



# RETAIL INNOVATOR *awards* 2016

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## 36 RETAIL EXECES NAMED 2016 RETAIL INNOVATOR AWARD WINNERS

Today, during the [Retail Innovation Conference](#), 36 leading retail executives were honored as Retail Innovator Award winners. In its third year, the [Retail Innovator Awards](#) honor business leaders who are embracing positive disruption in retail.

This year, *Retail TouchPoints* received more than 100 nominations for Retail Innovator Awards. Winners hail from a wide cross-section of industry segments and company sizes. Winners are disrupting the retail industry with new digital initiatives, workforce innovations, unique entrepreneurial concepts and much more.

We are thrilled to honor every one of the winners!



*Debbie Hauss*

Debbie Hauss  
*Editor-in-Chief*  
**Retail TouchPoints**

# 2016 RETAIL INNOVATOR AWARD WINNERS



## **MORGAN HERMAND-WAICH**

**Founder & CEO, Adore Me**

- Morgan's first investors were his Harvard professors. He raised \$11.5M from VCs and private investors and launched the disruptive lingerie business in 2012.
- By injecting geeky tech sensibility into the traditional fashion space – such as A/B testing lingerie models – Morgan fueled growth on every platform and led Adore Me to be the first company to go from nothing to advertising on national TV.
- In 2015, Adore Me was ranked #14 on the Inc. 500 list of fastest-growing companies in America, topping the charts as the #2 fastest-growing company in retail and #2 fastest-growing company in NYC.



## **KIM KEATING**

**Assistant VP, Digital Engagement Strategy, AT&T Operations**

- Kim helped to transform AT&T's online chat experience — which manages 12,000 agents and 2,000 concurrent chats globally — resulting in a 24% increase in agent satisfaction.
- As part of her responsibility for AT&T's chat strategy and infrastructure, Kim led the migration of the company's live chat function to TouchCommerce in a brief two-month time frame.
- The rapid migration saved AT&T \$16.5 million in fees. The company recently hosted its 11 millionth chat on the TouchCommerce platform.



## **CHRIS PURKEY**

**VP, Gearhead Operations, Backcountry.com**

- Chris has made it his mission to establish exceptional, relationship-based consultative selling for the business-to-consumer sales industry, specifically within outdoor retail.
- Chris was able to make his vision a reality as Head of Gearhead Operations at Backcountry.com. The e-Tailer's sales representatives are described as "Gearheads," which is a term of endearment given the in-depth technical knowledge they have of inventory.
- The program takes a strategically and economically attractive approach to differentiate the customer experience and drive increased customer retention.

## 2016 RETAIL INNOVATOR AWARD WINNERS



### **BARRY BECK**

**Founder & COO, Bluemercury**

- Barry's luxury beauty chain recently was acquired by Macy's. Bluemercury pop-ups are opening in Macy's stores.
- Barry founded M-61 Laboratories, a natural cosmetics brand that answers to Bluemercury customers' desire for a highly effective natural skin care brand that didn't have harsh chemicals.
- Bluemercury is focused on internal employee growth: 100% of the company's District Managers were once Bluemercury store managers, and virtually all store managers were once sales associates.



### **ERIC GROSSE**

**CEO, Chairish**

- Thanks to his deep understanding of the furniture industry, Eric and his team created a peer-to-peer marketplace of furniture that streamlines processes from creation to credit card processing and fulfillment.
- Eric is known to challenge his team to fine-tune the Chairish web site, app and customer service experience, which has generated innovative site and app accomplishments, such as the award for "#1 Can't Live Without App" by *Architectural Digest*.



### **JENNIFER WANG**

**Co-Founder, Dealmoon.com**

- Jennifer created a niche within the Chinese-American demographic, offering curated recommendations from sister e-zine site, Fashion Moon. Up to 13 million shoppers view dealmoon.com daily.
- Jennifer is the only woman in a suite of six Chinese entrepreneurs who co-founded Dealmoon. A Berkeley engineer by trade, she came to the U.S. with her mother as a teen and learned about building a business while selling lighters and slippers on the street corners of Los Angeles.

