build genuine relationships has been incredibly cool to watch. We hope Pulse continues to grow and support the next generation of ambitious retailers.

THE STATE OF TRADE

Based on our internal dataset and ongoing conversations with leading brands, the current state of trade across eCommerce remains cautiously stable, though far from uniform. Performance across recent months has been mixed. A significant proportion of brands are achieving double-digit year-on-year growth, while a notable minority are experiencing similarly sharp declines, highlighting a market where strong product, disciplined execution and clear brand positioning are making the difference.

Geographically, Europe has generally been the most consistent performer. Markets such as Sweden, Denmark, Italy, Spain and Ireland continue to show resilience, with the Nordics in particular standing out as dependable sources of demand. The UK has shown some signs of improvement but remains a challenging environment for many mid-to-premium brands, while the US continues to present the most volatility, particularly for brands that are heavily reliant on paid acquisition.

Across the industry, sentiment remains cautiously positive, with senior eCommerce and marketing leaders reporting steady confidence in the year ahead. Brands are continuing to prioritise efficiency and profitability, keeping media investment disciplined while focusing on improving site experience, strengthening customer relationships and driving sustainable growth.

At this year's Pulse eCommerce Summit, we'll explore many of these themes in more depth alongside some of the most exciting brands in eCommerce and retail, unpacking where growth is coming from and how leading teams are navigating the current market.

PAUL ROGERS
CO-FOUNDER | VERVAUNT

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Google Play

Follow the event and post your photos:

@pulse.summit Pulse eCommerce Summit

OVERVIEW OF THE TRACKS

Inspiration Stage
PORTER TUN

A stage built for fresh thinking and creative perspective, led by brands shaping culture and customer experience. Expect honest stories, standout ideas and real examples from names like Anya Hindmarch, Axel Arigato, COS, Healf and REFY.

Momentum Stage
QUEEN CHARLOTTE

Focused on how brands are sustaining growth and building momentum in a constantly shifting landscape. Sessions explore ongoing innovation, scaling strategies and what's actually driving progress for brands like Represent, Oh Polly, Lounge Underwear and Patta.

Impact Stage
KING VAULT

Designed for substance and results, this stage cuts through to what's delivering real commercial impact. Expect practical insights, proven strategies and measurable outcomes from brands including Ellis Brigham, French Connection, Hush, Arsenal FC and Trinny London.

Energy Stage
QUEEN VAULT

Fast-paced and forward-looking, this stage captures the energy behind modern growth and execution. From creative velocity to channel experimentation, hear how brands like HexClad, Mint Velvet, Gymshark and Abbott Lyon are moving quickly and thinking big.

Roundtables - Retailers Only

Our roundtables are for brands and retailers only, to discuss the latest challenges and trends in eCommerce. Moderated by an industry expert, and supported by our tech partners, these roundtables are created around a closed door structured discussion on topics such as international, customer acquisition, loyalty and more.

Attendance is only guaranteed for brands who have pre-registered for these events. However, if you have not, please do arrive early and if there is room, we will allow entry.

DAY ONE 13 MAY

9:30

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN

Opening Statements

Joshua Hobson, Vervaunt

9:40

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN

State of Commerce & Media

Paul Rogers, Vervaunt | Josh Duggan, Vervaunt

10:20

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN

Fashion Strategy in 2026: Brand, Performance & Scale

Jake Messer, bound & UN:IK Clothing | Ian Mackey, Percival | Shamoli Miah, Vervaunt

MOMENTUM STAGE – QUEEN CHARLOTTE

From Community to Conversion: How Patta Turns Cultural High Heat Releases into Lasting Loyalty

Tomas Overtoom, Patta | Giorgia Pollastrelli, Reveni

IMPACT STAGE – KING VAULT

Elevating Beauty: Owning the Customer Journey, Building Trust & Driving Brand Growth

Angus Jenkins, LYMA | Claire Curran, Trinny London | Taniya De Abrew, Lush Cosmetics | Francesca Raggio, Vervaunt

ROUNDTABLES

Roundtable: International

Moderated by Chris Ormonde, Whanau Advisory

11:00

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN

Building Your Creator Strategy from Two Globally-Recognised Creators

Oren John, Hyper Studios | Clayton Chambers, Hyper Studios

MOMENTUM STAGE – QUEEN CHARLOTTE

Making Loyalty Your Biggest Growth Lever with The INKEY List and Medik8

Georgie Little, The INKEY List | Anna-Louise Chambers, Medik8 | Sam Curtin, LoyaltyLion

11:00 (contd)

IMPACT STAGE – KING VAULT

From North London to the World: How World-Class Partnerships Fuel Arsenal Football Club Global Reach

Omar Shaik, Arsenal Football Club | Ben Hornby, Airwallex

ENERGY STAGE – QUEEN VAULT

SEO, GEO and the Future of Discovery: Visibility, Demand & Changing Search Behaviour

11:40

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN

Sportsshoes Didn't Just Run Offers, They Made Every One Count

Sian Wells, Sportsshoes | Dan Bond, RevLifter

MOMENTUM STAGE – QUEEN CHARLOTTE

What Does Returns Excellence Look Like in 2026 for New Look and Boden?

Daniele Thomas, New Look | Colin Dawes, Boden | Richard Lim, Retail Economics | Al Gerrie, ZigZag

IMPACT STAGE – KING VAULT

Scaling with Purpose: The Foundations Behind Hush's Next Phase of Growth

Rebecca Scott, Hush | Max Brennan, Centra

ENERGY STAGE – QUEEN VAULT

Future-Proofing Your Paid Media Strategy in 2026 and Beyond

Tom Hancock, Vervaunt | Josh Duggan, Vervaunt

ROUNDTABLES

Roundtable: Fashion

Moderated by James Gurd, Digital Juggler & Inside Commerce

contd on next page

DAY ONE

13 MAY

12:20

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN

Hypergrowth in Turbulent Times: How JAKI & Wax London Drive Sustainable Global Expansion

Nicolò Talignani, Wax London | Rameez Ebrahim, Jaki | Max O'Brien, Global-e

MOMENTUM STAGE – QUEEN CHARLOTTE

Unlock Growth with AI Powered A/B Testing & Personalisation

Harry Roth, Laura Gellar & AS Beauty | Marc Adelman, Visually

IMPACT STAGE – KING VAULT

The Future of Commerce: The Perspectives of Market-Leading Agencies

Andrew Mackenzie, By Association Only | Martijn Wijsmuller, Ask Phill | Ed Bull, Limesharp
Lewis Sellers, IDHL | Anton Johansson, Grebban | Shamoli Miah, Vervaunt

ENERGY STAGE – QUEEN VAULT

Lean Teams, Global Growth: Inside HexClad's eCommerce Playbook

Rebecca Harper, HexClad | Valeria Granda, Rebuy

12:40

KING GEORGE

Lunch

14:00

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN

A Drag Performance from Danny Beard

14:40

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN

How Loop Earplugs and Hoodrich Turned Consent Into a Growth Engine

Natalie Tobias, Hoodrich | Brina Skof, Loop Earplugs | Ryan McErlane, Dataships

MOMENTUM STAGE – QUEEN CHARLOTTE

Next Generation eCommerce Stack: Discussing the Future with Some of eCommerce's Most Exciting Technologies

Jessika Ödling, Dema | Sarah Young, Harper | Marc Adelman, Visually
Vidar Trojenborg, Emfas | Shamoli Miah, Vervaunt

14:40 (contd)

IMPACT STAGE – KING VAULT

Omnichannel at Scale: How French Connection and Ellis Brigham are Winning with Personalisation

Mark Oldham, Ellis Brigham | Ellie Lansley, French Connection |
James Gurd, Digital Juggler & Inside Commerce

ROUNDTABLES

Roundtable: CRM & Loyalty

Moderated by Hannah Spicer, Hannah Spicer Consulting

15:20

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN

Experiences that Travel: Scaling Globally in the Era of Connected Commerce

Alister Hewitt, Rat & Boa | Sara Gomes, Studio Nicholson |
Mat Brown, Universal Works | Vicky Beech, Swap

MOMENTUM STAGE – QUEEN CHARLOTTE

Redefining Checkout: Meeting Modern Consumer Expectations across Every Channel

Robert Bridge, Cinch | Vasil Yanakiev SNS Software | Daniel Hoggan, Mediaworks |
Ed Harries, Worldpay

IMPACT STAGE – KING VAULT

The Intersection of Design & Functionality

Sarah Shakery, Drake's | Molly Allen, Astrid & Miyu | Trevor Hardy, Orlebar Brown |
George Linton, By Association Only

ENERGY STAGE – QUEEN VAULT

Beyond DTC: Making Retail and Wholesale Actually Work

Lawrence Montgomery, Rough Trade | Tom Clements, Mint Velvet |
Chris Perrins, Gymshark | Luke Hodgson, Commerce Thinking

16:00

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN

From Cult Brand to Global Business: Axel Arigato on Building with Intention

Albin Johansson, Axel Arigato | Marcus Tagesson, Dema

contd on next page

DAY ONE

16:00 (contd)

MOMENTUM STAGE – QUEEN CHARLOTTE
Entering and Scaling the US: Strategy, Execution & Reality
Claire Hennah, Grown Alchemist | Tom Broughton, Cubitts | Chris Ormonde, Whanau Advisory

IMPACT STAGE – KING VAULT
Preparing for Agentic Commerce: Ellis Brigham's Delivery Intelligence Journey
Mark Oldham, Ellis Brigham | Piotr Zaleski, Ingrid

ENERGY STAGE – QUEEN VAULT
The Visual Mandate of Fashion Merchandising with Lounge Underwear and Abbott Lyon
Nick Tefft, Abbott Lyon | Kristian Burnard, Lounge | Antony Kattukaran, Tagalys

ROUNDTABLES
Roundtable: Customer Experience
Moderated by Kate Walmsley, Tern Circular

16:40

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN
An Interview with Dame Anya Hindmarch
Moderated by Ed Bull, Limesharp

Join Dame Anya Hindmarch for an intimate fireside chat exploring the ideas, decisions and moments behind building one of Britain's most iconic fashion brands. From creativity and entrepreneurship to sustainability initiatives and long-term brand thinking, this session offers insight into the mindset of a business leader shaping the future of retail.
Brought to you by the Limesharp team.

17:00

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN
A Recap of the Major Trends: Closing Statements
Shamoli Miah, Vervaunt | Bethan Rainford, Vervaunt

17:10

KING GEORGE
Networking Drinks

19:00

FLIGHT CLUB, SHOREDITCH
Darts & Drinks – Official After-Party

PLATINUM

dataships
GlobalE
klaviyo
Littledata

EMERALD

loop
reveni
RevLifter®
shopify

SAPPHIRE

DEMA
LoyaltyLion
visually
zigzag

GOLD

iDHL
Swap
worldpay

SILVER

By Association Only
centra
ingrid
LIMESHARP
Voyado

BRONZE

Airwallex
glara* by brandback
gorgias
Order Editing
REBUY
rivo
Tagalys
yotpo.

