2026 Trend Predictions

Key industry-specific trends that will shape the marketing landscape next year

Retail + consumer goods

The future of loyalty is earned through *experience*

70% of executives say that **customer expectations are evolving faster** than their company can adapt

29% of consumers say they stopped using or buying from a brand due to **poor customer experience,** either online or in person

46% of executives say their current loyalty program will be **irrelevant in three years**

Retail + consumer goods

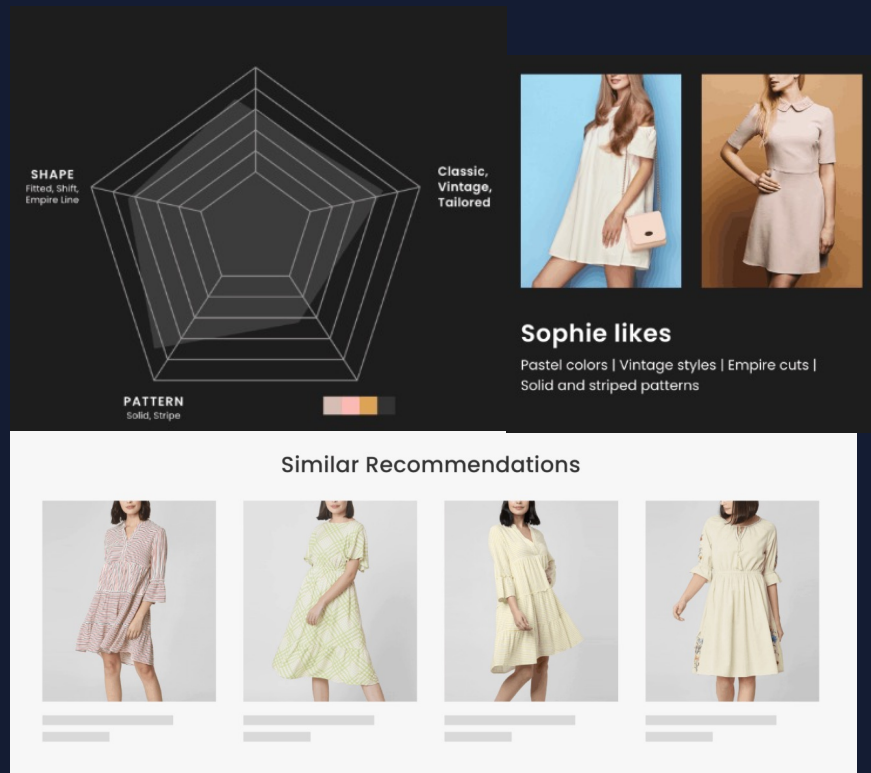**1**

AI makes personalization *predictive, not reactive*

2

Loyalty grows when credibility lives across the *entire customer journey*

3

Phygital retail delivers the *best of both worlds*

1

AI makes personalization *predictive, not reactive*

AI-powered personalization can turn insights into relevant experiences that drive engagement, spending, and loyalty

## Most customers expect personalized experiences.

71% of consumers expect personalized interactions from businesses, and 76% are frustrated when they don't receive them.

AI can help businesses scale personalization.

AI is projected to unlock more than $240 billion in economic value for the retail industry, largely through improved personalization and automated content generation.

Personalization drives value.

When brands deliver standout personalized value, they report improved metrics across the entire customer journey: 45% higher conversion, 50% higher engagement, and 45% higher lifetime value.
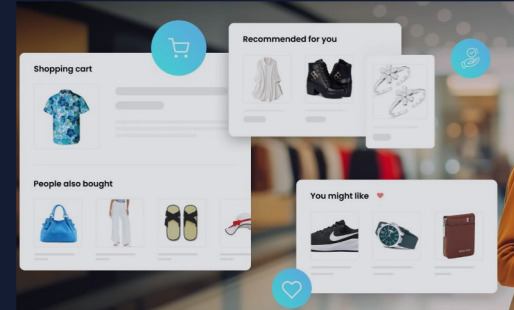
AI can help reduce inventory levels by 20-30% through improved demand forecasting while lowering operational costs and improving product availability when and where customers want them

Strategies for success

Anticipate customers' needs with predictive targeting

AI-powered predictive targeting enables brands to deliver **hyper-personalized offerings** and **dynamic digital experiences** before customers even ask. By analyzing first-party and site visitation data and leveraging media exposure data, brands can serve tailored creative exactly when and where it matters most.

