Scaling Holiday Creative to Meet E-Commerce Demands

Brand-Side Series by Celtra

Unwrapping the Holiday 2020 Shopping Season

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'Tis the season to be rethinking how you approach your brand's creative production needs. E-commerce is the new brick and mortar, and even more-so during this unpredictable time. In 2019, e-com growth outperformed physical retail locations by 5x[1], and total US holiday retail sales exceeded $1 Trillion, the first-ever trillion-dollar holiday season[2].

What's to say this year will be an even bigger one for e-commerce? A look at consumer behavior indicates that it's trending in that direction. 56% of shoppers have visited fewer brick and mortar stores during the pandemic[3] – and even 'off-peak' (non-holiday) shopping levels during COVID-19 from April to May were higher than what retailers saw during the 2019 holiday season[4].

As online spending dollars increase, so too does the proportion of digital-savvy shoppers. A survey of U.S. adults conducted by eMarketer finds that on average 71 percent of adults over 18 years old are planning to conduct more than half of their holiday shopping digitally[5].

$52 Billion

more in recorded online spend from April to May 2020 than what retailers would typically see during this same period

Actual online spend in May 2020 outperformed average holiday spend

81,5%

of US adults plan to do more than half of their holiday shopping digitally in 2020

60%

plan to spend the same amount on holiday shopping this year than in 2019

Household Spending on the Rise

Overall household expenses are a good indicator of general shopping patterns. Shoppers are now looking for ways to break out of that quarantine rut as they adjust to the 'new normal[3].'

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Jun 01
$12.1T

$13T

$12T

$11T

Jan   Feb   Mar   Apr   May   Jun

Household Spending on the Rise

American Household expenses, including food, clothing, housing, health care, transportation, and recreation, plunged from $13T to well below $11T in April, and rebounded back to $12.1T on June 1st. Additionally, m-commerce (sales via smartphones and tablets) will be the fastest- growing shopping channel and will make up 45% of total U.S. e-commerce market sales this year[3].
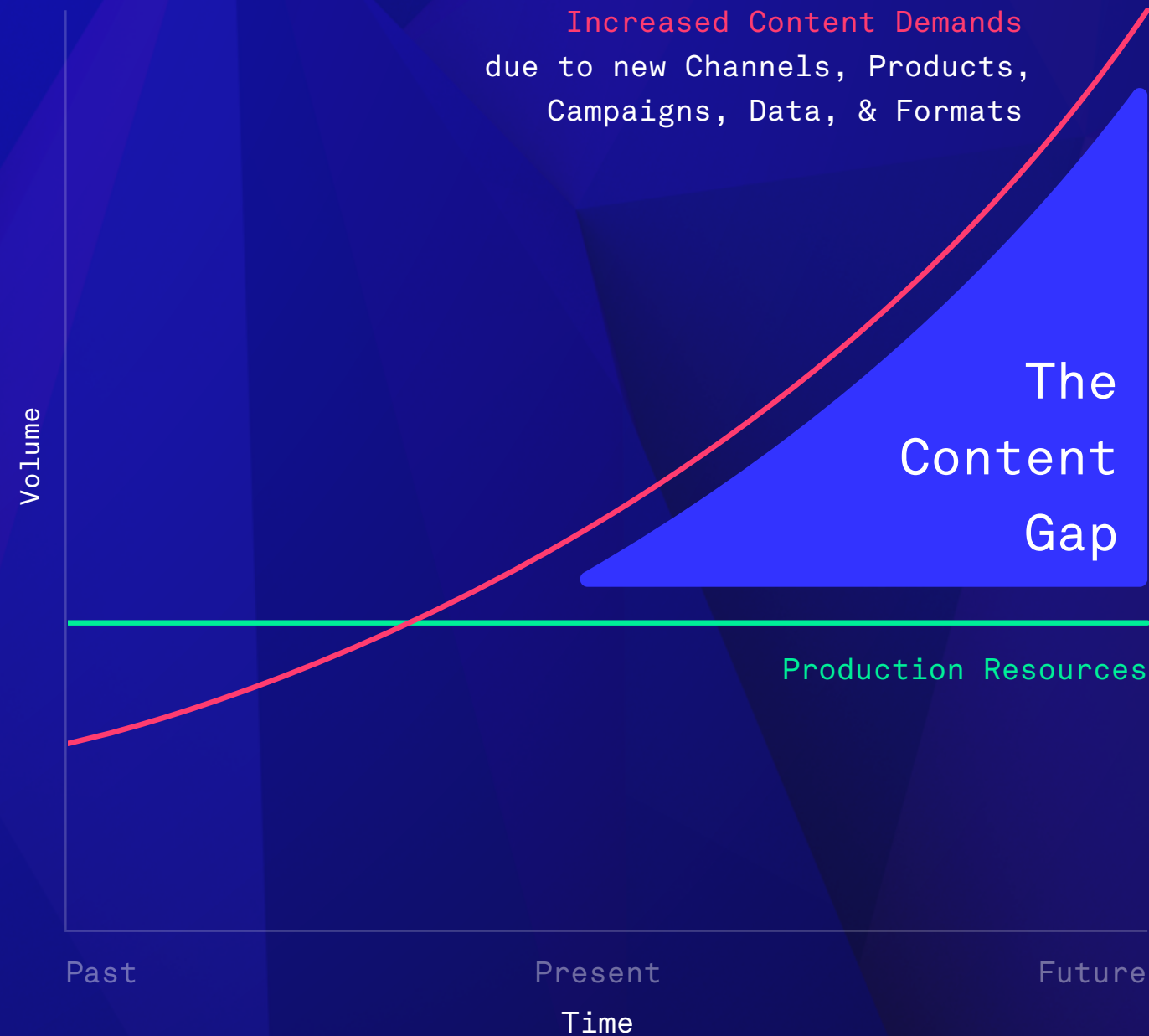
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In 2019 m-commerce comprised over a quarter of total e-commerce – more than **doubling since 2015**