SUPPORTING

Ask Phill
athos commerce
bloomreach
Brightpearl by Sage
COMMERCE-UI
eComID
EMFAS
Grebban™
Made by Field
newtone
NOVOS
REACH
ReBound by Reconomy
salesforce
SCAYLE° COMMERCE ENGINE
waye

DAY TWO 14 MAY

9:30

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN
Opening Statements
Joshua Hobson, Vervaunt

9:40

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN
Future of Commerce & Media
Paul Rogers, Vervaunt | Josh Duggan, Vervaunt

10:20

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN
Economics of Scale: Capital, Commerce & the P&L with ex-Gymshark CEO & Investor, Steve Hewitt
Steve Hewitt, Whanau Advisory | Paul Rogers, Vervaunt

MOMENTUM STAGE – QUEEN CHARLOTTE
Returns are eCommerce: Turning Post-Purchase Friction into Retention with Oh Polly and Thrudark
Emily Mcmorran, Oh Polly | Diego Fria, ThruDark | Kent Woodyard, Loop

IMPACT STAGE – KING VAULT
Growth Marketing: What's Working in 2026
Viviana Lozada, Ami Paris | Ciaran McClellan, ME+EM | Javier Artal Herbella, Samsøe Samsøe | Freddie Ransom, Vervaunt

ROUNDTABLES
Roundtable: Premium & Luxury
Moderated by Zoe Rowswell, Tern Circular

11:00

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN
Marketing Measurement in the Age of AI: What Shopify Brands Need to Know Now
Edward Upton, Littledata

MOMENTUM STAGE – QUEEN CHARLOTTE
Scaling with Gymshark & Lounge: To Build, To Buy, or To Shopify?
Dominic Hague, Lounge Underwear | Chris Perrins, Gymshark | Hamish McKay, Order Editing

11:00 (contd)

IMPACT STAGE – KING VAULT
Fit for Purpose: Naked CPH's Revenue-Led CX Strategy
Simon Hetland, Naked CPH | Martijn Wijsmuller, Ask Phill | Neil Forrest, Gorgias

ENERGY STAGE – QUEEN VAULT
Strategic Affiliate Marketing for Next-Level Incrementality
Gabrielle McLeod, Vervaunt | George Whitmore, Vervaunt

11:40

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN
AI Strategy & Transformation with COS
Simone Williams, COS | Paul Rogers, Vervaunt

MOMENTUM STAGE – QUEEN CHARLOTTE
Building an eCommerce Roadmap in 2026: AI, Testing, Measurement & More
Monika Burke-Tamics, Medik8 | Chris Sheard, Fanatics | Jane Wilson, Monica Vinader | James Gurd, Digital Juggler & Inside Commerce

IMPACT STAGE – KING VAULT
Cutting Through the Noise: What Meaningful CRO Actually Looks Like
Nick Phipps, Vervaunt

ENERGY STAGE – QUEEN VAULT
Fans, Friends, or Fees? Navigating Loyalty, Referrals, and Influencers
Hudson Leogrande, Cmfrt | Jessica Blanchat, Salt and Stone | Sara Pereda, Rivo

ROUNDTABLES
Roundtable: Omnichannel
Moderated by Luke Hodgson, Commerce Thinking

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DAY TWO

14 MAY

12:20

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN
Future Ready Retail: Boden's Enterprise Transformation with Shopify
Alex Ives, Boden | Deann Evans, Shopify

MOMENTUM STAGE – QUEEN CHARLOTTE
Building an Integrated Loyalty Program & Strategy with Represent
Conor Jones, Vervaunt | Ricky Jennings, Represent | Tim Robinson, Represent

IMPACT STAGE – KING VAULT
Rewriting Legacy: The Digital Reinvention of Heritage Brands
Jess Mcguire-Dudley, John Smedley | Victoria Binns, Whittard of Chelsea | Leslie Roumilhac, Limesharp

ENERGY STAGE – QUEEN VAULT
The New Discovery: How Fashion Leaders are Rethinking Growth in an AI-First World
Natasha Dabell-Jones, Percival | Jacobo Hachuel, eCommerce Advisor & Former CEO | Sheila Power, Yotpo

12:40

KING GEORGE
Lunch

13:00

ROUNDTABLES
Roundtable: Customer Acquisition
Moderated by Ross Allsop, Pion333rs

14:00

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN
A Performance from "Britney Spears"

14:40

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN
Wellbeing Intelligence: How Healf Turned Culture, Data & Obsession into the Fastest-Growing Company in Europe
Hamza Waheed, Healf | George Kapernaros, YOCTO | James White, Klaviyo

14:40 (contd)

MOMENTUM STAGE – QUEEN CHARLOTTE
Building an AI-Optimised Brand: How to Get Your Product Data Agent-Ready with Axel Arigato
Chris Kilin, Glara | Ian Earnshaw, Axel Arigato | Lauren Muir, Pion333rs

IMPACT STAGE – KING VAULT
Scaling Creatives Past Diminishing Returns: Elevate Creative Differentiation, Test Stronger, Scale Faster
Declan Etheridge, Vervaunt | Alayna Moxness, Vervaunt

15:20

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN
A Fireside Chat with The Beauty Tech Group
Andrew Showman, The Beauty Tech Group | Paul Rogers, Vervaunt

MOMENTUM STAGE – QUEEN CHARLOTTE
Growth from a Founder's Perspective: Scaling Without Losing your DNA
Orlagh McCloskey, RIXO | Louis Tinsley, ThruDark | Christopher Gove, Percival | Bethan Rainford, Vervaunt

IMPACT STAGE – KING VAULT
AI in Practice: How World of Books Benefits from Wide Scale AI Adoption
David Magee, World of Books

16:00

INSPIRATION STAGE – PORTER TUN
Leadership Lessons from the Retail CEOs of JoJo Maman Bébé, Refy Beauty & Oka
Mo White, Refy Beauty | Aalish Yorke-Long, Oka | Mark Wright, JoJo Maman Bébé | Bethan Rainford, Vervaunt

contd on next page

DAY TWO

16:40

INSPIRATION STAGE - PORTER TUN

An Audience with Dame Emma Bridgewater

Join Dame Emma Bridgewater for a candid talk on building an iconic British brand, from early entrepreneurial decisions to scaling a distinctive, enduring identity. With a focus on creativity, product, and long-term brand thinking, this session explores what it takes to grow with clarity and consistency - alongside the role English production has played in shaping the business.

17:00

INSPIRATION STAGE - PORTER TUN

A Recap of the Major Trends: Closing Statements

Shamoli Miah, Vervaunt | Bethan Rainford, Vervaunt

17:10

KING GEORGE

Networking Drinks

19:00

THE STEEL YARD

The Official After Party - Y2K Dot Com Boom

INTERVIEW:

Erika Goldstone
Global Head of Product Grown Alchemist

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE CITY FOR FOOD?

Mexico City

WHAT HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST SHIFT IN ECOMMERCE OR DIGITAL MARKETING OVER THE PAST YEAR, AND HOW HAS IT CHANGED YOUR PRIORITIES?
The biggest shift has been the move away from channel-centric thinking towards more connected, customer-centric ecosystems. Teams are no longer optimising in silos - customers expect seamless, relevant experiences across every touchpoint.

That's pushed the focus towards connecting data and building a more unified view of the customer. Whether it's onsite, in-app or across lifecycle marketing, the priority is delivering consistent, contextual experiences rather than isolated campaigns.

GROWN ALCHEMIST IS POSITIONED AROUND SCIENCE AND FORMULATION - HOW DO YOU TRANSLATE THAT INTO SOMETHING THAT ACTUALLY CONVERTS ONLINE?
At a brand level, everything is rooted in plant-powered, biotech and clinically proven performance - but that needs to be simplified online. Science alone doesn't convert.

We focus on translating technical formulation into clear benefits and tangible outcomes. That means simple language, strong visuals, and storytelling through routines and rituals. It's about embedding the science into something the customer can immediately understand and relate to.

WHAT ROLE IS AI ACTUALLY PLAYING IN YOUR DAY-TO-DAY MARKETING OPERATIONS - AND WHERE IS IT OVERHYPED?
For a relatively lean team, AI plays a very practical role. It helps with content generation, iteration and copywriting - but always with a strong layer of human review to protect brand tone and accuracy.

Where we've seen real value more recently is on the data side - reporting, dashboards and understanding user journeys. It helps move us closer to a single view of the customer and enables faster, more informed decisions.

Where it's overhyped is when it's expected to fully replace thinking. It can produce outputs, but it doesn't always understand the "why" behind them. That still requires human judgement.

WHICH CHANNEL OR CAPABILITY DO YOU BELIEVE MOST BRANDS ARE UNDERINVESTING IN RIGHT NOW?
We've started leaning more into LLMs, even though measurement is still unclear. It's an area we want to get ahead of as it continues to evolve.

TikTok Shop is also performing strongly for us and remains a key investment area. Alongside that, wholesale and broader B2B channels continue to play a significant role in overall growth.

WHAT DOES A HIGH-VALUE CUSTOMER LOOK LIKE FOR GROWN ALCHEMIST - AND HOW DO YOU INCREASE FREQUENCY?
As a global brand, it's not as simple as looking at LTV in isolation. We focus more on "routine customers" - those buying across multiple categories like skincare, bodycare and hair. That signals real brand adoption and naturally drives repeat purchase and basket expansion.

To increase frequency, we focus heavily on lifecycle marketing, replenishment strategies and cross-category journeys onsite. From entry through to checkout, every touchpoint is optimised - from re-purchase flows to UX improvements and subscription models. It's about making it easier and more compelling for customers to stay within the ecosystem.

> **"TEAMS ARE NO LONGER OPTIMISING IN SILOS - CUSTOMERS EXPECT SEAMLESS, RELEVANT EXPERIENCES ACROSS EVERY TOUCHPOINT.**

WHAT'S ONE DIGITAL INITIATIVE OR PROJECT YOU'RE PARTICULARLY PROUD OF FROM THE LAST YEAR?
It's hard to point to a single initiative - the last year has been more about a full transformation.

We've evolved our global trading strategy, launched a new site, restructured teams and expanded into new channels including wholesale, distributors, TikTok Shop and B2B, alongside continued DTC optimisation. It's been a significant shift in how the business operates digitally, and something we're incredibly proud of.

WHAT ORIGINALLY DREW YOU INTO ECOMMERCE AND DIGITAL MARKETING - WAS IT PLANNED OR ACCIDENTAL?
Completely accidental. I studied law but was drawn to fashion, starting out in online merchandising before moving into eCommerce trading at Moonpig.

That's where I was first exposed to working closely with product, engineering and UX teams, which led me into product management. From there, I've worked across a range of brands, from startups to global businesses. The variety and pace of the industry is what's kept me in it.

WHAT SEPARATES A GOOD ECOMMERCE LEADER FROM A GREAT ONE TODAY?
Strong communication, listening skills and a sense of calm. eCommerce is fast-paced, with constant change and competing priorities. The best leaders create clarity within that, stay grounded and help teams focus on what matters. Being data-driven is important, but so is the ability to inspire and bring people with you.

WHEN BUILDING A TEAM, WHAT TRAITS OR MINDSET DO YOU VALUE MOST?
Kindness, drive and a shared sense of purpose. When a team is aligned around the same goal, people naturally care more and perform better.

It's also important to have a mix of skillsets - different perspectives lead to better outcomes. And strong communication is key. Even simple things like regular team check-ins make a big difference in building trust and cohesion.

ONE BEAUTY TREND YOU LOVE - AND ONE YOU WISH WOULD DISAPPEAR?
I really like the shift towards skin minimalism and barrier-first skincare. There's a stronger focus on long-term skin health, better ingredients and more intentional routines.

On the flip side, it feels like every celebrity is launching a skincare brand at the moment. It's interesting to watch, but the space is definitely becoming crowded.

IF YOU WEREN'T WORKING IN ECOMMERCE, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING?
Something more creative and slower-paced - like becoming a yoga teacher.

There's something appealing about stepping away from the pace of digital and focusing on something more mindful.

WHAT'S ONE BRAND YOU THINK IS DOING AN EXCEPTIONAL JOB RIGHT NOW?
Ancient + Brave stands out. Their marketing feels very cohesive, the site experience is strong, and their use of influencers is well executed. Everything feels consistent across channels, which is increasingly hard to get right.

5 Marketing Attribution Challenges Holding Your B2C Business Back

BY:

klaviyo

You can have the best-performing campaign of the quarter and still struggle to explain why it worked. Marketing attribution, in theory, should be the key to understanding what drives results. But in practice, it's often a patchwork of disconnected tools and half-complete data.

Here, we unpack 5 of the most common attribution challenges modern marketing teams face.

01
FRAGMENTED DATA

Most marketers are juggling a messy tech stack. One platform for email, another for text messages, and yet another for reviews. When your data is scattered across 6–15 different sources, you don't actually know what's driving results. Attribution doesn't work when your tools aren't talking to each other. Siloed data leads to gaps in your reporting, incomplete insights, and frustratingly slow personalisation. The fix: consolidating your tech stack.

