

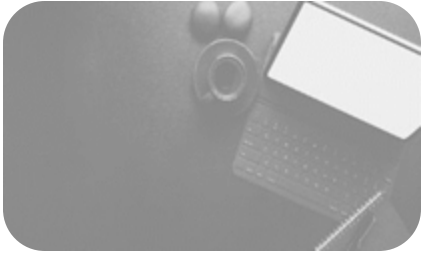
May 2021

# Market Intelligence Report



Chris Walton & Anne Mezzenga

In partnership with  **Manhattan**  
Associates®



What topics caught our subscribers' attention this past month?

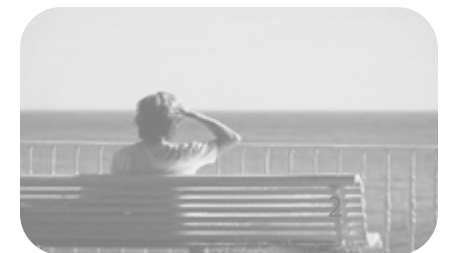
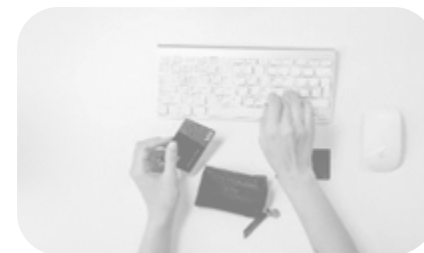
**Tech Eyes**  
Retail

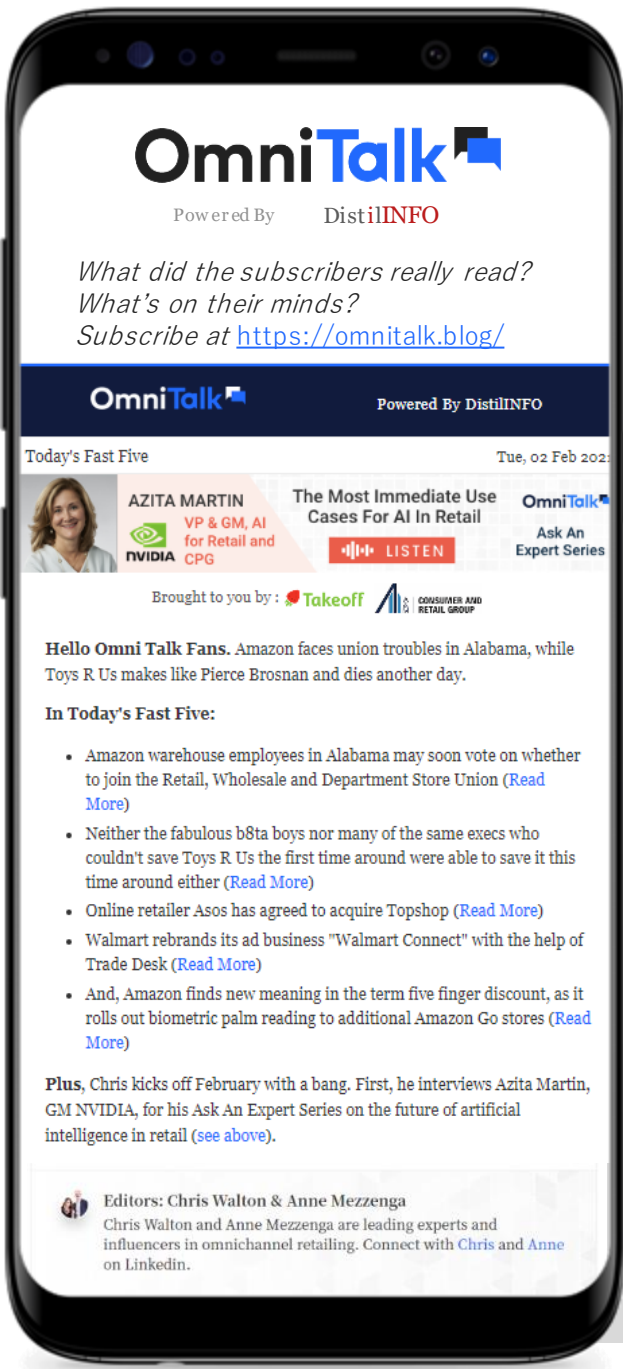
**Loyalty**  
Retail

**Food for**  
Retail

**Social**  
Retail

**OmniTalk**





We studied and analyzed **reader interest** across the Retail Industry for this report.

