

Retail is under pressure

Why marketing gamification is
key to engaging and retaining
overwhelmed customers in retail

leadfamily

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What's the problem retailers face?

Retail is under pressure. Consumers even more so. That was already the case but following the shift online by customers and retailers during the pandemic it's intensified. Couple that with the changing habits of consumers in both what and how they buy, and is it any wonder it's harder than ever to get your voice heard and build a loyal, long-lasting relationship between your retail brand and your customers?

The retail market is competitive, particularly online, with [ecommerce sales accounting for a third of all retail spending in 2020](#) according to the ONS (the UK's Office of National Statistics). Although some spending returned to stores, the proportion of online spending has remained high at similar levels. By contrast before 2019, online spending share was 19.7% in February 2020.

The evolution of the retail market has been hard and fast, with the industry advancing by years in a matter of months as retailers increased their focus on e-commerce or moved to online selling for the first time. The [ONS \(Office of National Statistics\)](#) reported that online retail sales was up to 28.1% in September 2021. During 2020, 87% of individuals [made an online purchase](#) in the UK.

And guess what?

The sheer scale of change and the volume of new players has meant that it's more difficult than ever to stand out from the crowd. Deepening engagement with existing customers, especially those who may have bought differently during the pandemic, as well as gaining new customers in an overcrowded market are big challenges to overcome. It means a need to deliver exceptional, memorable retail experiences in the fight for attention from the overwhelmed consumer.

How has the consumer changed?

It's no wonder that consumers are feeling overwhelmed as bids for attention grow every day. In the '70s (yes, a long time ago!) the average person reportedly saw between [500 to 1,600 ads](#) a day – mostly through billboards, in newspapers and on TV.

It's also little surprise that with time and new technologies – from online to mobile - marketing message bombardment has exploded. Consumers today see between 6,000 to 10,000 ads a day – a number that has doubled since 2007 alone.

But even these often-touted figures don't take into account the huge increase in marketing messages that have been shifted since the pandemic.



Average person scrolls the height of Everest in a year



Check this out

During the first half of 2021, in the second year of the pandemic, [digital ad spend grew by 49%](#) in the UK compared to the first half of 2020, according to the IAB UK's Digital Adspend report. The figure was the highest since the IAB started recording spend bi-annually and showed that the intensity of marketing messages had shifted up yet another gear.

But despite the acceleration it is consumers who have remained very much in the driving seat. They know they can say no to cookies, opt-out of newsletters and turn off notifications.

At this point, you realize

Consumers aren't necessarily in a hurry to return to old shopping habits. Not only has where they buy changed but also what they buy, with 36% more consumers trying a new product brand during the pandemic and 75% continuing to switch brands in 2021 – 90% of whom are millennials and high-income consumers, according to McKinsey & Company. [65%](#) say that their changing shopping behaviours are likely to stick.

This is no temporary market shift but a fundamental change that retailers must adapt to.



Consumers also expect a more sophisticated shopping experience. Friction is frowned upon, and experience is essential. Consumers know they can click and buy elsewhere. To keep them interested they want personal connections with brands and the ability to browse and shop across multiple channels seamlessly.

How can marketing gamification help?

