

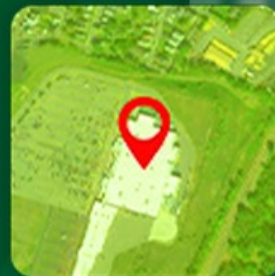
4 Shifts Every Retail Marketer Must Make Now

Location, lifetime value, product strategy, and content will define the next era of retail success.



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Retail is in the middle of a structural reset.

Customers don't move neatly from awareness to consideration to purchase. They discover online, browse in-store, buy across multiple channels, and expect brands to meet them with relevance and consistency at every step. Brands that continue to optimize for yesterday's metrics will get left behind.

For retailers with a substantial physical footprint, this creates both a challenge and an opportunity. Traditional media strategies focused on proximity or short-term ROAS no longer capture the full picture. Growth now depends on making four key shifts:

- 1 **Make the most of your location footprint.**
- 2 **Move from transactional ROAS to customer lifetime value.**
- 3 **Achieve the right product – audience fit: Right Product, Right Customer, Right Time.**
- 4 **Embrace content-driven commerce.**

This playbook explores each shift in detail, sharing how advanced data, smarter measurement, and creative agility come together to drive not just clicks but sustainable business growth.



Shift 1

Make the Most of Your Location Footprint

For businesses with brick-and-mortar locations, media support is essential. Yet a store's true trade area rarely aligns with a simple radius on a map. Customers often travel farther than expected, and what looks like one footprint is often a patchwork of demand clusters that overlap with nearby locations. Without understanding these nuances, marketers risk overspending

in low-value areas or missing out on high-value pockets of customers. That's why granular visibility into travel behaviors and location clustering are critical for efficient, scalable media planning.

- **Granular visibility:** Postal code-level analysis reveals surprising travel behaviors, pinpointing exactly where high-value customers originate.
- **Clustering for efficiency:** Instead of running campaigns for every single store, grouping locations with similar customer patterns enables more strategic and scalable media execution.
- **Local inventory optimization:** Retailers that optimize location listings and maintain local inventory feeds are positioned to capture high-intent shoppers who are ready to buy. Whether you own stores or sell through other businesses, surfacing accurate product availability at the local level is now a competitive necessity.



Real-life example: For one of DAC's clients, budget was initially spread evenly across the entire country. By mapping customer density at the postal code level, we identified "hot pockets" of high-value demand and reallocated spend accordingly. The result: stronger performance and improved efficiency where it mattered most.

72% of consumers that did a local search visited a store within five miles, but many high-value customers will travel much further if the brand relationship is strong ([HubSpot, 2023](#)).

Shift 2

From ROAS to Customer Lifetime Value

Many retailers still measure success by short-term ROAS, but this narrow view misses the bigger picture. Stores often account for the majority of revenue, and campaigns typically generate **3–7× more in-store sales than online**. Focusing only on attributed e-commerce conversions undervalues the real business impact of media.

Retailers that continue to optimize for transactional ROAS risk starving their business of long-term value. Without a CLV lens, marketing dollars flow disproportionately to short-term bargain hunters while competitors invest in building durable customer relationships. The result is an **efficiency trap**: campaigns look strong on paper, but revenue growth, margin, and loyalty stall out.

That's why retailers must move beyond ROAS and adopt a **customer lifetime value (CLV) mindset**, one that captures the quality and durability of growth, not just short-term transactions. This shift requires both advanced analytics and new technology:

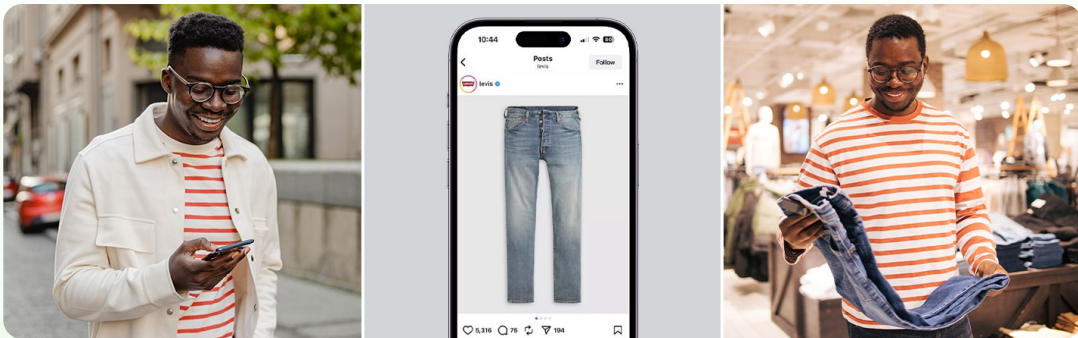
- **Improved attribution** to connect digital activity to in-store outcomes.
- **Incrementality testing** to prove which investments truly drive incremental revenue.
- **Marketing Mix Modeling (MMM)** to reveal how channels interact across the full funnel.