This signal-driven approach fuels dynamic ads and experiences, ensuring every interaction feels thoughtful, relevant, and concierge-like, strengthening engagement, trust, and loyalty.

Make your brand discoverable wherever shoppers search

Expand beyond traditional SEO to include generative engine optimization (GEO), **ensuring your content is discoverable and relevant to AI-powered tools** that influence consumer decisions.

By making information consistently helpful, accessible, and actionable across digital and in-store touchpoints, retailers can ensure they are part of the conversation to gain relevance, build trust, and drive repeat engagement — even when traditional search is bypassed.

Leverage AI to equip your stores and sales associates

AI can make every in-store visit feel **tailored to the customer**. Smart kiosks and digital displays suggest products based on past purchases and loyalty profiles. Mobile apps can send relevant offers while shoppers browse.

Leveraging your customer data platform, associates can get AI-powered insights to provide helpful, personalized recommendations. Even pricing and promotions can adjust in real time to match customer behavior and inventory, creating a seamless, customer-first experience.

2

Loyalty grows when credibility lives across the *entire customer journey*
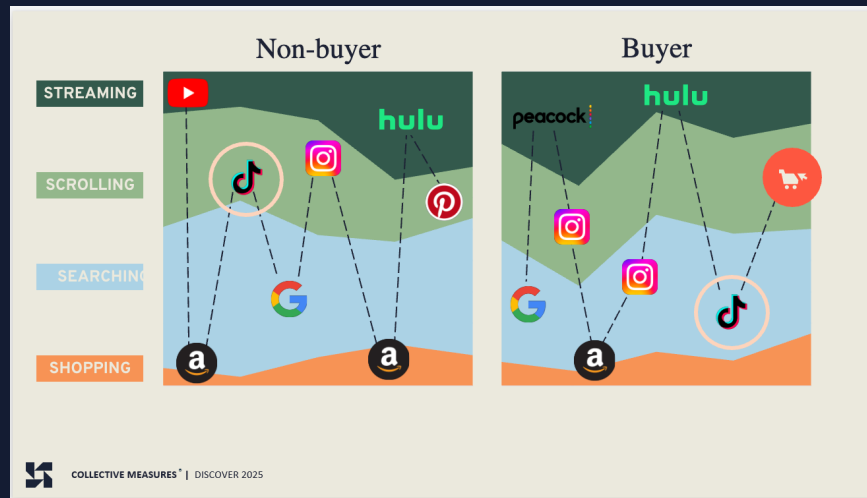
54% of consumer-obsessed companies experience better customer loyalty and improved retention from omnichannel efforts across the customer lifecycle.

Loyalty now means more than rewards; it thrives within an ecosystem built on credibility, connection, and advocacy

## Increased competition demands that brands justify their worth to consumers.

69% of CPG executives chose "increased competition for shoppers" as a top challenge for 2025.

Omnichannel consistency builds loyalty.

By anticipating customer preferences and delivering relevant, timely experiences across all touchpoints, brands strengthen trust and keep customers engaged over the long term.

Loyalty drives frequent purchases.

Loyal customers are 64% more likely to purchase more frequently and 31% more willing to pay a higher price.
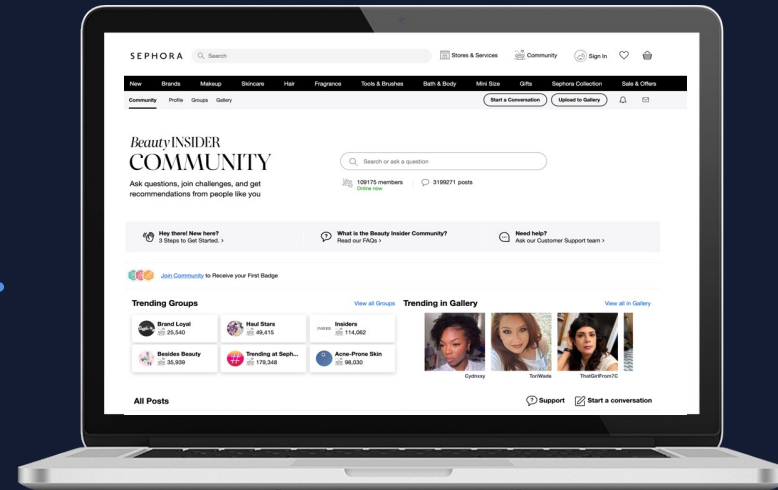
Strategies for success

Design with audience intelligence to build credible connections

Loyalty starts with understanding. A strong strategy begins by uncovering who your audiences are, what motivates them, and how they move through the world. Journey mapping allows you to identify where and how customers engage, then design communications that add value at every step.