Business Insider Intelligence predicts m-commerce volume on smartphones and tablets to make up **44% of e-commerce** purchases, in 2024

Click and collect, or otherwise known as curbside pickup, is forecasted to increase these holidays, with e-commerce sales **growth of 60.4%**

Where Does the Content Gap Come From?

Increased Content Demands
due to new Channels, Products, Campaigns, Data, & Formats

The Content Gap

Production Resources

Volume

Past

Present

Future

Time

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Where Does the Content Gap Come From?

▶ **Let's take a look at why the Content Gap exists.**

66%
of shoppers found brand creative to be repetitive[8]

44%
of shoppers were annoyed by ads they had seen too many times[7]

70%
of brands already devoting more time to advertising content creation than they would prefer[8]

Consumers want more variety. Advertisers are struggling to produce enough content for all the touch-points online. This manifests as the Content Gap. Production resources are strained but the demand for volume, variety and quality of assets continues to climb. Brands are expected to do more with less.

Hold On, Didn't You Just Say That Ad Repetition is a Big No-No?

It all depends on how brands approach ad frequency and what kind of creative strategy and messaging mix they're running.

▶ **Ad Frequency Is 2 or Less**

Consumers who have seen an advertisement less than two times: Use an emotional approach to capture their attention and trigger the problem-recognition phase of the purchase-decision process.

▶ **Ad Frequency Is 3-10**

Consumers who have seen an advertisement three to 10 times: A cognitive approach works best, with solutions-driven messaging to help guide their information search and evaluation stage of the decision-making process.

▶ **Ad Frequency Is More Than 10**

Consumers who have seen an advertisement more than 10 times: Remind consumers of their evaluation of the product and reinforce the value-add from making the right purchase decision[9].

