

Z E I T G U I D E + **nickelodeon**.™  
PRESENT

# THE EVER-EVOLVING BUSINESS & CONSUMER LANDSCAPE

5 TRENDS THAT MATTER TO KIDS & FAMILIES

*ZEITGUIDE,  
in partnership with Nickelodeon,  
presents:*

*The Ever-Evolving Business  
& Consumer Landscape*

*5 Trends that Matter to Kids & Families*

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# FOREWORD

FROM THE CMO & PRESIDENT OF CONSUMER PRODUCTS,  
PAM KAUFMAN

At Nickelodeon, we are committed to helping you—our partners—navigate an ever-evolving cultural and business landscape. Our aim is to serve you with knowledge, insights and creativity to stay ahead of the major trends impacting your business. To help accomplish this, we recruited ZEITGUIDE, an intelligence firm that studies this changing landscape to keep businesses culturally relevant, innovative and inspired for the future. As experts in cultural and business change, Zeitguide was the perfect thought partner to produce this exclusive digest offering an outside perspective on the changing lives of kids and families.

We face a transformational moment in the media, retail and marketing businesses. An explosion of touchpoints, an increase in digital viewership and the proliferation of online shopping have made it a challenge to grab consumer attention. But there's one thing that never changes: the strength and significance of great intellectual property. Consumers still respond to great content; and once they respond, they'll seek it out, consume it and remain loyal to it.

At Nickelodeon, we are fortunate to be home to some of the greatest characters in the world. We have the number one preschool show with *PAW Patrol*, and are number one for kids 6-11 with *Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn*. Our library is stocked with beloved properties from *SpongeBob SquarePants* to *Rugrats* to *Hey Arnold*. We are about to reboot a show with tremendous multigenerational appeal: *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. And we're trying a new model in partnering with social influencer JoJo Siwa.

For global licensing, this is our moment. The world may change. Let it. Nickelodeon will continue to be a brand that matters, precisely because we are the leading authority on kids and families. We continue to have the best access to insights into our consumers, demonstrated through the work of our consumer insights team led by Sujata Luther, with its definitional research study, "The Story of Me." It is our ongoing commitment to share our insights and expertise with our partners so that we can continue to build together.

I want to thank Jose Castro, Jen Caveza, Andrea Fasulo, Mark Kingston, Jon Roman and Dion Vlachos for their contribution with ZEITGUIDE to provide their expert insight into how we as a company are responding to these trends.

And to our partners, thank you. Our work together continues to drive our shared success.

# INTRO

FROM THE FOUNDER & CEO OF ZEITGUIDE,  
BRAD GROSSMAN

Here at ZEITGUIDE, we track, study and report on how our constantly changing culture continues to impact businesses and society at large.

Our signature process is what we call FIND FILTER FOCUS. We dive deep into hundreds of secondary sources, pull from our first-hand experience, and conduct interviews with experts and industry leaders to create a bird's eye view of the drivers and trends transforming our world.

For this piece, we partnered with Nickelodeon's global consumer products and retail teams to share our findings on how these forces of change are reshaping the business of entertaining and engaging with kids and families.

We mined knowledge from both inside and outside of Nick, speaking to those within the organization as well as thought- and business-leaders, retail and licensing industry pioneers, and cultural icons from around the world.

With a learned understanding of Nickelodeon's innovations, as well as best practices from others, we've synthesized our research into the 5 key levers that are the most relevant today. Our goal is to connect all of you, Nick's partners, together on a learning, and thus a winning, journey.

I want to thank my team and partners on this exploration—particularly Pam Kaufman, with whom I have worked for years as a thought partner. For this project, her stellar team helped us gain a better understanding, first-hand, into today's fascinating family dynamics, while also demonstrating how the media, consumer products and retail industries are constantly recalibrating to meet the changing needs of the kids-and-family business.

The challenges are well known, and solutions can feel elusive. But our takeaway is that the future of your businesses is beyond exciting—it's transformational. If media companies with strong intellectual property, their licensees and brick-and-mortar stores continue partnering together in innovative and entertaining ways, we can only assume the best is yet to come.

And as we always say at ZEITGUIDE . . . keep learning.

## Trend 1

## RETAILTAINMENT RECHARGED: HOW TO CREATE THE ULTIMATE IN-STORE EXPERIENCE

Parents know this problem all too well. Their daughter has been invited to a birthday party, they need to buy a gift, and time is tight.

