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Trends & Inspiration

Q2 2025

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Q2 Study: Topics

The following sections on trends, insights, and strategy have been curated to represent Imagine Studio's collective thought leadership applicable to future customer and client needs.

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Grocery Retail

Grocery Retail Overview

Ready-To-Eat



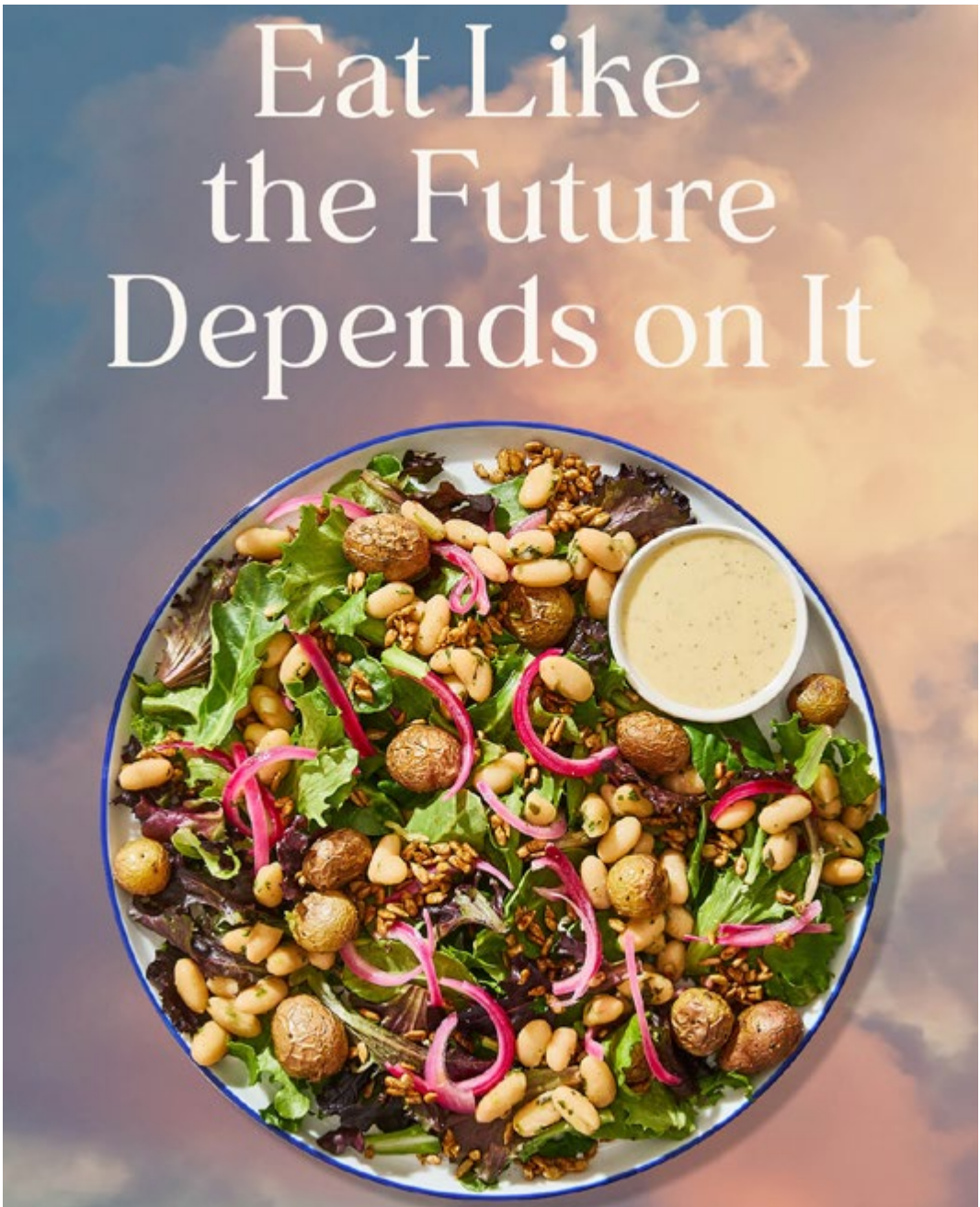
Fresh Mobilities
Evolving the Grab-& Go Model

Fresh Produce



Produce Theater
Sensory & Story-rich Displays

Innovation



Smart Fresh
Tech-enabled Transparency
& Personalization

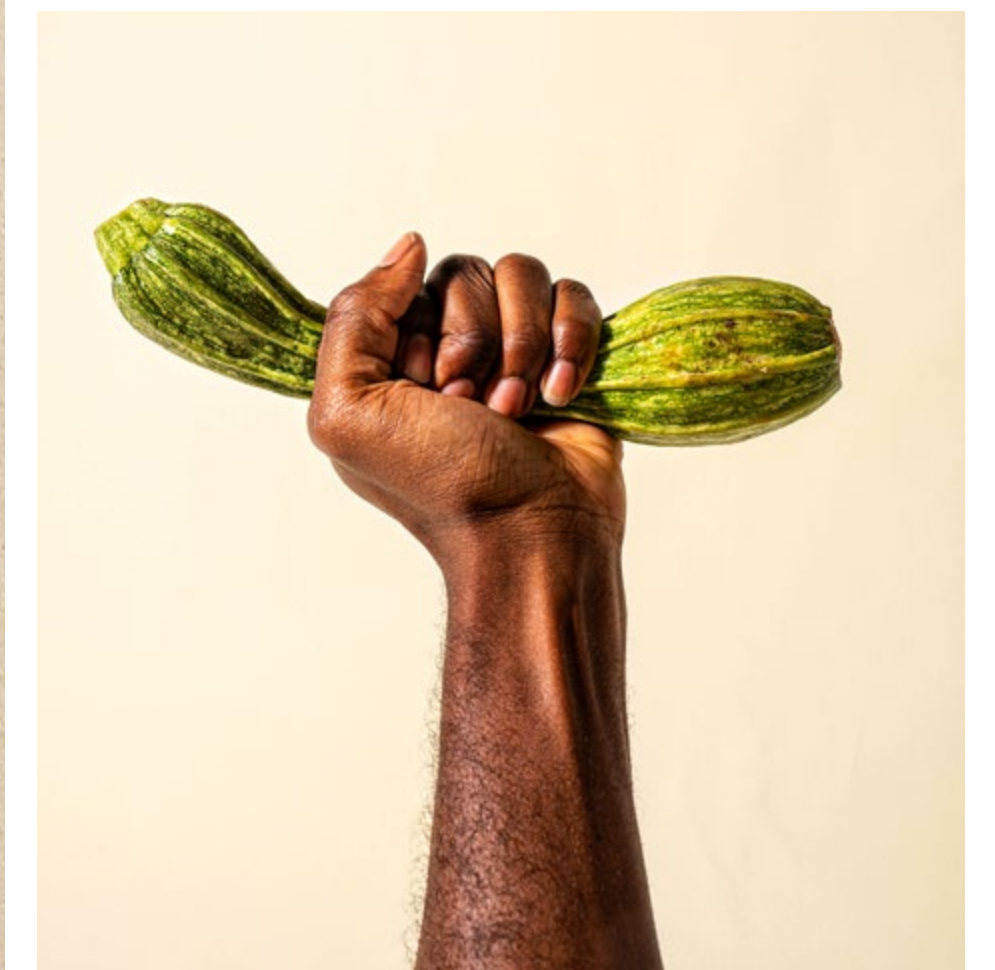
Grocery Retail Overview

Grocery Retail: Fresh Futures

Designing for Agility, Appetite, and Access

Health, freshness, and immediacy are reshaping consumer expectations across the grocery sector—especially in the high-frequency zones of **fresh grab-and-go meals and produce**. Modern consumers are demanding fast, functional, and flavorful food options that align with their personal values: clean eating, transparent sourcing, and climate-conscious production.

Grocery retailers are evolving beyond utility-driven stocking to become **curators of wellness, culinary discovery, and convenience-first experiences**. The new future of fresh isn't just about what's available—it's about how, where, and why it's delivered.

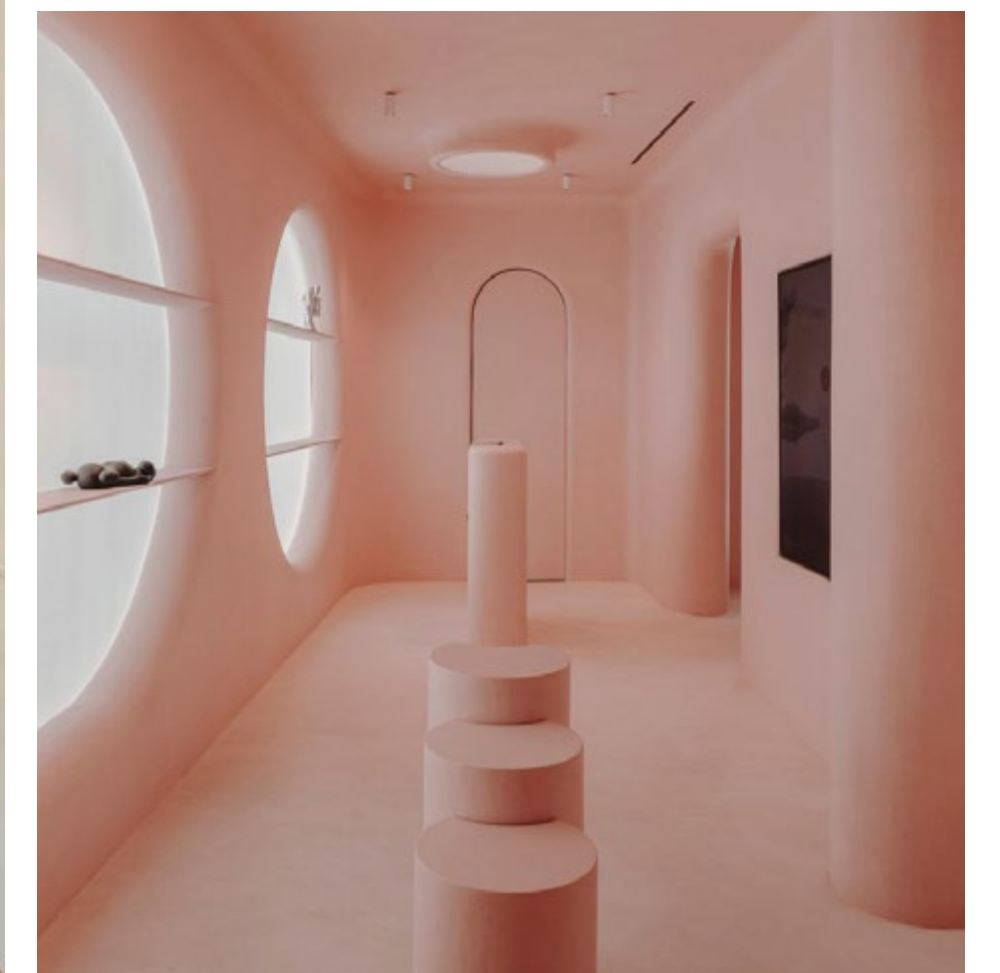
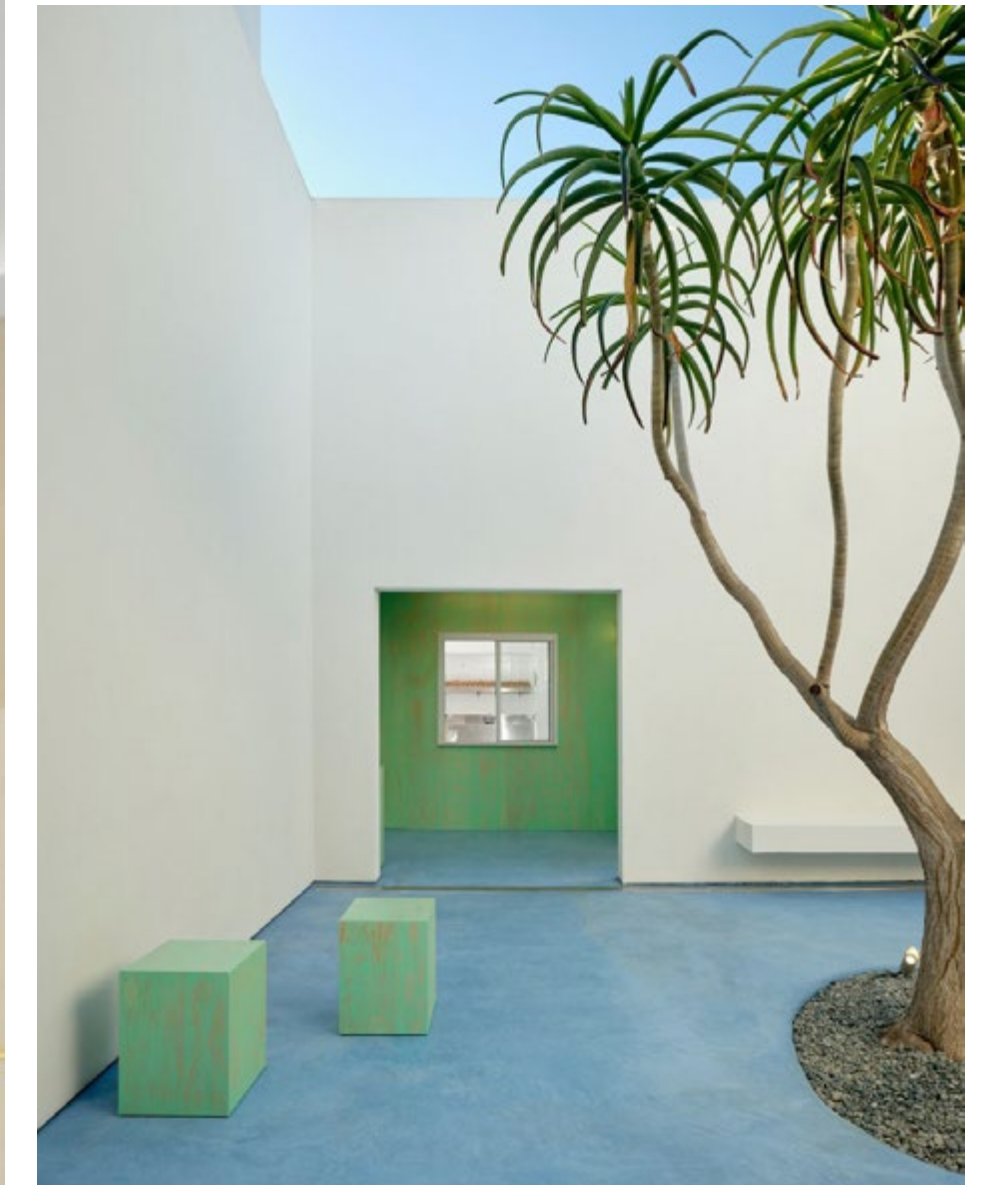


Grocery Retail Overview

Fresh is the New Fast.

Consumer expectations are shifting rapidly in the grocery space—away from bulk stocking and toward **hyper-fresh, on-the-go, and personalized options**. As health, convenience, and sustainability become inseparable priorities, leading grocery retailers are transforming their fresh meal and produce strategies to reflect new lifestyle rhythms and value systems.

Brands that integrate culinary storytelling, health-forward formats, and sensory-led produce experiences will win shopper attention—and loyalty—in an increasingly fragmented marketplace.



Grocery Retail Ready-To-Eat

Ready-To-Eat: Fresh Mobilities

Evolving the Grab-&-Go Model

In the age of flexible schedules and fluid eating habits, fresh no longer means slow. The new generation of grab-and-go balances quality, health, and speed—reinventing convenience with culinary credibility and visual appeal

Core Strategy Pillars

Chef-Led Convenience

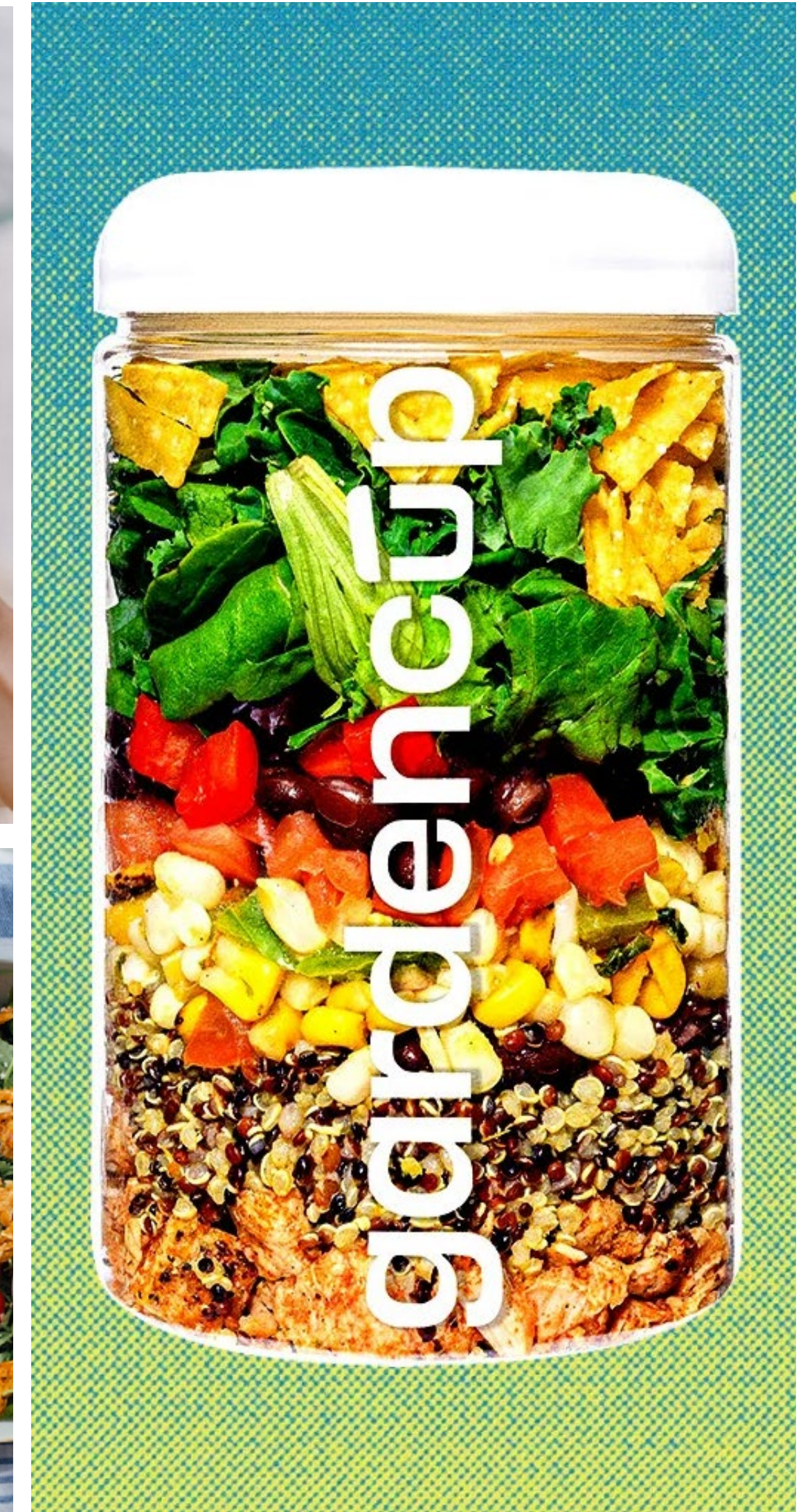
Bringing restaurant-level quality to grab-and-go through chef collaborations and elevated prepared meals

Anywhere Access

Extending fresh food beyond the grocery store with portable formats and location-flexible distribution

Cold-Case as Brand Space

Transforming refrigerated displays into immersive, curated brand experiences that signal freshness and care



Grocery Retail Ready-To-Eat

Chef-Led Convenience

Build a seamless rewards ecosystem across channels and lifestyles

In the age of flexible schedules and fluid eating habits, fresh no longer means slow. The new generation of grab-and-go balances quality, health, and speed—reinventing convenience with culinary credibility and visual appeal.