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### **MARY HOLAHAN**

*Digital Marketing Manager, Dick's Sporting Goods*

- Mary leads the digital and social strategy at Dick's to maximize customer reach and engagement and drive the integration of digital content and commerce.
- Mary partnered with Kurt Salmon Digital to launch the recent Rush My Shirt campaign, which enabled Denver fans in New York and Chicago to receive their Super Bowl championship shirts immediately following the game via UberRUSH.
- Mary has 12 years of experience in Marketing, previously with SRA Touchstone Consulting Group.



### **DANA SCHWARTZ**

*Director of Marketing and eCommerce, ECCO*

- With a strong background on the technical side, Dana is able to realistically operationalize major initiatives, while driving brand strategy, activation and commercial success.
- Dana worked with Demandware to implement a new Commerce Cloud Platform, enabling ECCO to react quickly to market changes, in addition to supporting international expansion.
- Today, ECCO store associates can offer customers more assortment and complete orders quickly and efficiently. They also have the appropriate knowledge and information on hand to maximize the efficiency of the customer journey.



### **JOSH NEBLETT**

*Co-Founder and CEO, etailz*

- Josh co-founded etailz as a college student, and has led the company to become the leading retailer and top merchant for online marketplaces such as Amazon, JET, eBay and Walmart.
- Josh's no-nonsense approach, relentless focus on innovation and passionate leadership has proven to be a driving force in the continued growth of etailz.
- Under Josh's leadership, etailz has had consistent YOY growth from 2009-2015 (climbing from \$435K to \$93M).

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### **CATHY PRYOR**

***SVP, Store Operations, Hibbett Sports***

- Cathy has 30 years of experience in the sporting goods retail business. She has helped grow Hibbett Sports' store locations from 30 stores to more than 1,000 since her appointment in 1988.
- Cathy currently is responsible for directing Regional Vice Presidents and District Sales Managers, Retail Education and Store Communication.



### **NADIA SHOURABOURA**

***CEO, Hointer***

- Nadia works to help retailers test new ideas aimed at removing customer friction and improving the overall shopping experience by inventing new ways to discover, try on and buy clothing. She is currently working with Macy's to help optimize the dressing room experience.
- Nadia has a PhD in Mathematics from Princeton University, where she wrote several important papers that have been referenced by over 200 publications. Prior to her work at Hointer, Nadia performed research at AT&T Bell Labs and powered Amazon's global supply chain and fulfillment.



### **SHAWN COOMBS**

***Director of Product Management, Home Depot***

- Shawn has led the omnichannel integration of consumer-generated content (CGC) — ratings and reviews, Q&As, visual inspiration and product sampling programs — across digital and physical channels. Partnering with Bazaarvoice helped to lay the foundation for a solid CGC program that would span mobile, tablet, desktop, and in-store.
- Shawn has been instrumental in reinforcing the role SEO plays in The Home Depot consumer experience, and has worked to optimize consumer content to boost organic search engine results.

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### **RYAN CRAVER**

*President and CEO, Lamour/Trimfit*

- Ryan's natural fascination with the intersection of retail and technology has inspired leading brands to be on the forefront of the evolving "connected retail" environment.
- Ryan has led recent retail media campaigns that have returned extremely positive, above-benchmark returns: 13 million impressions; 1,300% Return on Ad Spend; 40% conversion rate.
- Prior to joining Lamour, Ryan was in charge of the core department store strategy at Lord & Taylor/Hudson's Bay Company/Saks.



### **SHAWN NELSON**

*Founder and CEO, Lovesac*

- Shawn grew Lovesac to a 60-store chain with a suite of patented furniture inventions. Lovesac was named America's fastest growing furniture retailer in 2013.
- Shawn lived and worked in China for three years, first as a service volunteer, then as a management coach running leadership and team-building seminars for Fortune 500 companies speaking Chinese.
- He won \$1 million on Fox's "Rebel Billionaire" show in 2005 and became President of Virgin Worldwide with Richard Branson's companies.



### **GIHAD JAWHAR**

*VP, Digital, Lowe's*

- As the VP of Digital since 2010, Gihad is responsible for the e-Commerce and digital strategy for Lowe's.com. He has more than 15 years of experience in the digital and e-Commerce retail world.
- Gihad's true omnichannel mindset has led him to create a store-specific, location-based Lowe's app, which is available on both Apple and Android watches. Through his initiatives, Gihad helped grow Lowe's digital sales 5x in four years and score consistent YOY increases in sales revenue, traffic, conversion and online research leading to in-store purchases.