By integrating audience insights with channel and communication planning, retailers can deliver experiences that feel relevant, credible, and consistent across the entire journey.

Create holistic brand experiences

Design seamless, emotionally resonant experiences across every touchpoint, from digital interactions to in-store moments. Define what the value exchange is for your consumer beyond discounts and transactions so that each interaction reinforces value and strengthens customer relationships.

When your brand is harmonized across your entire ecosystem, even routine moments like order confirmations or loyalty rewards become moments that build credibility, foster advocacy, and generate long-term loyalty.

Empower advocates to amplify authenticity

Turn your most loyal customers into authentic brand storytellers by empowering them to share their experiences and perspectives. **Your customers can be your best influencers.**

Design activations and experiences that are inherently shareable, both visually and emotionally, so every interaction not only delights but also strengthens trust and reinforces loyalty.

3

Phygital retail delivers the *best of both worlds*

Phygital retail is refining the online-to-offline connection, creating meaningful customer experiences at every touchpoint

Urban Outfitters Launches Immersive In-Store Experience with Nike

May 14, 2025 at 12:30 PM EDT   By Adam Blair

Image courtesy Urban Outfitters

## Shoppers move seamlessly between channels.

73% of consumers use both online and offline touchpoints when making purchases.

Physical stores remain critical.

Despite growth in ecommerce, over 80% of U.S. retail sales still happen in brick-and-mortar locations, offering unique opportunities to create rich, personalized experiences.

Mobile is influencing in-store behavior.

80% of shoppers use their phones in-store to compare prices, research deals, or check reviews.

Sources: Uniform Market 2025, OuterBox 2025   **12**
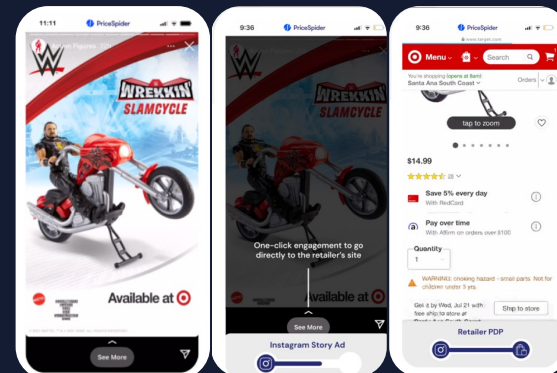
Strategies for success

Bridge physical and digital with ease and accessibility

Phygital experiences must work for everyone, whether customers prefer digital self-service, in-person support, or a blend of both. Clear signage, staff guidance, and exclusive offers for app or online engagement help convert in-store shoppers into multichannel users.

Integrate digital experiences with physical spaces to ensure digital tools complement physical touchpoints. Create a seamless experience that drives loyalty and maximizes customer lifetime value.

Make every piece of content a shopping opportunity

Shoppable content removes friction between discovery and purchase by **allowing customers to act instantly on what inspires them**. From social posts to video tutorials, every piece of content becomes a potential transaction. Ensure these opportunities are optimized for physical pick-up alongside online checkout to maximize your opportunity.

Shoppable content turns engagement into conversion, while connecting to in-store experiences can strengthen your customer identity profile, allowing for stronger targeting and measurement for future activations.

Turn every interaction into a data-informed experience

Every phygital moment, from scanning QR codes to interacting with digital kiosks or social commerce content, **generates insights about customer behavior and preferences.**

Collecting and analyzing these signals, retailers can optimize messaging, offers, and in-store experiences in real time. This approach ensures that campaigns are not only more relevant but also strengthen trust and credibility across every channel.

Let's chat

Collective Measures is a 100% employee-owned media agency specializing in full-funnel connections strategy and advanced analytics. With origins rooted in search and an expertise in understanding consumer intent, we are a collective of media strategists, brand engagement experts, and data scientists who make the complexities of modern marketing simple. With numerous accolades for our client work across paid media, content marketing, search engine optimization, and marketing analytics, we are simply accountable to driving results.

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