

RETAIL

## Values-based selling will help retailers win consumers' spend. Here is how

January 10, 2020



*Emily Pfeiffer is senior analyst at Forrester Research*

By [Emily Pfeiffer](#) and [Madeline Cyr](#)

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**  
Plus: Just released  
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

With holiday peak just behind us, apply lessons from 2019 for wins in 2020 and not just during the holidays.

Shoppers are not just looking for a good deal. They **want to appease their sense of social responsibility** to feel like they are doing some good with their purchase or at least, not making things worse.

In 2020, make your customers feel better about shopping with you by:

Seeking opportunities to balance the scales of environmental impact. Fast fashion gets a bad rap, but some brands are creatively counteracting the negative perception of "disposable" products.

Clothing retailer **H&M accepts used clothing** and textiles from any brand for recycling and offers consumers 15 percent off their purchase during that store visit.

Find relevant ways your brand can participate in the circular economy, perhaps by partnering with an organization such as the **Ellen MacArthur Foundation**.

Prioritizing philanthropic marketing starting now. Campaigns highlighting how your company gives back help maximize the impact of charitable initiatives, as long as it is not just a PR stunt.

Ensure that any charitable initiative is part of your long-term strategy and fundamental principles, or you will risk appearing disingenuous.

Start now, though. **We predict** that even when they have bought in, consumers' capacity for values-based purchases is constrained.

Promoting gifting-ready and environmentally friendly packaging and delivery options. According to the **EPA**, containers and packaging accounted for 30 percent of total municipal waste generated in the United States in 2017.

Are you packaging products in recycled/recyclable materials and avoiding unnecessary additional materials?

Remember to encourage customers to use "buy online, pick up in-store" (BOPIS) service and take credit for reducing

materials as a result.

We predict that sustainability will increasingly and positively impact consumer buying habits.

Playing up the digital self-service angle. Come Thanksgiving week, make it clear to your customers that they can gather round their phones and shop from the Thanksgiving table without fear that they are keeping retail workers from their own family gatherings.

Slide a friendly reminder into your digital marketing messages that their online purchase is guilt-free.

Demonstrating your values in all touch points. It is difficult to make the aforementioned types of changes credibly.

Sudden boasting about philanthropic work or improved practices can seem disingenuous or even shine a light on previous failures in these areas.

For instance, if you are a cosmetics brand that advocates for gender spectrum inclusion, ensure that your merchandising, product lines, search and navigation reflect that.

Your values need to be woven into the core of your brand's DNA.

Use [Forrester's assessment](#) to evaluate the authenticity of your values messaging, use the year to build your case for the holidays in 2020, and realize that "[it is time to commit to corporate values.](#)"

Bonus tip: Do not just ask your customers to donate on your behalf. Many retailers invite customers to donate money during checkout or to drop some of their freshly purchased goods into a donation bin by the door.

This puts customers on the spot and can leave a bad taste, while retailers have no skin in the game.

Instead, take the pressure off the customer, give perks for donating, and offer other options for customers to get involved.

Matching your customers' gifts or donating a portion of their purchases are great places to start.

HOW ARE YOU evolving your strategies from winning a purchase to winning loyalty when consumers vote with their wallet?

What options do you offer your customers who feel like doing good when they order?

*Emily Pfeiffer is senior analyst and Madeline Cyr is researcher for digital retail, both at [Forrester Research](#), Cambridge, MA.*

*Reproduced with permission from [Forrester Research](#).*

---

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.