They have two choices: find something online and get it delivered right to their doorstep, or take the time to go to the store.

One-click shopping may sound appealing, but a trip to the store can offer something more. Their daughter gets to meet one of her favorite characters, who happens to be demoing a new chemistry set; her love of science is born. She walks out with a new chemistry set in hand. The trip has become more than an errand—it's a chance to bond with her parents. It's a discovery. It's an experience. And it's something that online retailers will never be able to replace.

### **IT IS MORE CRITICAL THAN EVER THAT RETAIL SPACES BECOME MUST-ATTEND DESTINATIONS THROUGH A BLEND OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGY & ENTERTAINMENT.**

It's the secret retailers and their partners have found for keeping customers coming back: amplify offline shopping into more than just a transaction, but into a memorable, entertaining, interactive event. It's what George Ritzer defined as "retailtainment" back in 1999. His theory acts on one principle: use "ambience, emotion, sound and activity to get customers interested in the merchandise and in a mood to buy."

Now, 18 years later, with growing pressure from online retailers, it is more critical than ever that retail spaces become must-attend destinations through a blend of emerging technology and entertainment. Tech tools like virtual reality (VR) allow consumers to be transported into a virtual world where they can see themselves engaging with a product. One of the most innovative "interactive"

**72%** of 25-34-year-old consumers want to use VR and AR technology in physical stores

– Opinium Survey

stores we've seen is Rebecca Minkoff, the fashion boutique, in which a VR event was created with Walmart and its newly purchased ecommerce site, Jet. For that occasion, a virtual showroom was built, featuring 360-degree visible products alongside virtual life-size models wearing Minkoff apparel. Customers could also shop a VR runway show displaying the looks. Walmart sees a big future in VR, projecting that someday it could evolve into what it calls V-Commerce.

While VR can place customers inside a separate, fully immersive virtual showroom, augmented reality (AR) is able to superimpose images or data over reality to reveal details about a product. Nike has unveiled a new in-store device that allows customers to design their own sneakers by projecting colors, designs and patterns on the shoe via hologram. Sephora, which was praised by Harvard Business School for "staying relevant" through its AR app, allows customers to "try on" beauty products and get personalized tips on what to buy. In September, Ikea and Anthropologie released apps that let customers envision how a new piece of furniture will look in their home; they can even test colors and fabrics.

Apple's Tim Cook, whose recently launched ARKit intends to make AR experiences for consumers and retailers easy to access on the iPhone, declared AR the future of retail in Vogue: "Over time, I think [these features] will be as key as having a website . . . That will be a part of the shopping experience of the future, it absolutely will."

As if Cook's endorsement wasn't enough, consumer demand is there too. A recent Opinium survey concluded that 72 percent of 25-34-year-old consumers want to use VR and AR technology in physical stores—AR to help with discovering new products, sales, and sample product versions; VR for a fully-immersive showroom experience.

Another in-store tech innovation might inspire memories of Snow White: Magic mirrors. Neiman Marcus partnered with MemoMi, a tech lab whose MemoryMirror™ lets you see 360-degree back and side views in new outfits, and change the outfit's color—all in real time.

Ralph Lauren and Rebecca Minkoff are also getting in on smart mirrors that can adjust the lighting in the room, recommend complementary pieces, trigger assistance from an associate or order an item in an alternative size or color. The result: customers buy on average three times more apparel than they do in a regular dressing room, according to CEO Uri Minkoff in several sources from 2015.

To further bring the “sound and activity” Ritzer references into the store, retailers are partnering with entertainment brands. Walmart, in addition to partnering with a host of popular film and television properties to offer in-store events, has gone so far as to recruit professional bull riders, stationed in the parking lot, to entice shoppers to move inside.

Perhaps our greatest example of retailtainment is also, fittingly, the country’s largest mall: The Mall of America, located in Bloomington, Minnesota. While most malls are shutting down (5,300 so far this year), in what lifestyle site Refinery 29 calls “The Mallpocalypse,” the Mall of America gets more visitors annually than does Disney World. Why? A trip there mixes shopping with dining in 50 restaurants and with activities like a Sea Life Aquarium, flight simulations, blacklight mini-golf, and a Nick-themed amusement park.