Chef-Led Convenience Tactics

Collaborate with local chefs or influencers on limited-edition grab-and-go lines

Introduce rotating seasonal menus with prepared meals merchandised like restaurant takeout

Offer “meal bundle” kits with premium, pre-portioned ingredients for minimal prep



Grocery Retail Ready-To-Eat

Anywhere Access

Build a seamless rewards ecosystem across channels and lifestyles

Grab-and-go is moving beyond the grocery aisle. Retailers are tapping into new physical footprints—extending fresh food into lifestyle locations.

Anywhere Access Tactics

Launch branded fresh vending in high-traffic zones (e.g., airports, hospitals, gyms)

Operate micro-format stores or mobile kiosks focused solely on chilled meals and snacks

Integrate with delivery platforms for scheduled pickup from smart lockers or vending banks



Grocery Retail Ready-To-Eat

Cold-Case as Brand Space

Build a seamless rewards ecosystem across channels and lifestyles

In the age of flexible schedules and fluid eating habits, fresh no longer means slow. The new generation of grab-and-go balances quality, health, and speed—reinventing convenience with culinary credibility and visual appeal.

Cold-Case as Brand Space Tactics

Use transparent, modular packaging to show food integrity and freshness

Layer storytelling into cold-case signage—origin, inspiration, chef notes, pairings

Experiment with vertical case layouts and theatrical lighting to mimic a “refrigerated restaurant”

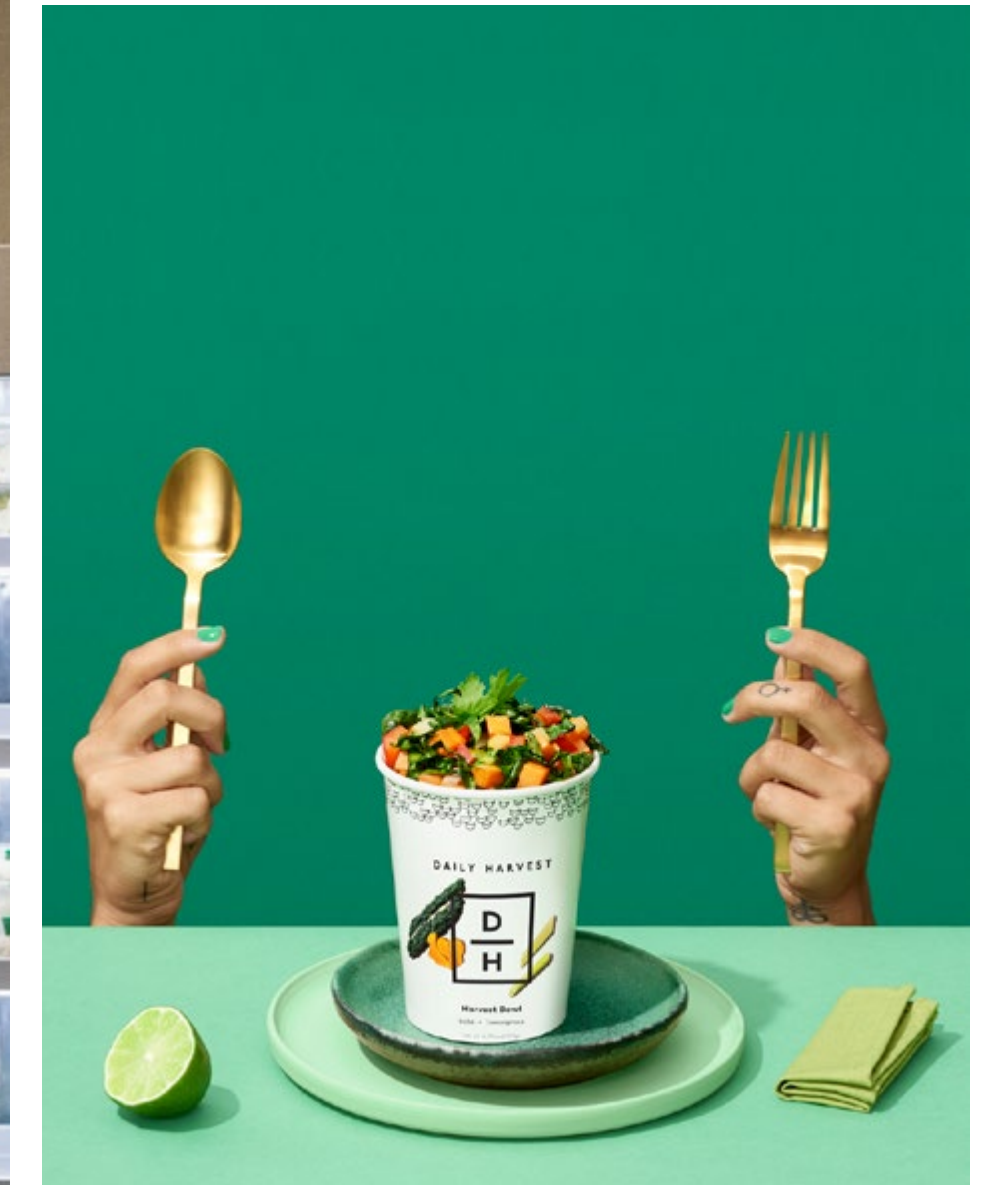
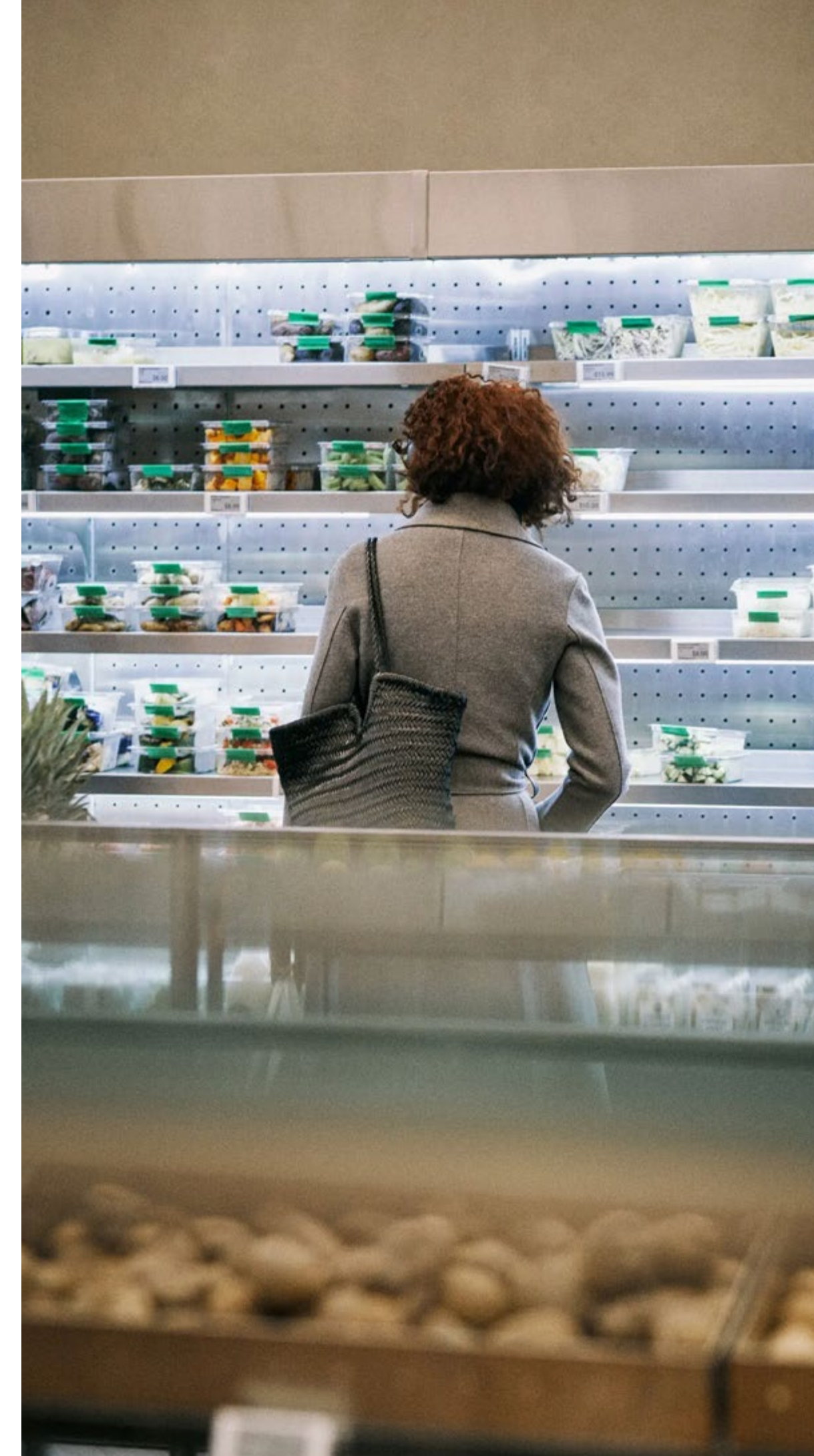


Grocery Retail Ready-To-Eat

Takeaway for Retailers

Fresh-Forward Utility

Reimagine the cold case as a stage for culinary innovation. In 2025, fresh formats that travel well, tell a story, and feel as considered as a plated dish will command the attention—and repeat visits—of hybrid consumers balancing speed and substance.



Grocery Retail Fresh Produce

Fresh Produce: Produce Theater

Elevating Everyday Fresh

As consumers seek connection, climate clarity, and sensory engagement, fresh produce is becoming a canvas for immersive storytelling. In 2025, leading grocery retailers are curating theatrical produce zones that celebrate seasonality, highlight provenance, and reward curiosity. By transforming produce aisles into interactive, story-rich environments, brands can make the everyday extraordinary—turning shopping into a moment of education, delight, and mindful selection.

Core Strategy Pillars

Sensory Storytelling

Provenance-Driven Displays

Seasonal Drop Culture

Climate-Conscious Merchandising



Grocery Retail Fresh Produce

Sensory Storytelling

Transform produce aisles into immersive, multi-sensory environments that spark curiosity and deepen engagement

Tap into the emotive power of scent, texture, color, and rhythm to create more immersive and memorable produce journeys.

Sensory Storytelling Tactics

Scent-Zoned Aisles:

Use aromatics (citrus, herbs, ripe fruit) and subtle scent diffusion to draw attention and deepen recall

Texture-First Displays:

Let shoppers touch and compare—fuzzy peaches, knobby roots, crisp greens—via tactile setups

Color Blocking by Variety:

Arrange produce by hue (e.g., red fruits, purple roots) to evoke artistic intrigue and encourage browsing



Grocery Retail Fresh Produce

Provenance-Driven Displays

Connect shoppers to the origins of their food through transparent storytelling and local grower visibility

Consumers want to know where their food comes from—and who grew it. Retailers are bringing origin stories to the produce aisle.

Provenance-Driven Display Tactics

Grower Portrait Signage:

Feature farmers and producers with short bios, farming techniques, and region callouts

QR-Linked Origin Maps:

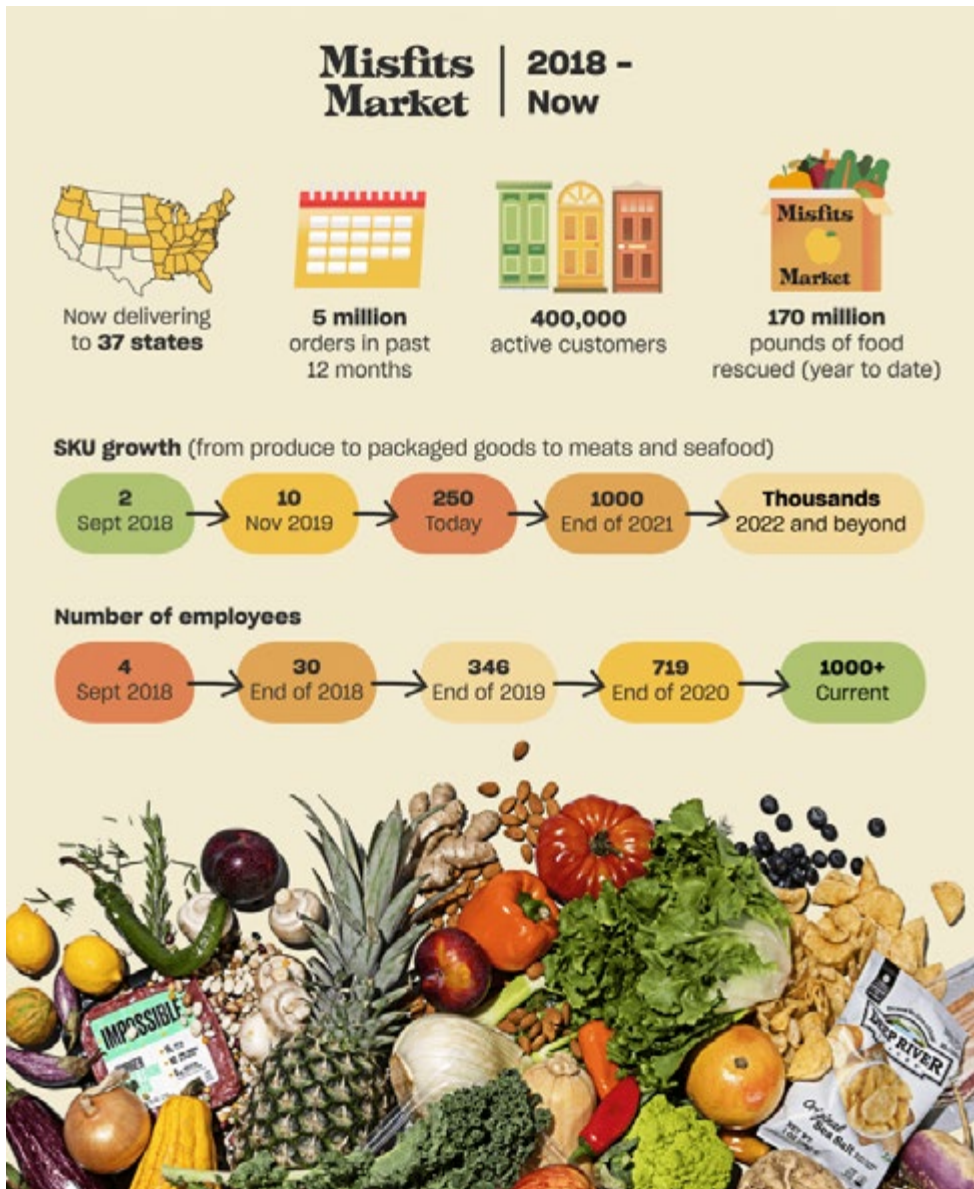
Let shoppers trace back to source via scan-to-learn maps, climate info, or even live farm cams

Single-Origin Focus:

Dedicate display space to spotlight a specific grower or farm collective (like a wine wall, but for lettuce)

Farmers-in-Residence Programs:

Host rotating in-store “farm features” with guest growers sharing tips or product tastings



Grocery Retail Fresh Produce

Seasonal Drop Culture

Inject excitement into the fresh aisle by framing produce as time-limited releases that reward anticipation and discovery

Borrow tactics from fashion and streetwear to turn seasonal produce into buzzworthy, time-sensitive drops

Seasonal Drop Culture Tactics

Harvest Launch Calendars:

Promote upcoming arrivals (first asparagus, blood oranges, heirloom tomatoes) with launch countdowns

Drop-Style Displays:

Use signage, spot lighting, or podium merchandising to make fresh arrivals feel limited and special

Flavor Flights:

Curate limited-time tasting flights for stone fruits, mushrooms, or citrus varieties to drive trial and education

Fresh Drops:

Allow loyal customers to pre-reserve seasonal or small-batch produce via app or loyalty channels



Grocery Retail Fresh Produce

Climate-Conscious Merchandising

Highlight sustainability through sourcing, rotation, and waste-reducing strategies that empower conscious choice

Sustainability isn’t just about plastic-free packaging—it’s about how produce is sourced, displayed, and rotated

Climate-Conscious Merchandising Tactics

Rescue Crop Features:

Create space for “imperfect” produce displays or flash sales on at-risk items nearing peak ripeness

Low-Impact Labeling:

Highlight water- or carbon-light produce choices with iconography or shelf tags

Rotation Education:

Show customers how to store, prep, and extend the life of different produce types

Compost-to-Go:

Offer compostable produce bags and easy take-home guides for waste reduction at home



Grocery Retail Fresh Produce

Takeaway for Retailers

Produce as Performance

Fresh produce is no longer just a category—it’s a brand stage. In 2025, winning grocers will rethink produce not as a transactional zone, but as a living gallery: sensory, seasonal, and rooted in purpose. From storytelling to sustainability, the new produce aisle invites shoppers to linger, learn, and love the act of selection again.



Grocery Retail Innovation

Innovation: Smart Fresh

Tech-Enabled Transparency & Personalization

As personalization, health optimization, and sustainability converge, the future of fresh grocery is becoming intelligent, traceable, and responsive. In 2025, shoppers increasingly expect transparency, dietary alignment, and technology-enhanced convenience in their fresh selections. From AI-guided curation to smart fridges and microbiome-based meal plans, tech is unlocking a new level of confidence, clarity, and customization in fresh grocery.

Core Strategy Pillars

Predictive Health Planning

Intelligent Fresh Fixtures

Digital Transparency Tools

Custom Nutrition Bundling



Grocery Retail Innovation

Predictive Health Planning

Use AI and wellness data to personalize fresh food guidance.

AI-driven interfaces and health integration tools are empowering shoppers to make smarter, faster choices around nutrition—whether based on allergies, fitness goals, or gut health. By turning personalized food discovery into a guided experience, grocers can shift from reactive providers to proactive wellness partners.