When your email, SMS, reviews, WhatsApp, mobile app notifications, and segmentation all live in one place, you get a clear, real-time view of every customer touchpoint. That means you can: 1) see the full customer journey at a glance, 2) attribute revenue accurately across channels, and 3) make faster, more informed decisions.

02
OVER-RELIANCE ON LAST-CLICK ATTRIBUTION

Last-click attribution is the default for a reason: it's easy. But in real life, customer journeys aren't neat or linear. If you're only giving credit to the last touch, you're ignoring all the effort that went into getting the customer to click on that text in the first place. The fix: omnichannel, linear multi-touch attribution.

> **"IF YOU WANT LEADERSHIP TO INVEST IN MARKETING, YOU NEED MORE THAN VANITY METRICS.**

Omnichannel, linear multi-touch attribution is a way of tracking all the marketing touchpoints a customer interacts with before making a purchase. From the first ad someone saw to the emails they opened, omnichannel, linear multi-touch attribution maps out the full customer journey and shows how each channel, campaign, and interaction contributed to the final sale.

03
DIFFICULTY PROVING ROI

Marketers today are expected to do more with less: more campaigns, more channels, more personalisation, with tighter budgets and higher expectations. But when your attribution is fuzzy, it's nearly impossible to show the real impact of your efforts. The fix: attribution that ties to revenue.

If you want leadership to invest in marketing, you need more than vanity metrics. That level of clarity comes from marketing and advertising attribution that's deeply integrated into your marketing stack.

04
LEGACY SYSTEMS THAT CAN'T KEEP UP

Most legacy marketing platforms weren't built for the complexity of modern B2C. Shoppers move between devices, channels, and touchpoints in seconds. They expect personalisation, real-time relevance, and a seamless experience whether they're opening an email, clicking a paid ad, chatting on WhatsApp, or browsing in your app. The fix: a modern platform built for B2C growth.

Modern B2C brands need more than just a place to send emails. They need a platform that brings everything together in one place, including customer data, messaging channels, and revenue insights. That looks like real-time customer profiles, attribution reporting tied directly to revenue, and one platform for all your owned channels.

05
SOPHISTICATED STRATEGIES BUT SLOW EXECUTION

This one is less specific to attribution and more of a marketing challenge, period: as you grow, your marketing strategies naturally become more complex. On paper, it's exciting. In practice, it can be painfully slow. The fix: tech that empowers marketing teams, not just data teams.

Today's best marketing and analytics platforms let marketers access historical data in real time, build advanced segments on the fly, and connect up their tech stack.

Attribution is supposed to be complex. Solving attribution starts with unifying your marketing, your data, and your customer touchpoints.

CASE STUDY:

Klaviyo x Paul Smith

If you want luxury clothing from a british icon, you shop at Paul Smith. Whether you're sporting their signature stripes or posing for a selfie outside their pink store in Los Angeles, you know you're part of a distinct and instantly identifiable retailer.

Small wonder that what began as a 3x3 metre shop in 1970 has become 130 stores and counting in over 60 countries.

Paul Smith had been using another marketing platform for over 10 years. But as the brand grew their B2B and B2C offerings, their website and marketing functionality was beginning to feel the strain.

Hannah Bennett, who has been Paul Smith's Head of Digital since 2020, saw that the development team were spending their energy on maintenance, rather than developing new features for customers.

"During sales, our marketing team would have to stagger our emails to prevent the site crashing - and then the site would go down anyway," Bennett says. "We needed smarter, easy-to-use integrations, to merge transactional campaign emails into one, and put the foundations in place for sms in 2025," Bennett adds.

Black Friday was looming, and the team had never done a marketing replatform. But it was time to modernise.

To make this happen, Paul Smith switched from their legacy platform to Klaviyo and moved their website to centra. This combination gave Paul Smith a single place of ownership for transaction, triggered, and campaign emails which were previously disconnected.

"We had a fantastic onboarding experience redesigning and moving our email templates into Klaviyo. The marketing team is really enjoying the simplicity of building flows," says Bennett. "Email has become one of our most important marketing channels.

There's pressure to perform, but the ease of use and performance from centra and Klaviyo means we don't worry about segmentation and execution"

Photo by Yunan Wang

Your Product Data Is Your New Storefront

BY: shopify

The next wave of commerce won't be won with a redesign. It will be won with better product data. AI-assisted orders grew more than 15x last year. That isn't a trend to watch; it's a mandate to act. For mid-market and enterprise leaders, the battleground is how you model, govern, and syndicate your catalogue.

Agents don't browse your site. They query structured data. If the facts live in prose, or in the wrong fields, machines can't see them. Your page might look perfect. To an agent, it's blank.

Names matter. "Ocean Breeze" won't surface a sea salt spray. Use creative copy for people, and explicit attributes for machines. Put size, material, function, shade, compatibility, and intended use in fields, not paragraphs. Freshness matters too. Price and availability must be accurate at the moment of the query, not the last time a crawler visited.

Complexity is real. Each major platform uses different schemas, feeds, and review policies. You will face separate formats, integrations, and maintenance. Reduce the chaos by centralising product truth once, then syndicating it everywhere.

What leadership should do now:

- Appoint owners. Create data stewards, service level agreements (SLAs), and change control for the catalogue.
- Standardise the spine. Use consistent titles, variants, taxonomy, and GS1 identifiers such as GTINs.
- Structure the truth. Adopt clear fields and schema.org markup; avoid stuffing facts into descriptions.
- Automate freshness. Connect pricing, inventory, and content updates to real-time events, not batches.
- Validate and monitor. Test for completeness and conflicts; track feed errors and rejection rates.
- Prove value. Tie fixes to search share, agent referrals, conversion, and margin.

Agents don't recommend what they can't verify. Stale, incomplete, or conflicting data lowers confidence and rank. The cost isn't missed discovery, it's lower share in channels that are fast becoming the default shopping interface.

The big chat platforms are becoming the storefront. They will reward clarity, recency, and reliability. Invest in clean, structured, real-time product data now. Centralise once, syndicate everywhere, and measure relentlessly. That is how you build a durable moat for the next era of commerce. Agentic commerce is coming; ensure your data is ready.

INTERVIEW:

Matt McGovern
Director of eCommerce - EMEA
Osprey Europe

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE CITY FOR FOOD?

Barcelona

WHAT HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST SHIFT IN ECOMMERCE OR DIGITAL MARKETING OVER THE PAST YEAR, AND HOW HAS IT CHANGED YOUR PRIORITIES?
Everybody's going to say LLMs, so I'll say LLMs too - but more specifically, building for them. The priority has shifted to improving our data proficiency, strengthening EAT signals on-site, and developing a better content roadmap to improve visibility across channels.

HOW DO YOU BALANCE BRAND STORYTELLING WITH CREATIVITY WITH THE INCREASING PRESSURE FOR MEASURABLE PERFORMANCE?
They're two sides of the same coin. Brand storytelling is top-of-funnel, measurable performance is bottom-of-funnel - we have separate budgets for each. But you can't truly separate them. If you're not building brand awareness, you're not acquiring customers. If you're not acquiring customers, you can't convert them. For measuring top-of-funnel, we're building out marketing mix modelling with agencies to understand brand, sales, and traffic uplift.

WHAT ROLE IS AI ACTUALLY PLAYING IN YOUR DAY-TO-DAY MARKETING OPERATIONS - AND WHERE IS IT OVERHYPED?
It's helping the team be more efficient - looking at data, transforming data. But we validate everything. From a creative standpoint, it doesn't fit the brand ethos. For a heritage brand like Osprey Europe, real content of real people doing real things won't be replaced by AI. The way to make pinnacle achievements relatable to everyday consumers is through smart storytelling - not simulating it.

WHICH CHANNEL OR CAPABILITY DO YOU BELIEVE MOST BRANDS ARE UNDERINVESTING IN RIGHT NOW?
For us, it's content, CRM, and direct mail. I come from a direct mail background and the ROI is strong - it's just underutilised. Almost nobody gets physical mail anymore, so when something well-made lands, it gets read. Tied into a loyalty scheme, it's a real opportunity. Keeping a customer is always easier than acquiring one.

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> **FOR A HERITAGE BRAND LIKE OSPREY EUROPE, REAL CONTENT OF REAL PEOPLE DOING REAL THINGS WON'T BE REPLACED BY AI.**

HOW DO YOU APPROACH DIGITAL EXPERIENCE FOR A BRAND, WHERE WHOLESALE AND PHYSICAL RETAIL IS SO IMPORTANT?
Content is key. Nothing will replace someone picking up a product and feeling the materials - especially for technical products. But good content, informational pages, and video support the decision. Digital and physical should work hand-in-hand.

WHAT'S ONE DIGITAL INITIATIVE OR PROJECT YOU'RE PARTICULARLY PROUD OF FROM THE LAST YEAR?
Upgrading our Packfinder module to V2. CVR has spiked, sessions are up, and it genuinely helps customers who aren't sure what they're looking for. A backpack sounds simple until you go deeper - having a tool that guides people through that is really valuable.

WHAT ORIGINALLY DREW YOU INTO ECOMMERCE AND DIGITAL MARKETING - WAS IT PLANNED OR ACCIDENTAL?
Accidental. I was working in legal, became disenfranchised, and a friend started a small brand in a sport we all loved. I went and worked there for seven years, learning everything from the ground up. It wasn't really a job - it was a sport I loved, with people I got on with.

WHAT SEPARATES A GOOD ECOMMERCE LEADER FROM A GREAT ONE TODAY?
Empowerment and trust. Giving people the scope to succeed - and to fail. I always tell my team: nobody here is more important than anyone else, we just have different jobs. And you have to listen to the people around you - the best answers often come from the most junior person in the room.

WHEN BUILDING A TEAM, WHAT TRAITS OR MINDSET DO YOU VALUE MOST?
Ownership mentality, and wanting to do the best job they can for themselves and the people around them. Cultural fit is almost more important to me than experience. People don't just come to work for a salary - they come to work with people.

ONE TRAVEL TREND YOU LOVE - AND ONE YOU WISH WOULD DISAPPEAR?
I am far too uncool to know anything about travel trends.

IF YOU WEREN'T WORKING IN ECOMMERCE, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING?
Living off-grid. Homesteading somewhere.

WHAT'S ONE BRAND YOU THINK IS DOING AN EXCEPTIONAL JOB RIGHT NOW?
I'll say Yeti, with the caveat that it's a slightly sensitive one given the category we operate in. But they genuinely impress me. The product is expensive and, honestly, not always the most ergonomic - but the brand is everywhere, and everything they do feels cohesive. Their offline event strategy - festival sponsorships, barbecue events, outdoor cookouts - is genuinely strong, and it works hand-in-hand with their digital and billboard presence.

GLOBAL ECOMMERCE GROWTH IN AN ERA OF RISING COMPLEXITY

BY: GlobalE

From new tariffs and duties to removal of de minimis thresholds, the rules governing international trade are continuously shifting. Global eCommerce is becoming even more complex and the brands that don't have a plan are feeling it.

Selling online worldwide was never simple; currencies, payment methods, local tax and duty collection and remittance, customs clearance, delivery and returns logistics. The list continues. The infrastructure and resources required to sell globally, compliantly and competitively, are considerable. What's changed is the regulatory and economical landscape, adding further complexity.

The deliberate moves by major economies to protect domestic trade through higher barriers and increased friction for imports mark a broader trend: de-globalisation. The EU's new measures for low-value goods represent a material shift in both the cost structure and logistical complexity of selling into Europe. Simultaneously, the US tariff environment has introduced significant uncertainty, with duties impacting margins and consumer confidence in equal measure. Overcoming these challenges is no longer an achievement, it's a lifeline.

When import regulations change significantly, many brands default to defensiveness. Pass additional costs to the customer. Withdraw marketing investment. Pause and wait.