**4,000+**  
CxO Level  
Readers



**5,000+**  
VP Level  
Readers



**6,000+**  
Retail and Affiliated  
Organizations



**10,000+**  
Director Level  
Readers



1. [Walmart is Pulling Plug on More Robots](#)
2. [Mark Zuckerberg Announces New Ways for Instagram Creators to Make Money](#)
3. [Apple Retail Creator's Startup Enjoy to Go Public Via SPAC](#)
4. [Tractor Supply Off to Strong Start in Q1; 90 New Stores, 150 to 200 Remodels on Tap](#)
5. [Affirm to Acquire Returns Startup Returnly for \\$300M](#)
6. [Panasonic in \\$7.1 Billion Deal to Buy Blue Yonder](#)
7. [Why Reports Of A Full-Size Checkout-Free Amazon Supermarket Should Be Taken Seriously](#)
8. [Forbes | Best Buy Beta Is A Really Smart Idea](#)
9. [The 800 Pound Gorilla – Amazon Fresh Grocery in 2021](#)
10. [A Madison unicorn: Fetch Rewards Raises \\$210M at a Valuation North of \\$1B](#)

**Loyalty:** Fetch Rewards indeed grew its unicorn horn, securing a +\$1 billion valuation from the likes of SoftBank and others ([Read More](#))

**Outlet E-Commerce:** Otrium, another company on Omni Talk's Watch List for some time now, raised an additional \$120 million in Series C funding to take on the U.S. outlet market ([Read More](#))

**Ultra-Fast Delivery:** Not to be outdone, Getir, a super fast delivery company out of Turkey with plans to expand in Europe, secured \$300 million and a valuation of \$2.6 billion in its latest Series C round ([Read More](#))

**Social Commerce:** Meesho laid claim to its own \$2.1 billion valuation round, again led by SoftBank, to allow small businesses to succeed online in India ([Read More](#))

**Cross-Border Commerce:** Productsup, out of Berlin, grabbed an additional \$20 million to help companies localize their digital ads in multiple foreign languages ([Read More](#))

**OmniTalk**

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## OmniTalk Startup Newsletter

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Here are this week's Fast Five startups making headlines:

- "Headless" commerce moved to the head of the class as Fabric secures \$43 million to make e-commerce even easier and more flexible ([Read More](#))
- Wholesale marketplace Abound raised another \$22.9 million ([Read More](#))
- ReverseLogix now has another \$20 million to automate e-commerce reverse logistics ([Read More](#))
- Pipe17 brought in a big seed round of \$8 million to help e-commerce startups better connect their accounting software to their fulfillment operations ([Read More](#))
- And, Raydiant also landed \$13 million from investors, including Mark Wahlberg, to give retailers more control over their digital signage in-store. Marky Mark even uses the technology to sing "Happy Birthday" live to his Wahlburgers customers while they eat! ([Read More](#))

**Plus,** just like always, it's summarized and there for you all within the preview pane of your inbox.

— Chris, Anne, and the entire Omni Talk team

**P.S.** Have a startup or know a startup you think we should interview? Send an email our way to [info@redarcherretial.com](mailto:info@redarcherretial.com) with the subject line "Cool AF Company Chris and Anne Need to Meet."



**Editors: Chris Walton & Anne Mezzenga**

Chris Walton and Anne Mezzenga are leading experts and influencers in omnichannel retailing. Connect with [Chris](#) and [Anne](#) on LinkedIn.