Predictive Health Planning Tactics

Microbiome-Based Meal Builders:

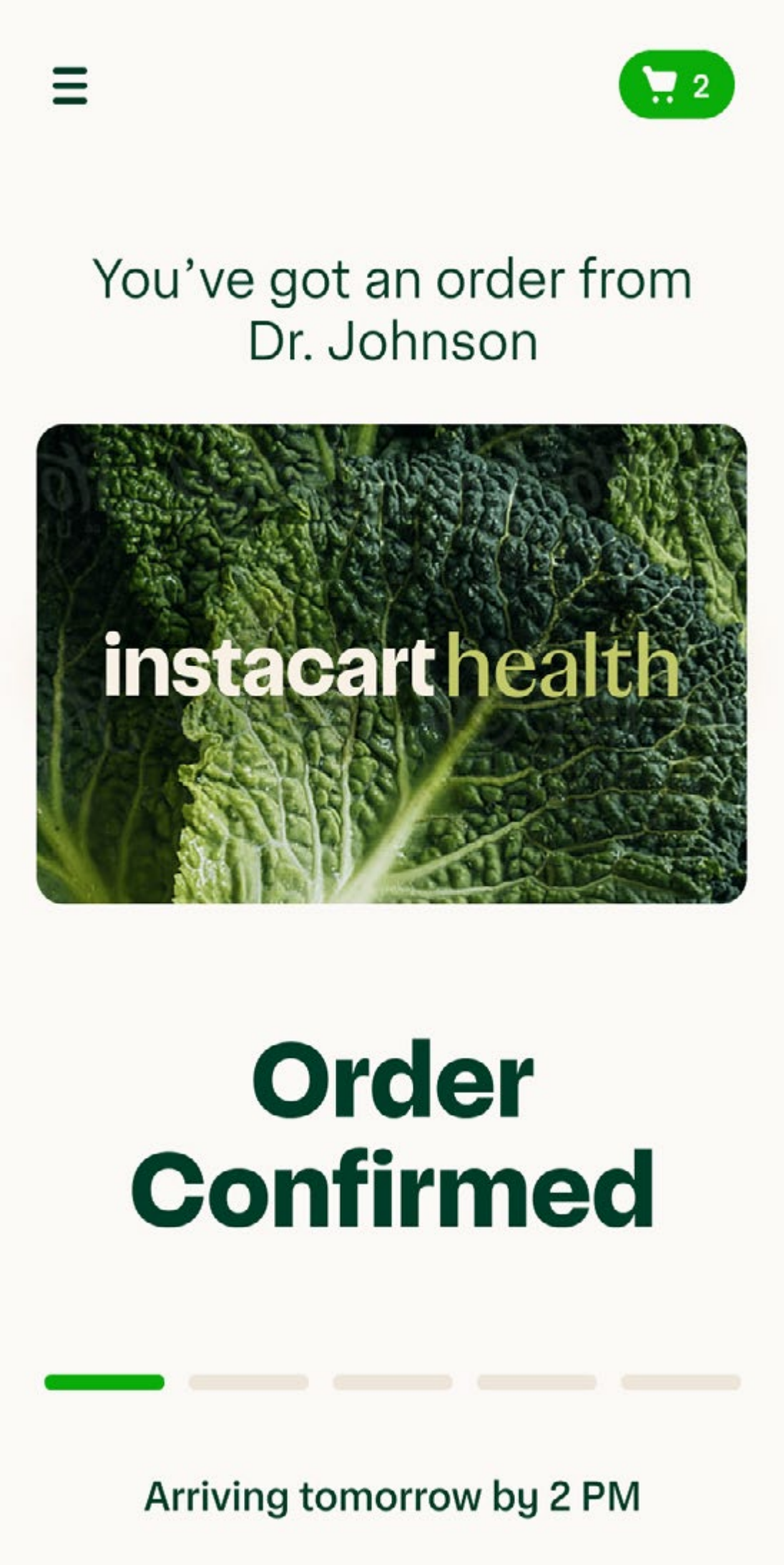
Partner with gut health platforms (e.g., ZOE, Viome) to suggest microbiome-aligned meals and ingredients

AI Diet Assistants:

Introduce AI kiosks or app integrations that recommend fresh products based on user goals—like immunity support, low-FODMAP, or hormone balance

Wearable Syncing:

Allow customers to sync grocery apps with wearables (e.g., WHOOP, Fitbit) to generate personalized fresh picks post-workout or during meal planning



Grocery Retail Innovation

Intelligent Fresh Fixtures

Install technology that elevates freshness visibility and product confidence

Connected displays and smart shelving equipped with freshness sensors, temperature regulation, and spoilage detection are helping retailers build trust and reduce waste. These innovations turn cold cases and produce bins into interactive, confidence-boosting zones that align with safety, quality, and sustainability goals.

Intelligent Fresh Fixture Tactics

Smart Fridges & Cold Displays:

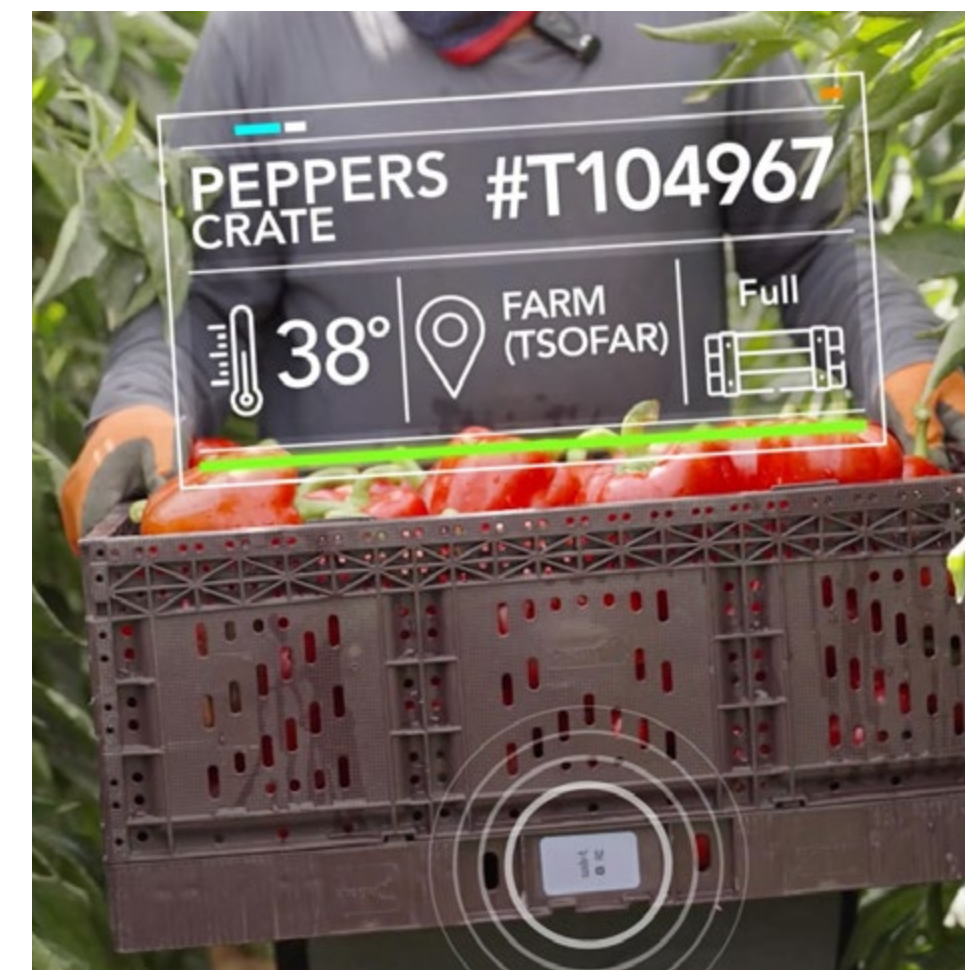
Launch RFID-enabled or sensor-monitored cases that alert staff to ripeness, temperature fluctuations, or spoilage risk

Interactive Digital Labels:

Equip produce shelves with NFC or QR-enabled tags that update in real time with freshness scores, harvest dates, or storage tips

Recipe-Sync Stations:

Integrate touchscreen displays into produce aisles that suggest recipes based on what's available and fresh, with option to auto-generate a shopping list.



Grocery Retail Innovation

Digital Transparency Tools

Empower informed choices through sourcing, impact, and ingredient traceability

Smart packaging and on-demand content—delivered through QR codes, AR overlays, or digital labels—invite customers deeper into the sourcing, nutrition, and impact story behind each item. This level of radical transparency isn’t just informative—it becomes a key differentiator for brands vying for conscious consumer loyalty.

Digital Transparency Tools Tactics

Blockchain Traceability Tags:

Highlight QR codes on produce that link to sourcing maps, grower profiles, and pesticide use

Eco Impact Ratings:

Display environmental scores (e.g., water usage, emissions, packaging impact) directly on fresh item signage

AR Origin Stories:

Test augmented reality activations where shoppers can scan produce to unlock virtual tours of the farm, producer interviews, or growing conditions.



Grocery Retail Innovation

Custom Nutrition Bundling

Curate fresh bundles and kits based on lifestyle and health needs

From diet-aligned meal kits to personalized snack packs, curated bundles are reshaping the grab-and-go landscape with relevance and care. These modular formats reflect an evolution from convenience to customization, helping grocers support individual health journeys at shelf speed.

Custom Nutrition Bundling Tactics

Goal-Based Grab-&-Go Kits:

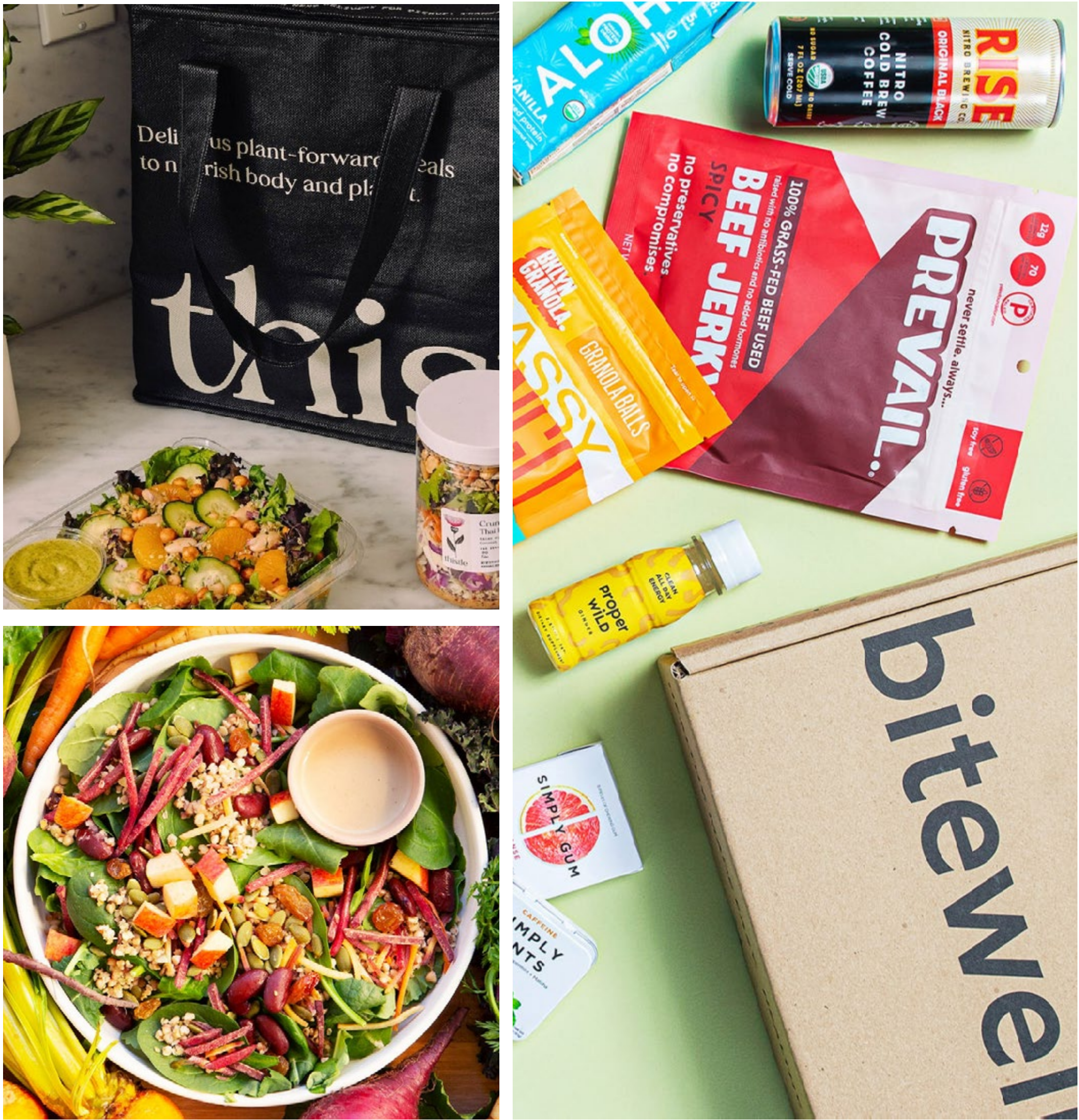
Create space for “imperfect” produce displays or flash sales on at-risk items nearing peak ripeness

Dietitian-Curated Produce Boxes:

Show customers how to store, prep, and extend the life of different produce types

Family-Style Meal Builders:

Show customers how to store, prep, and extend the life of different produce types

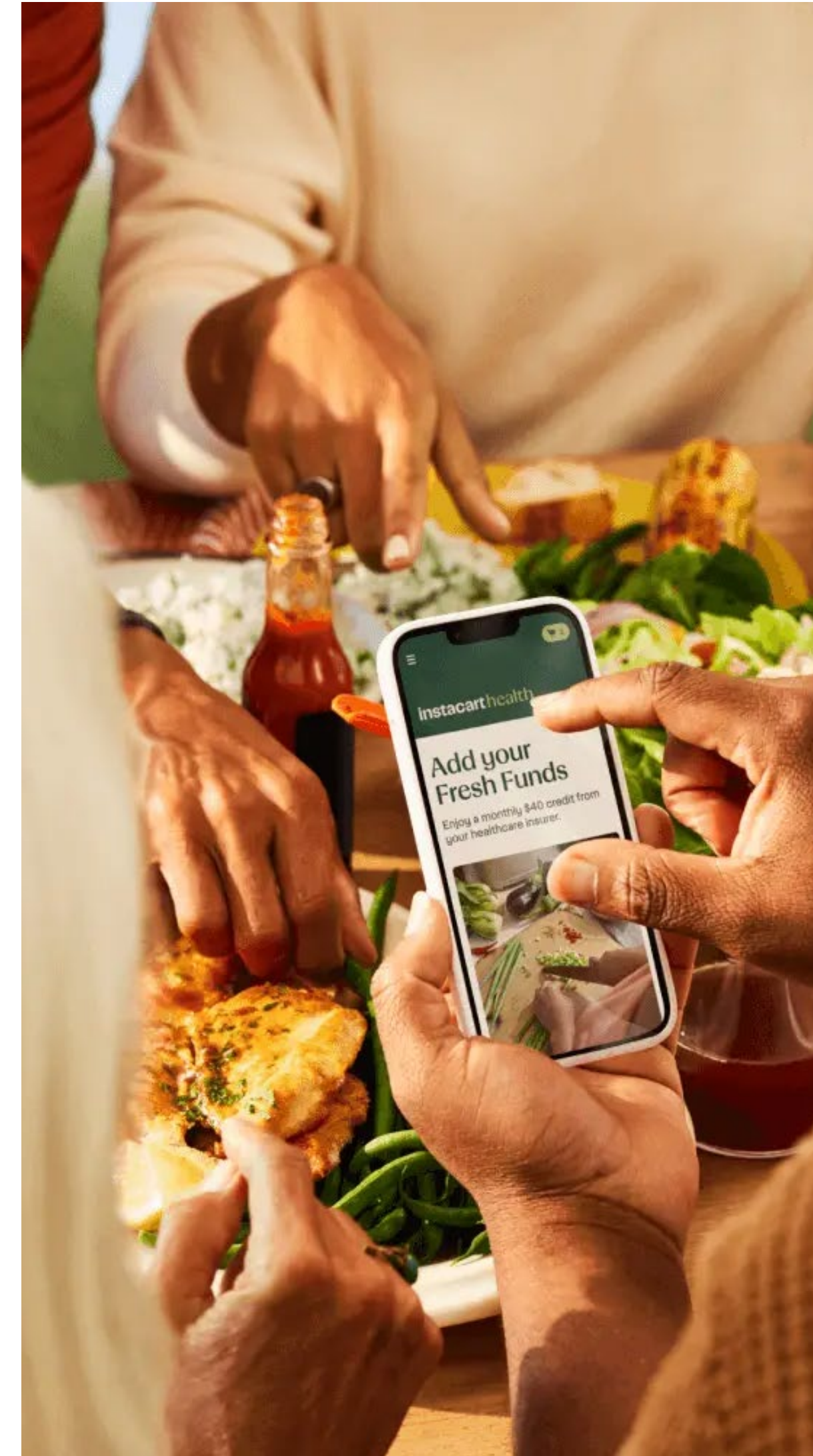


Grocery Retail Innovation

Takeaway for Retailers

Smart is the New Fresh

Retailers must now think beyond stocking fresh items to engineering fresh ecosystems. By integrating personalization, health optimization, and transparency tech into fresh categories, grocers can futureproof the perimeter of the store while deepening shopper trust and loyalty. In 2025, the brands that win in fresh will be the ones that anticipate individual needs—and deliver clarity, care, and confidence in every bite.



Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising

Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Overview

Store Design



Restorative Retail
Designing for Mindful, Emotional,
and Sensory Relief

Brand Experience



Strategic Play
Designing Joyful, Inclusive, and
Purposeful Ecounter

Brand Ecosystem



Ecosystem Thinking
Designing for Belonging, Value,
and Longevity.

Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Store Design

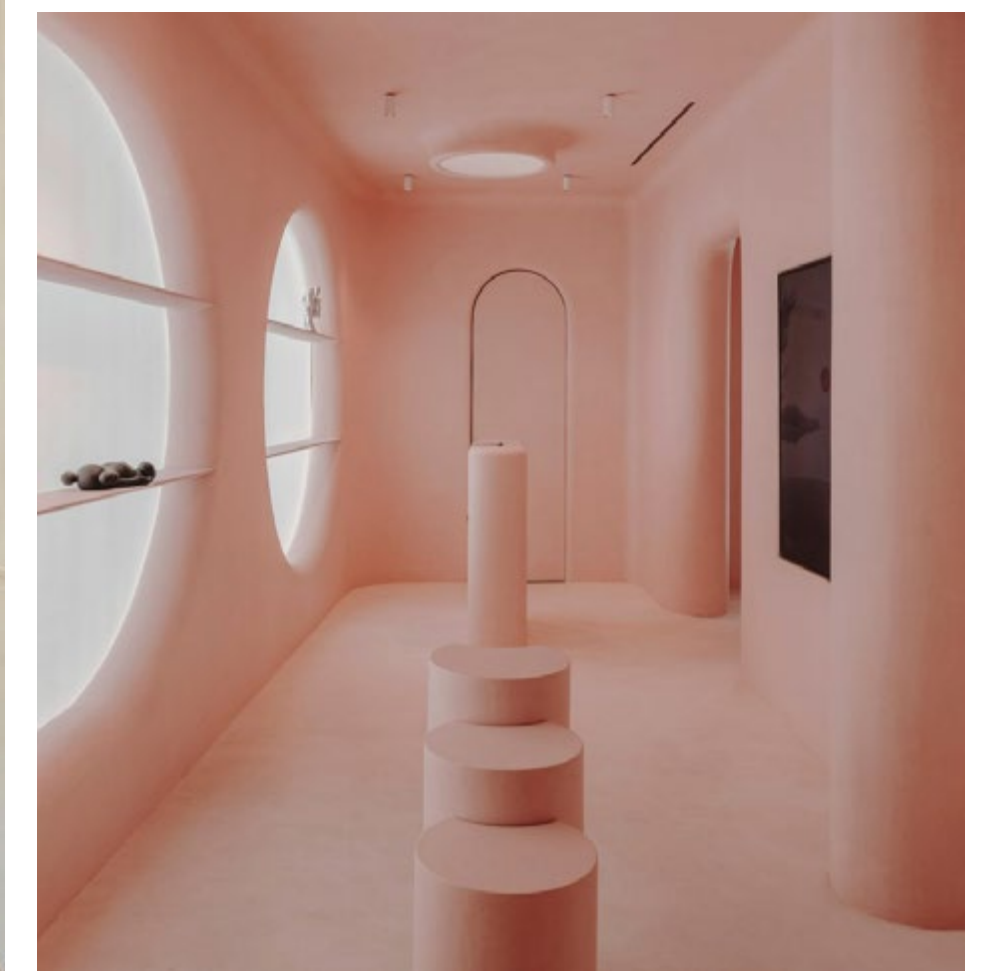
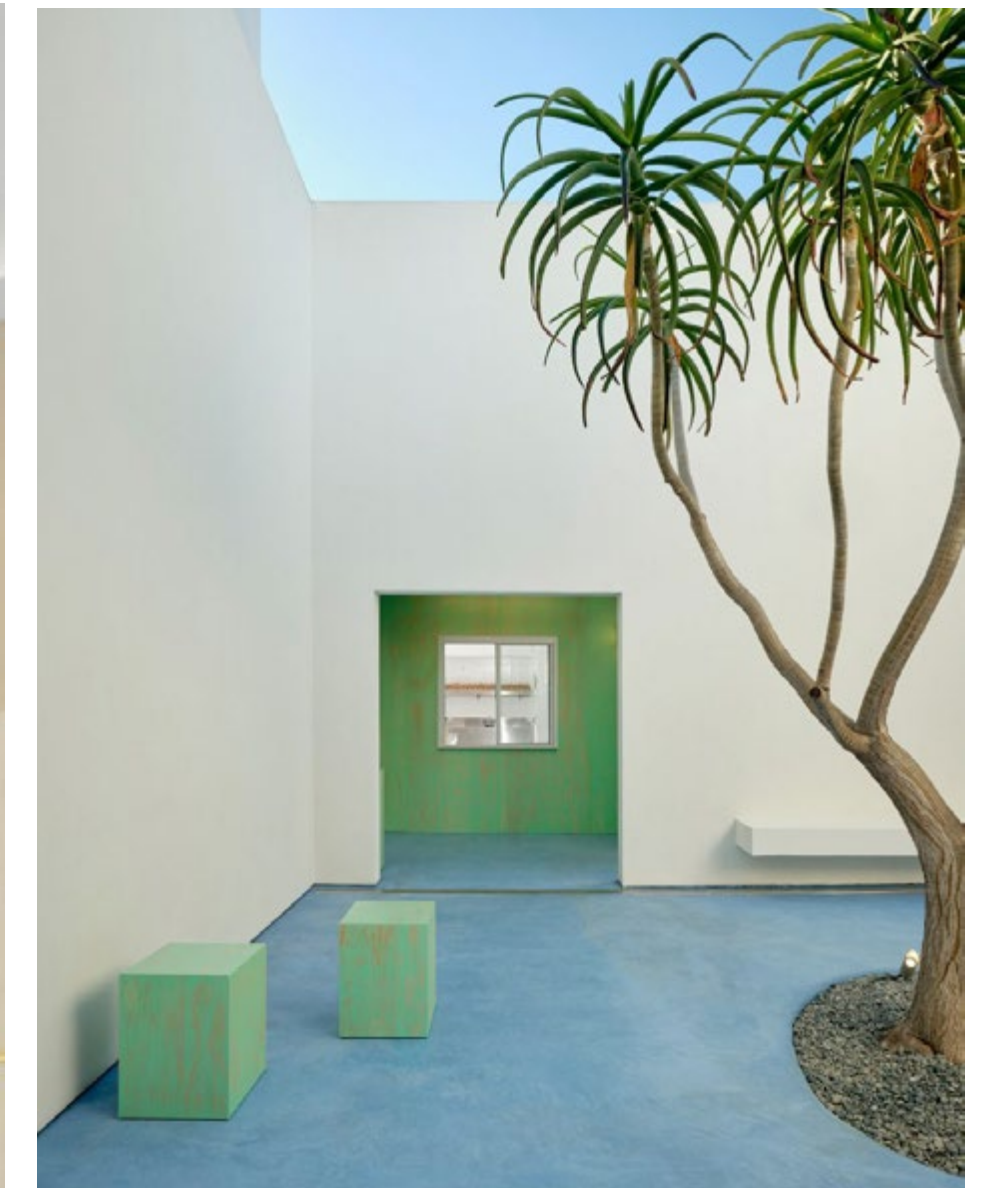
Store Design: Restorative Retail

Designing for Mindful, Emotional & Sensory Relief

As mental wellbeing rises in cultural priority—especially for Gen Z—retail environments are evolving to offer more than convenience or commerce. Specialty apparel brands are rethinking the store as a space for emotional restoration and sensory balance, embracing design strategies that calm the mind, ease the body, and invite connection. These are not stimulation centers—they're sanctuaries that meet the moment.

Spaces that Replenish, Not Deplete

In an era of overstimulation, burnout, and rising emotional fatigue, retail must do more than attract—it must restore. Restorative Retail prioritizes calm, comfort, and care, shifting away from high-stimulation experiences toward soothing, sensorially attuned environments. This approach moves beyond minimalism into multi-sensory design, intentional pacing, and social softness—all working in harmony to reduce friction and increase emotional safety. As wellness culture matures, brands must see the store as a vessel for renewal, where thoughtful design fosters presence, ease, and lasting connection.



Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Store Design

Core Strategy Pillars

Atmosphere of Calm:

Create emotionally attuned environments that foster serenity and refuge

Biophillic Integration:

Natural elements reduce stress and reinforce sustainability narratives.

Sensory Journey:

Encourage immersion, mindfulness, and emotional uplift through layered design experiences.

Artful Minimalism:

Simplify with gallery-like settings that elevate storytelling and ease decision-making

Indoor-Outdoor Blending:

Blur boundaries between architecture and nature to foster renewal

Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Store Design

Atmosphere of Calm

Design serenity into the emotional and spatial fabric of the store

This strategy centers on creating a sense of refuge from overstimulation. Through soft lighting, serene palettes, and spatial stillness, brands can build spaces that invite customers to breathe deeper, browse slower, and feel emotionally safe.

Atmosphere of Calm Tactics

Calming Colors:

Create a sense of serenity and comfort through soft neutral tones. Take inspiration from wellness-infused interiors via healing colours, such as soft blue, soothing pink and pale green.

Immersive Atmosphere:

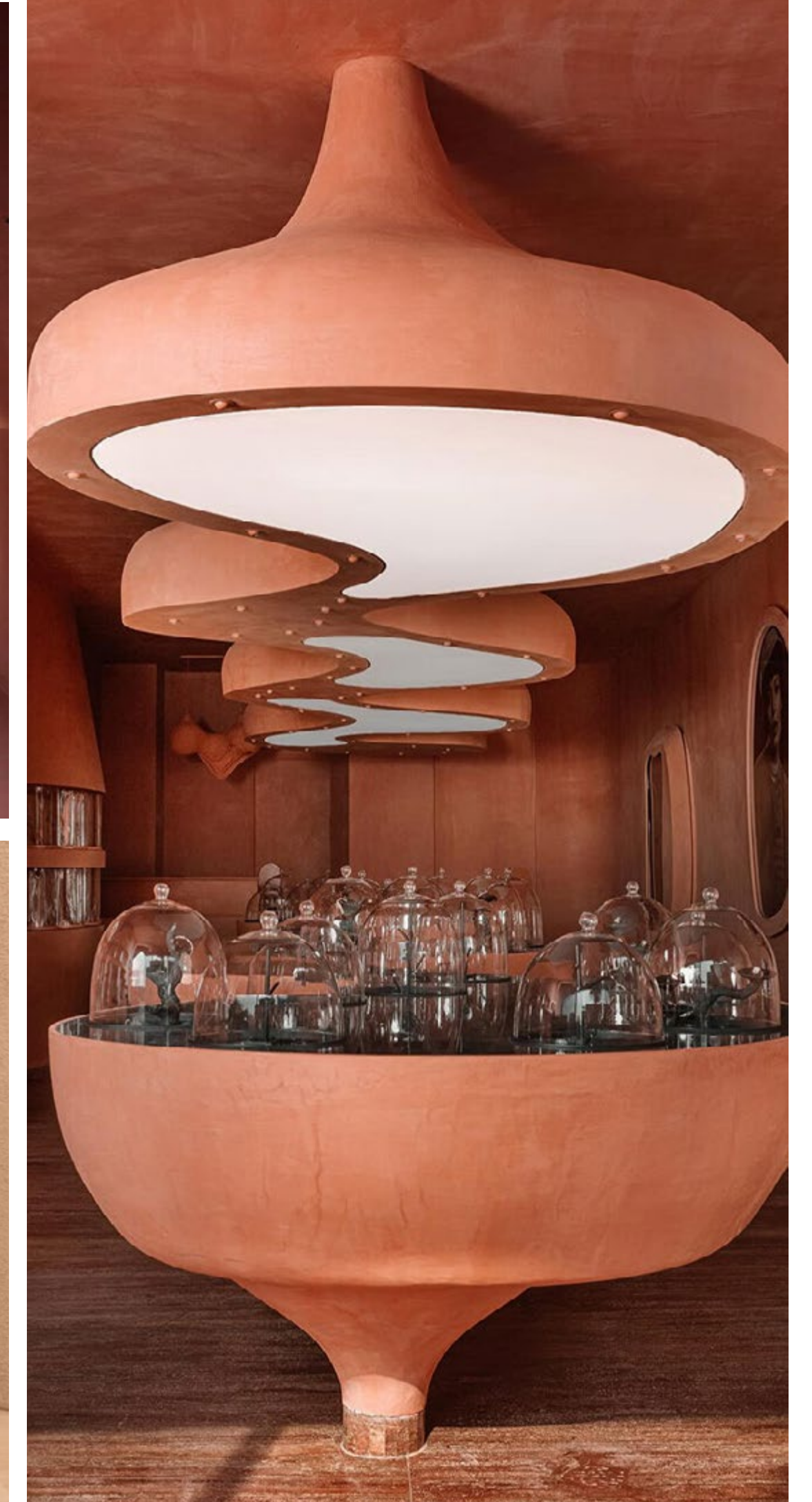
Experiment with colour-drenching for an immersive, enveloping feel, wherein the same colour is applied throughout the interior

Ease & Flow:

Design for flow and spaciousness to support visual and mental clarity – use calming colour applications in your spatial design to encourage shoppers to slow down, pause and reflect, leveraging the emotive power of colour commerce

Lightplay:

For a temporary approach to the trend, experiment with diffused and transformative lighting to soften the mood and encourage stillness – introducing color into spaces quickly and easily.



Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Store Design

Biophillic Integration

Use natural systems and materials to soothe and ground

By incorporating nature's forms, textures, and rhythms, stores can lower stress levels, foster emotional connection, and affirm a brand's sustainability values—all while enhancing sensory engagement.

Biophillic Integration Tactics

Living Architecture:

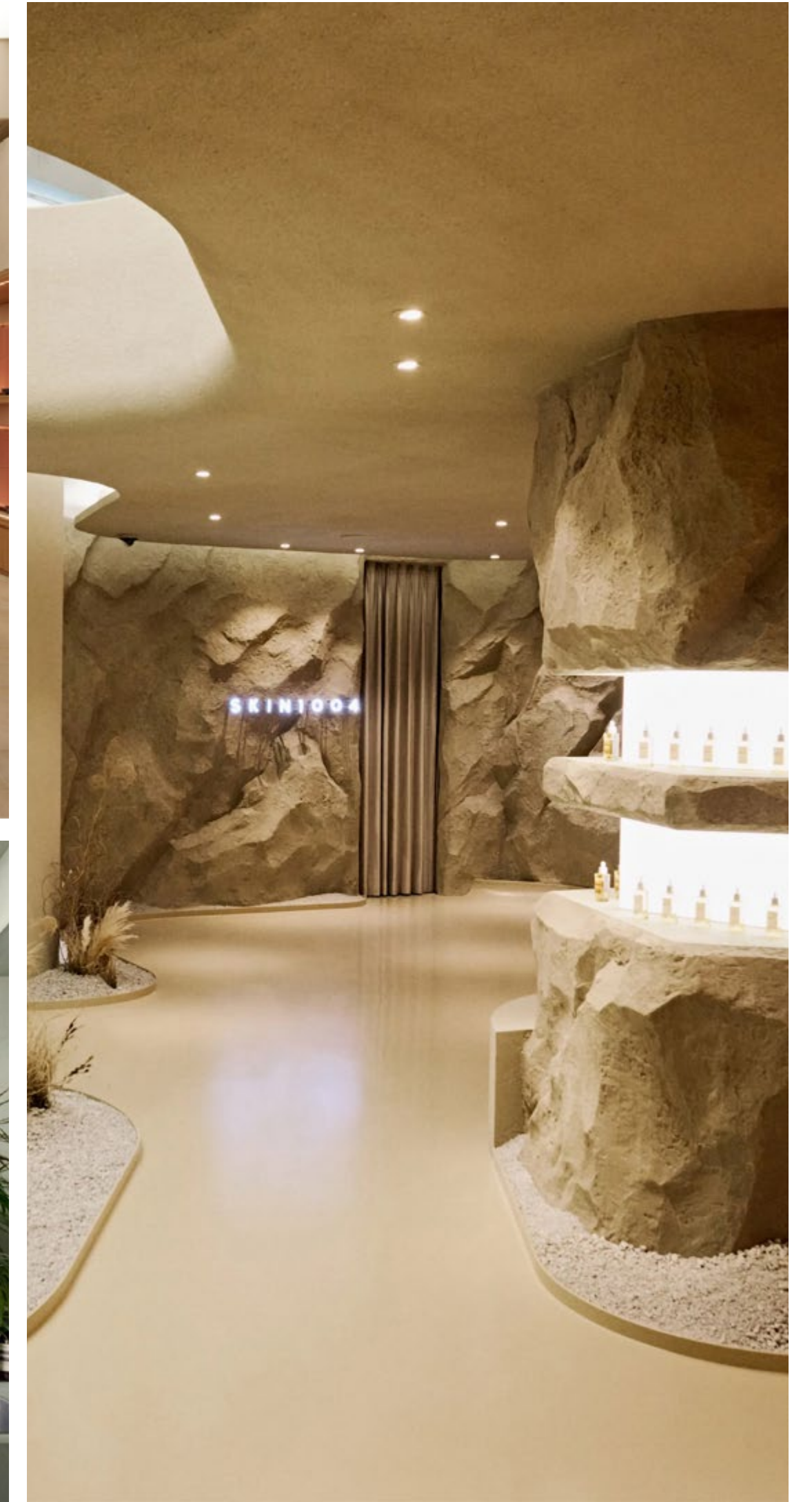
As consumers increasingly seek to reconnect with nature, integration of indoor trees, green walls, and garden-like retail layouts reinforce this connection.

Textural Ecology:

Experiment with natural materials like wood, bamboo, linen, and stone to heighten sensory comfort and tactility. Conveying the balance and healthiness of your store will connect with consumers living for longevity.

Seasonal Shifts:

Rotating greenery or seasonal floral installations create freshness and rhythm. Choose plants that not only fit the brand identity but also the shop's specific environmental surroundings.



Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Store Design

Sensory Journey

Design immersive experiences that promote awareness and uplift

Restorative design considers the entire sensory arc of a visit—layering light, texture, sound, and flow to create intentional moments of pause, curiosity, and emotional resonance.

Sensory Journey Tactics

Peek-a-Boo Facades:

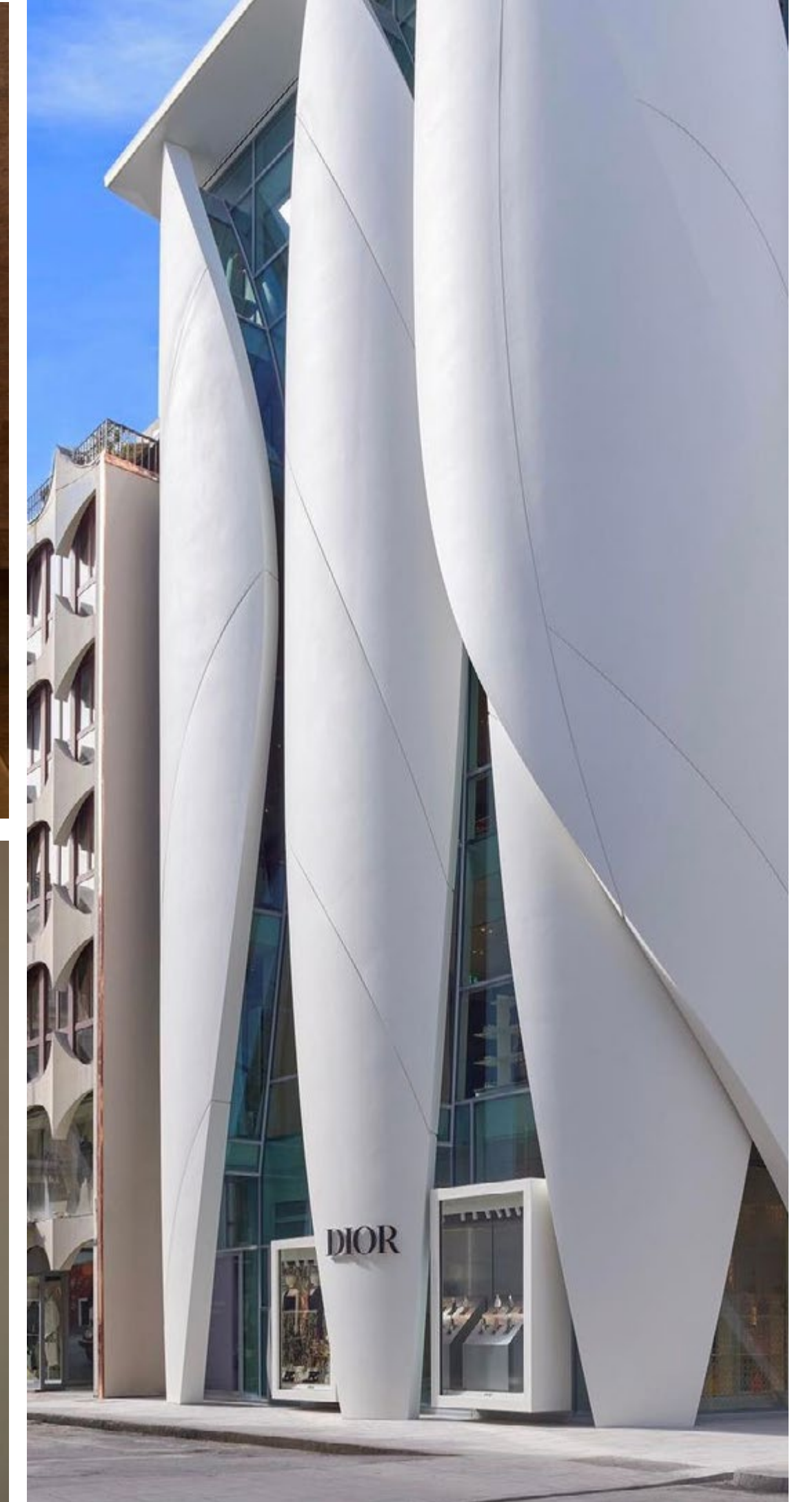
Concealed or partially visible storefronts build intrigue and emotional anticipation for what's inside, creating a more compelling retail experience.

