

The Power of Personal Contact

Redesigning the retail experience to put people first

CUSTOM CONTENT



The Idea

While technology has inarguably made the transactions of daily life easier than ever before, something crucial has been lost. The small human interactions that once peppered our days have been replaced by seamlessly efficient digital transactions. The result is an impersonal void that, as social animals, we have a deep need to fill.

Working in partnership with Synchrony Financial, WP BrandStudio will show how retailers can find new opportunities for success in today's post-Internet world by providing the personal contact that consumers desperately desire. Modern commerce is all about the human touch—and Synchrony Financial is the trusted thought-leader who can help businesses use it to their advantage.

Execution

We'll explore this idea through content that could include:

- **Deep-dive journalistic article** exploring the power of personal contact
- **Interactive poll** of WP readers followed by **infographic** showing original data insights
- **Live-action video OR photo essay series** documenting real-life retailers who have found success through personal contact
- **Interactive infographic** showing opportunities for personal contact at all stages of the consumer journey

The Content

Journalistic Article

We'll set up the program with a deeply-researched journalistic article that leverages *The Washington Post's* most successful editorial layout to explore why people need personal contact; how they are expressing that need through shifts such as the return to cities and trends such as the locavore and artisanal movements; and how retailers can leverage their physical locations to deliver unique experiences that strengthen brand connection.

- Includes insights from experts in areas such as atmospherics and retail psychology
- Data visualizations present facts such as:
 - A good sales associate interaction can boost sales conversions by 43%; repeat visits by 12%; transaction amounts by 81%

Interactive Poll + Infographic

Along with the article, we'll invite WP readers to express their opinions about the importance of personal connections through an interactive poll. The responses, combined with relevant third party data, will be turned into a dynamic infographic and released at a later point.

Sample poll questions include:

In deciding where to shop, your priority is:

- A pleasant experience
- A speedy and efficient transaction
- The best price and availability

How does the personal recommendation of a sales associate affect your buying decision?

- a) I consider it as I make my decision
- b) I appreciate the extra insight and information
- c) I go the other way—I don't like to be pushed

The Content (cont.)

Live-Action Video OR Photo Essay Series

Compelling first-person stories will bring to life how retailers can achieve success by prioritizing human touch. A documentary-style video could tell the story of a single retailer while a photo essay series could explore a more diverse group.

Sample retailers could include:

- Warby Parker is reinventing the customer experience with intimate spaces that deliver a special experience in addition to displaying products (pneumatic tubes shoot glasses from the stocking area to the sales floor; bookshelves invite customers to browse)
- Morrisons is replacing automated counters with staffed express checkouts and relying on the eyes and experience of employees instead of infrared sensors to determine how customers move through stores

Interactive Infographic

We'll show how retailers can put personal contact to work through a circular graph of the customer journey from trigger to information gathering to evaluation to purchase facilitation.

- “Hotspots” indicate personal contact opportunities; upon click or hover, text overlays reveal actionable insights

Sample hotspots:

- Good customers crave eye-contact acknowledgement. A greeter at the store entrance starts the experience right.
- Forty percent of shoppers say they are never able to find a sales associate. Make associates readily available and train them to look for the most common visual cues: seeking help (64%), signs of confusion (55%)