▶ **Invest in Creative Variety**

67% of shoppers want a storytelling approach from brands rather than being slammed with the same ad over and over again[7].
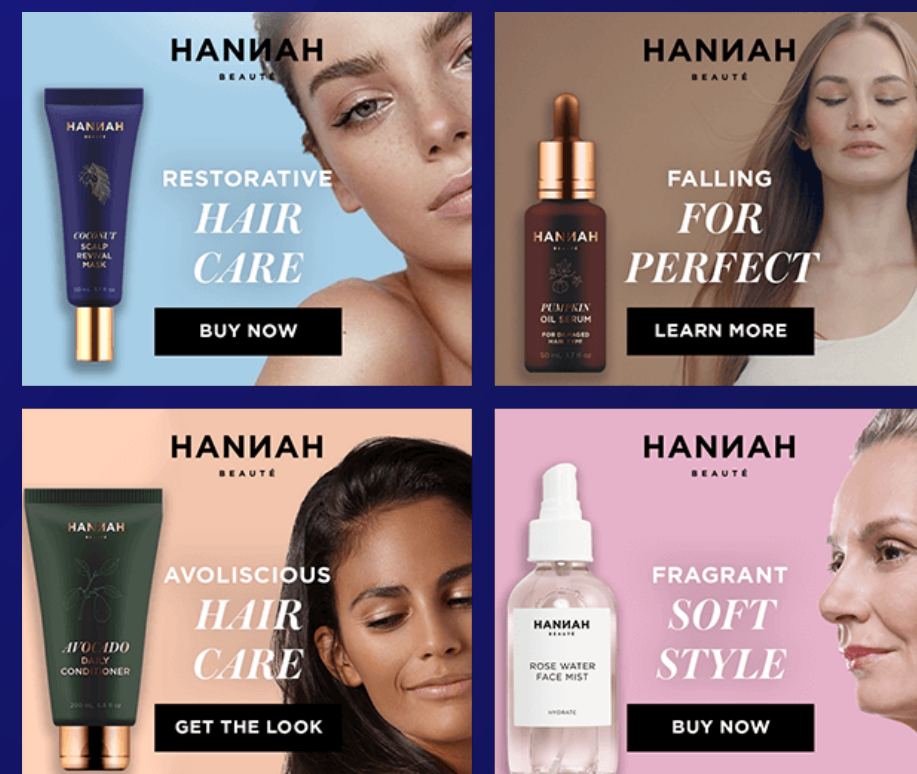
What Do Consumers Want to See in Holiday Campaigns?

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68% of consumers find holiday content to be repetitive

79% of consumers want a variety of different storytelling approaches from brands

33% find entertaining stories to be the most eye-catching

28% find high-quality design comes in second as the top attention grabber

In September 2020, Celtra and Dynata surveyed 1000 U.S. consumers on holiday creative and campaigns.

Creative Automation is Lending a Helping Hand These Holidays

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▶ **Turn to cloud-based marketing collaboration** and dramatically scale your holiday content faster than ever.

▶ **Faster time-to-market.** Get your campaigns out the door faster with built-in reviews, approvals, and distribution.

▶ **Creative variety.** Design on-brand seasonal templates to mass-produce countless creative variations.

▶ **Production efficiency.** Tap into automation to dramatically reduce manual design and production tasks.