Contemplative Corners:

Intimate nooks, seating areas, or textural hideaways invite pause and introspection. Enable moments that breakthrough the hectic speed of everyday life and social media – encouraging consumers to slow down and relax can boost brand affinity.

Multisensory Layering:

Subtle soundscapes, scent zoning, or textured flooring deepen immersion. Multisensory retail design communicates care for the customer beyond the transaction. Thoughtfully crafted environments build trust and emotional loyalty – make visits more memorable and brand experiences more resonant.



Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Store Design

Artful Minimalism

Curate with clarity to create space for story, product, and pause

In a world of cognitive overload, simplicity becomes a luxury. Artful Minimalism strips away visual noise, allowing product narratives to shine while supporting ease and intentionality in how customers explore.

Artful Minimalism Tactics

Sculptural Merchandising:

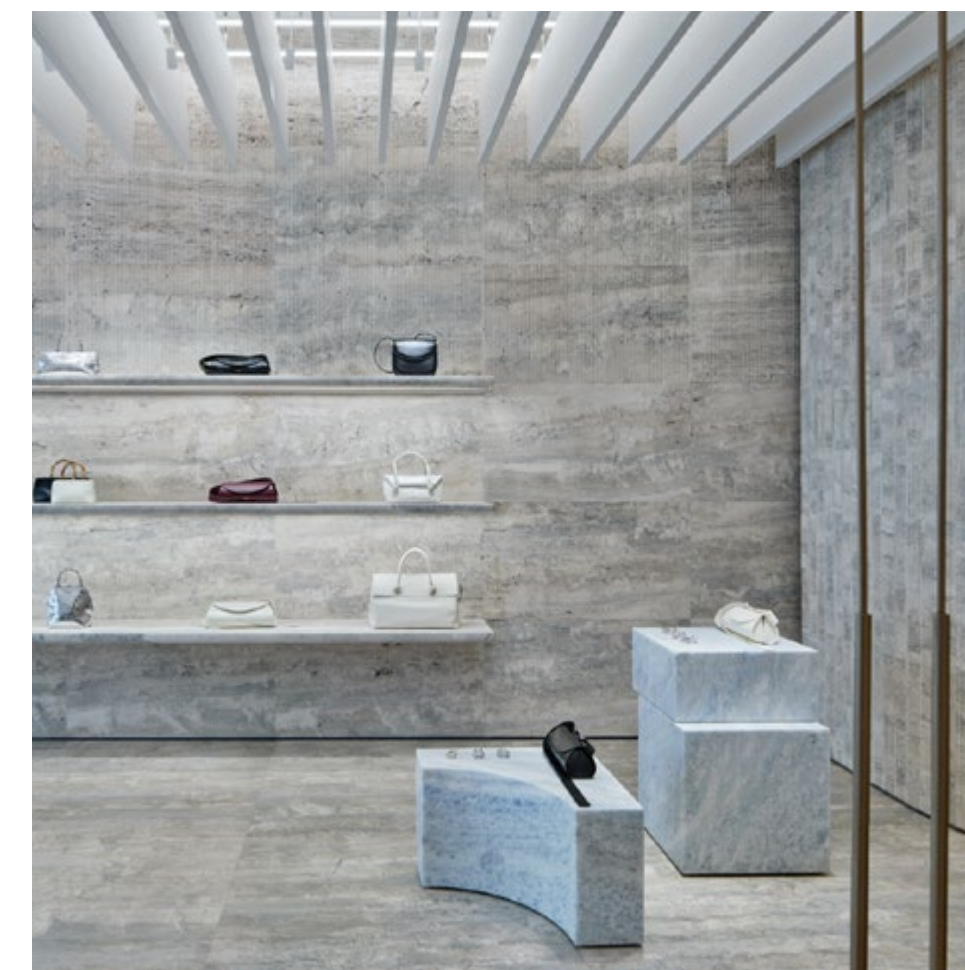
Use of plinths, monolithic fixtures, and organic contours to highlight product presence. Tapping into visual serenity and spatial prestige allows customers to focus and engage with products more intentionally.

Spatial Editing:

Lean assortments allow for focus and flow, amplifying curation and intention. Highlighting fewer items, but with more storytelling and emotional impact fosters an unhurried, intuitive shopping journey.

Light-Filled Galleries:

High ceilings and natural light create spacious, museum-like calm, providing a thoughtful and alluring in-store experience. Stimulate the senses without overwhelming shoppers.



Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Store Design

Indoor-Outdoor Blending

Foster renewal by softening the boundary between store and nature

Bringing elements of the outdoors into retail spaces adds a sense of vitality and sensory relief. These gestures ground the store in its environment and create a breathable, emotionally resonant atmosphere.

Indoor-Outdoor Blending Tactics

Courtyard Integration:

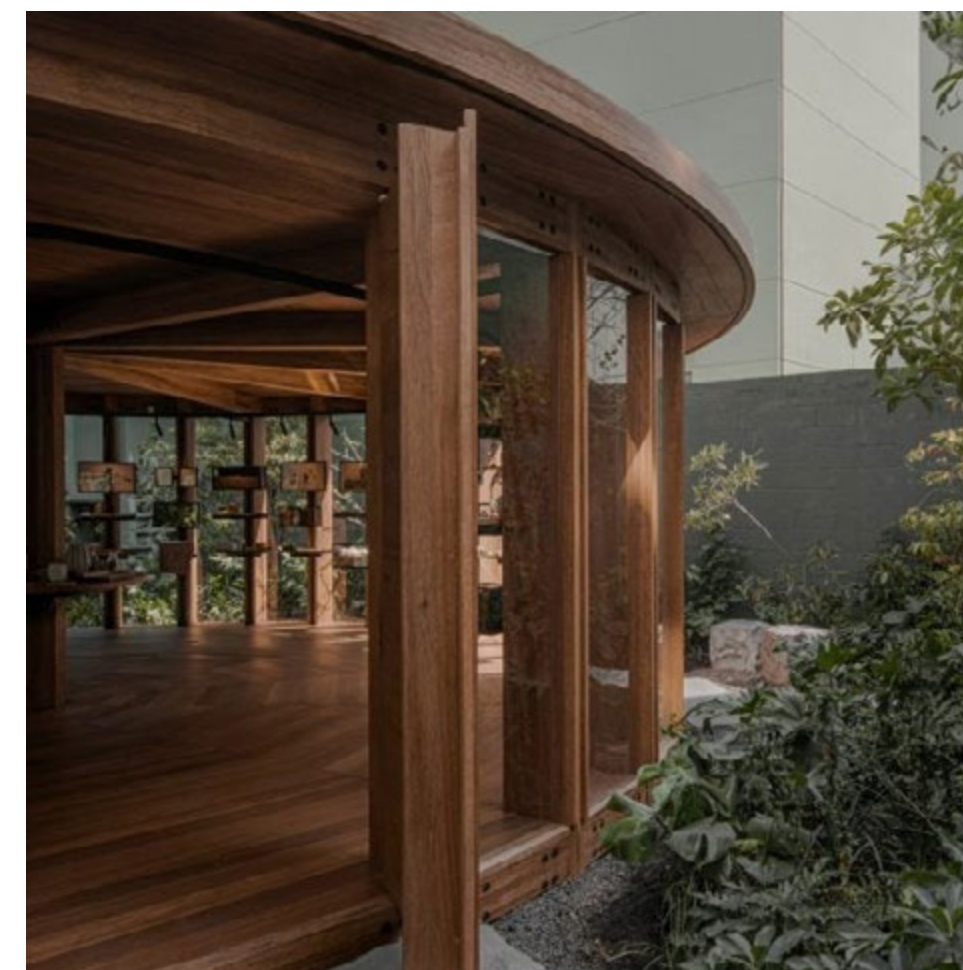
Internal patios, skylights, or atriums introduce sunlight and create sensory reset zones. Bringing the sensation of nature into spatial design to foster calm, comfort, and tranquility among today's anxious shoppers.

Natural Dialogue:

Material continuity and organic forms root stores in their physical and cultural environments. Using raw forms and surfaces to add interest and depth to otherwise pared-down displays. Provide a calming more sustainable space using refined natural materials and sculptural forms in warm, neutral tones.

Airiness & Openness:

Emphasis on ventilation, views, and open-plan flow combats spatial claustrophobia and makes decision-making easier all while elevating the overall shopping experience.

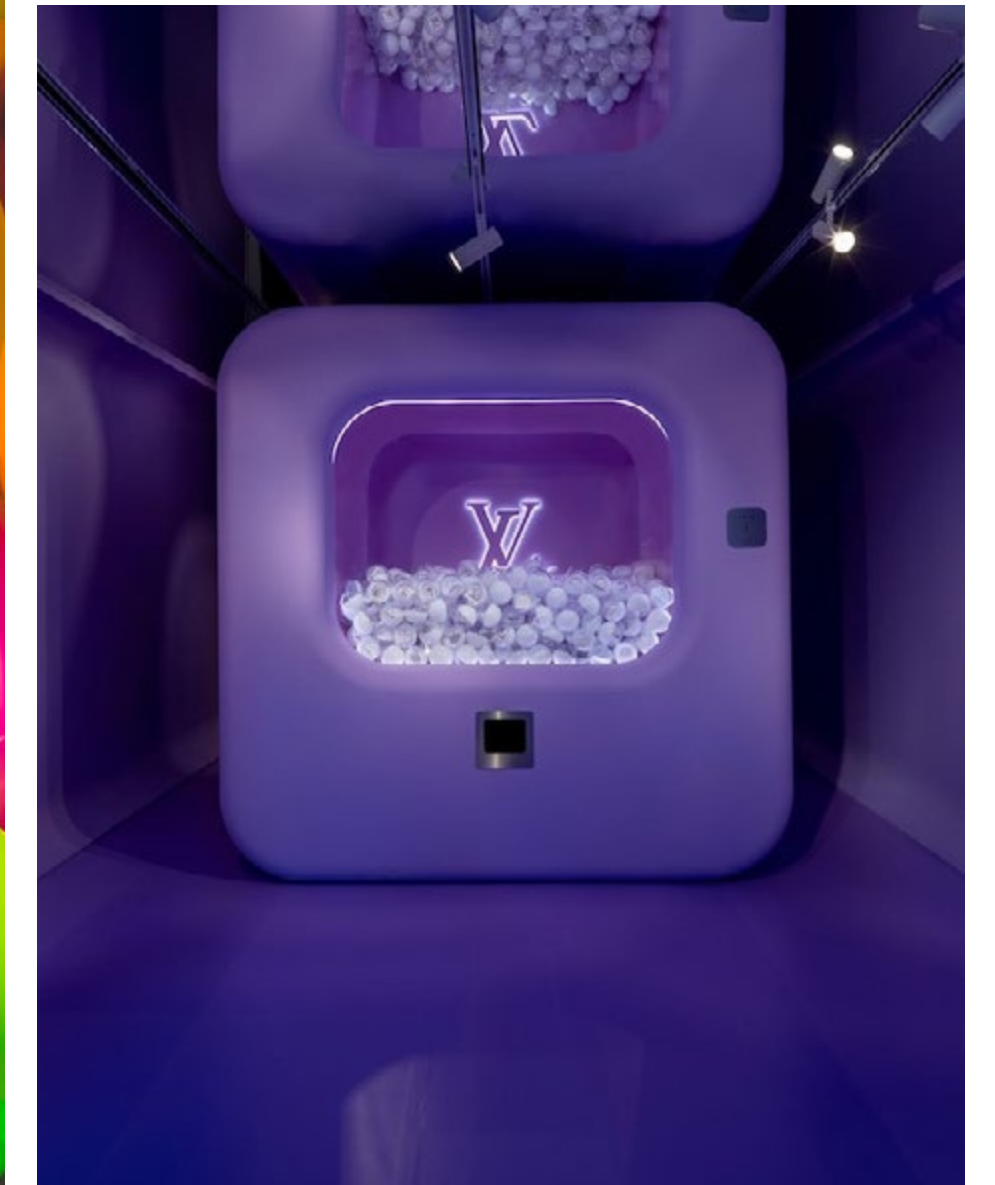


Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Brand Experience

Brand Experience: Strategic Play

Designing Joyful, Inclusive & Purposeful Encounters

Play is rapidly evolving into a powerful brand strategy—less about whimsy, more about meaning. For specialty apparel, integrating play into physical and digital touchpoints offers deepened emotional engagement, stronger community ties, and a future-facing edge. From escapist storytelling to playful inclusivity and internal culture shifts, brands that take play seriously will lead with both innovation and humanity.



Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Brand Experience

Core Strategy Pillars

Play with Purpose:

Move beyond “fun” aesthetics to craft experiences that are joyful and strategically meaningful

Wellbeing Through Play:

Position play as essential to wellness, especially amid rising loneliness and digital fatigue

KI: Kid Intelligence:

Use a childlike lens to unlock creativity and relevance across generations

Modular & Inclusive Play:

Design experiences and spaces that feel welcoming and adaptive to all forms of play

Workplace Play:

Embed playful mindsets into internal culture to fuel innovation and brand authenticity

Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Brand Experience

Play With Purpose

Move beyond “fun” to foster deeper engagement

Playful experiences can be more than lighthearted—they can be transformative. This strategy leverages play to immerse, surprise, and emotionally anchor shoppers in brand worlds that provide delight and meaning.

Play With Purpose Tactics

Storytelling as Escapism:

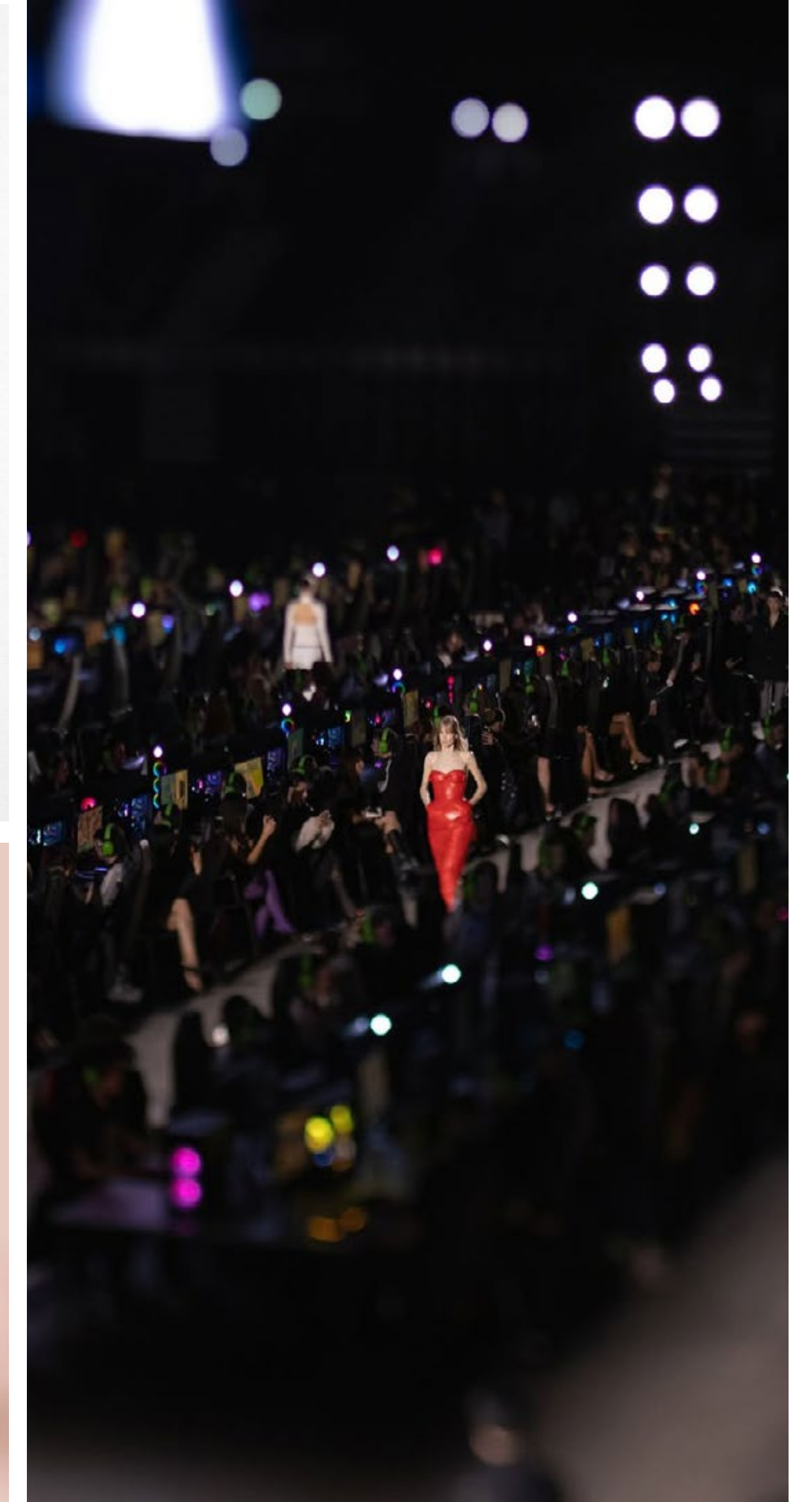
Build fantastical or nostalgic worlds across digital and physical retail

Gamified Touchpoints:

Add interactive mechanics to loyalty programs, try-ons, and discovery path

Purposeful Design Cues:

Use playful form, typography, or motion to reinforce brand intent



Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Brand Experience

Wellbeing Through Play

Combat loneliness and burnout through joyful connection

With social isolation and digital fatigue on the rise, play becomes a tool for emotional reset. In-store programming and product storytelling that promote lightness, collaboration, and comfort can enhance both brand value and customer wellbeing.