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### **MICHAEL MOORE**

**CMO, Lowes Foods**

- Michael is leading a rebranding effort including new in-store concepts and products, advertising, grassroots marketing, guest insights, personalization and loyalty.
- Lowes Foods piloted a new e-Commerce digital customer engagement platform from Unata in 2015, leveraging a 1:1 recommendation engine and machine learning technology to create unique experiences for guests.
- Following the platform's rollout across all 60 Lowes Foods-To-Go locations, the retailer is on track to meet a forecasted sales growth rate of more than 40% in 2016.



### **JASON RICHARD**

**CIO, Lucky Brand**

- Jason joined Lucky Brand as IT "Employee #1" five months into an ambitious two-year project to transition off a legacy ERP platform. He was tasked with building a new IT team and infrastructure to support sales through 259 stores, an e-Commerce site and via retail partners.
- He selected NetSuite's cloud-based platform to run mission-critical business processes around financials, inventory management, fixed assets, currency and tax compliance.
- Jason led the effort to build a future-proof foundation for innovative customer experiences, including RFID-enabled touchscreens to provide information and assistance to shoppers.



### **KEVIN LAVELLE**

**Founder and CEO, Mizzen+Main**

- As the Founder and CEO of Mizzen+Main, Kevin has introduced advanced performance fabrics to menswear apparel, proving that men don't have to choose between style and comfort.
- Mizzen+Main sells 80% of inventory online and in 150 luxury stores such as Saks Fifth Avenue, and it has generated a loyal celebrity following including Drew Brees, Mark Cuban and J.J. Watt (who is the retailer's official brand ambassador).
- Kevin was a finalist in Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur of the Year award and among *The Dallas Business Journal's* 40 Under 40.



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### **LEE SUMMERS**

***Marketing/Technology Manager, Nebraska Furniture Mart***

- Responsible for the direction, resource allocations and operations of customer-facing digital technology, Lee used solutions from Reflect to create unique customer experiences at the retailer's 560,000-square-foot retail showroom that opened in spring 2015.
- Technologies include custom wayfinding delivered via touchable 3D store maps; 17 touchscreens that help customers locate specific items in real time, even when they have been moved to new locations just that day; touch-sensitive, interactive branded applications; and a mosaic video wall consisting of 22 Planar Tiles.



### **PAUL CARROLL**

***VP, Digital and eCommerce Creative, New York and Company***

- Paul has reinvented how NY&C approaches e-Commerce by accelerating rich, creative output while reducing time-to-market from months to days and hours.
- NY&C dynamically updates its digital experiences according to inventory levels and customer interests, via real-time analysis and the ability to create and publish new content on the fly.
- The #itJustFits rich media campaign, featuring dramatic images of Oscar winner Jennifer Hudson styled in NY&C fashions, has customers spending an average 5X more time on the web site.



### **Yael AFLALO**

***Founder and CEO, Reformation***

- Yael set out to create a brand where "green" fashion and sustainability could coexist without sacrificing style. Reformation utilizes green measures in every aspect of the brand, from recycled eco fabrics to eco-friendly packaging for at-home shipments. These efforts helped Reformation save 5M lbs. of CO2 and 450M gallons of H2O in 2016.
- Yael launched Reformation in 2009 in the back room of a store in Los Angeles. Yael now counts celebrity followers Taylor Swift, Rihanna, Emily Ratajkowski and Rosie Huntington-Whiteley as paying customers.
- She was just 21 years old when she launched her first fashion line, Ya-Ya, which Yael ran for 10 years.

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### **MIKE KARANIKOLAS**

*Co-Founder and Co-CEO, REVOLVE Clothing*

- Mike leads the technology and operations strategy for the REVOLVE brand and has guided the company through a mobile-focused approach to retail.
- REVOLVE also boasts a strong email base of 1.5 million loyal subscribers. Notably, 50% of its almost \$450 million in sales came from purchases on the mobile site and app combined.
- He and co-founder Michael Mente were named 2015 Ernst and Young Entrepreneurs Of The Year in the retail category. Previously, Mike was a software engineer at NextStrat, an enterprise software start-up, and co-founded Stratana, an enterprise strategy software company based out of Irvine, Calif.