These approaches carry underestimated risk. Unexpected costs upon delivery erode trust and hamper retention. Significant fees at checkout increase cart abandonment. In a competitive market, short-term margin protection can compound into long-term damage: higher customer acquisition costs, reduced lifetime value, and lost market share that's difficult to recover.

> **"GLOBAL ECOMMERCE PRESENTS AN OPPORTUNITY BRANDS CANNOT IGNORE, OUTPACING DOMESTIC RETAIL DESPITE RISING COMPLEXITY.**

The brands sustaining profitable international growth share one defining trait: they treat regulatory change as a trigger for strategic action, not retreat. When regulations shift and cost structures change, they respond swiftly.

This requires making a series of decisions quickly and confidently: how to adapt pricing strategies and adjust propositions market-by-market to secure conversion and margins, and how to handle new logistical requirements and evolving regulatory obligations. It also means exploring alternative approaches, such as B2B2C business models that allow goods to be cleared at lower dutiable values, creating material margin benefits whilst remaining compliant.

None of this is straightforward. It demands proven data models to understand the impact of proposition changes. It requires sophisticated operational infrastructure to implement changes at speed. And it relies on deep expertise across import and tax regulation and logistics to ensure compliance while maintaining trust.

Managing market-by-market optimisation, payments, tax and duty calculations, ongoing regulatory compliance, logistics and carriers in-house represents a costly diversion from brand-building and product focus. More critically, this complexity multiplies with scale. The systems, headcount, and investment required grow exponentially, creating a ceiling on growth and preventing brands from capitalising on new market opportunities.

This is where a single end-to-end global eCommerce solution proves invaluable. When regulations change, there's no scrambling to update systems or rebuild processes. Tax and duty calculations and compliance management happen behind the scenes, allowing brands to respond strategically and act decisively rather than defensively.

Global eCommerce presents an opportunity brands cannot ignore, outpacing domestic retail despite rising complexity. With the right expertise and setup, complexity doesn't have to be the gatekeeper of sustainable growth.

INTERVIEW:

Ian Mackey
Global Marketing Director
Percival

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE CITY FOR FASHION?

PARIS

WHAT HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST SHIFT IN ECOMMERCE OR DIGITAL MARKETING OVER THE PAST YEAR, AND HOW HAS IT CHANGED YOUR PRIORITIES?

The biggest shift has been around creative diversity and the way platforms are evolving to treat creative as a form of targeting. It's forced a rethink of how that fits with brand guidelines, positioning and, importantly, how you scale it commercially.

For us, that meant bringing content creation in-house. We invested in a dedicated role focused on translating brand and product stories into platform-native content. The goal is to keep things entertaining, relevant and ultimately drive down CPA.

HOW DO YOU BALANCE BRAND STORYTELLING WITH CREATIVITY WITH THE INCREASING PRESSURE FOR MEASURABLE PERFORMANCE?

We're in a fortunate position where our founder, Chris, is naturally strong on camera and deeply connected to the product. There's no better person to tell those stories, especially when transparency is something the audience expects.

It still requires constant iteration - thinking about hooks, angles and how to make stories feel socially relevant across both organic and paid. A good example was when we changed the fabric of a waterproof trench and got it wrong. We owned it publicly with a "we messed up" video, which ended up being one of our best performing assets. It shows that honesty, when done well, can be both brand-building and commercially effective.

WHAT ROLE IS AI ACTUALLY PLAYING IN YOUR DAY-TO-DAY MARKETING OPERATIONS - AND WHERE IS IT OVERHYPED?

AI is playing more of a role on the measurement and analysis side. We're using tools like Dema to support attribution and decision-making, which helps us move faster and be more confident in where we invest. On the creative side, it's useful for small, practical tasks like image adjustments when the team is stretched.

Where it's overhyped is in fully AI-generated creative. Audiences are already calling it out, and there's a real risk of losing trust if brands lean too heavily into it. It still lacks the nuance and authenticity that strong creative requires.

WHICH CHANNEL OR CAPABILITY DO YOU BELIEVE MOST BRANDS ARE UNDERINVESTING IN RIGHT NOW?

TikTok still feels underutilised by a lot of brands. There's a tendency to repurpose content from other channels or take a more polished, serious approach, but what works is leaning into the platform properly - trends, sounds and a more informal tone. The best-performing content for us has come from that mindset, particularly in terms of lowering CPA and driving new customer acquisition.

WHAT MAKES A "HIT PRODUCT" FOR PERCIVAL - AND CAN YOU PREDICT IT?

It's very difficult to predict, especially when you're designing collections so far in advance. Trends can shift quickly, and something that feels established can suddenly spike again. For us, a hit product is one that doesn't need much demand generation. Customers see it, immediately want it, and are willing to pay for the quality. A lot of that is driven by timing, culture and how the product shows up in the wider market.

WHAT'S ONE DIGITAL INITIATIVE OR PROJECT YOU'RE PARTICULARLY PROUD OF FROM THE LAST YEAR?

Our focus on the French market stands out. As a relatively small team, it required a very hands-on approach, particularly around localisation and creative strategy.

We've seen strong growth as a result, with France significantly up year-on-year. Influencer partnerships, translated creative and incrementality testing all played a role, and it's given us the confidence to continue investing there.

WHAT ORIGINALLY DREW YOU INTO ECOMMERCE AND DIGITAL MARKETING - WAS IT PLANNED OR ACCIDENTAL?

I started in brand management at L'Oréal around the time digital and social were really taking off. I was drawn to the immediacy of it - being able to see results quickly and experiment creatively. That led into more dedicated digital roles and eventually managing teams, and it became clear that was the direction I wanted to take.

WHAT SEPARATES A GOOD ECOMMERCE LEADER FROM A GREAT ONE TODAY?

The ability to connect eCommerce and performance marketing. They're so closely linked now that you can't treat them in isolation. Great leaders understand how different channels influence each other and look beyond siloed metrics to focus on overall impact and incrementality.

WHEN BUILDING A TEAM, WHAT TRAITS OR MINDSET DO YOU VALUE MOST?

People who are willing to lead, not just follow. It's easy to get caught up in what competitors are doing, but the best work comes from original thinking. Creating an environment where people feel comfortable sharing ideas - regardless of role - is key to building a strong, collaborative team.

ONE FASHION TREND YOU LOVE - AND ONE YOU WISH WOULD DISAPPEAR?

I'm fully into brown at the moment - it feels like it's everywhere, and I can't stop buying it. On the other side, I'd happily see the return of shoes that look like goat hooves come to an end.

IF YOU WEREN'T WORKING IN ECOMMERCE, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING?

I always wanted to be a veterinarian, so probably that.

WHAT'S ONE BRAND YOU THINK IS DOING AN EXCEPTIONAL JOB RIGHT NOW?

Sult stands out. Their product, branding and social presence all feel very cohesive and well executed. It's a good example of a brand that understands how to show up consistently across every touchpoint.

The Offer Hasn't Changed Much, and That's the Problem

BY: RevLifter®

Offers, discounts, promotions. Basically the same thing. They've been used in retail for over 150 years. For most of eCommerce history, the process has looked like this: pick a discount, show it to everyone, and hope it moves the needle. 10% off. Free shipping over £50. A banner on the homepage.

Same offer, same audience, same results. And for a while, that was fine. Traffic was cheaper. Margins had more slack. If a few people used the discount who didn't need it, that was just the cost of doing business. It was getting expensive.

Today, research shows that over 80% of shoppers use a discount code even when they were planning to buy at full price. Every one of those transactions is a margin you gave away for nothing. Multiply that across a busy trading period, and you're looking at a significant chunk of revenue that simply evaporated. Not because the offer didn't work, but because it worked on the wrong person.

But what if you flipped the script? Instead of asking, "What offer should we run?" try asking yourself, "Which of my customers truly needs an offer?" That's what intelligent offers do. Instead of broadcasting a promotion to everyone, they read behavioural signals (what someone's clicked, how long they've spent on a page, whether they're copying product names to search elsewhere) and only show an offer when there's a real reason to.

That's not a technological leap. It's just a smarter version of something retailers have always done.

Photo by Iuliia Pilipeichenko

INTERVIEW:

Al Harley
Head of Digital Marketing
Paul Smith

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE CITY FOR FOOD?

San Sebastián

WHAT HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST SHIFT IN ECOMMERCE OR DIGITAL MARKETING OVER THE PAST YEAR, AND HOW HAS IT CHANGED YOUR PRIORITIES?
Content has become a genuine growth lever, not just something that supports paid. Brands can't rely on media investment alone anymore - how people discover, remember and buy is increasingly shaped by the quality and authenticity of content across the funnel.

At the same time, AI is bleeding into everything. The real opportunity isn't replacing thinking, it's reducing operational drag. If it can take care of reporting, admin and process, it creates more space for better creative and better decisions.

It's also been interesting to watch SEO evolve. There was a lot of noise around AI killing it, but in reality, it's expanded the conversation. Discovery is fragmenting, search behaviour is shifting, and SEO now has to think well beyond traditional rankings.

HOW DO YOU BALANCE BRAND STORYTELLING WITH CREATIVITY WITH THE INCREASING PRESSURE FOR MEASURABLE PERFORMANCE?
It comes down to being clear on what you're measuring. Not every piece of creative or campaign should be judged on immediate revenue. Different parts of the funnel have different roles.

Brand storytelling builds recognition, trust and desire. Performance captures and converts that demand. The mistake is forcing everything through the same lens, where awareness gets judged on CVR. Good strategy is about understanding the role of each touchpoint, then measuring it accordingly.

WHAT ROLE IS AI ACTUALLY PLAYING IN YOUR DAY-TO-DAY MARKETING OPERATIONS - AND WHERE IS IT OVERHYPED?
In practice, it's a support layer. It speeds up communication, simplifies workflows and reduces time spent on repetitive tasks. In fast-moving environments, that's incredibly valuable.

Where it's overhyped is when it's positioned as a replacement for taste, judgement or strategy. It can make teams more efficient, but it doesn't remove the need for strong instincts or a real understanding of the customer.

WHICH CHANNEL OR CAPABILITY DO YOU BELIEVE MOST BRANDS ARE UNDERINVESTING IN RIGHT NOW?
Two stand out. The first is creator-led content, particularly micro-influencers whose content can then be amplified through paid. That combination of authenticity and performance is one of the most effective in marketing right now, and a lot of brands still aren't building it seriously enough.

The second is SEO - although increasingly that means a broader view of discoverability. Social SEO is becoming more important quickly. Platforms like TikTok are now used like search engines, especially by younger audiences, and brands need to adapt to that behaviour.

HOW DO YOU APPROACH DIGITAL EXPERIENCE FOR A BRAND, WHERE WHOLESALE AND PHYSICAL RETAIL IS SO IMPORTANT?
Physical retail should be the heartbeat, and digital should reflect that. One of the strengths of a brand like Paul Smith is how close it still is to the customer - that level of human connection is hard to replicate.

Digital shouldn't feel disconnected from that world. It needs to carry the same personality, warmth and attention to detail you get in-store. When retail is that central, it keeps your digital thinking grounded - you're not just building for conversion, you're building a true extension of the brand.

WHAT ORIGINALLY DREW YOU INTO ECOMMERCE AND DIGITAL MARKETING - WAS IT PLANNED OR ACCIDENTAL?
Not planned at all. I studied photographic theory and spent time working across retail, studios and freelance creative. I was always drawn to the visual side of brands, but also how they actually grow.

As eCommerce and Meta accelerated, those two worlds started to come together. I was already creating digital-first content, and became increasingly interested in the commercial side behind it. That's when it clicked. Jimmy at YMC gave me an early opportunity, which helped get me going.

WHAT SEPARATES A GOOD ECOMMERCE LEADER FROM A GREAT ONE TODAY?
People skills, without question. The technical side matters, but most of that can be learned. What really sets great leaders apart is the ability to create clarity, build trust and bring people with them. In a fast-moving space, that often means cutting through noise and helping teams focus on what actually matters.

