

How Claire's stays relevant with Gen Alpha—and their parents

Article

Shopping mall mainstay Claire's balances being on trend for [Gen Alpha](#) with being a nostalgic brand for parents by leaning into pop culture, putting the right messaging on the right platforms, and staying in constant contact with core consumers.

"For us, it's really important to stay in constant communication with our consumer," said Meghan Hurley, vice president of global marketing and ecommerce at Claire's. "Remaining

relevant [requires] making sure that we're speaking with them about what's important and then bringing either that product in or those experiences."

This strategy has helped Claire's thrive while many other mall-based [retailers](#) have struggled to maintain relevance in the digital age. Here's how Claire's does it.

Balancing nostalgia with contemporary relevance

Claire's appeals to parents who shopped there in their youth without alienating today's young consumers.

"You don't want to lean too far into nostalgia, because it ages you," Hurley said. In order to remain relevant with both kids and adults, Claire's carries products for both age ranges. In March, the brand held a piercing pop-up with New York jewelry brand Susan Alexandra that offered an experience for all ages.

The brand also works with [creators](#) who are parents, kids, and [Gen Zers](#) in between to reach an intergenerational audience.

Music and pop culture partnerships

By aligning itself with popular artists and aligning merchandise with concert-going trends, Claire's has managed to stay relevant, even as the pop culture trends themselves shift.

"We're always kind of marrying a little bit of the brand, a little bit of the trends," said Jaime Bettencourt, senior vice president of global account management and marketing at agency Mood Media.

"There's so many things that you'll see pop in our stores driven by the trending music," said Hurley, pointing to friendship bracelets for Taylor Swift or cat ears for Chappell Roan.

Reaching kids on YouTube and parents on Instagram

While many retailers focus their [social media](#) efforts primarily on [TikTok](#) and [Instagram](#), Claire's fastest-growing channel is YouTube, according to Hurley. "We need to actually be where our consumer is the most, which is on YouTube Shorts," Hurley said.

Gen Alpha using YouTube Kids and then graduating to YouTube, all the while consuming YouTube Shorts, which gives Claire's a place to reach younger consumers and their parents, who may watch with them.

The retailer maintains presence across multiple platforms—speaking to parents primarily through Instagram while engaging younger consumers through YouTube Shorts. It uses TikTok to reach older and younger audiences alike.

Listening to consumers to stay relevant

Claire's employs multiple feedback channels to ensure their offerings align with what their customers actually want, not just what executives think they want.

"We bring in our target consumer and our customers to give us feedback on what we're deeming as innovation...and also go through our normal product line," Hurley said.

Beyond in-store feedback, Claire's maintains a dedicated consumer panel they consult approximately every six weeks to talk about "anything that is going on in their world," Hurley said. This approach allows them to stay ahead of trends rather than chasing them after they've peaked.

By establishing direct communication channels with their core consumers, Claire's can make more informed merchandising decisions that resonate with their audience, reducing the risk of misreading trends or missing key cultural moments.

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