### **KEITH KLUG**

*Director of Energy, Sears Holdings*

- Keith's Energy Team has improved facility maintenance and energy efficiency initiatives, saving Sears more than 1 billion kWh of energy since 2008.
- The retailer collaborated with Phoenix Energy Technologies to create a web page consolidating multiple buildings' "health records" into a central location accessible on multiple platforms, including mobile devices.
- The BuildingView web page has cut the review time for multiple stores from 1 hour to as little as 10 minutes, while average inbound call times dropped 40%, from 19 minutes to 14 minutes.



### **ANGELA GEARHART**

*Senior Director, Store Experience, Sleep Number by Select Comfort*

- Angela has helped transform mattress shopping by integrating digital experiences that allow the store to become a 3D selling tool to support relationship-based selling.
- Benefit-driven interactive experiences communicate core product technologies, including the IndividualFit 3D imaging technology, which allows customers to see and feel the bed adjusting to their perfect comfort level in real time.
- Custom mapping software and projection screen technology combine to create unique experiences that build customer credibility and confidence in the purchase.

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### **EGIL MOLLER NIELSEN**

**SVP, eCommerce, SmartCentres, Inc.**

- Egil has led the introduction of the Penguin Pick-Up and Penguin Fresh services, which combine the benefits of online and brick-and-mortar at 250 SmartCentres.
- Penguin Pick-Up is an “endless stores” concept, providing drive-through pickup services for online shoppers, who can receive purchases made from 1,200+ retailers in 15 different countries.
- Penguin Fresh provides kiosks in mall parking lots for delivery of groceries purchased online, sourced locally to maximize freshness.



### **SCOTT PALMER**

**COO, Spikeball**

- Scott’s use of cloud-based inventory management and retail business software enables his team to manage multiple sales channels for Spikeball, including its own stores, online and via sporting goods retailers.
- In 2014, he deployed Brightpearl to gain a real-time understanding of inventory flow, revenue and sales channel activity, along with the ability to accurately forecast 1 to 3 months ahead.
- A May 2015 appearance on “Shark Tank” netted the company a \$500,000 investment. The company sells its products in 30 countries worldwide.



### **STEVE FOUST**

**VP of e-Commerce Marketing, Spiraledge**

- Steve is responsible for consumer engagement, search engine marketing, affiliate marketing and email marketing. Steve started with Spiraledge in 2009 as a Marketing Analyst, then became VP of E-Commerce Marketing, a newly created position in the organization, in November 2013.
- Steve is using personalization to advance the retail customer experience. By using data and technology to drive a unified marketing engagement, Steve’s efforts helped YogaOutlet.com achieve triple-digit sales growth numbers and stand apart in the red-hot, competitive yoga wear (and athleisure) market.

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### **FAISAL MASUD**

*EVP and Chief Digital Officer, Staples*

- Faisal oversees the advancement of omnichannel capabilities within Staples, including the Buy Online, Pick up In-Store fulfillment model.
- Under Faisal's watch, Staples has sped up the time for associates to pick orders in the store, with most orders ready for the consumer within 15 minutes.
- In 2015, Staples reduced order cancellations by 50% and increased the 30-minute pickup rate by 15%, by improving both customer communication on available items and associate notifications at the store.



### **JACK OJALVO**

*CEO, Supplementler.com*

- Jack is the CEO of Supplementler.com, the largest Sports Nutrition and Vitamin, Mineral, Herbal and Supplement retailer in Turkey. Supplementler.com is a full-priced, profitable and extremely fast growing omnichannel player.
- Jack helped implement unique buying experiences, such as virtual selling via QR codes in gyms, vending machines in sports centers and pop-up stores.
- Previously, Jack worked in the mergers & acquisitions departments of top-tier investment banks such as Rothschild & Cie in Paris and Allen & Co in NYC. A Stanford University M.S. and Northwestern University B.S graduate, Jack is a French and Turkish citizen and currently resides in Istanbul, Turkey.