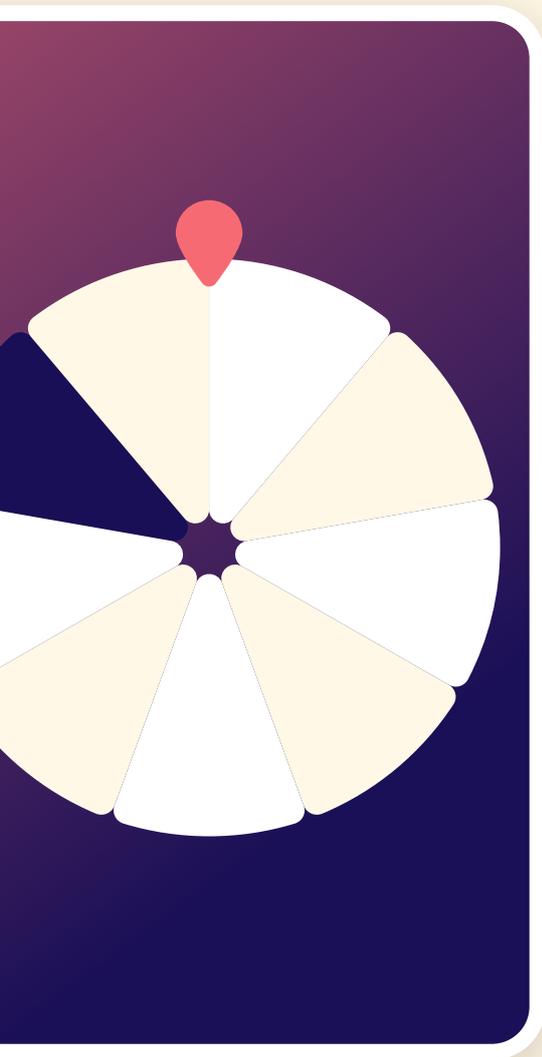
If the sheer number of marketing ads seen by consumers is enough to have them running to a dark room to hide, then the overwhelming challenge faced by the modern retail marketer to cut through this noise means a temptation to do the same.

How on earth can you be heard and engage the consumer with something different and meaningful but still of value to both you the retailer, and the consumer?

This is especially important given that the customer journey can involve so many touch-points – from bricks and mortar to apps and mobile.

It's not a straightforward funnel, but a complex loop where consumers interchange between exploring and evaluating. Consumers are going back and forth in researching a category's products and brands, and then weighing all the options. A process that can easily pause and [go in many directions](#).

How can you better engage the customer in any of these elements, and drive further engagement between the channels to provide a coherent, joined-up customer journey? How can you solidify your relationship with existing customers, as well as gain new ones and how can you boost sales and ultimately customer lifetime value?



The answer comes in the form of marketing gamification.

Put simply, it's using your marketing message to encourage your consumers to play. This, in turn, can boost engagement, increase sales and ultimately extend the value of that customer across their lifetime with us. And all without the hard sell of traditional marketing messages since the customer has to choose to opt-in to play these games.

The concept of marketing gamification has powerful psychology behind it too, especially after the pandemic years, taking a moment or two out to indulge in our innate desire to play - whether for fun or reward - isn't a bad thing.

Wait a minute, can marketing gamification help me?

Through the Leadfamily platform retailers and brands can use marketing gamification for several different purposes:

1. From acquiring new customers
2. to deepening engagement with existing ones
3. from boosting sales and AOV
4. to gaining valuable customer insight

Make customers feel good about your brand

The benefit for the consumer can vary too – from discounts that tempt them to buy online and can encourage them to buy or ultimately increase spend, to physical prizes that drive them to store to collect their win.

It's not all about tangible rewards either. Marketing gamification can also allow subtle personalisation that improves the customer experience, while also giving the brand or retailer valuable information about the customer themselves.

The fact that it's the customer that is in control of whether they play or not also improves engagement since the consumer doesn't just feel like they are just being marketed at.

And it works.

We've worked with fashion retailers from Bestseller to Masai and grocery retailers from Coop to Aldi and delivered fantastic results for them.

Average engagement time for customers of our retailers that use marketing gamification in e-commerce is just under a minute

59.2 seconds

With an **84%** game completion rate

That's valuable eyeball time.

Costcutter[®]

Gamification offers a number of different possibilities from high-converting games to surveys and polls — that enable us to understand our customers. Long term, this will help us further expand on our shopper persona profiles with the possibility of creating more personalized journeys and experiences.”

– Matthew Christiansen,
Digital Marketing Manager, Costcutter

How Costcutter uses marketing gamification to engage

Rather than a traditional giveaway promotion the company has used gamification in several campaigns, including a Valentine’s Day inspired spin the bottle game created with the Leadfamily gamification platform. The game offered prizes of prosecco, chocolates or cinema tickets which could be collected in the customer’s local store.

Analytics and tracking integration allowed Costcutter to measure the campaign visits, engagement and click-through rates. As well as engagement the aim of the game was to drive footfall into stores. A store location finder button at the end of the game helped direct winners to visit their local store to collect their prize.

