

How SmartBrief's Topic Affinity Targeting Extended the Reach of Original Research to a Trusted Retail Audience

The Challenge

Jumpmind has built a reputation for producing original research, thought leadership, and content rooted in real retailer insights. The problem wasn't content quality, it was reach.

As **Heather Primavera, Director of Marketing at Jumpmind**, explains:

"Jumpmind produces a steady stream of research, thought leadership, and content assets rooted in real retailer insights. The challenge was the reach. Our internal channels and owned audience could only take that work so far, and we needed a way to get it in front of the retail decision-makers and practitioners who would find it most relevant."

Jumpmind needed more than broad distribution, they needed precision. A way to place content in front of readers whose demonstrated interests already aligned with the topics Jumpmind was writing about.

Why Topic Affinity

Partnering with SmartBrief and applying Topic Affinity targeting gave Jumpmind something their owned channels couldn't: access to a curated, active audience whose engagement patterns showed genuine interest in retail research and technology topics — not just a demographic or job-title match, but a behavioral one.

"Partnering with NRF SmartBrief gave us access to a curated, engaged audience already tuned in to the topics we were writing about, so our content could do the work it was built to do."

The NRF association strengthened the targeting further, layering topical relevance with editorial trust:

"The NRF association was a significant factor. Retail is a relationship-driven industry, and the NRF brand carries weight with the exact buyers we are trying to reach. We were not just buying impressions in a generic B2B channel. We were showing up in a publication that our audience actively chooses to read."

The Results

By matching content to readers based on topical interest rather than broad targeting alone, the campaign demonstrated that Jumpmind's content resonated well beyond owned channels.

"The partnership gave us something our owned channels could not: direct access to an engaged, editorially curated audience of retail decision-makers who were already in a content consumption mindset. Our research performed well with that audience, and NRF SmartBrief specifically flagged our European Connected Shopper Report send as the top performer across our campaign period, confirming it exceeded their benchmark. That was meaningful validation that our thought leadership was resonating beyond our existing network."

Performance Metrics

The quantitative results reflected the precision of topic-based matching over broad reach:

100,000+

Impressions delivered across the campaign period

95+ clicks

reflecting a focused, high-intent audience rather than broad, low-engagement reach

0.14% CTR

75%

of clicks came from manager roles and above, confirming the campaign was reaching real decision-makers, not just practitioners

Heather pointed to seniority and relevance as proof the affinity match was working:

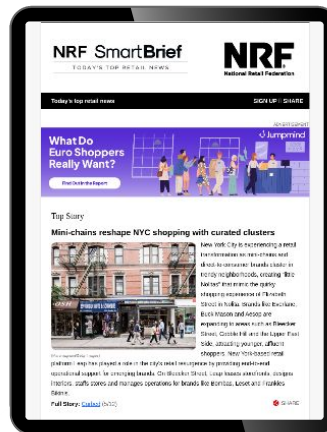
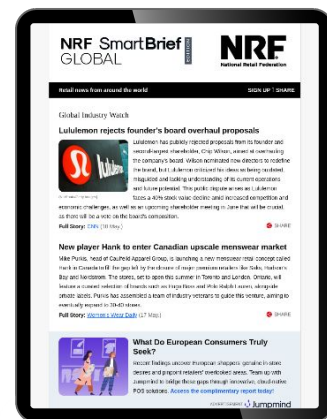
"The seniority mix of who engaged with our content was encouraging. We were not just reaching large numbers. **We were reaching the right people at the right levels.**"

The editorial environment reinforced the effect of topic-aligned placement:

"The editorial context matters, too. Our content appeared alongside trusted industry news, which meant readers were already in a receptive, professional mindset rather than scrolling past an ad in a more interruptive environment."

Topic Affinity targeting also surfaced a strategic insight Jumpmind hadn't fully quantified before:

"The clearest insight was around content type. **Our original research outperformed our product-forward creative with this audience**, which reinforced a broader hypothesis we had about how retail decision-makers want to be approached. We also did some experimenting with CTAs, which was helpful. Those findings shaped how we thought about content strategy going forward, not just for this channel."



The Topic Affinity Difference

"SmartBrief gave us a credible, efficient path to an audience we would have otherwise struggled to reach."

And beyond the strategic value:

"Not to mention, the team was great to work with!"

Looking Ahead

For Jumpmind, topic-aligned distribution delivered value that extended well beyond immediate metrics. At their current stage of brand-building in retail, the exposure and credibility gained through precision targeting were genuinely meaningful:

The exposure value was real, particularly for a market where we were still building brand recognition. That said, for a company at our stage, we are always weighing awareness against pipeline impact, and a channel like this works best when the goal is presence and credibility rather than direct lead generation."

That distinction, presence and credibility vs. direct lead gen has shaped how Jumpmind thinks about topic-based targeting's role in their broader marketing strategy going forward.

