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RETAIL POV

# TO POP-UP OR NOT

THE RIGHT FORMULA  
FOR EXPLORATORY RETAIL



**Consumers demands are changing** and while their online lives change at the blimp of a status update, they expect retail brands to have the same sense of newness they're experiencing in real-life. The reality is that traditional stores will always have a place in the mainstream retail strategy model, but here's a look at why it might be time to pop.

# WHY POP-UP?

How to tell if *Exploratory Retail* is right for your brand.

## REACHING A NEW AUDIENCE

If you're an established brand that's been known for years, one of the biggest hurdles in retail is communicating to customers that you've changed over time. Launching a pop-up space opens the door to shifting brand perception and could provide leeway to potentially targeting a new audience base.

## INVITING INNOVATION

Break the rules, test the brand boundaries, and bend the mold of traditional retail. No need to commit to a long-term brick and mortar strategy before testing the waters first. Think of the space as a lab for innovation, and observe how your customer interacts with the space and product to determine how elements can help you refine your traditional retail strategy.

## BUILDING AWARENESS

If you're new to retail, launching a temporary retail experience can create buzz and excitement to help increase awareness around your brand without the stress of a full on retail development strategy.

## INTRODUCING NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Whether it's a temporary or long-term brand relationship, a pop-up can be the perfect place to test out a partnership. If you're a mass-market brand, consider a premium brand partnership that could make exclusive product accessible to your consumers. Or consider bringing an out-of-category brand that could supplement your offer, for example adding a hospitality component (food, drinks, etc.) combined with apparel retail.

## ESTABLISH YOUR GOAL

If you decide that pop-ups are the right addition to your retail strategy, the first step is to define your goal. By establishing what you want pop-ups to do for your brand, you can start looking at the more tactical question of how you will reach it. Here are a few examples of strategic decisions you can make to build a successful pop-up.



"POP-UPS HELP  
BRANDS BE WHERE  
THEY WANT WHEN  
THEY WANT  
TO BE THERE"

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# HOW TO POP AND NOT FLOP

## LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION: Go Where Your Shopper Goes

Determining your location strategy from the very beginning is going to be one of the most pivotal components of your pop-up plan. **Clearly understanding your existing consumer base will be critical to identify the greatest opportunity for success.**

A&E network took advantage of an up-and-coming retail market and located their Bates Motel pop-up in Austin, TX during SXSW. This location strategy not only gave them the space they needed to build a full scale mock-up of the eerie motel from the series, but also provided a built-in customer base and publicity to tap into to make the most of their venture.

## SPACE SELECTION: Get Creative

If you're launching a temporary retail experience you sometimes have a little flexibility with what type of space you select. Are there opportunities to utilize untraditional places: an old-rail car, a vacant schoolhouse, or a vintage airstream. Explore the uniqueness of this experience, but take into consideration **your space selection should complement the attributes of your brand.**

For the launch of Tiffany T, a jewelry line geared toward a younger audience, Tiffany and Co. modeled their space after a subway car. This space selection was a deliberate choice to appeal to New York's "Downtown cool girls" and to help shift brand perceptions from traditional to more modern.

### MARMITE'S POP-UP



### MARC JACOBS TWEET SHOP



### GLADE EXPERIENCE STORE



## CONSIDER COLLABORATION: Don't Go It Alone

**Partnering with another brand that complements your offer can help you leverage an existing consumer base and draw additional exposure.**

Whether it's incorporating an exclusive food offer into your experience, or utilizing an influential figurehead in the category, you don't have to go it alone. Establish your partnership early and communicate how the partnership benefits the brand collaboration.

Purina One recently partnered with New York's North Shore Shelter to create a feline-friendly cat café where visitors could find a kitty companion, enjoy free bakery items, and sip 'cat'achinos complete with cutesy cat-themed foam art. This partnership gave the pop-up a deeper purpose with a focus on education and adoption above selling product.

## ENGAGING IN REAL-LIFE & VIRTUAL: Get Social. Activate!

Establish a social strategy not only so the retail experience can be exposed, but also so your consumers can share the experience in a thoughtful way. **If you incorporate a social strategy into the experience you'll create an overall deeper level of engagement with the guest.** Word of mouth and social sharing will be extremely powerful tools. Seek out bloggers, brand ambassadors and trusted category experts that support your pop-up position.

With a unique formula for a pop-up, Marc Jacobs launched a temporary space for the fragrance, Daisy, coinciding with the start of New York's Fashion Week. Leveraging the social following of the Daisy brand, Marc Jacobs created a space built on the foundation of "social currency." Coined the "Marc Jacobs Tweet Shop," customers were encouraged to snap photos and post messages using the branded hashtag #MJDaisyChain and share on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook in exchange for free product. By engaging visitors with payment for posts vs. payment for product you get a real sense of this brand's social relevancy.

## TIMING YOUR LAUNCH: Piggyback on Big Events

**Once you've identified your location, you need to do an analysis of the local market to understand when the most strategic timing for your opening.**

For example, if you're a fashion brand, it might be ideal to tie-in with fashion week activities that might take place during the week, or if there's a particularly large cultural music event. If you're a restaurant brand, are there particular months where food and wine events take place that typically draw in a crowd? Or is there a national holiday (official and unofficial) that would make sense to leverage?

Nike recently timed the opening of their SNKRS pop-up shop to coincide with the launch of their new app as well as All-Star week. Exclusive guests of the pop-up were able to see and shop premium collections and rare-editions of products, as well as get a preview of the app.

## CHOREOGRAPH THE EXPERIENCE: Be Memorable

Although you're creating a temporary retail experience, your strategy should be just as thoughtfully planned as it would for a brick and mortar space. **Choreograph the experience from the moment your customer sets foot in the door to the moment they leave the space.** This exploratory experience should allow them to not only touch and feel your product, but also understand a clear concise brand message on point with your unique tone-of-voice. **Consider what message your customer will leave with.**

Glade's holiday pop-up boutique capitalized on experiences by creating a store that "sells feelings." Visitors were guided through different moments that manifested scent in a physical way and captured the emotional reactions that scent can trigger. These memorable experiences were then meant to be shared out to the world via social media with the hashtag #FeelGlade.

## EXPAND YOUR BRAND: Broaden Your Horizons

The uniqueness of the pop-up isn't centered on just selling product—it's an extension of the love and loyalty your brand enjoys.

**Use your pop-up to expand on this and create new connections with your customer base.**

Marmite's capitalized on their brand perceptions by creating a pop-up that celebrated the "Love it or Hate it" opinions people typically have of the salty spread. Lovers and haters alike could explore the Marmite product collections, enjoy their tea and toast bar, and even make their stance known through a voting wall. By highlighting the polarized thoughts on Marmite they opened up their brand to an adverse customer base, without alienating their current loyalists.

Adding Exploratory Retail thinking to your overall strategy can open new avenues of opportunity. As you consider the goals and objectives that your brand might need to achieve, think about the potential that a new retail experience could provide, and don't be afraid to try something entirely new!

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# JOIN THE CONVERSATION.

Let us show you how pop-ups fit into your retail strategy.

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