**Fraud Prevention:** Friends of Omni Talk, Signifyd, raised \$205 million to keep up with the growing demand for its next generation online fraud prevention software. ([Read More](#))

**Rental Economy:** Grover, out of Berlin, secured \$71 million for its subscription rental electronics business. ([Read More](#))

**Food Waste:** Mori, a company whose proprietary compound of salt, water, and natural silk, can be used as an edible and protectable shield on fresh food, nabbed \$16 million of Series B financing and really grossed out Anne. ([Read More](#))

**E-Commerce Operations:** The e-commerce imagery business went gig economy as Soona raised \$10.2 million for its crowdsourced photography platform. ([Read More](#))

**Fulfillment Robotics:** An MIT startup named Pickle raised \$5.75 million and also released [one of the coolest videos we have seen of a robot working freight off of a truck](#). ([Read More](#))

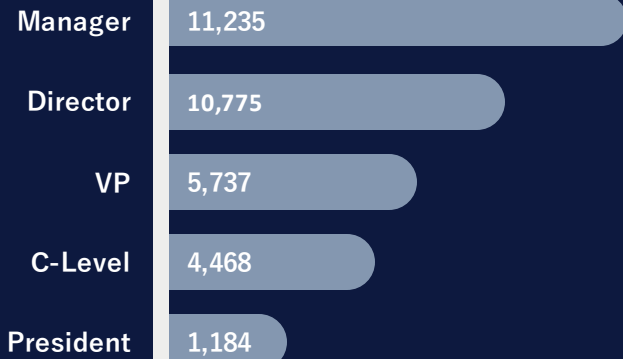


Here is what our **CxO, VP, Director Level** retail executive audience was interested in.

OmniTalk



Weekly readership profile



## CxO, VP Level Audience

- **Tech Eyes Retail** – Tech companies are encroaching on retailers' territory. What is the “Plan B”?
- **Social Retail** – Retail is getting more social in nature. What initiatives could positively impact the business?

## Overall Business Audience

- **Loyalty Retail** – Investors are crazy about loyalty rewards once again. WHY?
- **Food For Retail** – How is the food vertical of retail evolving? Where do we need to shift our focus?

# Tech Eyes Retail

**Tech Eyes Retail** – Tech companies are encroaching on retailers' territory. What is the “Plan B”?

**Yahoo Finance:** Facebook Marketplace, the Craigslist-like service where users buy and sell with each other, now has **one billion users**. There are more than **a million Shops, with more than 250 million users** interacting with those storefronts each month.

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg on Tuesday announced a slew of features Instagram is working on to help creators generate more revenue from their content. This includes a marketplace that would help match brands with creators whose content fits the audiences that they are trying to reach. <sup>1</sup>

**Creator shops** would allow creators to sell goods to Instagram users directly through their profiles on the social network. An **Affiliate marketplace** would allow creators to get a cut of sales for products that they recommend in their content. <sup>1</sup>

Global electronics and technology giant Panasonic, which acquired 20% of Blue Yonder in July 2020, will purchase the remaining 80% of shares for \$5.6 billion. Including repayment of outstanding debt, the additional investment totals \$7.1 billion, valuing Blue Yonder at \$8.5 billion. <sup>2</sup>

About 40% of the acquisitions of Apple, Google, Amazon, and Facebook are in the space of retail, advertising, and e-commerce. Over their lifetime Apple acquired 96 companies, Amazon 71, Google 181, and Facebook 77. <sup>3</sup>

1 Mark Zuckerberg Announces New Ways for Instagram Creators to Make Money



2 Panasonic in \$7.1 Billion Deal to Buy Blue Yonder



3 How Big Tech got so big: Hundreds of acquisitions



01.

02.

03.

04.

# Loyalty Retail

**Loyalty Retail** – Investors are crazy about loyalty rewards once again. WHY?

- **37% people** believed that earning rewards via a loyalty program is often more hassle than the rewards are worth
- **56 percent of consumers** feel that the retailer, rather than themselves, should be tracking their spending and offering rewards <sup>1</sup>

In 2020, retailers had no choice but to focus on rapid enablement to survive. In 2021, they should broaden these horizons. Focuses should include using loyalty as currency to increase subscriptions and recurring orders. <sup>1</sup>

Fetch Rewards, the Madison-based consumer loyalty and retail awards app, announced it has raised \$210 million in Series D financing at a valuation greater than \$1 billion. With the latest round of funding, Fetch plans to use the capital to inform its product strategy and adapt to changing consumer shopping habits on the heels of the Covid-19 pandemic. <sup>2</sup>