WHEN BUILDING A TEAM, WHAT TRAITS OR MINDSET DO YOU VALUE MOST?
Hunger, in the right way. Curiosity, drive and a willingness to push things forward. Experience matters, but mindset matters more. I'd take someone sharp, proactive and genuinely motivated over someone with a perfect CV but less energy. The best people care about both the detail and the bigger opportunity, and that shows quickly.

ONE FASHION TREND YOU LOVE - AND ONE YOU WISH WOULD DISAPPEAR?
I love the ongoing 90s prep revival. Jeans and a blazer is one of those combinations that just works. One I could happily lose is Uggs. I understand the comfort argument, but I still can't get behind them.

IF YOU WEREN'T WORKING IN ECOMMERCE, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING?
Probably running a photography studio. I spent a lot of time in studios after university, and there was definitely a point where that felt like the path. A lot of what I do now still comes from that world though - visual taste, storytelling, and how brands present themselves.

WHAT'S ONE BRAND YOU THINK IS DOING AN EXCEPTIONAL JOB RIGHT NOW?
I'd say Paul Smith. It's a brand with a clear point of view and a real sense of personality, which is rare. There's a huge amount of opportunity in how that translates digitally, and that's what makes it such an exciting place to be. There's already a strong foundation, but a lot more to come.

CONSENT: THE MOST OVER-LOOKED GROWTH LEVER IN ECOMMERCE?

BY: dataships

Most eCommerce brands treat marketing consent as a legal formality: a checkbox at checkout that gets configured once and never revisited. That passive decision is quietly costing them hundreds of thousands in revenue every year, while leaving their compliance standing on foundations that wouldn't survive a serious regulatory challenge.

Across Shopify Plus, the average marketing consent rate at checkout sits at just 39%. That means more than half the customers a brand has already paid to acquire will never receive an email, never enter a flow, and never get an SMS. They complete the purchase and disappear. This matters because subscribed customers are worth dramatically more.

Across over 15 million checkout sessions, customers who opt into marketing deliver 2.4x the lifetime value of those who don't, an average difference of roughly £50 per customer. For a typical brand, that gap amounts to over £50,000 per month in unrealised LTV. And it doesn't show up in any dashboard.

The conventional thinking is that privacy regulations make this problem worse. GDPR, the ePrivacy Directive, CAN-SPAM, CCPA, TCPA: the alphabet soup of global privacy law feels like a constraint on growth. Brands either default to overly conservative approaches that tank their consent rates, or ignore the nuance entirely and expose themselves to serious legal risk. Neither is a strategy.

The brands pulling ahead have made a different bet. They've recognised that privacy frameworks don't just restrict. They provide structure. And within that structure, there's enormous room to optimise.

The foundation is straightforward: every brand selling across borders should be collecting consent on a regional basis as a minimum. The legal requirements in London, Berlin, and Los Angeles are materially different, and a single approach applied everywhere guarantees you're either leaving growth on the table or taking on unnecessary compliance risk.

UK and Irish brands using default unticked consent boxes see 9% opt-in rates. The same brands, using compliant soft opt-in strategies permitted under the ePrivacy Directive, reach 74%. Continental European brands make similar jumps. US brands move from 61% to 90% by shifting to implied consent under CAN-SPAM and CASL.

But regional optimisation is the starting line, not the finish. Once that structure is in place, it opens up a new surface for continuous improvement: how consent is presented, when incentives are introduced, how returning customers are treated differently from first-time buyers, how suppressed contacts are handled.

Each of these becomes a testable lever that compounds performance over time. The brands treating consent as a living, optimisable touchpoint rather than a static configuration are seeing results that would have seemed impossible two years ago. That matters more now than ever. With 19 US states carrying distinct privacy laws, GDPR fines reaching 4% of global revenue, and AI introducing privacy implications that most brands haven't even begun to navigate, the compliance landscape is getting more complex every quarter.

The brands building consent into their growth architecture today aren't just capturing more revenue. They're building the legal defensibility and clean first-party data foundations that AI-driven commerce will demand tomorrow.

Consent isn't the enemy of growth. It never was. It's the infrastructure that makes sustainable, privacy-first growth possible, and the brands that figure this out early will own the next era of eCommerce.

39%

Across Shopify Plus, the average marketing consent rate at checkout sits at just 39%

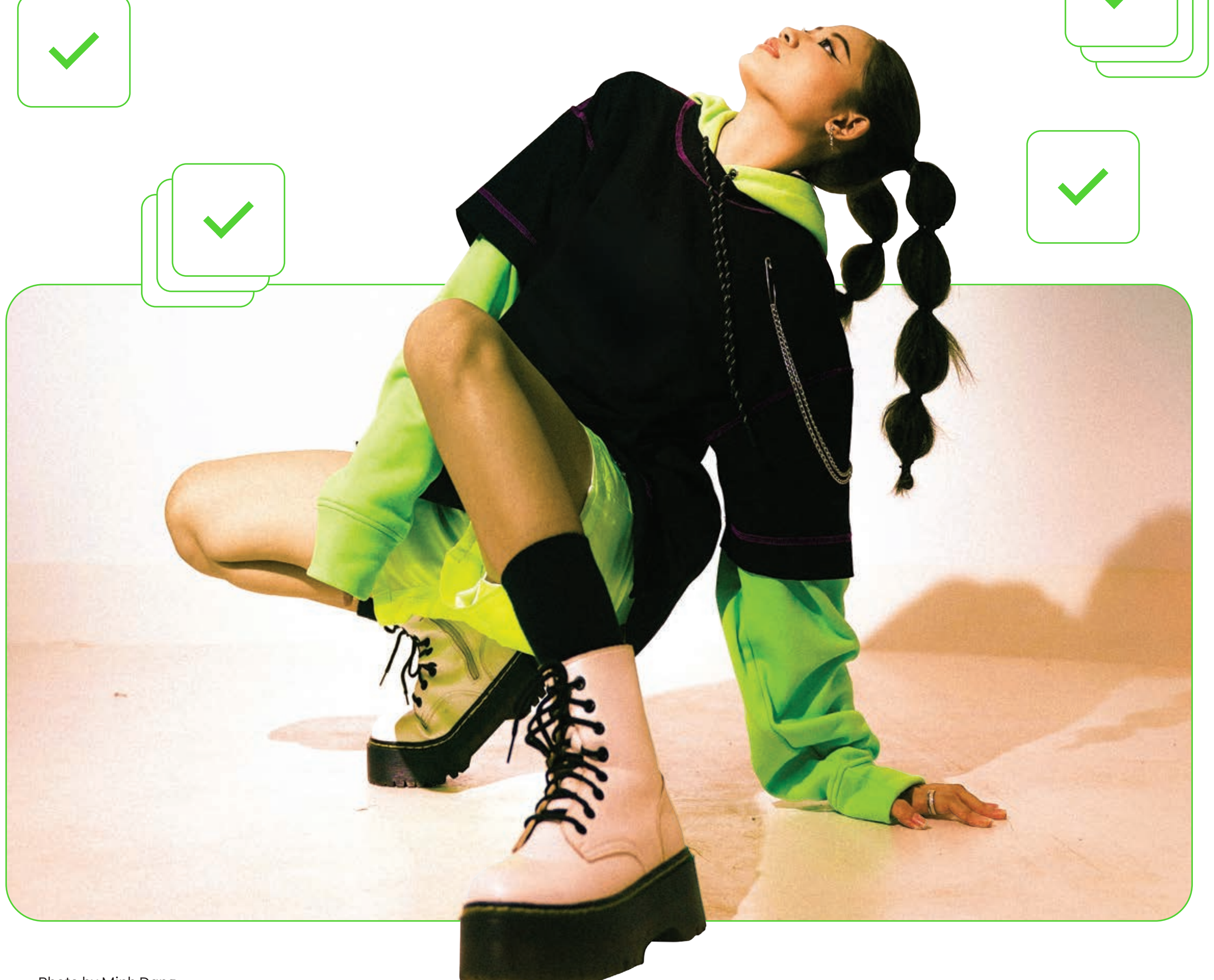


Photo by Minh Dang

CASE STUDY:

Dataships x Loop Earplugs

Loop Earplugs is one of the fastest-growing consumer brands in Europe. Based in Antwerp, Belgium, the company sells stylish hearing protection across dozens of markets worldwide. Their acquisition engine was performing strongly, and as they scaled internationally, they saw an opportunity to bring the same sophistication to how they captured marketing consent. Operating across multiple Shopify stores meant navigating a patchwork of privacy regulations: GDPR in Europe, CCPA in California, TCPA for SMS in the US, and varying requirements across Asia-Pacific.

Shopify's default consent checkbox treated every customer the same regardless of location. For a global brand processing substantial order volumes, a more nuanced approach could unlock significant subscriber growth, particularly in Europe where stricter consent rules apply.

Loop's CRM team knew that subscribed customers repurchased at higher rates and higher order values. They also knew that managing compliance manually across regions was consuming valuable time from both marketing and legal teams. With new markets on the roadmap, they wanted infrastructure that could scale without adding complexity.

Loop implemented Dataships to replace their default consent approach with intelligent, location-aware opt-in flows.

Within 48 hours of launching an A/B test, the results were clear:

- 62% increase in EU email consent rate
- 25% consent rate lift in the US
- 10X improvement in SMS opt-in rates

At Loop's order volumes, those gains translated into thousands of new, compliant subscribers flowing into Klaviyo lifecycle programmes daily.

Beyond capture, Loop operationalised compliance end-to-end with:

- Full localisation and translation across markets
- Audit-ready records for every opt-in interaction
- Automated data flows freeing marketing and legal teams to focus on growth

Loop's story illustrates a principle that applies to every brand selling internationally: when consent infrastructure adapts to each market's legal requirements automatically, compliance stops being a bottleneck and starts compounding growth.

Agentic AI: The New Growth Infrastructure for eCommerce

BY: reveni

For years, AI has been layered onto eCommerce stacks as a productivity enhancer: faster support replies, smarter segmentation, better reporting. Useful, yes, but rarely transformative. That chapter is closing.

What's emerging now is a structural shift toward agentic AI: systems that don't simply assist humans, but take action within core workflows. In a margin-constrained environment shaped by fluctuating logistics costs, cross-border regulatory complexity, and rising customer expectations, incremental automation is no longer enough.

Intelligence must sit at the heart of the customer journey. Leading brands are redesigning experiences around real-time, decision-capable systems. They understand that friction doesn't live in one isolated moment. It appears before checkout, during payment, and across post-purchase interactions. If those moments aren't intelligently orchestrated, they quietly erode conversion, trust, and long-term value.

Agentic systems allow us to intervene across these touchpoints. Before checkout, intelligent decisioning reduces the trust gap by clarifying what happens if something goes wrong.

During checkout, real-time risk evaluation balances conversion uplift with fraud protection. After purchase, autonomous underwriting enables instant resolutions while safeguarding profitability. These systems don't just recommend actions, they execute them within defined economic guardrails.

Every interaction is assessed not only for customer satisfaction, but for its financial impact. This broader view of the customer journey changes how brands think about AI.

It is no longer a back-office efficiency tool. It becomes a growth lever, strengthening trust, improving conversion, reducing operational drag, and protecting margins simultaneously. The next competitive advantage will not come from adopting more tools. It will come from embedding agentic intelligence precisely where friction threatens both experience and economics.

INTERVIEW:

Stefan Lewis
Chief Digital Officer
Represent

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE CITY FOR FOOD?

New York City

WHAT HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST SHIFT IN ECOMMERCE OR DIGITAL MARKETING OVER THE PAST YEAR, AND HOW HAS IT CHANGED YOUR PRIORITIES?
There's been a clear shift away from relying purely on paid performance as the main growth engine. That's pushed a much stronger focus onto owned channels - email, SMS and community.

It's also reinforced the importance of brand. The priority now is building something people actively want to engage with, rather than constantly pushing messages in front of them.