### **BRIDGET BURNS**

*Social Media Strategist, Tom's of Maine*

- Bridget is responsible for digital content strategy and creation, in addition to managing Tom's influencer programs, which focus on micro-influencers — everyday consumers with a large social following who are highly engaged around relevant topics.
- She helped boost the company's Instagram user community 8% within two weeks of implementing a micro-influencer marketing strategy.
- In spreading word-of-mouth to micro-influencers, these consumers' posts engage other shoppers at a 600% higher rate than those on the Tom's of Maine official Facebook Fan page and Instagram accounts combined.

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### **JERRY HUM**

***Co-Founder and CEO, Touch of Modern***

- Jerry plays a key role in curating the products, brands and designers featured on Touch of Modern. Trained in architecture, Jerry evaluates each proposed item against a strict set of criteria to meet customer demand and brand standards.
- Jerry was recently named as one of *Forbes'* "30 Under 30," along with the company's three additional Co-Founders.
- Touch of Modern has made strides in developing an effective mobile commerce channel, inspiring customers to purchase higher priced and luxury products via mobile devices. At least two-thirds of sales online now come through mobile devices.



### **JOHN HAZEN**

***VP, Omnichannel and Digital Innovation, True Religion***

- John Hazen has spearheaded an initiative to advance True Religion's real-time enterprise data availability, increase conversions and keep shoppers in-store longer with the endless aisle Apple Watch app and interactive digital screens.
- True Religion engaged with Aptos and Formula 3 Group to develop a unique endless aisle solution that provided reliable, real-time inventory visibility — across its entire enterprise — to shoppers.
- Previously, John was VP of Global e-Commerce at Fox Racing where he rolled out a global e-Commerce strategy in countries such as the UK, Spain, France, Canada and Australia. Prior to joining Fox, John launched e-Commerce for Hurley, a Nike subsidiary, and O'Neill, the legendary surf brand.



### **MARCI ZAROFF**

***Founder, Under the Canopy***

- Marci coined the term "ECOfashion," and has been instrumental in driving authenticity, environmental leadership and social justice worldwide for more than 25 years, helping launch the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS).
- Marci has worked with retailers such as Whole Foods Market, Bed Bath & Beyond and Target to launch sustainable apparel and home textile initiatives.
- She serves on the Board of Directors of the Organic Trade Association and the Textile Exchange, as well as Fair Trade USA and the Cradle to Cradle Innovation Institute's "Fashion Positive" Advisory Boards.

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### **PATRICK WALSH**

*Chief Operating Officer, VILLA*

- Patrick recently has been promoted from VP of Marketing at VILLA to Chief Operating Officer, having helped the company grow from 10 stores to more than 100 stores during his tenure.
- He implemented a non-traditional personalization strategy specifically tailored for individual Millennial consumers, focusing on product merchandising and site search. The personalization strategy resulted in a 20% boost in conversion rates, while revenue growth directly attributed to site search increased by more than 78%.



### **SIMON RODRIGUE**

*SVP eCommerce, Walmart Canada*

- Simon was instrumental in launching seven key initiatives to revamp how Walmart interacted with other local retailers, as well as how consumers interacted with their local Walmart stores. He helped launch online grocery pick-up in the Ottawa area to expand the offering to fresh food.
- Simon and his team partnered with 7-Eleven Canada to expand the Grab & Go Locker network, offering consumers a free shipping option where they can pick up their order 24/7.
- Previously, Simon led the e-Commerce and Interactive marketing teams at Sears Canada and Home Depot Canada, as well as the Site Experience organization for Travelocity North America.



### **JIM BRETT**

*President, West Elm*

- Jim has placed a major focus on impact sourcing — using purchasing power to improve workers' lives with investments in programs like health care and literacy.
- Brett maintains collaborations with artisan communities around the world through his "Impact Sourcing" strategy, making dual-purpose investments designed to deliver financial return as well as measurable social impact—including educational efforts for craft partners.
- Recently appointed to the advisory board of Nest, a non-profit organization helping artisans sustainably develop their businesses, Brett is active in The DUMBO Improvement District, the revitalization advocacy group for one of New York's earliest industrial neighborhoods.



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**Retail TouchPoints also honors retail companies during the year, through other awards programs:**



Social Media Maven Awards



Store Operations Superstar Awards



Customer Engagement Awards