Customers ended up playing the game an average of 1.8 times, clocking up an average of 1.36 minutes of engagement. More than 1,400 campaign visitors also clicked through using the store locator to find their nearest Costcutter store.

1.8

Game Plays Per Visitor

01:36

Average Engagement

1,400

Clicks On Location
Finder Button



[Read
the full
case story](#)

**"Gamification
campaigns have
lowered our CPL,
and reduced a new
customer's first time
to purchase."**

- Maria Stigsnaes-Eriksen, Head of
E-commerce & Campaigns, Masai



160,000

People participating

60,000

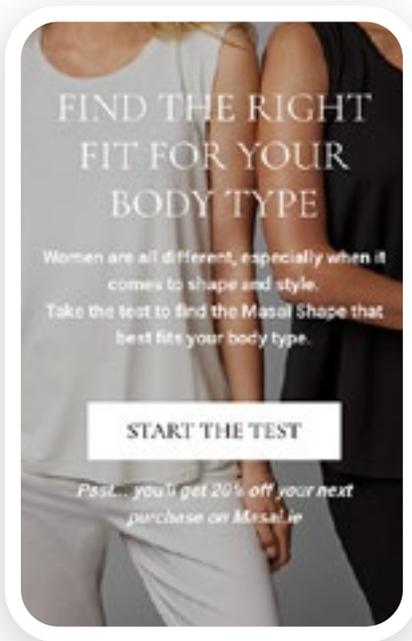
Permissions

50%

Cost per lead reduced

7 days

Average time to purchase



[Read the full case story](#)

“Game mechanics give us a way to listen to our customers’ preferences and use that information to direct products to the markets that they’ll perform best in. Gamification campaigns have also lowered our CPL and reduced a new customer’s first time to purchase. In addition to all of this, the data we gathered also enabled me to write a brief to our organization about what our audience wants from Masai.”

- Maria Stigsnaes-Eriksen, Head of E-Commerce Sales & Campaigns at Masai

At Danish fashion brand Masai Clothing Company, marketing gamification is used to derive customer information about their preferences. That valuable collection of zero-party consumer data has been used to help with both product development and understanding markets that such clothing might perform best in. This is especially important given the fact that preferences for shape and design differ by country and the brand is sold in 25 markets.

The company used Leadfamily’s personality test game in multiple countries. Respondents answered questions about fit, shape, style and the features they wanted to highlight or hide with their clothes. They were then rewarded with information about their shape and the types of clothes that would suit them.

More than 160,000 people took part in the tests, with 60,000 permissions. Most importantly the value of the data provided could be used in future product development to help guide colours and shapes for customers.

Cost-per-lead was reduced by 50% and the time to purchase was also lowered – down from four months to a week.

Game types and their marketing uses in retail

Grabbing consumer attention through gamification is a powerful concept. Games are categorised into 3 types – luck, knowledge or skill – the engagement of which extends with each type respectively.