**Consider charging a fee for membership:** Fee-based or premium loyalty programs are another great way to stand out from the competition. Members of premium loyalty programs receive high-value perks and benefits up front for a fee; therefore, the benefits must be desirable in order to attract sign-ups. <sup>3</sup>

**Deloitte study** found that (as of April 2021) 39% of U.S. consumers are becoming more mindful of where they spend their money, and 45% of consumers say they'll purchase more in the future from brands that responded well to the COVID-19 crisis. <sup>3</sup>

1 [Customer Loyalty in 2021 and Beyond](#)



2 [A Madison unicorn: Fetch Rewards Raises \\$210M at a Valuation North of \\$1B](#)



3 [5-ways-for-grocery-retailers-to-revamp-their-loyalty-programs-in-2021](#)



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# Food For Retail

In June 2017, acquired **Whole Foods Market for \$13.7B**. News of the transaction led to Target dropping by 12%, Kroger by 14%, and Walmart by 6%.

4 years later, Amazon appears on the cusp of transforming grocery with the **“Amazon Fresh”** concept.<sup>1</sup>

Distributors and food retailers are leveraging food sales data to autonomously improve efficiency within the supply chain, from rerouting delivery drivers to use more effective routes to improving product quality, safety and shelf-life by optimizing the environment food is stored and transported in.<sup>2</sup>

Technology will enable consumers to see the full history of their food by simply scanning a barcode and instantly seeing the supply chain process of that product. Such traceability and transparency in the sector is drastically needed to rebuild consumer confidence.<sup>2</sup>

In 2020 alone, the online sector of food retail jumped by a whopping \$60 billion. To meet changing consumer behaviors during the pandemic, Tharpe saw stores reconfiguring their back-end processes.<sup>3</sup>

**Omnichannel behavioral shift:** consumers shopping in-store for food they want to inspect before buying; a subscription model for predictable consumables, such as coffee; and curbside for the rest.<sup>3</sup>

**Food For Retail** – How is the food vertical of retail evolving? Where do we need to shift our focus?

1

[The 800 Pound Gorilla – Amazon Fresh Grocery in 2021](#)



2

[Five Ways in Which Food Retail will Change in 2021](#)



3

[How Consumers' Food-Buying Habits Altered The Supply Chain](#)



+

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## Social Retail

A total of **76%** of consumers have purchased a product they saw in a brand's social media post:

- **11%** bought immediately; **44%** bought later online
- **71%** of marketers want to learn more about Instagram
- **21%** bought later in a physical store. <sup>1</sup>

01.

- 40% of consumers buy online at least once in a week.
- 7% of consumers shop online daily. <sup>1</sup>

02.

**Share user-generated content (UGC):** Customers love to share and tag brand products in their photos when posting on social media. UGC is a helpful tactic both for community building and for filling your social calendar up with hyper-relevant content. <sup>2</sup>

03.

“Platforms like TikTok, Shopify, and YouTube have aligned as a third-party ecommerce fulfillment platforms system to compete versus Amazon. In fact, Facebook and TikTok are both expanding into social-media ecommerce.” <sup>3</sup>

04.

The rise of social media storefronts signals social platforms are going beyond discovery, enabling retailers to do more than simply pay for ads that redirect shoppers to a website. Rather, Facebook or Instagram hosts the entire shopping experience—keeping shoppers away from Amazon and sites powered by ecommerce providers like Shopify. <sup>3</sup>

**Social Retail** – Retail is getting more social in nature. What initiatives would positively impact the business?

1

[76% Of Consumers Buy Products Seen In Social Media Posts](#)



2

[9 tips to build customer relationships with social media in 2021](#)



3

[Social Media eCommerce: A New Contender in “Shopping Wars”](#)





### Mind the Tech Giant

- Build a strategy to compete with the likes of Apple, Google, Facebook, and who knows, NETFLIX?
- Investing in technology on all fronts is the best chance to survive
- Collaborate with the start-ups that are developing tech solutions for the retail industry

Technology is the “Core Competitive Advantage”



### Loyalty Rewards are Back

- Consumers want to stay loyal to a particular brand, provide they get value of it
- Develop a reward program that motivates consumers to buy more, stay loyal, and even pay for the enrollment
- Socially responsible behavior is translating to customer loyalty. Do not shy from CSR investments.