Wellbeing Through Play Tactics

Social Fitness Spaces:

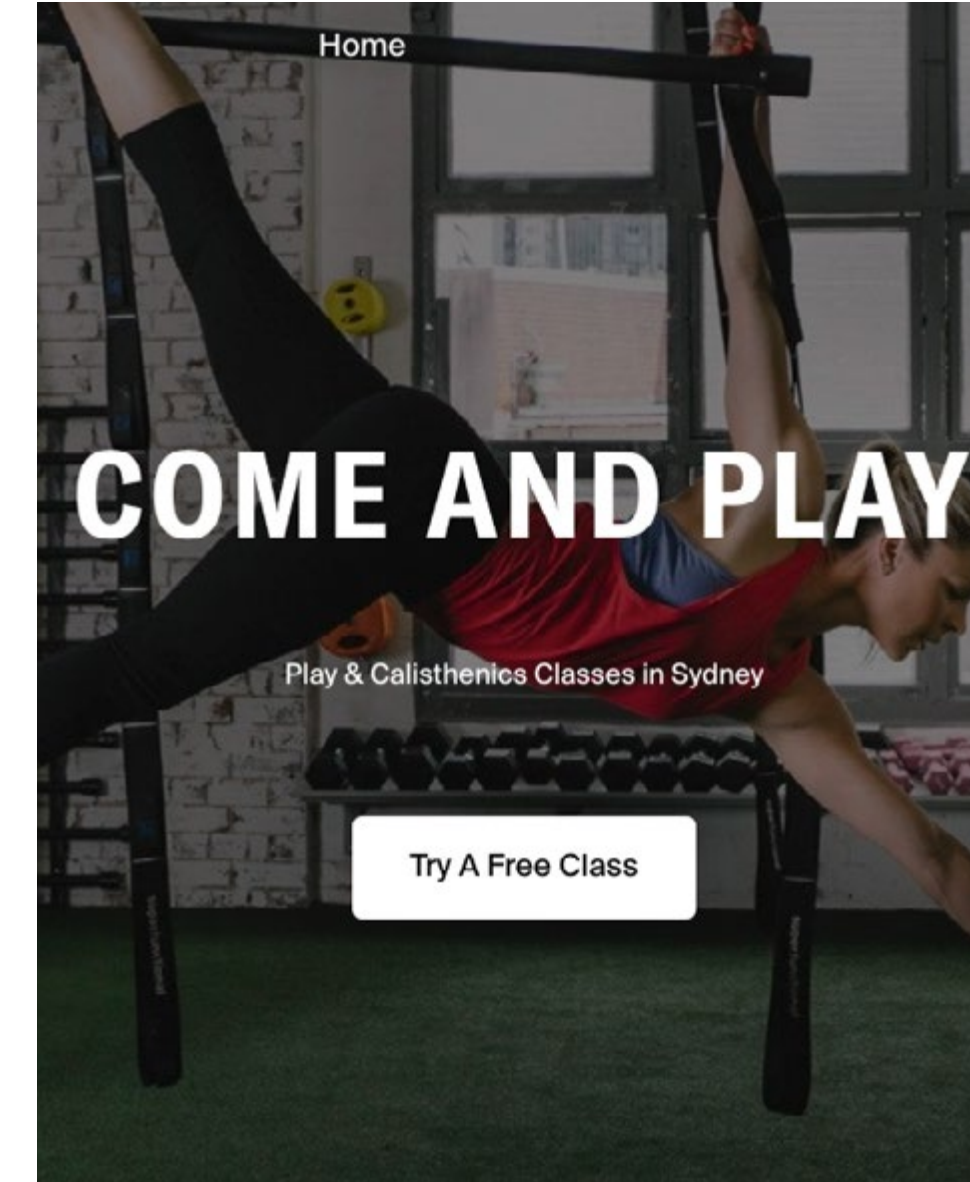
Host community events for creative or movement-based play

Inner Child Healing:

Lean into self-soothing nostalgia and self-gifting rituals

Mindful Merchandising:

Create soothing zones with tactile or analog elements



Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Brand Experience

KI: Kid Intelligence

Tap youth imagination to fuel cross-generational creativity

Youth culture has always been a taste-maker, but today it's also a co-creator. Brands that adopt a “kid lens” embrace naiveté, wonder, and fun as key to product relevance, campaign resonance, and long-term innovation.

KI: Kid Intelligence Tactics

Youth-Led Insight

Partner with Gen Alpha or Gen Z to shape brand expressions

Nostalgic Collabs:

License retro IPs and visuals to spark memory and emotional appeal

Juvenile Joy Codes:

Use childlike colors, graphics, or formats in grown-up ways



Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Brand Experience

Modular & Inclusive Play

Design for all bodies, brains, and playstyles

Play should be expansive, not exclusive. This pillar emphasizes adaptable experiences that honor different ways of engaging—especially for neurodiverse, disabled, or culturally varied shoppers. It also encourages modularity for broader accessibility.

Modular & Inclusive Play Tactics

Play Personalities:

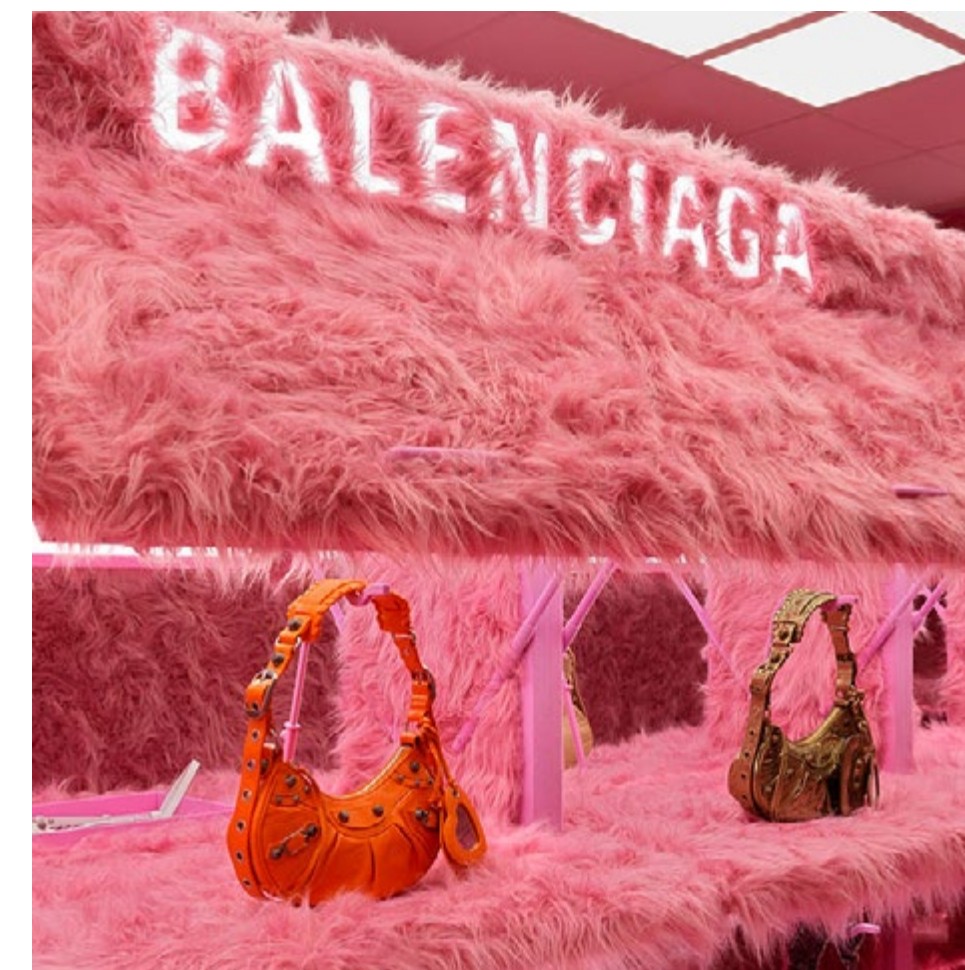
Design for different modes—tactile, competitive, cooperative, imaginative

Multisensory Brand Worlds:

Use scent, sound, and texture to deepen inclusivity

Adjustable Environments:

Offer flexible zones that adapt to quiet, social, or creative play



Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Brand Experience

Workplace Play

Internalize play to fuel innovation and brand soul

To authentically champion play externally, brands must embody it internally. This pillar explores how playful processes—like experimentation and flow-state working—can supercharge creativity and help teams stay agile and resilient.

Workplace Play Tactics

Playstorming over Brainstorming:

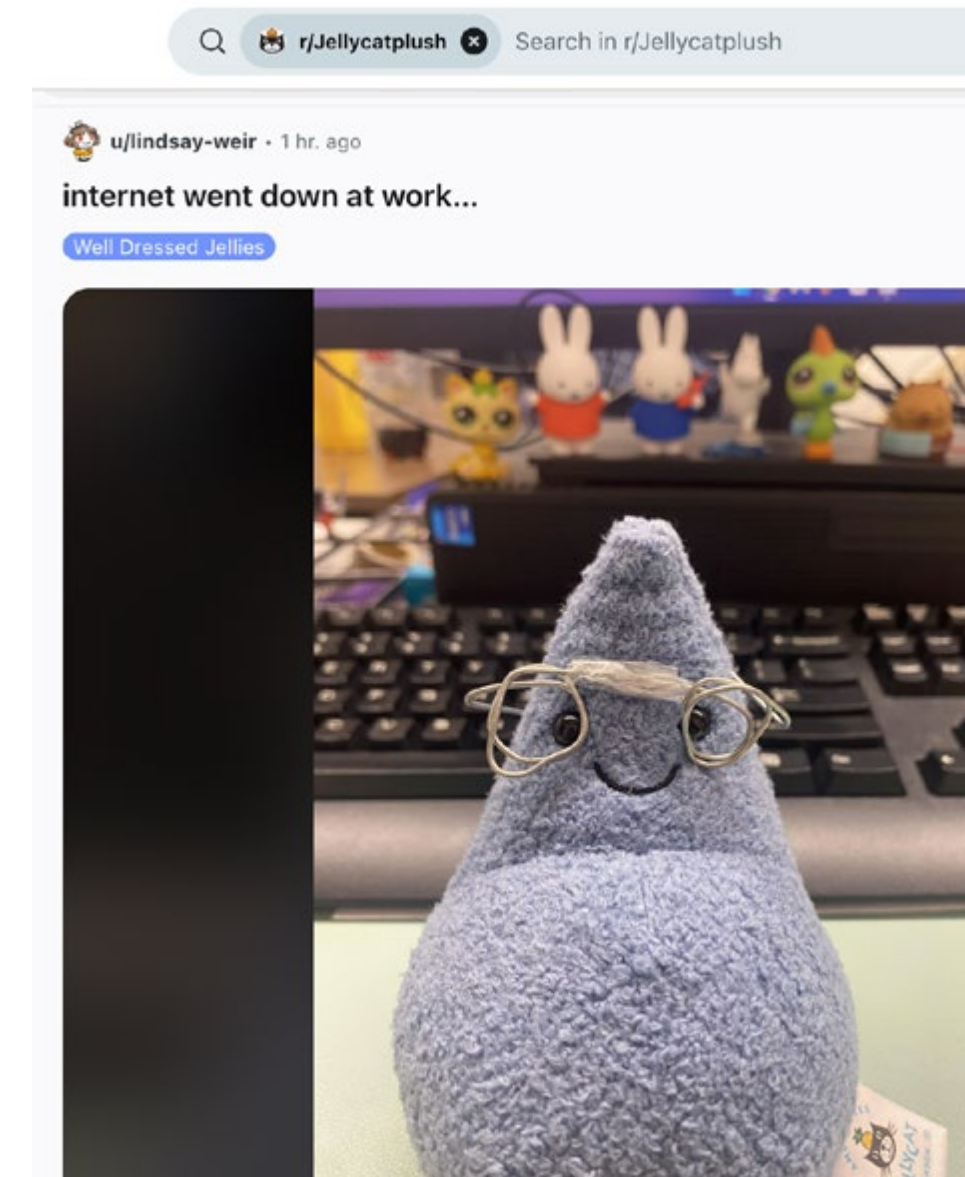
Rethink ideation with tactile, open-ended activities

Flow-State Training:

Give teams immersive environments for risk-free exploration

Culture of Curiosity:

Incentivize light-hearted experimentation in product, service, and space

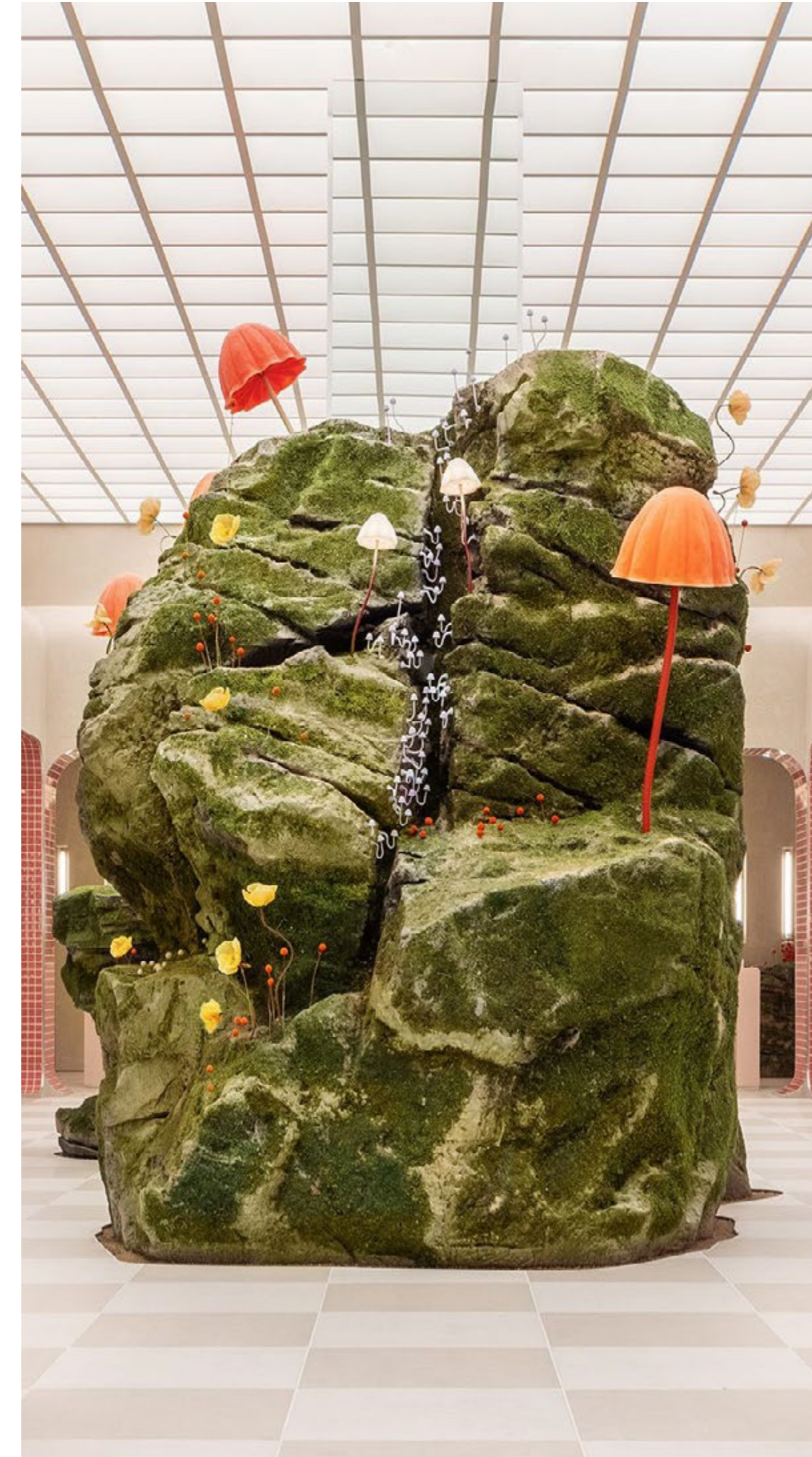


Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Brand Ecosystem

Brand Ecosystem: Ecosystem Thinking

Designing for Belonging, Value & Longevity

As retail becomes more fragmented, specialty apparel brands must evolve from standalone stores into dynamic ecosystems—connecting lifestyle, community, and commerce. This shift means building platforms, not just storefronts, where services, storytelling, and social connection drive deeper loyalty. Ecosystem Thinking is about resilience, cultural relevance, and value that extends far beyond the rack.



Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Brand Experience

Core Strategy Pillars

Beyond The Rack

Expand beyond apparel with new categories, collabs, and store formats

Service as Strategy

Position services as core offerings, not just add-ons

Community as Currency

Build loyalty through cultural participation and co-creation

Revenue Beyond Retail

Unlock platform models for diversified growth

Unified Loyalty Infrastructure

Create seamless, cross-platform loyalty ecosystems

Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Brand Ecosystem

Beyond the Rack: Diversify the Offer

Expand your value across lifestyle categories and retail formats

To stay relevant and reach new audiences, apparel brands are stretching into adjacent categories and flexible retail concepts. These extensions create new entry points, boost cultural relevance, and support lifestyle positioning.