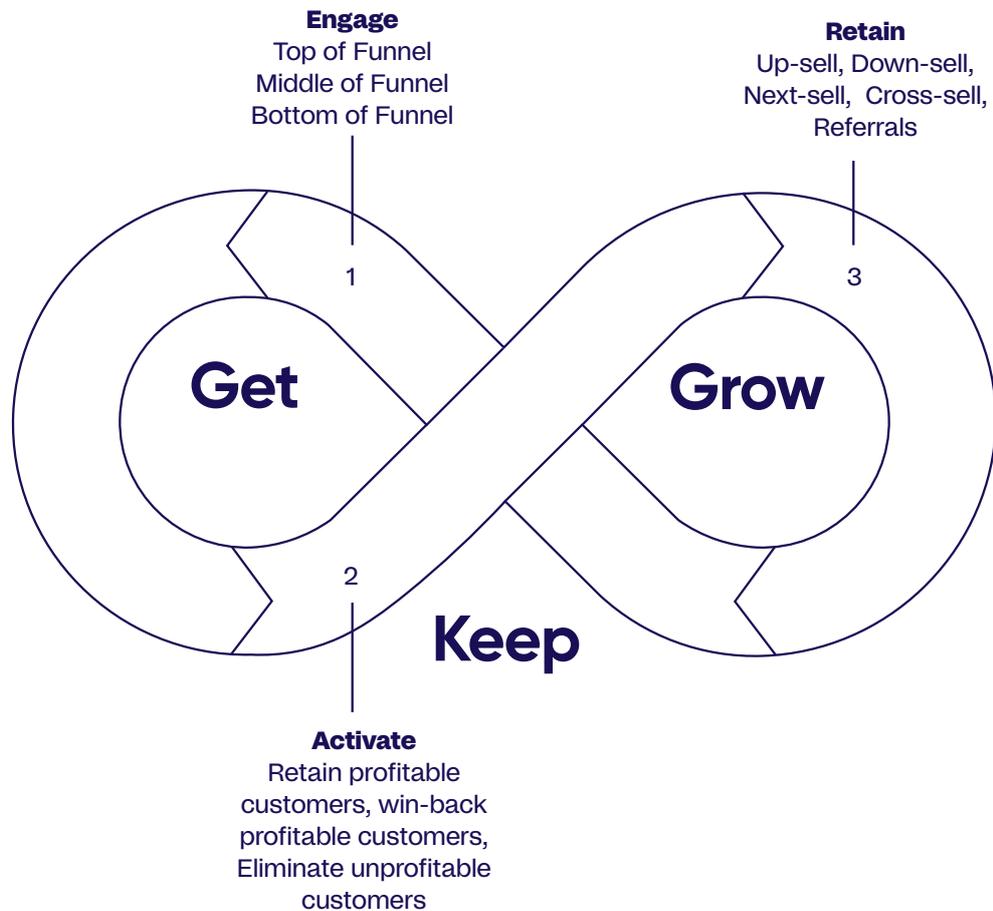
And, as already mentioned, objectives vary depending on the game type. Driving sales can be enabled through instant win concepts, such as Wheel Of Fortune, that offer online discounts for redemption or in-store products for collection. Such 'earn't offers are statistically more likely to be redeemed than more generic offers since they bring a feel-good factor that makes the consumer feel special. These types of games can help to boost sign-ups to marketing communication so help to build your customer database as well as increase sales conversion.

But there are other uses too.

Knowledge games work well for **educating your audience** about your products but can also include quizzes that help you to better understand your customers' needs and wants, allowing you to better recommend products. This can also give valuable data for future product development allowing you to keep on top of latest trends and customer demands.

Skill games, meanwhile, prompt deeper engagement with your brand since the consumer plays for longer in such games, connecting more deeply with your brand as a result. This is particularly good for brands that might not usually have much direct communication with the consumer but want to boost consumer engagement to increase the likelihood that the consumer will select their brand next time they are shopping. As such brands and retailers will often work together on mutually beneficial marketing gamification campaigns.

But online games can also be used to help understand customer views on products, with games such as Swipe It, which take inspiration from dating apps of the same nature, or Product Selector which help to ascertain customer favourites.



How to implement marketing gamification in your retail business



Implementing marketing gamification is easier than you might think. The Leadfamily platform is a SaaS platform comprising more than 30 pre-coded game experiences for you to choose from. They can be integrated onto your site via your landing page, an iframe into the site, pop-up or via an app.

Building games is low-code to no-code — the game CMS and pre-built game templates allow you to build engaging marketing campaigns with ease, since they seamlessly connect with your existing MarTech stack.

All that needs to happen beyond the implementation on your site or in your app is branding of the game for your campaign. The rest, dare we say it, is child's play.

There's no lengthy training either, our games are intuitive to design and execute and you are able to access a real-time dashboard that provides you with full visibility of how they are performing with your customers.

And, as with all elements of play, the only limit is where your imagination can take you.

Want to know more

Visit the Leadfamily Library to understand more about marketing gamification or view an on-demand webinar.

Visit the library →

Connect with a gamification specialist to learn more about opportunities with gamification in marketing for your company.

Connect with a specialist →

Lastly, we love to chat. Drop us an email at hello@leadfamily.com to say hi, or we can answer a question. Or you can message us directly from the [Leadfamily website](#).

Contact us

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