Customers want to be loyal and you should reward them for their behavior



### Food Supply Chain is up for Overhaul

- Consumers want transparency in the food supply chain. Invest in blockchain technology that would enable consumers to track their food in real time
- Pandemic has taught the importance of sourcing local food and creating smaller but local warehouses
- Monitor what would Amazon fresh and online groceries mean to the food retail business

Consumer want to know the “Farm to Fork” journey of food



### Open Social Media Storefront

- Social media marketplaces command higher consumer engagement
- Setting up a social media retail store is a very different experience from setting up an Amazon or Shopify outlet
- Managing consumer journey and rewarding decision influencers is the key to success in social media retailing

Social media will help to beat the Amazon juggernaut

# IT'S RETAIL'S HOUR OF NEED.

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# Executive Insights



**A (digital) stitch in time, saves nine**



**Computer Vision is taking retail to new places**



**Think of employees before robots**



**Loyalty follows customer experience**

**Doug McMillon**  
**President and CEO, Walmart**

“Change in retail accelerated in 2020. The capabilities we’ve built in previous years put us ahead, and we’re going to stay ahead.”

**Jordan Fisher**  
**Co-founder and CEO of Standard**

“As stores across the world shut their doors, retailers and their customers have waited for a technology like computer vision to help drive the industry forward. This new category will be bigger than mobile or the Internet. It is the most disruptive thing to happen to retail in decades.”

**Chris Kempczinski**  
**President and CEO, McDonald’s**

“It’s really important that we be very clear: A safe and respectful workplace where people feel like they’re going to be protected is critically important for our business.” “It’s just what society is expecting.”

**Allison Peterson**  
**Chief customer officer, Best Buy**

“As we look to evolve our membership programs, the goal of Best Buy Beta is to create a membership experience that customers will love and to leave them feeling confident throughout their relationship with Best Buy.”

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With Anne Mezzenga  
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Chris Rupp  
EVP, Chief Customer & Digital Officer  
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Kelly Kowal  
Chief Platform Officer  
Farfetch




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Play All

Women's Retail Collective

Ask an Expert Series



Anne Mezzenga

Chris Walton

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With Chris Walton

**FEATURING:**  
Kristin Kohler Burrows  
Sr. Director  
David Ritter  
Managing Director  
Alvarez & Marsal  
Consumer & Retail Group





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With Chris Walton

**Featuring:**  
Jonah Ellin  
Chief Product Officer  
1010data




## Spotlight Series

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Liz Buchanan  
Head Of Consumer  
Intelligence N. America

Natalie Williams  
VP of Product Leadership  
NielsenIQ



Get Featured

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### Ask An Expert Series



**David Ritter**

Managing Director  
in the Consumer  
& Retail Group

 ALVAREZ & MARSAL



**Chris Walton**

Editor-in-Chief

OmniTalk 

## The 800 Pound Gorilla - Amazon Fresh Grocery in 2021



Read Full  
Article



## Walmart, Wizards, and Gopuffs

- Walmart removing its in-store pickup towers and how the announcement, is about way more than robotics.
- Gopuff nabbing a 20-year Amazon veteran to head up operations after its latest \$1 billion financing round.
- The hilarious Amazon vs. Walmart battle over cool sounding in-home delivery PR. For the record, Amazon wins hands down
- Instagram's new marketplace to connect creators and brands.
- And why a new Harry Potter store in NYC highlights everything that is right about physical retail, even though it really has nothing to do with retail.



## Starbucks Reusable Cups? Make Ours Venti

- Discuss what Harry's \$155 million investment round means for its future and the future of CPGs.
- Exchange barbs about Best Buy's new subscription program, Best Buy Beta.
- Grade Starbucks' new reusable cup pilot on a scale only Starbucks drinkers will love.
- Highlight why Nordstrom's market strategy would be even cooler if Macy's and Kohl's started drinking from the same Kool-Aid.
- And anxiously and unanimously await the day when rumored Amazon discount electronics and home goods stores are actually a reality.