- And now, **AI-driven tools** raise the bar enabling predictive analytics to flag churn or repurchase, media buying that optimizes for lifetime value, and dynamic creative optimization (DCO) that delivers the right product at the right moment.



Real-life example: For one of DAC's clients, shifting from transactional ROAS to CLV modeling revealed which products and audiences drove the most profitable long-term growth. By reallocating spend accordingly, the brand consistently outperformed revenue and efficiency goals, even in a declining luxury market.

*Unless a retailer is totally new to the market, retaining existing customers offers both lower cost and higher returns. Acquiring a new customer can range from **five to seven times the expense of keeping an existing one** (Retail Touchpoints, 2017).*



Shift 3

Right Product, Right Customer, Right Time

Not all products play the same role in driving growth. Some bring in new customers, others deepen loyalty, and others maximize margin. The retailers that win are those that understand which categories serve which function, and then align media, messaging, and merchandising accordingly.

Retailers that fail to make this shift risk overspending on products that generate volume but not value. A high-ROAS product isn't always the right product if it primarily attracts discount-driven shoppers with low retention potential.

That's why it's critical to align product strategy with customer intent and lifecycle:

- **Acquisition drivers:** Entry-level products that attract new customers and serve as a gateway to the brand.
- **Loyalty drivers:** Every day or replenishable categories that build repeat behavior and deepen engagement.
- **Margin drivers:** High-value or premium products that protect profitability.

By identifying which products spark profitable long-term relationships, retailers can prioritize campaigns that deliver durable growth instead of chasing short-term wins.



Real-life example: For one of DAC's clients, analysis of two years of SKU-level data revealed that the first product purchased strongly predicted customer lifetime value. Customers who entered through certain categories were far more likely to return and expand into adjacent categories. By prioritizing those acquisition products in media and merchandising, the brand not only grew revenue but accelerated the path to loyalty.

*Repeat customers generate **3–7x more revenue** per visit than new shoppers (Adobe Digital Index, via [Oliver POS](#)).*

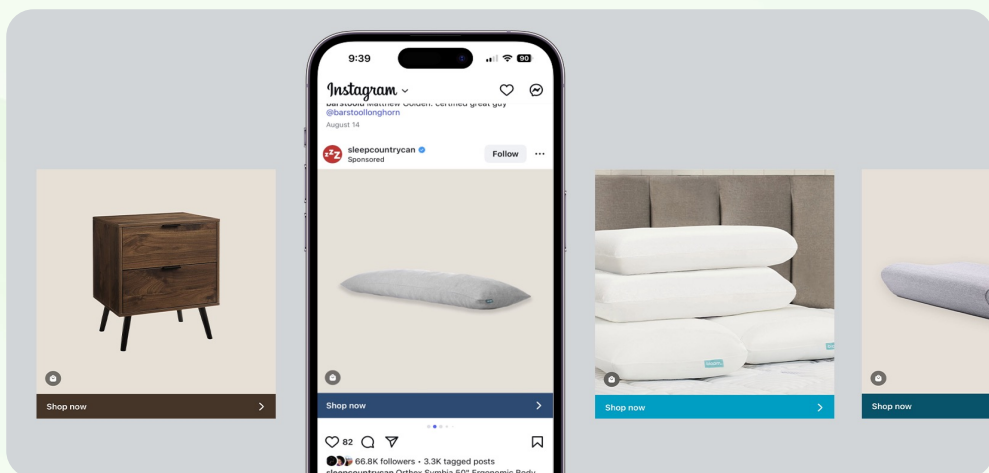
Identifying which products attract and retain these high-value customers is critical to long-term profitability.

Shift 4

Embrace Content-Driven Commerce

The consumer journey is collapsing. Shoppable videos, carousel ads, and social commerce platforms allow customers to move from discovery to purchase in a single step. For retailers, this means content can no longer be viewed as just a brand awareness tool — it has to drive conversion as well.

Retailers that fail to adapt risk falling behind as competitors use content to own the customer journey. If your creative strategy isn't built to connect inspiration with action, you'll lose shoppers in the gap between browsing and buying.



That's why it's essential to embrace **content-driven commerce**:

- **Creative agility:** Build systems that adapt content quickly to customer intent, seasonal trends, and inventory realities.
- **Social proof at scale:** Leverage influencers and user-generated content (UGC) to build trust and authenticity — especially critical for higher-consideration categories.
- **Commerce-ready storytelling:** Align media, creative, and product placement so customers can act immediately, wherever they are in the journey.
- **AI-powered commerce readiness:** Consumers will soon compare and purchase products directly in AI-driven environments like ChatGPT, not just Google, Amazon, or physical stores. Retailers that prepare their content footprint for these platforms will be better positioned to influence discovery and drive conversion.
- **Beyond UGC - community and reviews:** Platforms like Reddit and product review sites now shape both consumer trust and AI-powered search results. Retailers that invest here ensure their brand shows up credibly when algorithms and customers are making comparisons.

