

New York Magazine's The Strategist | Case Study

How to create a new brand to drive ecommerce revenue without
jeopardising your old one

Key achievements

183%

higher earnings-per-click than our
network average

5

media brands with expansive
commerce strategies

121%

affiliate revenue growth rate
year-on-year, 2015-2016

About New York Magazine

Named for the greatest city on earth, New York Magazine covers, analyzes, and comments on the news, culture, and personalities that drive the world forward. Founded in 1968, the magazine is published by New York Media, which launched The Strategist, a dedicated brand for commerce-related content, in November 2016.

Early success centered around practical items everybody needs and that came highly recommended by someone they trusted. One of our writers found a pair of nail clippers in an airport in Japan, saw them on Amazon, and we sold a ton of nail clippers. That kind of success led us to decide that a standalone commerce brand could be a success.

- Camilla Cho, Executive Director of Business Development & Strategy @ New York Media

Keys to success

1. Rigorous data collection and analysis

Creating actionable insights has been a key component of success for the Strategist. By understanding what price ranges suit the audience, which product categories perform best and which merchants drive the highest conversions, they are able to constantly refine and optimize content production to ensure the best possible results.

3. Internal buy in makes all the difference

At first key stakeholders were skeptical that e-commerce would add up to significant revenue. To prove the case, e-commerce investment was initially pitched as an experiment, and as test goals continued to be exceeded, and the scope of tests grew in parallel, executives began to recognise the potential. Being able to sell e-commerce as something of strategic importance means being prioritised by product team and getting resources necessary to make a success of it.

2. Audience Development Matters

Driving traffic to commercial content is key to helping it reach its revenue-earning potential. That's why the Strategist team don't work in a silo. The editorial and business teams cooperate together, and work toward the same goals, and the SEO, Product and Social Media teams are also involved to ensure the best possible chances of success for new commerce content and driving traffic to commerce pages.

4. Leveraging editorial authority to drive higher conversions

It is critical to maintain the trust of the Strategist and nymag.com users. The Strategist editorial team maintains their editorial voice and authority with every piece of content (commerce-related content) that is created; editors will ask themselves: "Should someone actually buy this?" By only featuring products the team themselves would buy and stand behind, they ensure they're producing authentic content and drive higher conversions as a result.

Looking to the future

The roadmap for New York Media and The Strategist in 2017 is to make commerce even more of a strategic initiative. Content production, resources and hiring will all be scaled up. As well as in-house hiring, New York Media will also be looking to expand its existing network of commerce-focused freelance contributors to enhance output of commerce-related content.

Why they work with Skimlinks

The data insights we can get from Skimlinks are crucial. Merchant communications are also super helpful: Knowing from the newsletters about what merchants are out there, if networks are providing better rates than usual and having that information to pass to editorial teams is invaluable. Being able to apply Skimlinks' knowledge and experience of the publishing industry to our business has also been advantageous.

- Camilla Cho, Executive Director of Business Development & Strategy @ New York Media