Beyond the Rack Tactics

Sub-Brands & Extensions:

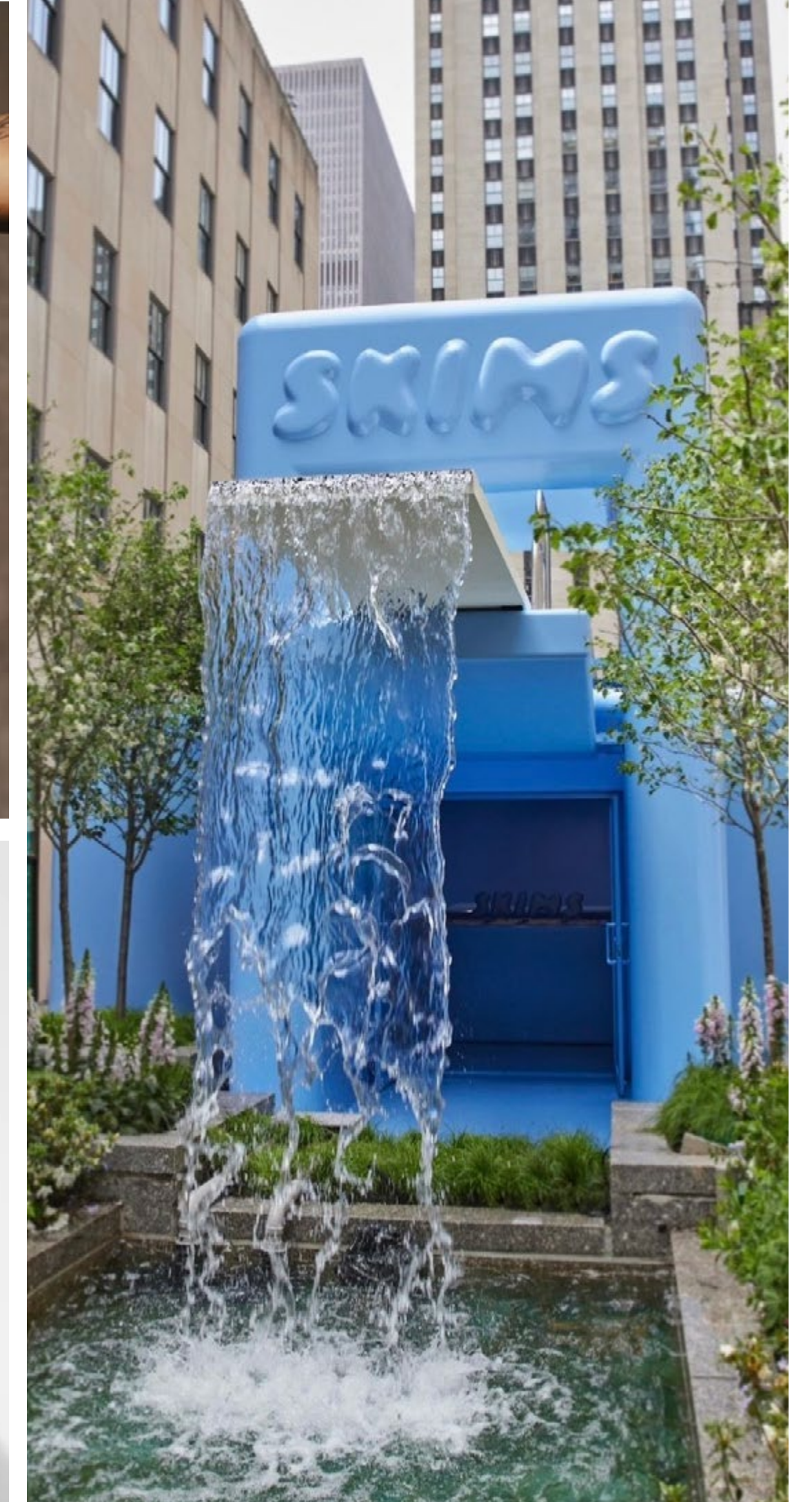
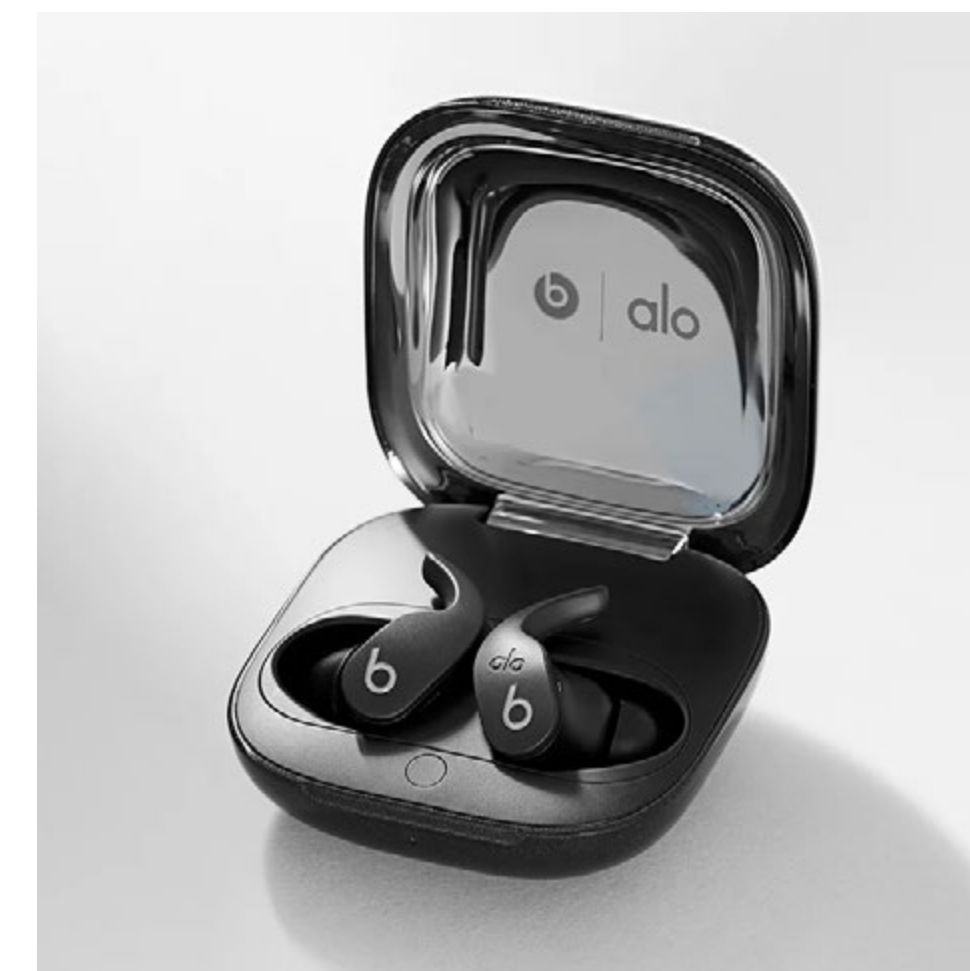
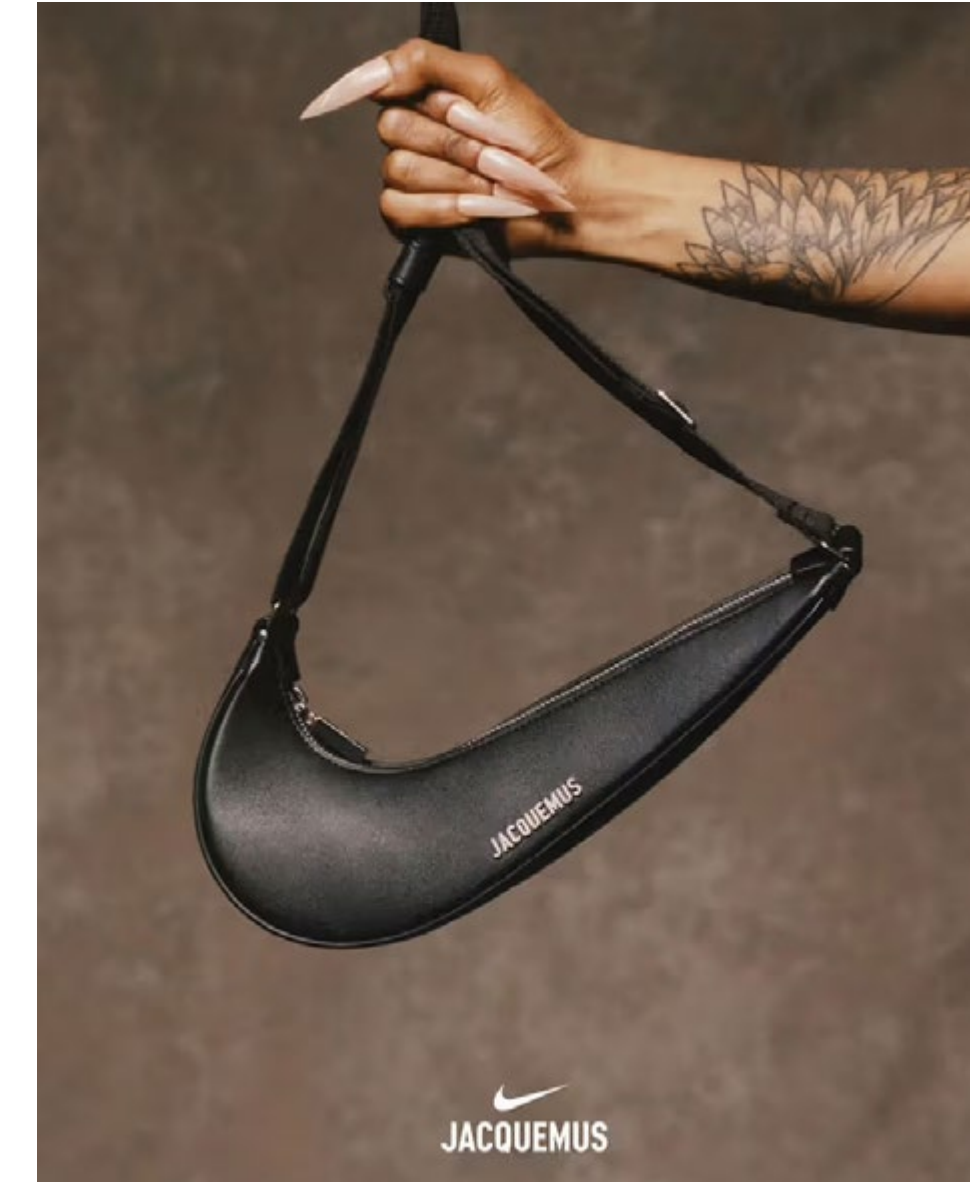
Launch capsule lines for niche use cases (e.g. travelwear, hybridwear)

Cross-Category Collabs:

Partner with wellness, tech, or beauty brands for limited drops

Format Innovation:

Test modular stores—like seasonal pop-ups or campus labs—to target micro-communities



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Service as Strategy

Turn services into value drivers, not side features

Services like styling, repair, and logistics can create long-term loyalty and differentiate the brand experience. When woven into physical and digital environments, they become key assets in delivering value beyond product.

Service as Strategy Tactics

Expertise Over Inventory:

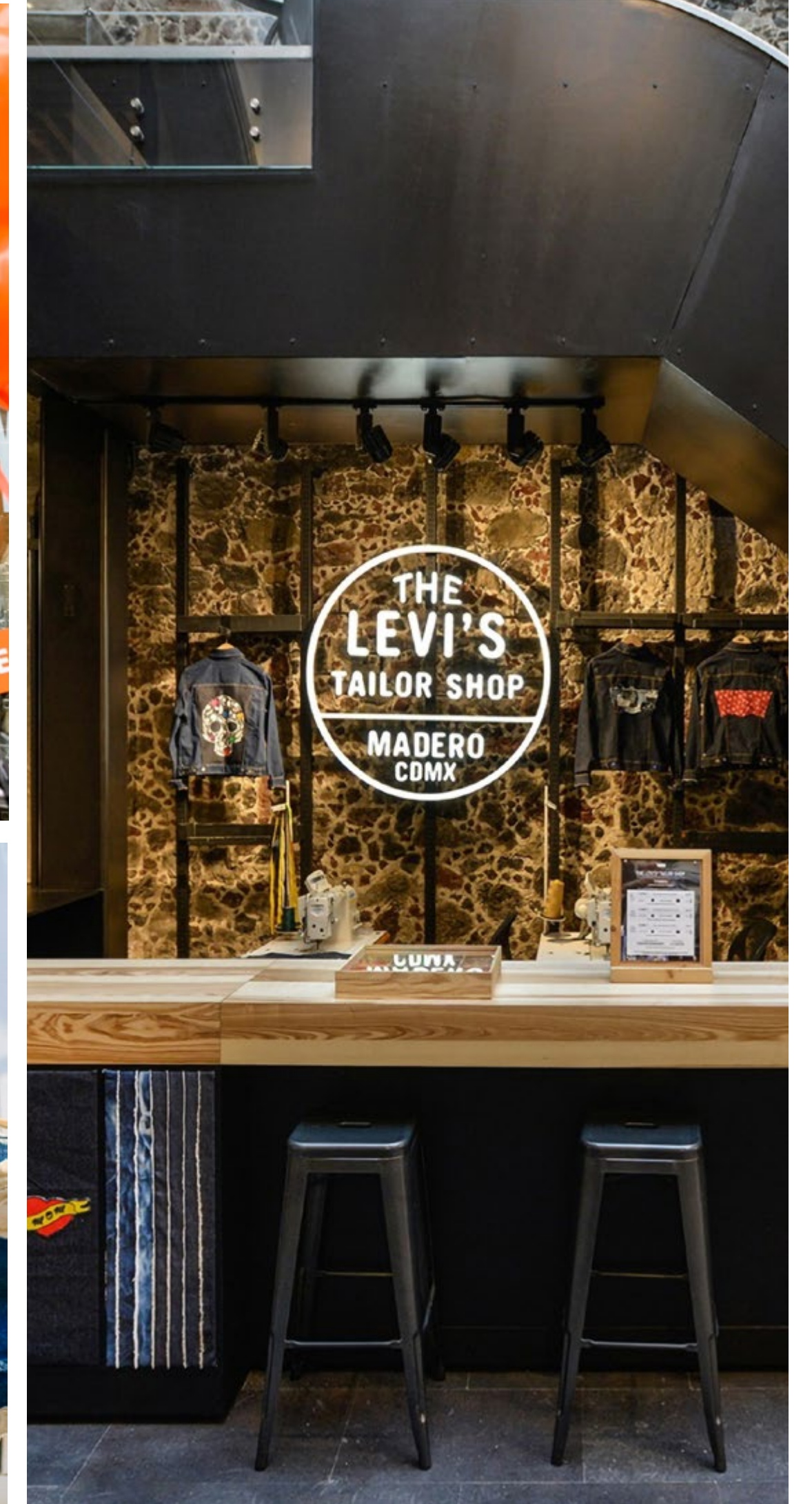
Launch capsule lines for niche use cases (e.g. travelwear, hybridwear)

Repair & Refresh:

Enable tailoring, mending, or upcycling to extend product life

Quick-Commerce Layer:

Collaborate with last-mile delivery services to meet fast-fashion standards more sustainably



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Community as Currency

Build loyalty through culture, conversation, and co-creation

Brands are shifting from broadcasters to hosts—creating spaces where customers gather, contribute, and feel seen. This human-centric approach turns affinity into advocacy.

Community as Currency Tactics

In-Store Activations:

Use stores as hubs for style clinics, collabs, or talks

Content Ecosystems:

Launch editorial, audio, or video series to deepen storytelling

Feedback Loops:

Let power users guide product development or test in-store concepts

Outdoor Voices

What is Doing Things?

There's no start or finish. It's all about getting out there and having fun with friends daily. Show us how you're #DoingThings.



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Revenue Beyond Retail

Transform your brand into a lifestyle platform

Retail can be the front door to a broader value network. By opening new monetization channels—like media, food, or B2B support—brands extend their impact, utility, and profitability.

Revenue Beyond Retail Tactics

Retail Media:

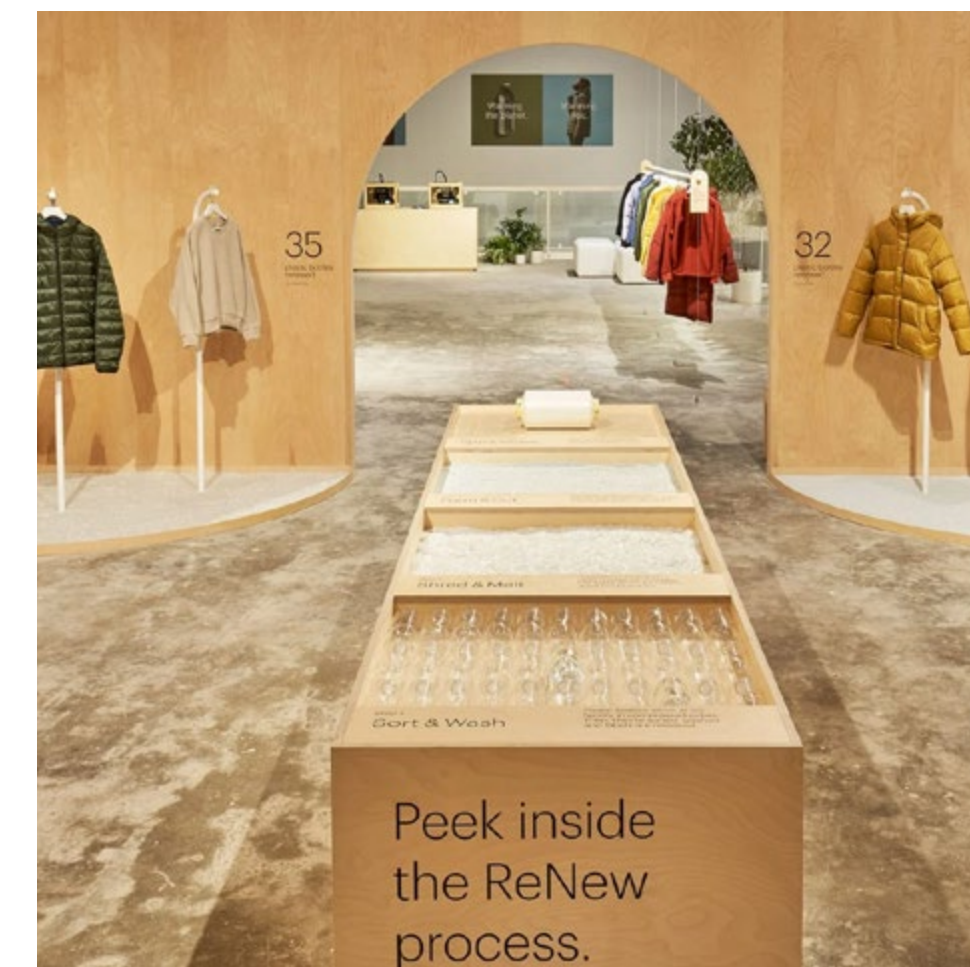
Sell ad placements and data insights via your digital storefront

B2B Enablement:

Offer white-label services in fulfillment or design

Food & Mood:

Add juice bars, cafés, or sensory labs to boost in-store immersion



Specialty Retail Visual Merchandising Brand Ecosystem

Unified Loyalty Infrastructure

Build a seamless rewards ecosystem across channels and lifestyles

Modern loyalty is less about points and more about presence. A robust system that tracks and rewards across touchpoints—while offering lifestyle-aligned benefits—can build stickier customer relationships.