The Mall of America is a great example of how to do it right, and the rest of the world is paying attention. According to publisher China Skinny, the most popular malls in China have become “lifestyle centers,” half of whose space is devoted to food and beverage—the remainder to ice skating rinks, spas, gyms, children’s play areas, language schools, bowling alleys, rooftop horse-riding centers, indoor beaches, amphitheaters and retail space. These “lifestyle centers” contextualize commerce not just as shopping, but as somewhere to be.

Tech companies are also taking note of this trend. In tandem with its iPhone 8 and iPhoneX announcements, Apple unveiled a plan to make its retail locations like “town squares” that will feature live events from artists and musicians.

“With brick & mortar retailers needing to drive traffic, they are increasingly looking to their entertainment partners like Nickelodeon to produce experiences that entice consumers to get off their couches & into the store.”

– Dion Vlachos, EVP, Retail Sales, CPG, and Publishing at Nickelodeon

While Apple aims to create cultural destinations with its town squares, Nickelodeon has begun reframing stores into family fun destinations, as ZEITGUIDE learned in discussions with Nick executives.

“With brick and mortar retailers needing to drive traffic, they are increasingly looking to their entertainment partners like Nickelodeon to produce experiences that entice consumers to get off their couches and into the store,” says Dion Vlachos, EVP, Retail Sales, CPG, and Publishing at Nickelodeon.

Nickelodeon has made its characters come to life in-store and beyond with character meet-&-greet, product demos, mobile scavenger hunts, social competitions, augmented reality, customized 3D printed toys and more. The brand is also exploring ways to reinvent the toy aisles to encourage product interaction, education and play.

Nickelodeon is also bringing social media into stores with activations like an Instagram Live from a Walmart store during a JoJo Siwa Meet & Greet, or a Facebook Live from a Toys “R” Us event with mommy influencers Audrey & Vera promoting an exclusive *PAW Patrol* program. These opportunities to meet social stars in real life offer an elevated retail experience and the chance for fans everywhere to share in the event.

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By pairing our beloved characters with the latest technologies, we're offering unique experiences and live moments for parents to share with their children. Building this engagement is not only good for our brand, but drives sales for the retailers too.

”

— Andrea Fasulo, SVP,  
Retail Marketing & Consumer  
Products Planning at Nickelodeon

But it's not just social stars showing up at the stores. Nickelodeon has also brought kids' favorite characters to life. The upcoming *Sunny Day Glam Van* mobile tour, created in partnership with Mattel, will be visiting over 50 Walmart stores during Summer 2018. Walmart shoppers will have the chance to visit Style Stations to get fun hairstyles, participate in DIY activities and play with product demos—a perfect mix of entertainment and product showcasing.

Nickelodeon has tapped its retail locations as content distribution channels as well. Premier Screening Events give kids and parents the chance

to be part of an in-store episode premiere, with additional activities that make it a must-attend experience. One instance saw Nickelodeon partnered with Target to debut a new episode of the hit show *PAW Patrol* for its annual chain-wide Halloween in-store event. In addition to watching the screening, kids could “trick or treat the store,” and collect freebies and mementos of the special event.

“By pairing our beloved characters with the latest technologies, we're offering unique experiences and live moments for parents to share with their children,” says Andrea Fasulo, SVP, Retail Marketing & Consumer Products Planning at Nickelodeon. “Building this engagement is not only good for our brand, but drives sales for the retailers too.” It's a winning combination that's making retail quite simply the new place to be.

## Trend 2

### **NEXT-GEN GENDER: MOVING TOWARD GENDER INCLUSIVENESS**

Today, the discussion on gender in media is all around us—from questions surrounding inclusion and representation of gender and diversity to a growing demand for media and consumer products that go beyond traditional stereotypes. Today, there's a desire for options that are accessible to all children, regardless of gender.

Despite the increased conversation, a recent report from family media watchdog Common Sense Media found that gender-normative and masculine traits are still as prevalent as ever, and still presented as more valuable than feminine traits. “Our research shows that there are profoundly more male characters than female characters in [entertainment] aimed at children—and that the female characters [who] do exist are often underdeveloped, sidelined, uninspiring, or simply eye candy,” explained Academy Award-winning actress Geena Davis, who founded the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, and was a contributor to the Common Sense Media study.