▶ **Collaborate in the Cloud.** Bring remote teams under one roof for a streamlined collaborative process.
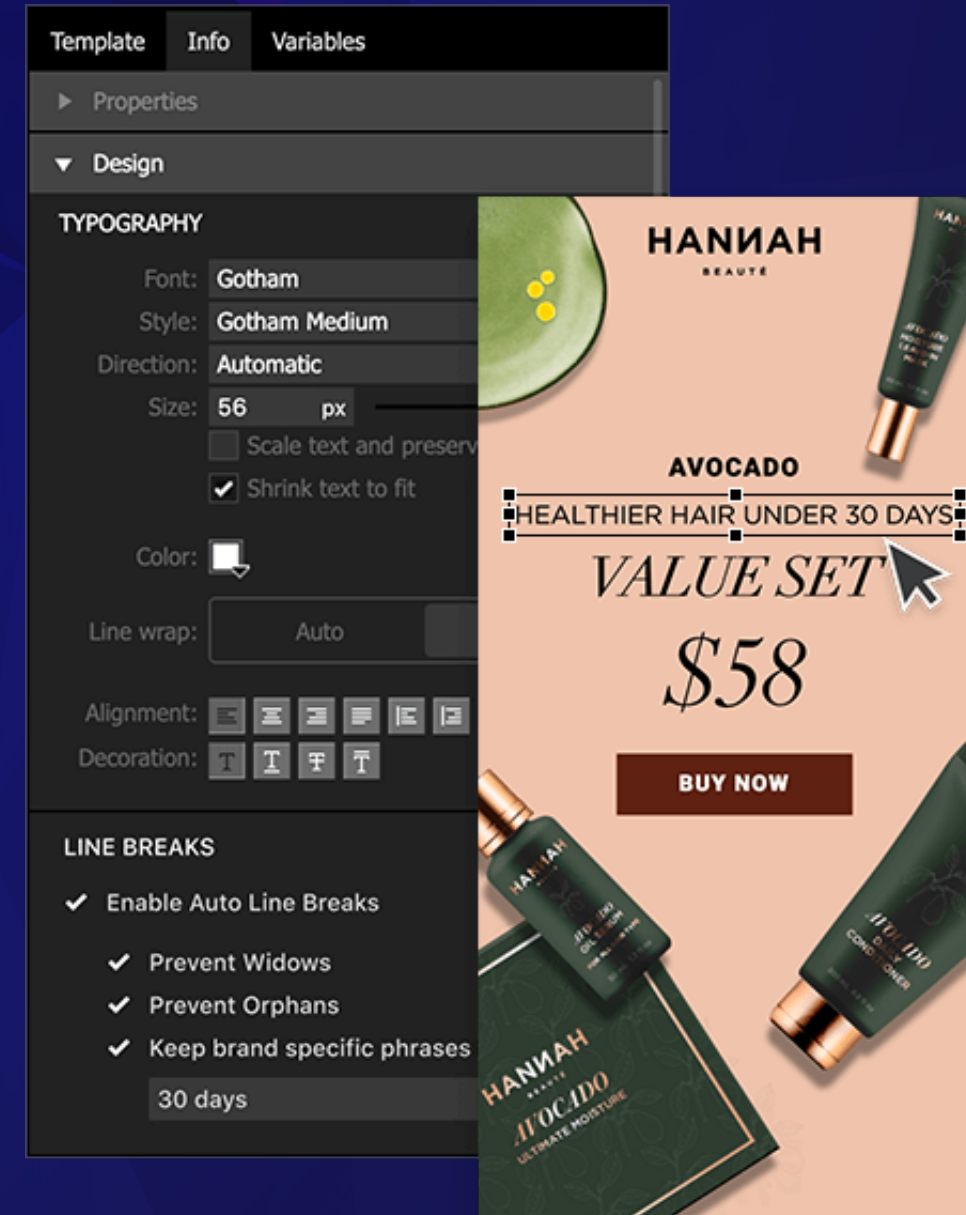
The Benefits of Creative Automation

Scaling production: It's not uncommon for e-commerce brands to have a product line of many SKUs – think multiple sizes, styles etc. When you add up channels, designs, content variants and regional markets, the number of creative assets multiplies, and is only feasible with Creative Automation.

Creative excellence: Thanks to Creative Automation, brands don't have to settle for anything less than artisanal creatives at scale. Creative Automation frees up time to spend on creative experiences and long- term strategy instead of churning out banners.

Speed to market: The situation is changing quickly: from curbside pickup and shifting to e-comm first advertising, brands need to adapt their campaigns quickly. With Creative Automation, advertisers can shorten the production cycle by 2x.
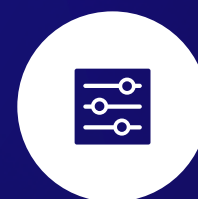
Brand control: Maintaining brand consistency is key – whether that be across global regions, platforms, design, and messaging. Creative Automation facilitates this through one unified interface with controls to lock elements in main templates for consistency.