REPRESENT HAS BUILT SERIOUS MOMENTUM - WHAT'S ACTUALLY BEEN THE BIGGEST DRIVER OF THAT GROWTH?
It comes down to consistency and authenticity at scale. The product, storytelling and identity have been built over time, not overnight.

The brand reflects its founders in a way that feels genuine, and that's hard to manufacture. When product quality meets that level of trust, your customers effectively become your most credible marketers, and that's where growth really compounds.

WHAT ROLE IS AI ACTUALLY PLAYING IN YOUR DAY-TO-DAY MARKETING OPERATIONS - AND WHERE IS IT OVERHYPED?
AI is useful from an operational perspective, particularly in terms of speed and efficiency. Where it's overhyped is in creative direction. It can't replace instinct, taste or cultural awareness, and those are the things that genuinely differentiate brands. Consumers are quick to spot when that balance isn't right.

WHICH CHANNEL OR CAPABILITY DO YOU BELIEVE MOST BRANDS ARE UNDERINVESTING IN RIGHT NOW?
Physical experiences. The brands that stand out are creating meaningful offline moments that deepen the connection with their audience. That's difficult to replicate digitally.

From an online perspective, SMS is still underutilised, particularly by premium brands. When done well, it can feel personal and drive strong results.

REPRESENT HAS A STRONG COMMUNITY - HOW DO YOU ACTUALLY NURTURE THAT BEYOND JUST CONTENT?
You have to create something people feel part of. That goes beyond content into access, experiences and consistency.

It's about listening, engaging and creating moments people want to be involved in. Community isn't a channel, it's a relationship.

WHAT'S ONE DIGITAL INITIATIVE OR PROJECT YOU'RE PARTICULARLY PROUD OF FROM THE LAST YEAR?
Launching our custom-built app alongside the evolution of our loyalty programme stands out.

Both were designed to feel like a natural extension of the brand, not just functional tools. It's about bringing product, storytelling and experience together in a way that feels cohesive and immersive for the customer.

WHAT ORIGINALLY DREW YOU INTO ECOMMERCE AND DIGITAL MARKETING - WAS IT PLANNED OR ACCIDENTAL?
Accidental, like most people. I was initially drawn to the creative side through brand building and storytelling, and eCommerce became the space where that met measurable impact. Everything since has been learned through experience.

WHAT SEPARATES A GOOD ECOMMERCE LEADER FROM A GREAT ONE TODAY?
The ability to balance data with instinct. Data should inform decisions, but not define them entirely. The best leaders know when to trust their perspective and build something that goes beyond what the numbers suggest. They also surround themselves with people who challenge them.

> **"YOU HAVE TO CREATE SOMETHING PEOPLE FEEL PART OF. THAT GOES BEYOND CONTENT INTO ACCESS, EXPERIENCES AND CONSISTENCY.**

WHEN BUILDING A TEAM, WHAT TRAITS OR MINDSET DO YOU VALUE MOST?
Curiosity over credentials. You want people who question things, who look beyond their immediate role and are willing to challenge conventional thinking. In a space that evolves this quickly, that mindset is far more valuable than simply following a playbook.

ONE STYLE TREND YOU LOVE - AND ONE YOU WISH WOULD DISAPPEAR?
Timeless, well-constructed essentials will always resonate. What I'd move away from is trend-led design without a clear identity. It tends to be short-lived and forgettable.

IF YOU WEREN'T WORKING IN ECOMMERCE, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING?
Still building something. The medium might change, but the focus on creating and growing would stay the same. Failing that, a Premier League footballer.

WHAT'S ONE BRAND YOU THINK IS DOING AN EXCEPTIONAL JOB RIGHT NOW?
Satisfy Running and Manors both stand out. They've built brands that feel like subcultures rather than just products, with a clear identity and community that extends beyond the core offering.

YOUR DATA IS LYING TO YOU

BY: Littledata

The numbers on your Shopify dashboard, Google Analytics, and Meta Ads Manager will never agree, but what should you do about it?

Open Google Analytics. Now open Meta Ads Manager. Now check your Shopify dashboard. If you're running an eCommerce brand, you already know what comes next: three different revenue figures, all for the same time period, all claiming to be the truth.

Most founders are told this is normal. Accept a 20% discrepancy, the advice goes, and move on. But that 20% isn't just a reporting inconvenience. It's 20% of your marketing decisions being made on data you fundamentally cannot trust.

The cause is something called client-side tracking. Google Analytics only knows a purchase happened because a small ping fires from your thank-you page to Google's servers. If that ping gets blocked by an ad blocker, Apple's privacy protections, or a customer closing the tab too soon, the sale disappears from your data entirely. It was real money. It just never got counted. In modern eCommerce, that's a growing problem.

Accelerated checkouts, headless builds, Shop Pay, TikTok Shop: all of them introduce new gaps in the traditional tracking model. Most stores are quietly missing 20 to 30 percent of their revenue across their analytics tools and ad platforms.

> **“ MOST STORES ARE QUIETLY MISSING 20 TO 30 PERCENT OF THEIR REVENUE ACROSS THEIR ANALYTICS TOOLS AND AD PLATFORMS.**

AI running on corrupted data is worse than a competent human managing campaigns manually. The fix is a direct, server-to-server integration between Shopify and every marketing channel you use. Every order relayed uninterrupted, not dependent on a pixel firing or a customer consenting to be tracked. This is what's known as a data layer: the reliable infrastructure sitting between your commerce platform and the tools you use to grow it.

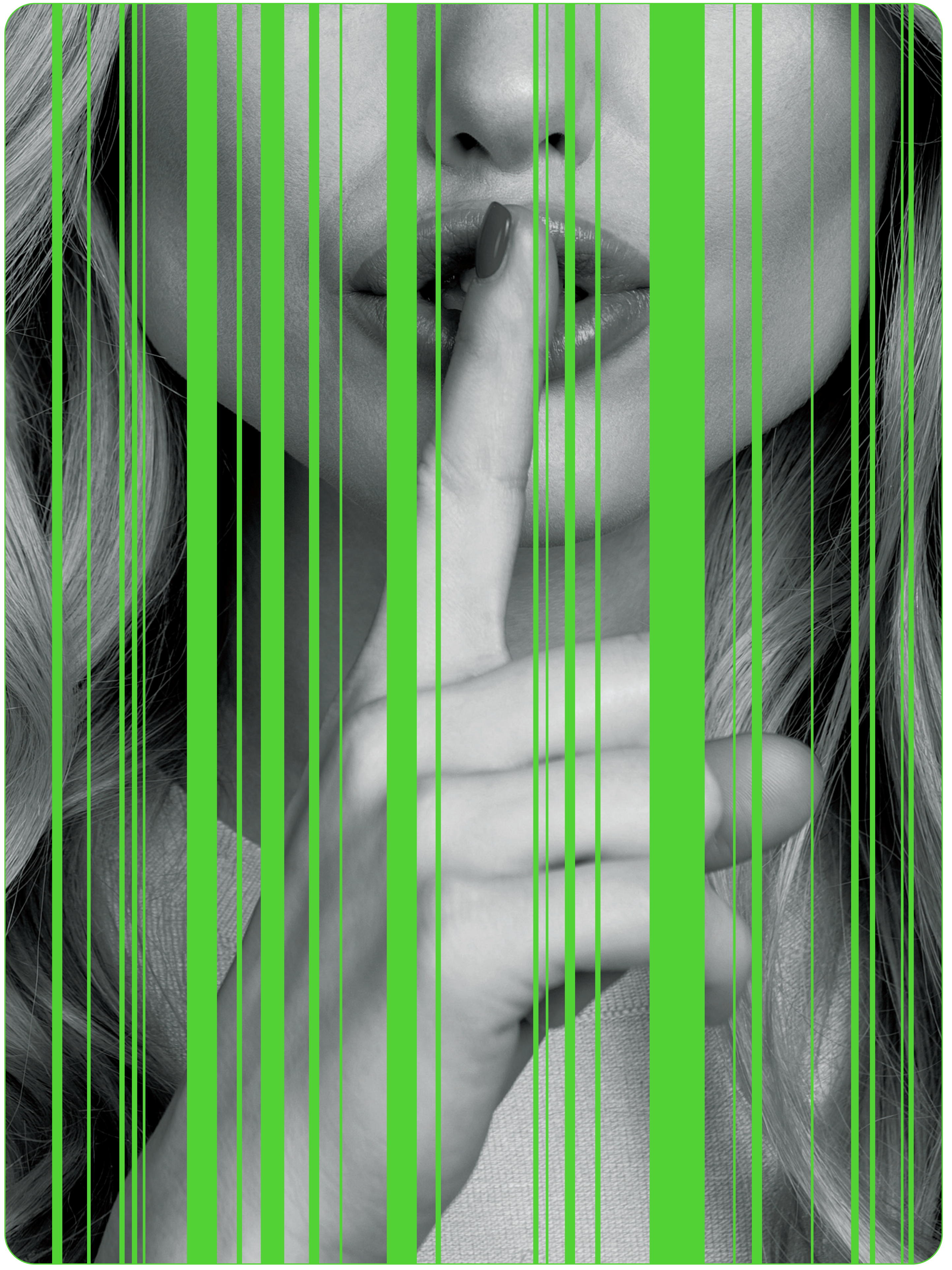
The impact goes beyond cleaner reports. Meta's ad algorithm decides how to allocate your budget based on the conversion signal you're feeding it. When that signal is incomplete, the algorithm optimises for the wrong things, favouring creatives that appear to convert, not the ones that actually do. Better data means smarter budget allocation, which means more efficient ad spend.

Google's Enhanced Conversions works on the same principle: attach real customer identifiers to conversion events, and Google's Performance Max campaigns can auto-optimise with far greater precision. The effect compounds through email and SMS, too. Klaviyo can only trigger an abandonment flow if it knows who is on your storefront right now.

A well-built data layer joins the dots between your contact list and live browsing behaviour, allowing you to trigger 50 to 100 percent more abandonment flow emails than Klaviyo's default tracking would catch.

There's an AI dimension here that also deserves attention. The industry is moving quickly toward AI-powered campaign optimisation: automated creative selection, audience targeting, budget allocation. Google and Meta are both investing heavily in it. But AI is only as good as the signal it runs on. Fix the data foundation, and these tools become powerful. Run them blind, and the automation optimises in the wrong direction faster than any human could.

The question isn't whether accurate data is worth having. It's how much longer you can afford to grow without it.



CASE STUDY:

Littledata x Future Kind

Vegan vitamins brand Future Kind ran six tracking providers head to head under identical conditions.

The results were not close.

- 205% more checkout events captured vs previous provider
- 31% more checkout events captured vs native eCommerce platform
- 91% of all Viewed Product events captured

When performance agency Pointblank Marketing noticed a measurement gap in Future Kind's data, they did not guess which tool was to blame. They ran a test. Six tracking providers were implemented simultaneously for the same audience, including Future Kind's existing attribution tool, eCommerce platform, Klaviyo native tracking, and Littledata.

The metric that mattered most was Checkout Started events: the platform's highest-intent behavioural signal. If this event is missed, abandonment flows cannot trigger and attribution breaks downstream.

The gap was stark. Future Kind's previous provider captured 31.3 percent of checkout sessions. native eCommerce platform captured 73 percent. Littledata captured 95.6 percent, recording 1,748 sessions against the previous provider's 572.

That is not a marginal difference in tool performance. It is the difference between knowing your highest-intent shoppers exist and being able to reach them.

The pattern held across the funnel. Of 2,750 Viewed Product events, Littledata captured 91 percent, the highest rate of all providers tested. That stronger early-funnel visibility translated into the largest reachable abandonment audience and, by extension, the greatest revenue potential from lifecycle flows.

"Littledata allowed Future Kind to reliably reach thousands of high-intent shoppers that other tools never detected, expanding abandonment revenue potential across the entire funnel." Julien, Pointblank Marketing

Pointblank standardised on Littledata because signal reliability is where eCommerce performance actually forms. Clean data determines how many of your best customers you can reach.