Content that collapses the funnel turns awareness into sales. It drives efficiency by reducing wasted impressions and builds stronger emotional ties by showing up where customers are already inspired to act.



Real-life example: For one of DAC's clients, we used data to identify which entry-level products attracted high-value customers and built creative around those categories. By pairing this with remarketing that encouraged cross-category exploration, the brand converted first-time buyers into loyal, repeat customers.

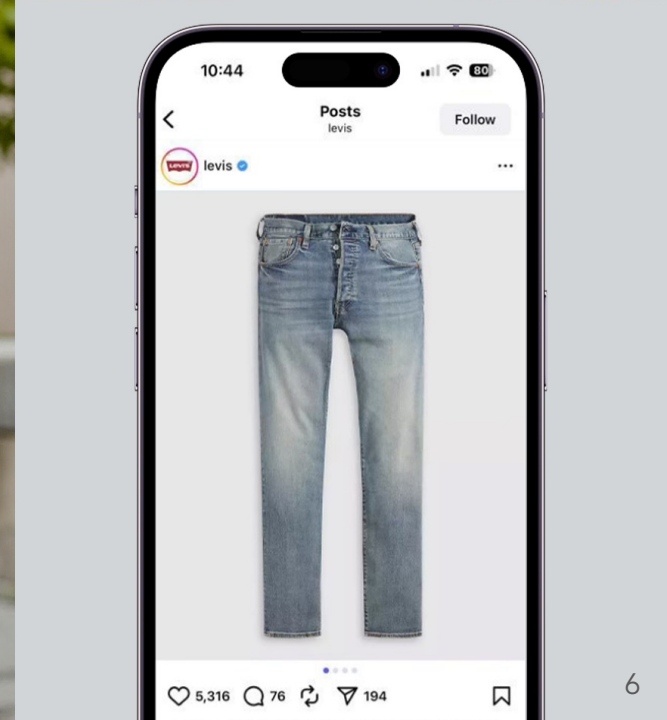
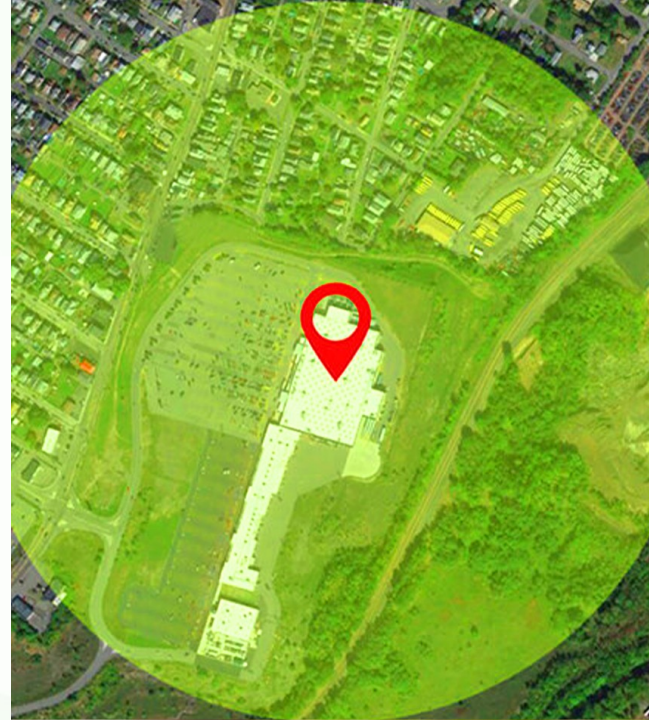
79% of consumers say user-generated content (UGC) highly impacts their purchasing decisions (Chain Store Age, 2021).

The retailers that thrive in the next era will master all four shifts in tandem:

supporting stores with smarter location media, measuring success through customer lifetime value, aligning products to customer intent, and collapsing the funnel with content-driven commerce.

These aren't isolated tactics. Together, they create a unified framework for sustainable, profitable growth. At DAC, we've helped leading retailers move from efficiency traps to durable, long-term value even in challenging market conditions.

The next step is tailoring these shifts to your business; start building the framework for sustainable growth today. [Contact us](#) to get started.



About DAC

Founded in 1972, DAC is an international leader in full-funnel media, mastering the art of media application from enterprise to local. As a digital-first agency with expertise across the entire media landscape, we ensure that our clients stay ahead of the curve with innovative solutions that drive success.

We thrive in the evolving media environment, building on our core strengths while continuously seeking new, groundbreaking methods to serve our clients better. We help brands gain awareness and achieve performance both globally and locally through our comprehensive range of services, including paid media, SEO, content strategy, local presence management, reputation management, and data analytics. Our team of high-quality, knowledgeable professionals works in an integrated environment, leveraging unique expertise and technology to deliver powerful outcomes.

At DAC, we partner with you to achieve exceptional success, driven by our dedication to your goals.

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