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Indeed, there is a cultural imperative for thinking from an inclusive rather than gender-normative approach. So, parents today are demanding more neutrality in representations of gender, and more visible diversity in media. And the demand for gender-neutral toys and apparel is growing too. One survey from marketing firm Havas of 12,000 participants across 32 countries found 61% of women and 46% of men agreed that children should be raised with as few gender binaries as possible to reduce the restrictions traditional roles can place on children.



Brands are listening. Mattel and Hasbro both produce toys without binaries. Mattel has added the first boy character to its American Girl line, and its line of Hot Wheels cars featuring female superheroes like Batgirl and Wonder Woman comes in non-gendered red and blue packaging, not pink. Hasbro's Baby Alive doll can say "daddy" for the first time, while "mommy" formerly was the only option. And unisex children's clothing is on the rise, with brands like Zara and Selfridges rolling out new, gender-neutral lines.

**IN 2015, TARGET ANNOUNCED THE DECISION TO REMOVE GENDER-BASED SIGNS IN ITS AISLES & ISSUED THIS STATEMENT:**

**“WE NEVER WANT GUESTS OR THEIR FAMILIES TO FEEL FRUSTRATED OR LIMITED BY THE WAY THINGS ARE PRESENTED.”**

In 2015, Target announced the decision to remove gender-based signs in its aisles and issued this statement: "We never want guests or their families to feel frustrated or limited by the way things are presented." The brand has since removed pink and blue backgrounds from its shelves. Today, its back-to-school line created with Toca Boca features non-gender specific apparel, designed in colors that fall outside classically stereotyped blues and pinks, and neutral imagery.

Since day one, Nickelodeon has had the mission to represent all kids. From *Clarissa Explains It All* to *Game Shakers*, Nick has worked to provide characters that break down gender stereotypes and can be enjoyed by all. Consider Sunny, an entrepreneur who exudes creativity, compassion and confidence—all while running her own business, showing girls a positive example of a female in power. Or Nella, a biracial princess-knight wielding determination, power and courage.

Unsurprisingly, when characters become more dynamic, so too does the audience. Series helmed by positive female characters like Shimmer and Shine—don't exclude a male audience. In fact, the show earns an even split in its audience between boys and girls.

"We are proud to be a leader when it comes to positive depictions of strong, creative, compassionate young women," says Jen Caveza, SVP, Licensing at Nickelodeon. "Characters like Nella and Sunny highlight the values parents want their young girls and boys to be exposed to."

And these themes expand into retail products. All kids love to cook, but toys like the Easy Bake Oven were long targeted to girls. Now, products like the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* Pizza Kitchen expand the appeal of cooking play to everyone. Boys and girls both equally love *PAW Patrol*, but boys' shirts infrequently feature Skye, the most prominent female character. Young boys now demand that this valuable member of the team be included—an object lesson of how inclusive gender depictions have merit in teaching boys and girls to see each other as equals.

"It's important for retailers and licensees to be tapped into this trend to create powerful examples of a more inclusive future for kids and families," says Caveza.

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Licensing at Nickelodeon

## Trend 3

## THE MINI-ME PHENOMENON: PARENTS & KIDS ARE BFFS

Forget about simply protecting and providing for their children—today’s parents are taking on the role of best friend, too. Gone are the days of latch-key kids—think instead of mothers and daughters in matching yoga pants and sons turning to dads with their daily dramas before hitting up their school pals. More than ever, parents are participating in their children’s social and emotional lives not just as caregivers, but as friends.

**54%** of millennial parents describe one of their children as a best friend.

– The Family Room

A study from The Family Room, a research agency with a focus on millennial families, found that 54% of millennial parents describe one of their children as a best friend. For their part, children may find that having a stronger connection to a parent can be helpful in navigating other relationships. “If you have a patient, caring, supportive parent, and things happen with your best friend, you can always turn back to your parent for support,” says Ken Rubin, a professor of human development at the University of Maryland. “So when people say, ‘My mom is my best friend,’ that could be entirely correct.”

One reason for this shift is an uptick in the amount of time parents and children spend together. A study published in the *Journal of Marriage and Family* by researchers from the University of California, Irvine, found that the time mothers spend on child care nearly doubled from 1965 to 2012, jumping from 54 to 104 minutes a day. Fathers’ time commitments nearly quadrupled from just 16 minutes to 59 minutes over that same period.

That time spent together is no longer limited to basics like homework help and afterschool activities. Today’s fathers are much more involved—even when it comes to tasks like shopping. A survey by market research firm Mintel found that 4 in 5 Millennial dads prefer shopping with (and for) their kids, with 3 in 4 seeing it as a way to bond.