Photo by Mahdi Chaghari

5 Focus Areas in 2026 Roadmaps

BY: PAUL ROGERS | VERVAUNT

It is becoming increasingly clear that the fastest-growing brands are those built on strong commercial foundations. They combine robust data infrastructure, lean operating models, and a sharp focus on creative, cross-channel brand marketing, supported by disciplined measurement.

1. AI-FIRST VENDOR BUYING

Despite widespread discussion around how brands should use AI, much of the real progress is coming from adopting platforms where AI capability is already embedded, rather than building solutions internally.

The focus is on practical, high-impact use cases such as automated insights, AI-supported content creation, no-code or AI-assisted build environments, and improved forecasting.

AI is now also embedded in content operations, supporting product information at scale, accelerating testing and improving translation quality, making localisation faster and more cost-effective.

The shift is moving from experimentation toward commercially meaningful application.

2. BUILDING FOR NET NEW USERS

With customer acquisition still the largest cost line for many brands, more attention is being given to converting new audiences effectively. This includes more deliberate landing page strategies and tailored journeys for users with low intent or limited brand familiarity, rather than directing all traffic into the same core experience.

Clearer value propositions, smarter personalisation and content designed to build early trust are improving first-touch conversion and creating stronger foundations for long-term growth.

3. LOYALTY ROOTED IN BRAND AND COMMUNITY

Loyalty strategies have evolved well beyond simple points and transactions and remain a major investment area. Increasingly, loyalty is used to drive deeper engagement and stronger customer relationships.

While commercial mechanics continue to mature, there is a clear shift away from viewing loyalty purely through a short-term revenue lens toward its broader role in strengthening brand connection and long-term customer value.

4. INVESTMENT IN REPORTING

Measurement remains central, with brands seeking greater confidence in trading decisions and marketing effectiveness. Contribution margin, deeper views of CAC and CLTV and incrementality are now widely embedded, supported by continued investment in data and tooling.

Focus is growing on on-site behavioural reporting, as declining visibility from traditional analytics tracking has created gaps in understanding user behaviour and journey quality.

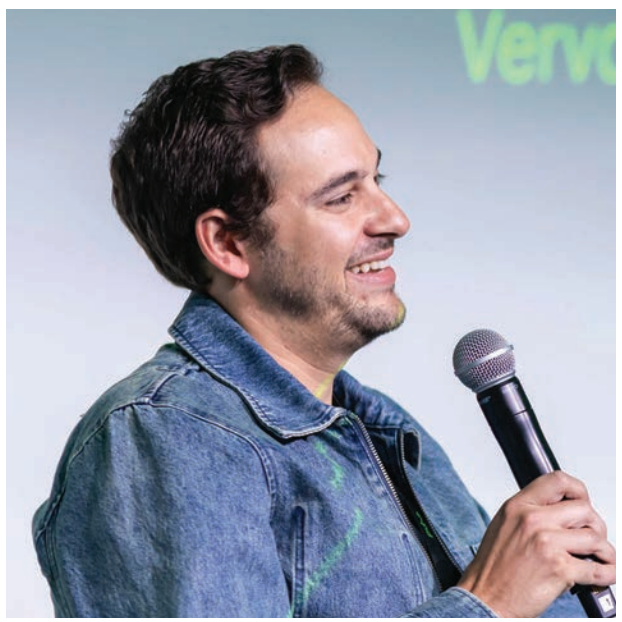
5. TRADING INVESTMENT

More brands are placing increased emphasis on trading, particularly in challenging conditions. This includes more deliberate merchandising, deeper testing of bundling, stronger use of upsell and cross-sell and greater focus on margin-led performance.

At the same time, more attention is being given to understanding new customer behaviour, helping refine trading decisions and improve the overall quality of growth.

INTERVIEW:

Ethan Kirkpatrick
Director of Performance Marketing
rag & bone



WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE CITY FOR FASHION?

New York City

WHAT HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST SHIFT IN ECOMMERCE OR DIGITAL MARKETING OVER THE PAST YEAR, AND HOW HAS IT CHANGED YOUR PRIORITIES?

There's been a clear shift away from growth at all costs towards getting more out of existing customers. The pressure on CRM, email and SMS has increased significantly, with a real focus on frequency and lifetime value rather than just acquisition.

Mature businesses are becoming less willing to "pay for growth" and are looking at how to drive more value from what they already have. That's definitely changed priorities - retention is no longer a secondary lever, it's central to sustainable growth.

HOW DO YOU BALANCE BRAND STORYTELLING WITH CREATIVITY WITH THE INCREASING PRESSURE FOR MEASURABLE PERFORMANCE?

It's about building one strong, cohesive story and then adapting it across the funnel. You need the emotional layer - brand identity, aspiration, lifestyle - but paired with clear hooks and calls to action.

The key is translating that same concept into different formats depending on where the customer is. The story stays consistent, but the message evolves. That's how you balance creativity with performance.

WHAT ROLE IS AI ACTUALLY PLAYING IN YOUR DAY-TO-DAY MARKETING OPERATIONS - AND WHERE IS IT OVERHYPED?

AI is a strong support tool. It's particularly useful for scaling copy, exploring ideas and developing messaging for specific audiences. The output is only as good as the input though - the more specific you are, the more valuable it becomes.

Where it's overhyped is when it's treated as a replacement for thinking. It's a great assistant, but not a task owner. If you rely on it to build everything end-to-end, you end up with safe, repetitive ideas rather than anything genuinely original.

WHICH CHANNEL OR CAPABILITY DO YOU BELIEVE MOST BRANDS ARE UNDERINVESTING IN RIGHT NOW?

Content breadth, particularly on Meta. The playbook has shifted quite a lot over the last six months. It used to be more predictable in terms of formats and refresh cycles, but now a much wider mix of content is performing well. Brands can't afford to slow down testing - new formats, new angles and new executions are constantly needed to stay competitive.

WHICH MARKETS ARE DRIVING THE MOST MEANINGFUL GROWTH RIGHT NOW?

North America continues to be the biggest driver, largely due to established brand awareness and scale. At the same time, we're starting to see early momentum in markets like Germany and Korea as we expand internationally. They're still developing, but the initial signals are strong.

> **"THE PLAYBOOK HAS SHIFTED QUITE A LOT OVER THE LAST SIX MONTHS.**

WHAT'S ONE DIGITAL INITIATIVE OR PROJECT YOU'RE PARTICULARLY PROUD OF FROM THE LAST YEAR?

Launching a brand advocacy program has been a big one. The focus was on activating existing customers to create content, drive revenue through their own networks and build a more community-led growth engine.

It's been a strong example of how retention and acquisition can work together - turning customers into advocates rather than just focusing on net new acquisition.

WHAT ORIGINALLY DREW YOU INTO ECOMMERCE AND DIGITAL MARKETING - WAS IT PLANNED OR ACCIDENTAL?

Not planned at all. I've had a pretty varied path - from the medical field to co-owning a theatre company, to working in public diplomacy in Paris.

The common thread was always needing to be challenged. eCommerce and digital marketing never really stand still - there's always something to improve, test or rethink. That constant change is what drew me in and kept me there.

WHAT SEPARATES A GOOD ECOMMERCE LEADER FROM A GREAT ONE TODAY?

A willingness to constantly question the status quo. It's relatively easy now to build a functional eCommerce experience. What's much harder is creating something genuinely best-in-class. That only happens if you're continuously evaluating what you're doing, pressure testing it and looking outside your own business for inspiration.

WHEN BUILDING A TEAM, WHAT TRAITS OR MINDSET DO YOU VALUE MOST?

The ability to create influence. No one operates in isolation, and success in eCommerce is heavily dependent on cross-functional collaboration. If people can't build trust and bring others with them, things slow down quickly. Strong teams understand how to navigate that and get things over the line.

ONE FASHION TREND YOU LOVE - AND ONE YOU WISH WOULD DISAPPEAR?

I'm very happy to see bold colour making a comeback. It feels like we've come out of a period of sameness, and it's good to see more expression again. One I'm ready to move on from is chunky dad sneakers. It's probably time.

IF YOU WEREN'T WORKING IN ECOMMERCE, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING?

Running a vineyard in the south of France. Maybe making cheese on the side. Something a bit slower, a bit more hands-on - but still creative in its own way.

WHAT'S ONE BRAND YOU THINK IS DOING AN EXCEPTIONAL JOB RIGHT NOW?

Dior stands out. They've managed to balance heritage with modern relevance incredibly well - staying true to the core codes of the maison while evolving the brand for today. It feels culturally sharp, considered and consistent across everything they do.

The Future of Loyalty: Make Loyalty Your Growth Lever

BY: LOYALTYLION

For years, brands have relied on discounts and ad spend to drive sales. Today, rising acquisition costs and shrinking margins are making those tactics unsustainable. Winning brands are consistently influencing behavior across every channel, market, and moment.

Because customer behavior has shifted, too. Shoppers want memorable experiences, not just offers to redeem. Appetite for loyalty programs is also growing.

LoyaltyLion research shows 59% are more likely to sign up for a loyalty program today than 12 months ago. And 85% say a loyalty program influences their decision to repeat purchase.

What do customers want from loyalty programs? 88% say financial rewards are important, but experience-led benefits matter just as much: 85% value shipping and product rewards, 72% want early access to sales, 67% want priority access to product launches, and 71% want priority support.

Consumers aren't just looking for the best offer. They're looking for an experience worth repeating. How do you deliver?

Ensure customers can earn, redeem, and engage with unique elements of your program wherever they shop. Whether that's online, in-store, through retail partners, or on mobile.

Localise your loyalty experience at scale. Every touchpoint, not just the loyalty page. AI tools can help you translate in your tone of voice too.

Use loyalty AI to identify the biggest opportunities to grow revenue with minimal effort. That could be perfectly timed nudges for customers close to a reward or bonus point promotions launched at exactly the right moment. Brands following AI-driven loyalty recommendations are seeing 2x revenue uplift.

When you stop chasing transactions and start investing in personalised experiences everywhere your customers shop, growth becomes profitable. You drive repeat purchases and build a scalable competitive advantage. The future of loyalty isn't discounts, it's differentiated customer experiences.

AI Is Changing How eCommerce Teams Test, Learn, and Grow

BY: VISUALLY

As brands scale, they need a clear growth roadmap anchored in available resources - team bandwidth, technical capacity, and testing velocity. Historically, those constraints have defined how fast a brand can experiment and optimise. But AI is rapidly changing this dynamic, especially in the world of conversion rate optimisation (CRO).

AI is becoming the executional worker bee of eCommerce. Tasks that once required weeks of manual effort (analysing user behavior, designing experiments, building test variants, and deploying them) can increasingly be automated or accelerated by intelligent systems.

Instead of teams spending most of their time executing tests, AI handles the heavy lifting and day-to-day production work. This shift fundamentally changes how CRO teams operate. Rather than acting as builders and operators, teams can focus on strategy, insight, and creative problem-solving.

They can spend more time identifying opportunities, forming hypotheses, and interpreting results, while AI rapidly executes and iterates in the background. The impact on testing velocity is massive. What used to take weeks or months can now happen in hours or days.

New ideas can be generated, deployed, measured, and refined continuously. This creates a compounding advantage: the faster you test, the faster you learn, and the faster you grow. But the real opportunity isn't simply using AI as another tool in the stack. The biggest gains will come from redesigning how teams work. AI allows brands to move toward a continuous experimentation model - where insights lead directly to rapid execution and optimisation across the entire customer journey.

The brands that embrace this shift, where AI powers execution and humans focus on strategy, will lead the next wave of eCommerce growth.

Grasping the Opportunity of Social Commerce

BY: WORLDPAY

Social commerce is no longer an experiment - it's reshaping the core of retail. Products now launch and sell out directly on social, sometimes before customers even visit a brand's website.

This shift means transactions, customer service, and even finance teams are now part of the social conversation. A single creator's video can spark a sales surge, with customer questions and service requests appearing instantly in the comments.

