

From Vintage to Visionary: The Future of Urban Outfitters

Leaders from [Glossier](#), [Shopify](#), [Mastercard](#) and more will take the stage at Brandweek to share what strategies set them apart and how they incorporate the most valued emerging trends. [Register](#) to join us this September 23–26 in Phoenix, Arizona.

On this episode of The Speed of Culture podcast, Suzy founder and host Matt Britton is joined by Dmitri Siegel, chief creative, brand and digital officer at Urban Outfitters. They explore how Urban Outfitters leverages in-store experiences to drive social media engagement, the balance between creativity and performance marketing, and the evolving expectations of Gen Z consumers.

Urban Outfitters has long been a trendsetter in the retail industry, known for its eclectic mix of products and unique in-store experience. As the brand navigates the evolving tastes of Gen Z consumers, it continues to blend creativity with data-driven strategies.

Siegel is a seasoned creative executive with over 15 years of experience leading and modernizing brands, driving growth, building teams and spearheading change. He's previously held roles at companies such as Sonos and Patagonia.

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With a background in design and performance marketing, his

distinctive perspective has been instrumental in shaping the identities of these iconic brands, establishing him as a key thought leader in the industry.

“The gap between millennials and Gen Z is profound, much like the gap between baby boomers and Gen X,” he says. “We need to be obsessed with who our customers are, listen to them, and understand their different experiences and viewpoints.”

Listen to Dmitri Siegel on The Speed of Culture podcast and gain insights into how Urban Outfitters blends creativity with business strategy to engage Gen Z.

Key takeaways:

05:15-12:30 Leveraging In-Store Experiences for Social Media

Success: Siegel highlights the importance of integrating in-store experiences with social media strategies. Urban Outfitters has found that the most engaging content on their social media channels often originates from real-life events and experiences in their stores. By hosting events and creating unique in-store moments, they amplify these experiences through platforms like TikTok and Instagram, driving higher engagement and building a stronger community. For brands looking to enhance their social media presence, focusing on authentic, in-person experiences that can be shared online can be a powerful strategy.

13:45-19:20 Balancing Creativity and Performance Marketing:

Creativity is where value is created, whether through products or marketing campaigns. Siegel notes that while performance marketing has dominated in recent years, the pendulum is swinging back toward valuing creative efforts that truly connect with consumers. He explains how Urban Outfitters blends artistic and scientific approaches in their marketing strategies to drive business results. Brands should strive to maintain a balance between creative and data-driven strategies to maximize their marketing effectiveness and ensure

sustainable growth.

24:35-31:10 Adapting to Gen Z Consumer Preferences: Gen Z consumers have distinct preferences and values that set them apart from previous generations. Siegel points out the importance of understanding and adapting to these differences, such as their appreciation for sustainability and vintage items. Urban Outfitters has successfully tapped into this by offering a wide range of vintage and remade products. Brands targeting Gen Z should invest time in understanding their unique preferences and values, ensuring that their offerings and marketing messages resonate deeply with this demographic to foster loyalty and engagement.

35:20-42:00 The Role of Creativity in Business Strategy: Reporting directly to CEOs and founders throughout his career, Siegel learned the importance of integrating creativity within the broader business strategy. Creativity should not operate in isolation but must align with overall business objectives to drive value and growth. This holistic approach helps ensure that marketing initiatives support the company's financial goals and enhance brand positioning. Brands should ensure that their creative efforts are closely aligned with their overall business strategy, integrating creativity into all aspects of their operations to drive success.

48:50-54:30 Navigating Ecommerce and Digital Transformation: Siegel shares insights into the dynamic nature of ecommerce and the challenges of competing with large-scale players like Amazon. Urban Outfitters focuses on offering a wide assortment of products online and leveraging data to improve fulfillment. As ecommerce continues to evolve with advancements in AI and changes in consumer behavior, brands must remain agile and innovative. Investing in robust ecommerce platforms, understanding consumer expectations, and leveraging data analytics are crucial steps for brands to stay competitive in the digital marketplace.

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