**4 in 5** Millennial dads prefer shopping with (and for) their kids

– Mintel

That ramped-up connection means kids have more input with parents. It’s what’s known as “pester power,” or the influence children have over household purchases—and it extends from where families eat to where they vacation and shop. With this influence in mind, Nickelodeon created Slimefest, a multi-day music festival first launched in Australia that has since expanded to the U.K., Spain, Italy, South Africa and now the U.S. The festival taps into the family meeting over entertainment decisions, and offers an incredible way for parents and children to spend more time together.

In-home entertainment is also shifting to accommodate the enhanced parent-child connection. Networks are moving to capitalize on this trend with programming that appeals to a sense of nostalgia in parents—and creates a new generation of fans in their kids. In fact, more television programming than ever before is being created with co-viewing by both parents and kids in mind.

The besties dynamic has even gone “couture” with children’s clothing becoming fashion’s latest obsession. Say goodbye to sibling hand-me-downs; clothes today are designed to look just like Mom’s. Ferragamo’s mini collection is designed for girls aged 3-8, and features flats and bold miniature bags to match Mommy’s. Gucci offers a mini-me line for babies. And Dolce & Gabbana’s Fall 2017 runway featured looks modeled for the whole family—pushing fashion’s inclusivity trend to the positively intergenerational.

Trend-focused retailers are playing their own role in the elevation of children’s fashion, as seen with Target’s collaboration with Victoria Beckham on a clothing line for moms and daughters. And celebrity mom-daughter mini-me pairs, such as Beyoncé and Blue Ivy, and Kim Kardashian and North West, further this demand for kids’ fashion that mirrors adult looks ripped from the glossies or the runway.

“The mini-me trend gives parents the opportunity to share the passion kids have for their favorite brands,” says Jose Castro, SVP, Softlines Licensing and Global Collaborations at Nickelodeon. “We’re helping meet the demand for this trend by creating products that parents and kids alike will love.”

For Nickelodeon, this has meant a partnership with trend-setting New York-based brand and retailer Kith. That fashion outpost came out with *Rugrats*-inspired looks, including matching hoodies and tees for both kids and adults.

Products and programs like these capitalize on parents’ desire to share their childhood experiences with their own children—redefining parent-child relationships and just what it means to be best friends for life.

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#### Trend 4

### FINDING SUPERFANS: THE RISE OF COLLECTING & NOSTALGIA

The hunt for new audiences may be eternal, but we are seeing brands now rushing to cater to their strongest allies. Meet the superfans. These hardcore brand loyalists, who make up around 10% of customers, communicate their passion through excessive word-of-mouth and social media, and they buy in great quantities—even driving 30%-70% of sales in some industries, according to Eddie Yoon, a growth strategy expert at The Cambridge Group, and author of the book *Superconsumers*.

When brands focus on superfans’ behaviors and directly engage with them, they learn to improve their products, uncover insightful consumer habits, elevate their marketing strategies and even transform more buyers into superfans. Facebook and Google, for example, keep superfans hooked with exclusive access to their latest tools and services. In exchange, they harvest superfans’ feedback to improve products. Nike and Adidas go so far as to consult with ethnographers to study their most passionate fans.

Superfans don’t just want to passively experience their favorite brands—they want to “live it” and “collect them all.” The success of the collectables’ market is an indicator of just how powerful superfans are—and why brands are working to keep them. Fans dying to get every action figure in a series, or snap up that limited edition toy just out for the holidays, caused a spike in collectibles, with a 33% increase in sales last year (\$1.8 billion, per The NPD Group).

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– The NPD Group

Fueling the collecting craze has been a trend that's nothing short of surprising: the unboxing phenomenon. The craze for the "big reveal" has spiked blind bag sales up 60%, increasing more than six-fold in the last three years. Toys like Hatchimals and Shopkins are in the vanguard, thanks to their element of mystery, driving the desire to buy more and collect.

It's the same surprise and reward logic that's made toy-subscription delivery boxes packed with exclusive items like Kiwi Crate, Pley and Loot Crate so popular. Nickelodeon has tapped into the trend and partnered with Culture Fly to create two subscription boxes: The Nick Box and a box for Nick ambassador JoJo Siwa. And Loot Crate's monthly boxes feature products inspired by Nick shows from the coveted '90s that pack a heavy dose of nostalgia for fans.