In the UK, authenticity trumps polish; relatable creators with engaged audiences often outperform celebrities, and the comment section itself becomes part of the sales process.

Retailers face new challenges: managing inventory for viral spikes, providing public customer support, and reconciling sales from multiple platforms.

Product discovery, evaluation, and purchase now often happen within the same social feed, making traditional web funnels less relevant. To succeed, brands need operational agility and unified payment solutions.

To succeed in today's market, brands need operational agility and unified payment solutions. Flexible checkout options, such as creating single or multiple payment links to share directly on social media, allow merchants to streamline the path to purchase by focusing on selling a few selected items without redirecting customers to a website. Retailers can benefit from solutions that support website payments, social sales, text, messaging platforms like WhatsApp, and even ad-hoc in-person payments via QR codes.

Centralising all transactions in a unified dashboard simplifies reconciliation and provides valuable business insights. As social commerce becomes an integral part of retail's operating reality, those who adapt strategically are best positioned to capture the next wave of growth.

Connected Commerce Is the New Growth Engine

BY: SWAP

Global expansion is no longer a market challenge. It's a systems challenge. Fashion brands today aren't limited by demand. They're limited by fragmentation. Delivery, duties, tax compliance, returns, and customer service too often operate in silos.

When they do, margins compress, speed slows, and brand experience fractures. Connected commerce changes that. When operational infrastructure works as one system, the storefront becomes stronger. Pricing can localise dynamically. Compliance can run in real time. Cross-border complexity becomes manageable. Returns shift from cost center to retention driver.

What once felt like backend overhead becomes operational control. This shift is accelerating with the rise of agentic commerce. AI is no longer confined to reporting on what happened yesterday. It is planning, predicting, and acting across the commerce stack.

Instead of reacting to operational friction after it impacts margin or experience, brands can proactively optimise fulfillment, tax handling, duties, and service at scale.

For fashion brands scaling globally, distinctiveness does not come from operational improvisation. It comes from precision. When delivery, duties, returns, and service operate as one connected system, then creative and commercial teams can focus on product, storytelling, and community – confident that infrastructure is protecting margin and enabling growth behind the scenes.

The next era of commerce will not be defined by how many markets a brand enters, but by how intelligently those markets are connected. In a connected commerce environment, operations are no longer reactive support functions. They are the foundation for sustainable global growth.

How Affiliate Marketing Is a Full Funnel Marketing Channel in 2026

BY: GEORGE WHITMORE | VERVAUNT

Affiliate sceptics have long pigeonholed affiliate marketing as a lower-funnel, “check-out” channel, a tactical lever only pulled to convert customers via generic discount codes. The affiliate landscape has shifted into a sophisticated, full-funnel channel, with partnerships at the heart of it. The channel actively drives discovery, influences consumer decisions and can secure profitable conversions.

DISCOVERY: THE AI & CONTENT LAYER

Top of funnel strategy now relies on targeted content where publishers layer geofencing and behavioural signals to match products to users. Consumers, particularly gen z, are increasingly using AI assistants to find prices, meaning brands must ensure their affiliate programmes are optimised for AI driven search layers to capture intent early during the awareness stage of the funnel.

DECISION: CONTEXTUAL VALIDATION

Mid-funnel influence is driven by contextual brand partnerships. By utilising a whole host of great brand-to-brand hosts, brands can surface relevant offers to audiences already validated for intent (for example, a nutrition offer following a fitness watch purchase). This seamless placement builds trust and drives incremental value, without the hard sell of traditional display ads.

PURCHASE: SMART CONVERSION, NOT BLIND DISCOUNTING

At the conversion stage (where the affiliate channel traditionally does so well), brands focus must shift from volume to value. High growth brands have long moved away from flat commission structures to dynamic commission. Are new customers more valuable to your business? Incentivise them. Does your business struggle with churn, and you want to increase LTV? Target this valuable customer group with relevant, strategic incentives. Furthermore, shift generic discounting away from public view, behind login walls such as closed user groups, to not only protect public brand equity, but target high-intent customers across valuable demographics such as students, employee purchase programmes or front-line workers.

In 2026, successful brands are no longer paying for generic traffic or blanket discounting, they are utilising the affiliate channel as a full-funnel strategic lever as part of their wider performance marketing strategy.

Speed, Scale, Diversity: The New Rules of Creative Performance for Paid Channels

BY: BETHAN RAINFORD | VERVAUNT

The evolution of the creator economy reflects a broader shift in how performance marketing strategy is now driven. As paid media costs continue to rise and organic reach declines, creative has become the most important variable that brands can control. In a saturated environment where consumers are exposed to thousands of messages a day, attention is the most valuable currency - and creative diversity is what earns it.

However, most brands are still operating within a production model that was not built for this environment. Highly editorial studio assets are expensive, slow to produce, and often disconnected from real-time platform behaviour and market trends. By the time campaigns launch, content can already feel dated. The traditional cycle of brief, shoot, edit and approve is simply too rigid for the speed that modern platforms demand.

This is where creator-led production has reshaped the landscape. Creator content delivers pace, scale, relevancy and diversity in a cost-effective way, and can produce assets that feel native to the platforms where they appear. Increasingly, creators are not valued purely for their audience and reach, but for their ability to produce authentic, high-performing creative at scale. In many cases, this style of content outperforms polished studio advertising, particularly in environments where audiences favour immediacy and authenticity.

To make this model work commercially, we are seeing the rise of the ‘Creative Strategist’. Sitting between brand, creator and performance, this role translates data into creative direction - using signals such as hook rate, hold rate and conversion behaviour to shape briefs and ensure content is not only engaging, but commercially effective.

The brands winning in this environment are those moving away from campaign-based production toward continuous creative engines. In a landscape defined by speed, saturation and rising costs, creative diversity is no longer a differentiator - it is a requirement for sustained performance.

INTERVIEW:

Natalie Tobias
Head of eCommerce
Hoodrich

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE CITY FOR FOOD?

Tel Aviv

WHAT HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST SHIFT IN ECOMMERCE OR DIGITAL MARKETING OVER THE PAST YEAR, AND HOW HAS IT CHANGED YOUR PRIORITIES?
The biggest shift has been the move towards agentic commerce, where AI is acting more like a digital personal shopper than a search tool. It's no longer just about capturing attention, it's about being the most relevant recommendation when an AI is helping a customer build their look. That's shifted our focus towards product data and structure. We're prioritising how discoverable and interpretable we are for machines, not just people. It's a more technical shift, but ultimately it's about making sure the brand stays front-of-mind as the shopping journey becomes more automated.

HOW DO YOU MAINTAIN MOMENTUM IN SUCH A FAST-MOVING, TREND-LED CATEGORY?
It comes down to a "drop and learn" mindset. We prioritise speed over perfection and move away from rigid seasonal cycles in favour of micro-drops informed by live data. That allows us to double down quickly on what's working, while cutting anything that isn't performing before it becomes a problem. It keeps the brand responsive and closely aligned with what the customer actually wants.

WHAT ROLE IS AI ACTUALLY PLAYING IN YOUR DAY-TO-DAY MARKETING OPERATIONS - AND WHERE IS IT OVERHYPED?
AI is heavily embedded in the operational side of the business. We use it to clean and structure product data, generate descriptions that are both SEO-friendly and machine-readable, and support real-time merchandising based on user intent.

It's also valuable in customer service, where it handles high-volume, repetitive queries so the team can focus on more meaningful interactions with the community.

Where it's overhyped is in creative and cultural understanding. AI can optimise, but it can't pass a "vibe check." In a brand rooted in street culture, that instinct and nuance still has to come from people.

WHICH CHANNEL OR CAPABILITY DO YOU BELIEVE MOST BRANDS ARE UNDERINVESTING IN RIGHT NOW?
Pinterest is massively underutilised. While most brands are focused on short-term attention on platforms like TikTok, Pinterest operates much closer to a visual search engine. It's where customers go to plan, not just scroll, which means intent is significantly higher.

It also plays well into the shift towards agentic commerce. The structured, visual nature of the platform makes it highly crawlable for AI, and gives brands the opportunity to become part of a customer's longer-term consideration set rather than a moment of attention.

WHAT MAKES A PRODUCT A "HIT" FOR HOODRICH - AND HOW QUICKLY CAN YOU REACT TO DEMAND?
A hit is defined by velocity. It's about how quickly a product moves from being worn by a specific influencer or talent to becoming a high-volume search term on-site.

> **"WE PRIORITISE SPEED OVER PERFECTION AND MOVE AWAY FROM RIGID SEASONAL CYCLES IN FAVOUR OF MICRO-DROPS INFORMED BY LIVE DATA.**

Because of how we operate, we can react quickly - scaling successful products and adjusting ranges in near real-time based on that demand.

WHAT'S ONE DIGITAL INITIATIVE OR PROJECT YOU'RE PARTICULARLY PROUD OF FROM THE LAST YEAR?
The relaunch of our loyalty programme, "The Locker," stands out. With acquisition costs rising, we focused on rewarding the existing community in a more meaningful way.

We've seen a 33% increase in purchase frequency from engaged members, alongside a lift in overall participation. It's shifted the programme from a simple points system to something that genuinely drives lifetime value and strengthens the relationship with the brand.

WHAT ORIGINALLY DREW YOU INTO ECOMMERCE AND DIGITAL MARKETING - WAS IT PLANNED OR ACCIDENTAL?
I was working as a Brand Manager for a jewellery label and ended up launching their Shopify store as part of a broader remit. That's where the interest in the technical side of the business really started, and it's grown from there. That was around nine years ago, and I haven't looked back since.

WHAT SEPARATES A GOOD ECOMMERCE LEADER FROM A GREAT ONE TODAY?
The ability to bridge technical execution with emotional storytelling. A good leader focuses on performance and optimisation, but a great leader treats the digital experience as an extension of the brand's culture. It's about building something that goes beyond transactions and creates a genuine connection with the community.

WHEN BUILDING A TEAM, WHAT TRAITS OR MINDSET DO YOU VALUE MOST?
Honesty, work ethic and genuine buy-in to the brand. In a fast-moving environment, you need people with grit and a strong commercial mindset, but also people who understand and believe in the brand's DNA. If someone doesn't connect with that, it's very hard for them to make the right decisions for the community.

ONE STYLE TREND YOU LOVE - AND ONE YOU WISH WOULD DISAPPEAR?
I really like the shift towards technical utility - combining functional design with strong aesthetics. It feels authentic to where streetwear is heading.

On the other side, I'd be happy to see disposable fast fashion fade out. Low-quality, short-life products don't align with what streetwear should represent.

IF YOU WEREN'T WORKING IN ECOMMERCE, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING?
Something completely different - probably running an off-grid glampsite or homestead. It would be a more creative and slower-paced environment, focused on wellbeing, with things like yoga, food and shared experiences at the centre of it.

WHAT'S ONE BRAND YOU THINK IS DOING AN EXCEPTIONAL JOB RIGHT NOW?
Mertra stands out. They've found a strong balance between technical innovation and exclusivity, using elements like reactive fabrics alongside a tight, scarcity-driven drop model. It creates a sense of product value that goes beyond just the logo, and keeps the brand feeling fresh and culturally relevant.

ABOUT VERVAUNT

Vervaunt is a forward-thinking eCommerce consultancy and paid media agency, collaborating with market-leading fashion, beauty and lifestyle brands across full-funnel performance and brand marketing, technology change, CRO & UX, growth strategy and more.

Our eCommerce consultancy is largely focused on technology strategy and user experience, with projects ranging from platform selection and hands-on replatforming support, to international strategy and roadmap definition. Our performance marketing services covers paid search, paid social, creative and affiliates- managing performance across all core channels, with a particular focus across Google and Meta.

ADANOLA

A.P.C.

Champion

Dr. Martens

Mulberry

OSPREY

Paul Smith

REPRESENT

self-portrait

The Frankie Shop

TIMEX

Photo: Represent

Thank you for attending the Pulse eCommerce Summit 2026.
We look forward to seeing you next time.

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