Unified Loyalty Infrastructure Tactics

Tiered Memberships:

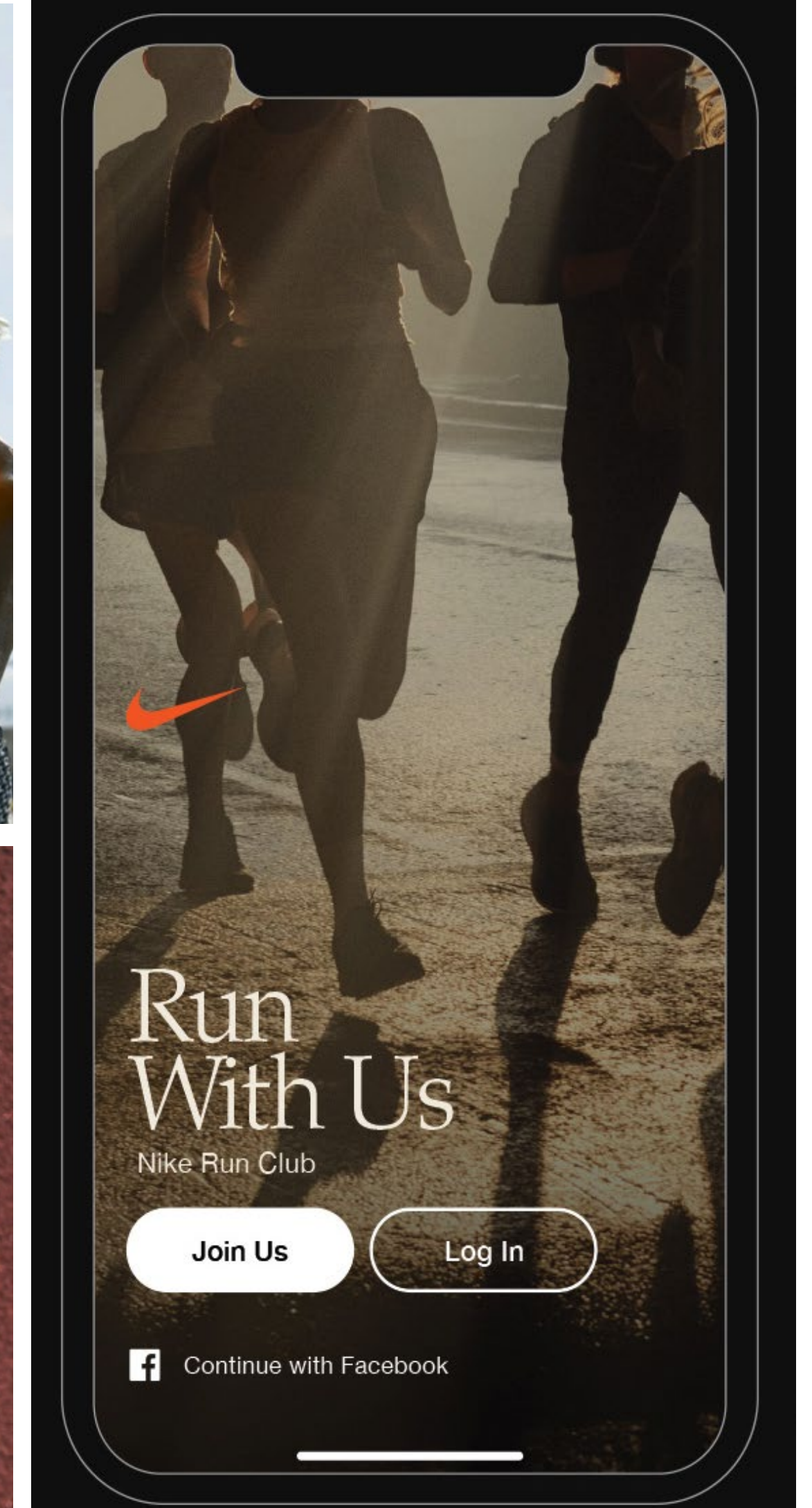
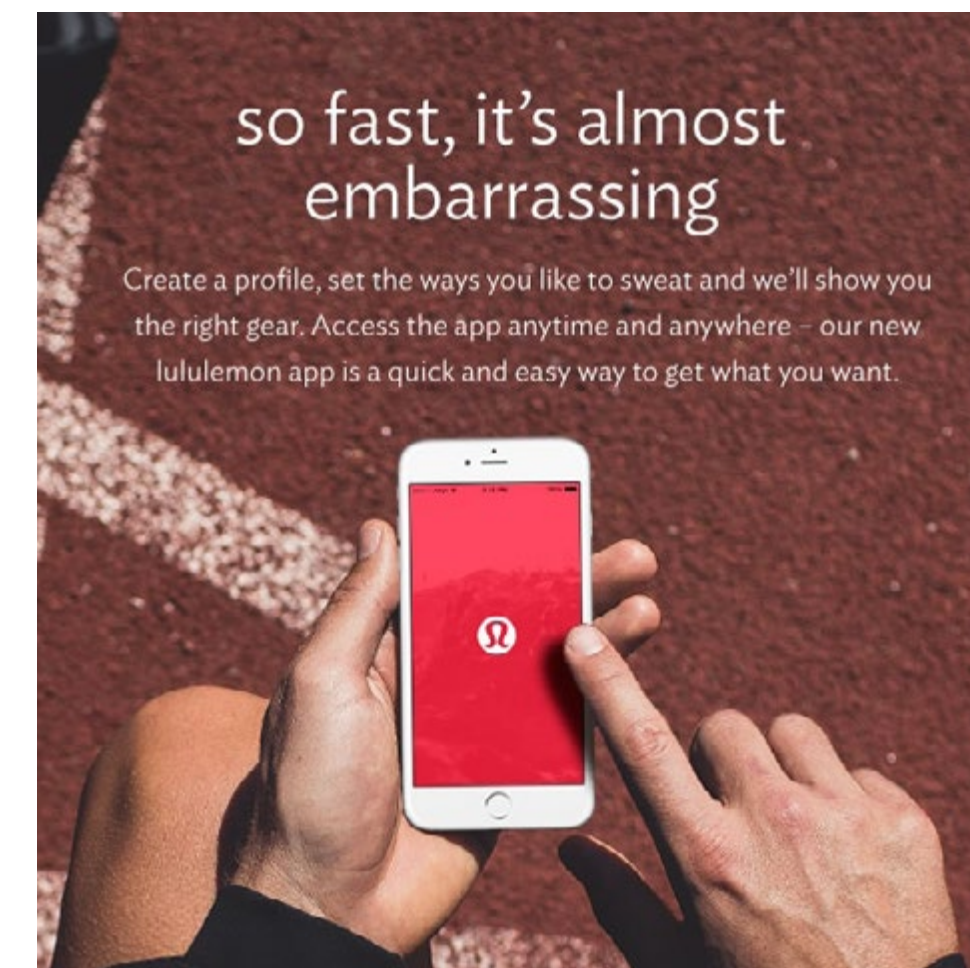
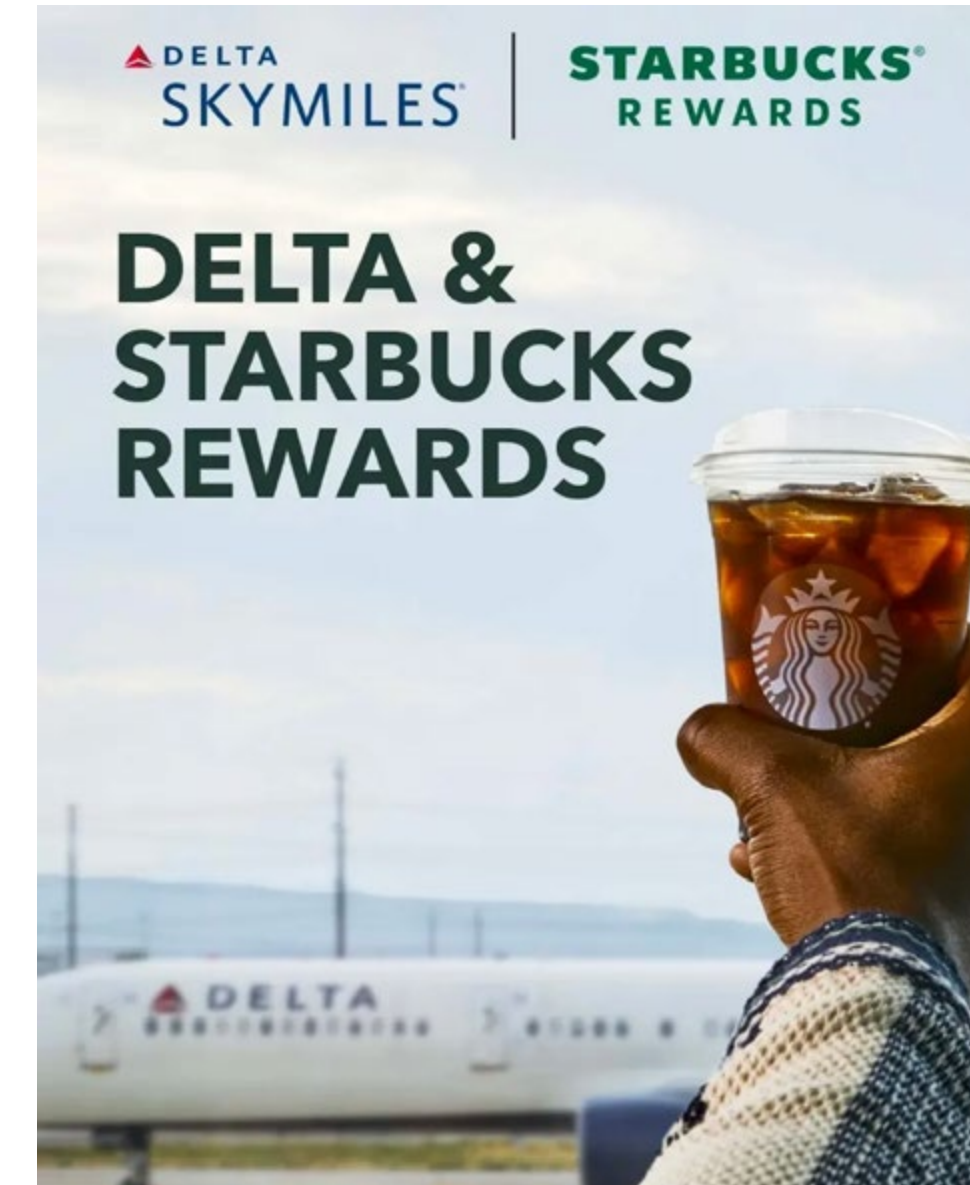
Offer escalating perks across free and paid tiers

Connected Commerce:

Ensure digital and physical shopping are reward-synced and personalized

Lifestyle Perks:

Partner with fitness, coworking, or streaming brands to increase real-world value



Quick-Serve Restaurants (QSR)

QSR Overview



Prototype Thinking
Building Restaurants
Around Behavior



Experience on Rails
Designing Fluid
Consumer Journeys



Brand as Flavor System
Bold Worlds,
Local Expression

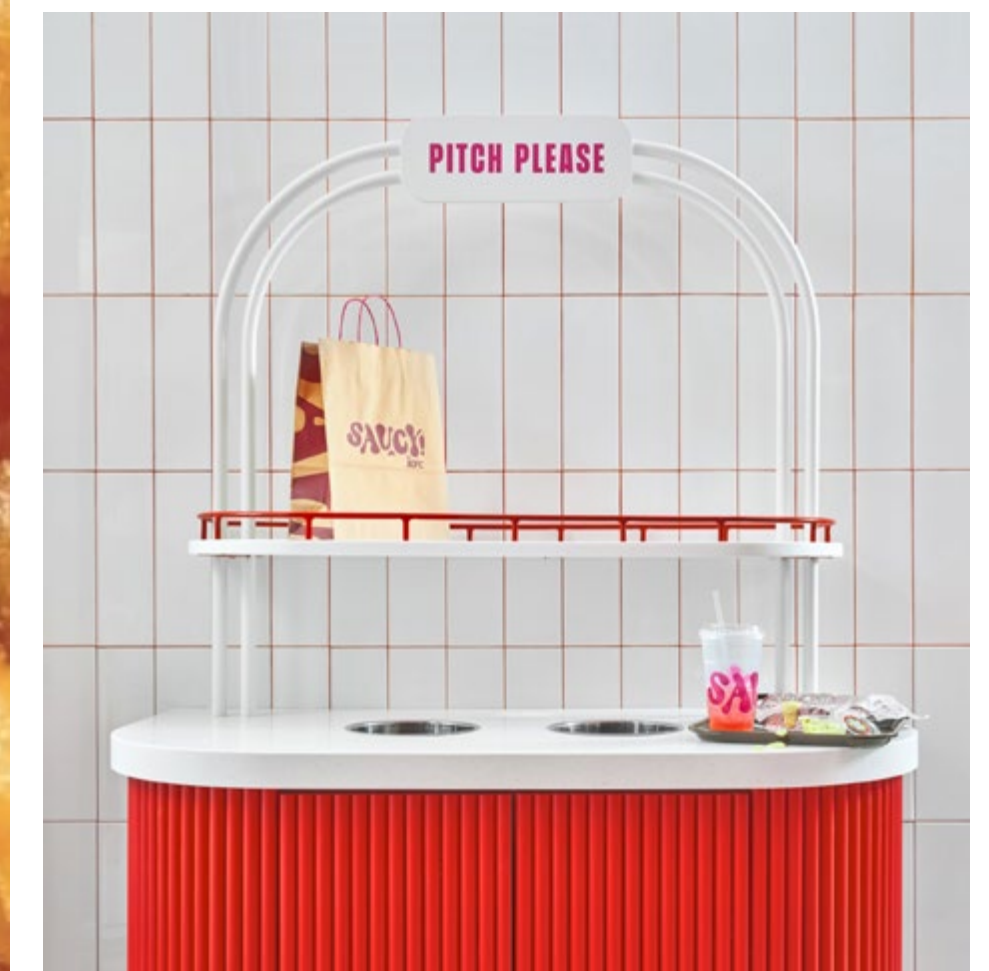
QSR Overview

QSR: Next-Gen QSR

Fast, Flexible, & Flavor-First

In 2025, leading QSR brands are evolving beyond legacy formats to meet consumers where they are — physically, digitally, and emotionally. Through design-forward prototypes, tech-enabled personalization, and hybrid pickup models, the new QSR experience is built around fluid convenience, operational precision, and bold, expressive brand worlds.

This shift is as much about systems innovation as it is about emotional connection: the best new QSRs are smaller, smarter, more social, and above all, built for real-life rhythms.



QSR Restaurant Design

Prototype Thinking

Building Restaurants Around Behavior

QSR brands are deploying modular, no-dining prototypes designed to streamline traffic flow, enable 3P pickup, and flex by location or time of day. The physical restaurant is now a responsive tool—not a fixed format.

Strategy Pillars

Modular Footprints:

Drive-thru only, walk-up, and mobile-priority units reduce labor and real estate while increasing speed

Queueless Design:

Y-lane drive-thrus, dedicated delivery lanes, and pick-up lockers reduce friction across every channel

IN-MARKET EXAMPLE:

JACK IN THE BOX MK12:

DRIVE-THRU ONLY, WALK-UP, AND MOBILE-PRIORITY UNITS REDUCE LABOR AND REAL ESTATE WHILE INCREASING SPEED



QSR Experience Design

Experience on Rails

Designing Fluid Consumer Journeys

From menu board UX to AI ordering and lighting transitions, QSR brands are treating operational flows like designed experiences—ensuring brand storytelling and consumer clarity every step of the way.

Strategy Pillars

Branded Pathfinding:

Menu boards, lane signage, and drive-thru language are being reimagined as dynamic and delight-rich

Tech at the Touchpoint:

AI ordering, kiosks, and predictive menus reduce friction while adding surprise and delight

IN-MARKET EXAMPLE:

SAUCY’S DIGITAL TWIN:

The back-of-house tech uses real-time data to reduce wait times and upping the crisp-factor for every bite. Using real-world data and running simulations to create proprietary algorithms that inform how to make tenders as hot & fresh as possible.



QSR Value-Driven

Brand as Flavor System

Bold Worlds, Local Expression

Consumers expect personality and distinction, even in value-led formats. The QSR brands leading in 2025 are those with a clear voice, visual vibrancy, and a flavor-first identity system that moves across physical and digital touchpoints.

Strategy Pillars

Heritage Made Modern:

Rebrands like Popeyes and KFC draw from brand roots—via iconography, color, and typography—but update for versatility and energy.

Flavor Forward Identity:

From sauce bars to packaging to brand mascots (like Popeyes’ “Poppy”), flavor becomes narrative.

IN-MARKET EXAMPLE:

POPEYES’ MODERN RENAISSANCE:

a global rebrand that blends Louisiana heritage with streamlined modernity, featuring updated logos, packaging, and prototype restaurants. The new design system emphasizes operational efficiency and cultural storytelling, with self-order kiosks, kitchen automation, and New Orleans-inspired interiors. It marks a shift toward faster, more scalable experiences without losing brand soul.

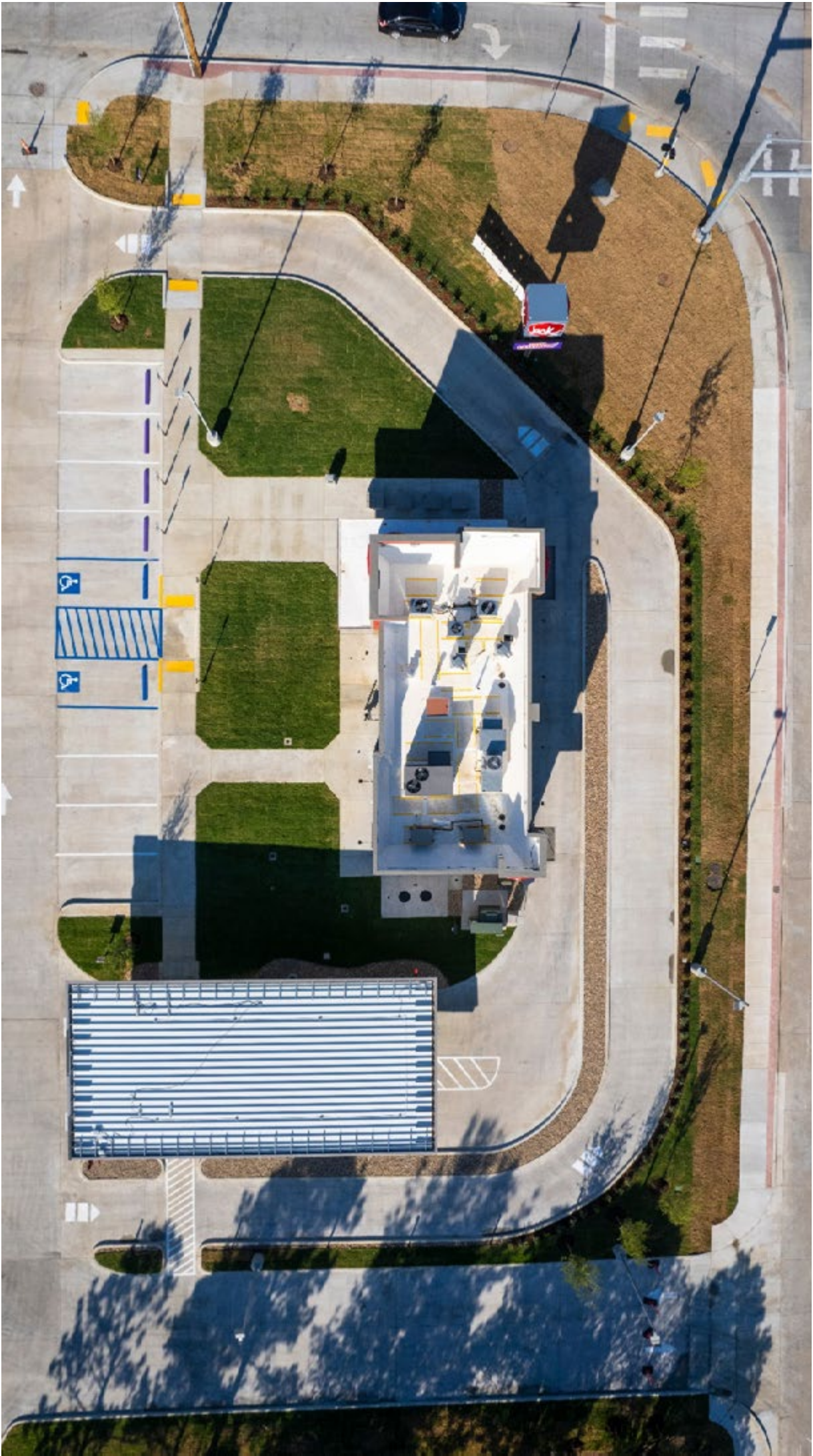


QSR Takeaway

Takeaway for Retailers

Rethink the Box

For QSR brands, innovation in 2025 means more than faster lanes or smaller footprints—it means rethinking every consumer interaction as an experience layer. Success belongs to the brands that operate like systems, speak like personalities, and meet customers wherever their appetite lands next.





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