A line of Stranger Things action figures from Funko is one example of reading a pop culture phenomenon and delivering collectables to superfans within 6 months or less of the show becoming an overnight sensation. The overall success of Funko can be attributed to its ability to feed the needs of superfans of even the most obscure properties, with the company boasting over 200 active licenses. It's all about giving superfans what they want, when they want it.

Tapping into both the collecting and unboxing craze, Nickelodeon teamed up with WWE to create an exclusive line of Ninja Superstars. For the collection, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* figures were decked out in the duds worn by wrestling superstars John Cena, Sting, Undertaker and Macho Man Randy Savage. A series of unboxing videos with WWE superstar Zach Ryder, plus Sting interviews with superfans at Comic Con, created over 225 million impressions and garnered strong retail sales.

Superfandom is also making its mark intergenerationally. With series reboots, and re-releases of classic shows, movies and products, parents themselves are encouraging the next generation of fans in their own kids. On Nickelodeon, *The Splat* features shows Millennial parents grew up loving, like *Ren & Stimpy*, *Hey Arnold!* and *Rugrats*.

"We have kids and their parents who want to eat, sleep and live our properties," says Jon Roman, SVP, Licensing at Nickelodeon. "This passion applies to parents who remember the shows they loved as kids and share them with their own children. We're building this fandom further through shows meant to touch on parents' nostalgia, and live events and other product collections that develop our fans' connection even further."

Taking '90s nostalgia to the retail aisle, Toys "R" Us launched the Fan Vault. With an assortment of limited items from hit Nick shows from the '90s, this dedicated section of the store caters directly to superfan collectors. On clothing racks, fashion pairs seamlessly with nostalgia through collaborations such as Love Tribe x Nickelodeon—a collection exclusive to Macy's offering a line of tees, sweaters and hoodies with throwback Nick characters.

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Paragon-of-cool designer Jeremy Scott created a line based on cult heroes *Ren and Stimpy* for his 2016 collection. And Scott's Moschino Resort 2018 collection paid homage to *SpongeBob SquarePants* with a capsule assortment to benefit the (RED) charity.

These capsule and collaborative collections allow superfans to show off their tireless devotion to their favorite brands. "It's a badge of honor and community when you wear your *SpongeBob* T-shirt and people point at you and give you the thumbs up on the street," says Roman. "It makes you feel more like you are part of a community." It's a dedicated community—and one that only continues to grow.

## Trend 5

**THE EVERYWHERE-TO-  
EVERYONE BRAND:****CONNECTING TO CONSUMERS AT ALL TOUCHPOINTS**

Remember when the only thing Amazon did was sell books through its website? Today, the company has grown into an everything-under-the-sun purveyor of products ranging from award-winning television shows and films (watched in theaters and at home) to clothing to hardware to Whole Foods. Initially a brick-and-mortar disruptor and ecommerce giant, the brand is expanding into physical retail space to create an everywhere-at-once brand experience. Its growth strategy is to become an omnichannel brand—a brand that markets and sells to its customers using as many online and offline touchpoints as possible.

Amazon might be the most talked about retail-turned-media company when it comes to omnichannel, but it's not the only one doing it.

Media companies also have an exceptional opportunity to expand into the omnichannel approach. Nickelodeon, for example, is taking its brand beyond strictly linear and digital media platforms with a wide variety of in-person events. "We're constantly providing external touchpoints to engage consumers off our platforms as much as on them," says Mark Kingston, SVP & GM EMEA Consumer Products and International Promotions & CPG at Nickelodeon. "Live shows and in-store events provide another critical touchpoint."

Live shows like *SpongeBob SquarePants* on Broadway and the *PAW Patrol Live!* Tour give fans a way to experience beloved characters in-person, while interactive museum exhibitions give kids a chance to delve deeper into their favorite worlds. At hotels, resorts and theme parks—both in the U.S. and internationally—they're giving guests the opportunity to spend a day as SpongeBob, Helga or Angelica Pickles. Fans are used to finding Nickelodeon characters through linear, digital and mobile platforms, but a visit to Bikini Bottom in person is a once-in-a-lifetime event. These live touchpoints give the brand increased dimension and magic, and allow fans to meet and create a community with other fans.

