

CASE STUDY

Major Department Store Chain Boosts Revenue With Next-Gen Social Proof Strategies



Businesses experience regular ups and downs in their product inventory and sales volume due to events beyond their control. They often operate in tune with emerging trends—weather, sports events, holidays—that drive high consumer interest in certain products. This is true for not only stores but also for the “endless aisles” of digital storefronts.

A leading department store chain partnered with ZineOne to harness real-time trending data to deliver optimal shopping experiences that influence behavior and conversion with advanced, in-the-moment social proof strategies. The goal was to encourage purchase decisions by showcasing high-demand products while site visitors browse online.

Challenge

Most businesses are familiar with some common social proof mechanisms where site visitors are notified if the items they are viewing are dwindling in stock, or the concept of those who bought X, also bought Y. At the same time, retailers have mastered the art of analyzing stored customer data to create personas and segments that fuel basic personalized recommendations; many struggle to account for visitors' changing needs, intent, channel, location and exogenous factors, such as weather or events. To achieve its goals, the department store needed a solution to ***augment the data from its enterprise systems with in-session customer data, enrich it with third-party data, and surface these insights while the visitor is still browsing the website.***

Solution

To nudge more visitors to not just to browse but make a purchase, the store enlisted the ZineOne Intelligent Customer Engagement (ICE) platform's Product Urgency Experience template. Powered by ZineOne's patent-pending ML models, this retail-focused template captures real-time trending data on the number of views for a product, purchases, and inventory. Additionally, it allows for the real-time display of this information on the product detail page (PDP) while the visitor is viewing the product. Some examples of information shown include:

- Availability of the item
- The number of people that have this item in their cart
- The number of people that have recently purchased this item
- Identification of items that are trending overall and in a particular region
- The list of items that are being viewed by others in their area

What is Social Proof?

Social proof—such as reviews, likes on social channels or website, and personal recommendations—has become a powerful tool to drive sales. The concept succeeds by showing that other consumers are also interested in a product, hence the product must be good. According to [The Psychology Behind Trust Signals report from Trustpilot](#), 66% of customers said the presence of social proof increased their likelihood to purchase.

Result

Generated

\$52M

Incremental Revenue

With trending data on social proof

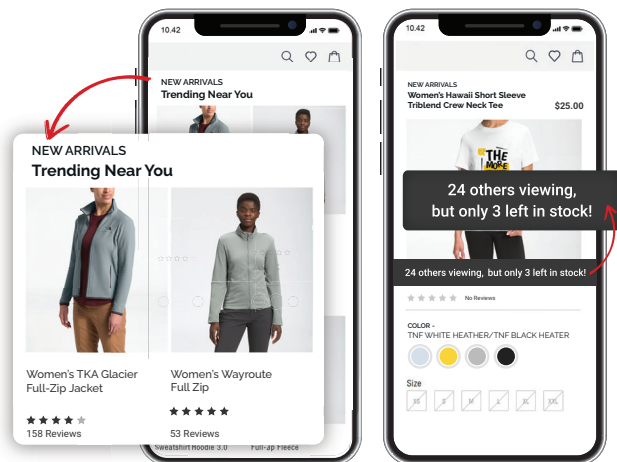
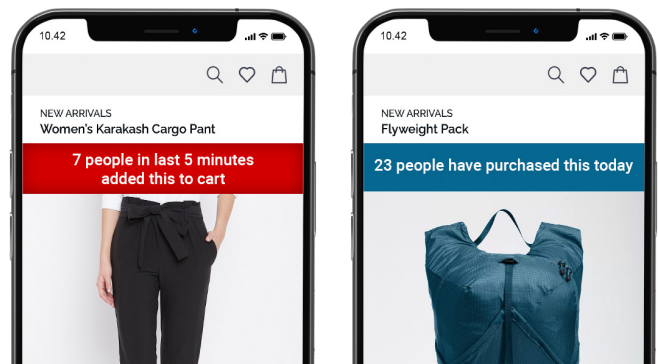
This tactic yielded robust results for the department store since it applied to a large cross-section of its target customer base. The company recorded \$52 million in incremental revenue by proactively showing information on high-demand products.

How Did It Happen?

After a quick deployment of ZineOne tags on the store's website, their marketing team used the ICE platform's out-of-the-box Product Urgency Experience template to:

- Ingest real-time activity data to identify a visitor's interest in a product and determine if they showed intent to purchase during the session.
- Capture real-time trending data on other visitors' interest in that product
- Tap into first-party data for historical insights
- Perform real-time inventory and cart checks for a particular item
- Tabulate consumer interest in the product based on the visitor's location
- Optimize the site experience by surfacing the most relevant information on PDP as social proof to influence behavior and conversion in real-time.

For a site visitor viewing a PDP, the department store automated the display of a badge indicating the number of other shoppers viewing or purchasing the same item at that moment. The marketing team customized this experience by specifying the maximum number of products, the minimum number of viewers, and/or the minimum purchases required to trigger the display of the badge, as appropriate for each PDP.



Additionally, the team tailored the social proof to the visitors' zip codes—their local communities. Using weather intelligence or knowledge of events in particular areas, the team tapped into communal feelings of excitement and anticipation to display what's trending in that area. For instance, if an unexpected cold wave and snowfall swept over Lake Tahoe, CA, it informed the residents that ski gear is selling out fast. Or when a particularly exciting 49ers football game was coming up, those in the San Francisco Bay Area were shown information about their favorite team jersey's availability.

In summary, the department store created highly individualized experiences that capitalized on the wisdom of crowds to reduce product confusion, instill price confidence and product urgency. The store generated \$52 million in incremental revenue by proactively surfacing social proof or peer validation to enhance its site visitors' digital shopping experience.

In the realm of digital transactions, predictive responses need to be immediate and accurate. ZineOne's Intelligent Customer Engagement platform enables business users to understand and respond in-the-moment with relevant 1:1 customer engagements to encourage desired outcomes. Recognized by Gartner as a "Magic Quadrant for Personalization Engines" provider, ZineOne's platform has quickly positioned the company as a leading AI personalization provider that is delivering nearly \$1 billion in new revenue while respecting and preserving margins for companies who seek to provide consumers with superior shopping experiences. The patent-pending platform and its continuous learning models provide deep insights into each and every visitor across digital and physical channels while delivering intelligent customer experiences in critical moments that delight customers, foster loyalty, and increase revenue.

Learn more at www.zineone.com.