## Amazon Hair Salons, Lululemon Resale, and Emma's Last Show

- Lululemon getting into resale (and the watch outs it could confront).
- Why Amazon's new hair salons are about way more than hair.
- What Taco Bell's digital-only store in NYC means for our ever-growing fear of a WALL-E future.
- AiFi's new camera-only checkout-free implementation with Choice Market
- And why Amazon's new home delivery installation program is way cooler than anyone probably thinks on first blush.



## Nike Can Go As Far As It Wants In Pulling Back Its Distribution

- Take sides on the landlord vs. retailer sales calculation debate
- Discuss how far is too far in Nike's distribution pullback efforts
- Forecast out the impact on retail workers of increased demand for warehousing space
- Fantasize about other Restoration Hardware-like retail and hospitality mashups
- And, go in some of the strangest directions imaginable talking about whether Tinder commerce could become a big thing

# OmniTalk

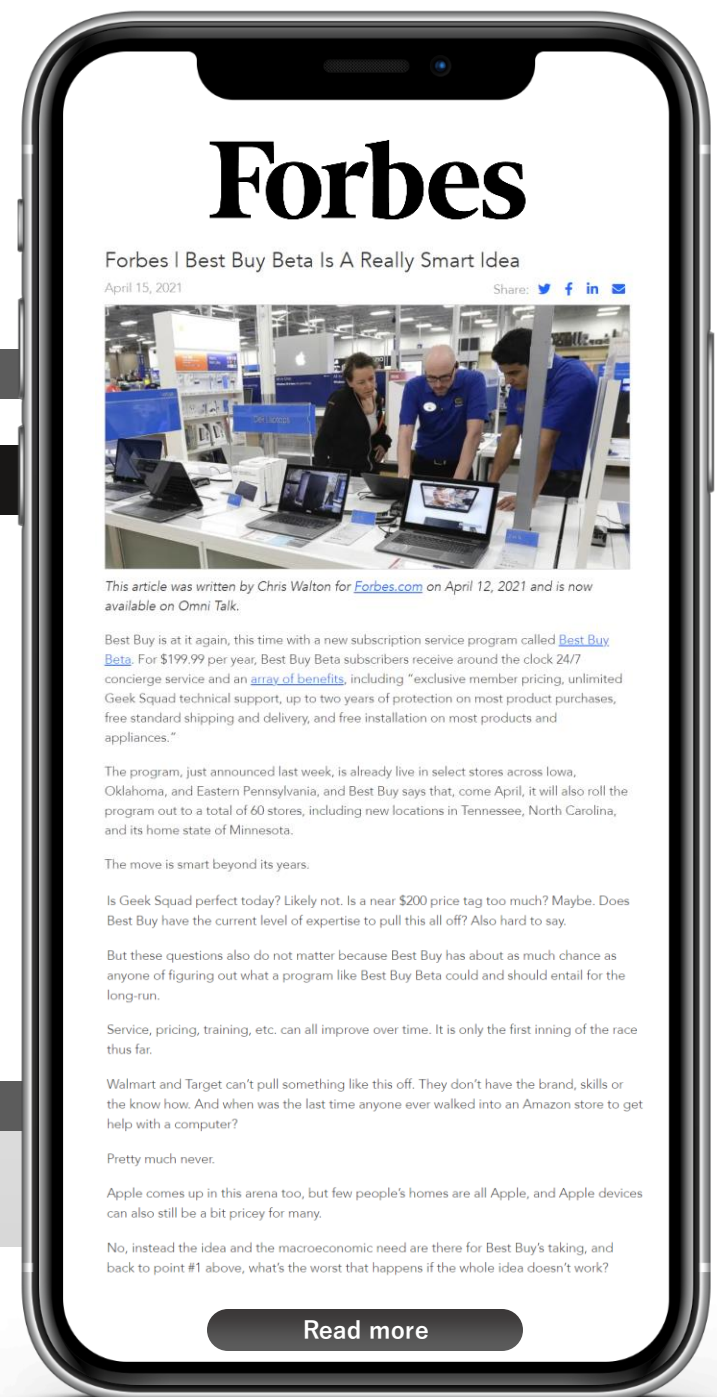
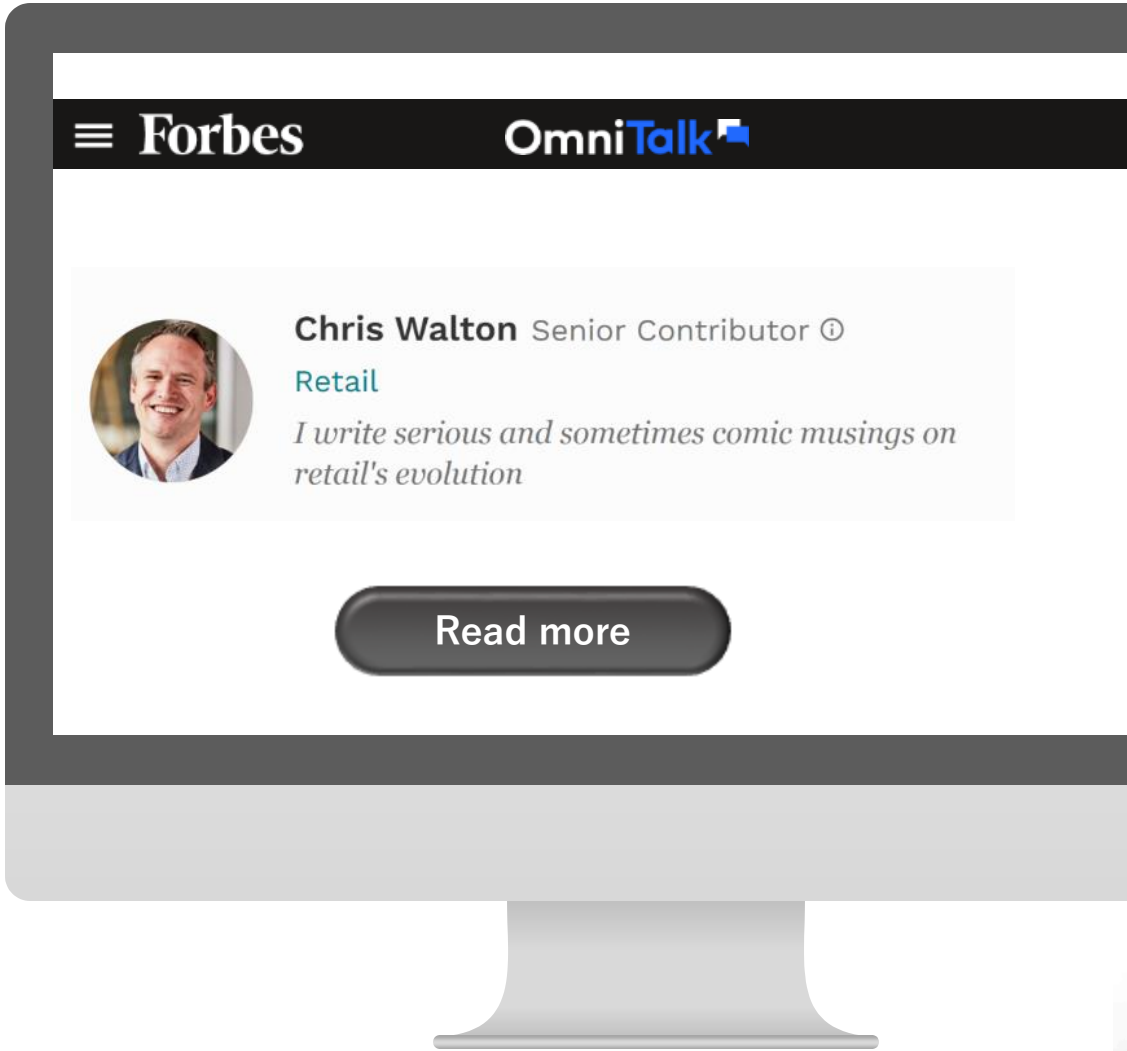
## The Fast Five

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# Chris in Forbes







**Editors: Chris Walton & Anne Mezzenga**

Chris Walton and Anne Mezzenga are leading experts and influencers in omnichannel retailing.

*Connect with Chris and Anne on LinkedIn*

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## About OmniTalk and DistilINFO

Together Omni Talk and DistilINFO publish industry news, views and interviews about the future of retail. We distill the information for you - saving time and keeping you up to date on the topics in the industry that matter most.

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