“

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– Mark Kingston, SVP & GM EMEA  
Consumer Products & International Promotions & CPG  
at Nickelodeon

Another route for omnichannel brands: influencer campaigns. Generation Z depends on influencers—bloggers, vloggers, celebrities—to act as filters for them. One-off contests and paid posts are losing traction and credibility in a saturated terrain. Today, brand partnerships—ones that often generate products or programs offline—offer a more enduring way to speak to influencers' audiences.

Nickelodeon has partnered with Dance Moms star and social influencer JoJo Siwa on a series of collaborations to create an omnichannel brand experience that transcends platforms and media. Her massive following on YouTube and across social media (over 20 million followers in all) gives her a built-in audience for collaborations: a docu-special on Siwa, guest appearances on popular Nickelodeon series, hosting *Lip Sync Battle Shorties*, and product lines—from her coveted bows to dolls, apparel, bedding, books, DVDs and more. Siwa debuted many of these products during her 14th birthday celebration at the Walmart flagship store close to its headquarters in Bentonville, Arkansas, demonstrating how social notoriety translates to real-life fame in today's media.

That partnership is symbiotic. It allows both Siwa and Nickelodeon to speak to each other's fan base through their respective platforms: Nickelodeon helps Siwa grow on television, while she expands Nick's reach into the YouTube space. And the retail components help both brands find new customers. In short, each partner gets a second microphone to speak from.

Fans today aren't just found in front of TVs. They're at home on their computers, they're walking down the street looking at their mobile devices, they're driving and listening to podcasts. And they're in countries across the globe from Australia to Germany to Brazil. While it is a challenge for brands to keep customers engaged across all the touchpoints now available, it's also an opportunity to connect the dots of the brand story and offer a 360-degree view of an entire brand experience.

**WHILE IT IS A CHALLENGE FOR BRANDS TO KEEP CUSTOMERS ENGAGED ACROSS ALL THE TOUCHPOINTS NOW AVAILABLE, IT'S ALSO AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT THE DOTS OF THE BRAND STORY & OFFER A 360-DEGREE VIEW OF AN ENTIRE BRAND EXPERIENCE.**

The amplifying effects of omnichannel are clear when campaigns reach consumers across every touchpoint—a coordination of content (programming, distribution and promotion) and messaging across platforms, retailers' O&Os and licensees. It's in-store, online, and on mobile devices and tablets, engaging consumers wherever they are and creating a cohesive, covetable brand narrative.

"It's not a tradeoff of spending on linear and live to spending on digital. You need to make a commitment to both," says Kingston. "How do we get the hours they're not watching TV into our universe? How do we get that time to us?"

When consumers are engaged across all the touchpoints they encounter—and even when they create or discover new ones—brands become not just desirable, they become indispensable, and create more fans and opportunities for offering our consumer products.

## CONCLUSION

So the world is changing. As Pam Kaufman noted in her introduction: Let it.

Our examination of the ever-evolving business and consumer landscape of kids and families shows us how we too must change to drive loyalty with this audience. Every great business knows that to stay on top, it must ride the wave of change, whether that's in retail, in shifting conversations on gender roles and diversity, in parent-kid relationships, or in connecting with superfans and the omnichannel retail-meets-media landscape.

With these insights, we at ZEITGUIDE hope we can together bridge the universes of entertainment, consumer products, and retail and continue to be world-class leaders for kids and families.

**LET'S GET TO WORK!**

## *About*



Nickelodeon, now in its 38th year, is the number one entertainment brand for kids. It has built a diverse global business by putting kids first in everything it does. The company includes television programming and production in the United States and around the world, plus consumer products, digital, recreation, books and feature films. Nickelodeon's U.S. television network is seen in more than 90 million households and has been the number one-rated kids' basic cable network for 22 consecutive years.

For more information or artwork, visit <http://www.nickpress.com>. Nickelodeon and all related titles, characters and logos are trademarks of Viacom Inc. (NASDAQ: VIA, VIAB).





## About

# ZEITGUIDE

ZEITGUIDE is a think tank that partners with 21st century companies representing all industry verticals.

Using FIND FILTER FOCUS—our signature methodology tapping a wide variety of primary sources and subject-matter experts—we study, advise and publish on what you need to know, as our constantly changing culture continues to impact business and society.

Our mission is to keep leaders and their entire organizations culturally relevant, transformative and inspired for the future.

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