Backgrounds Galore

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One swift change of a single element – like a background image) can immediately transform your campaign. Such backgrounds can be pulled in easily from a content feed, and can be scaled across photos, product or a mix of both. The CTA and background can also be easily switched out. For brands looking to promote their gift giving guides, this is a useful template to have on hand.
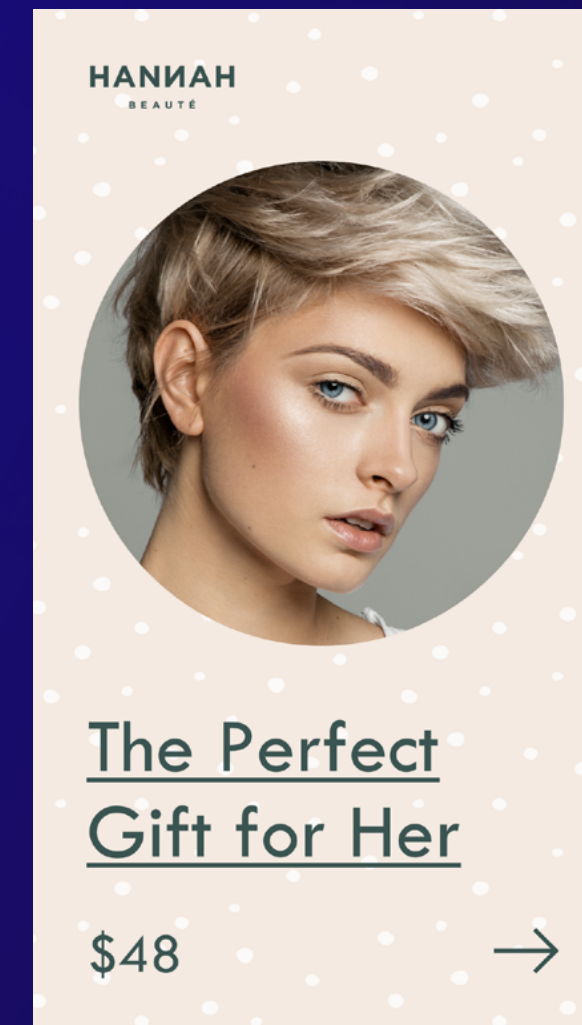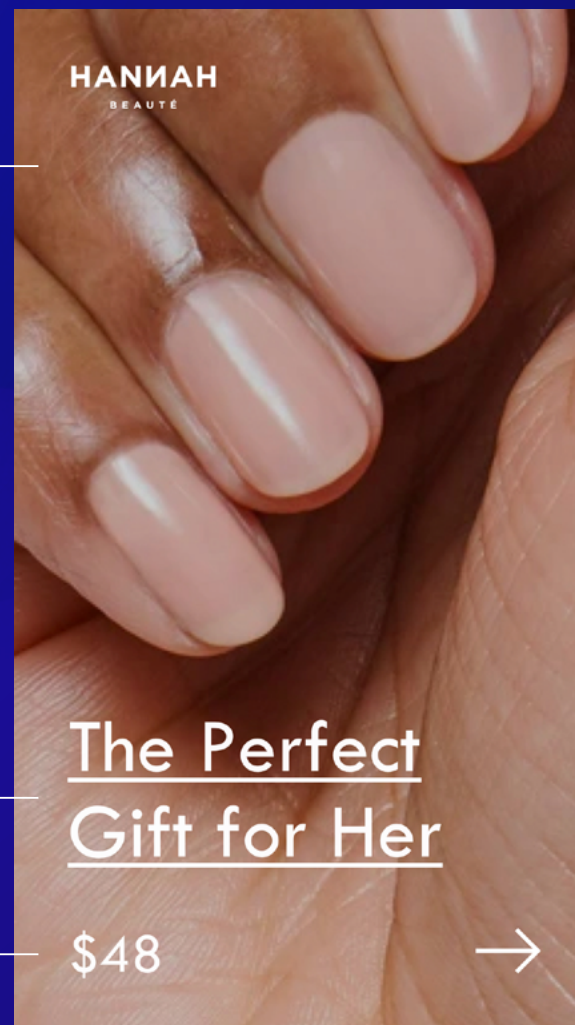
Scaling Holiday Creative to Meet E-Commerce Demands

Background image (or two)

Headline

Price

HANNAH
BEAUTÉ

The Perfect Gift for Her

$48 →

HANNAH
BEAUTÉ

The Perfect Gift for Her

$48 →

HANNAH
BEAUTÉ

The Perfect Gift for Her

$48 →

Typographic Approach

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What if you want to make a statement with words, rather than visuals? We've got you covered. A typography approach is often used for big sale events like Cyber Monday or Black Friday, and it doesn't require a lot of assets or resources to produce. For brands who want to keep it short and sweet, but stay consistent with their brand identity (namely brand colors and fonts), this is it. This approach supports any live changes – for example, if you want to offer free shipping, you can easily pop in this content and it will be automatically applied to all of your creative variants.

Sale percentage

Customer service message
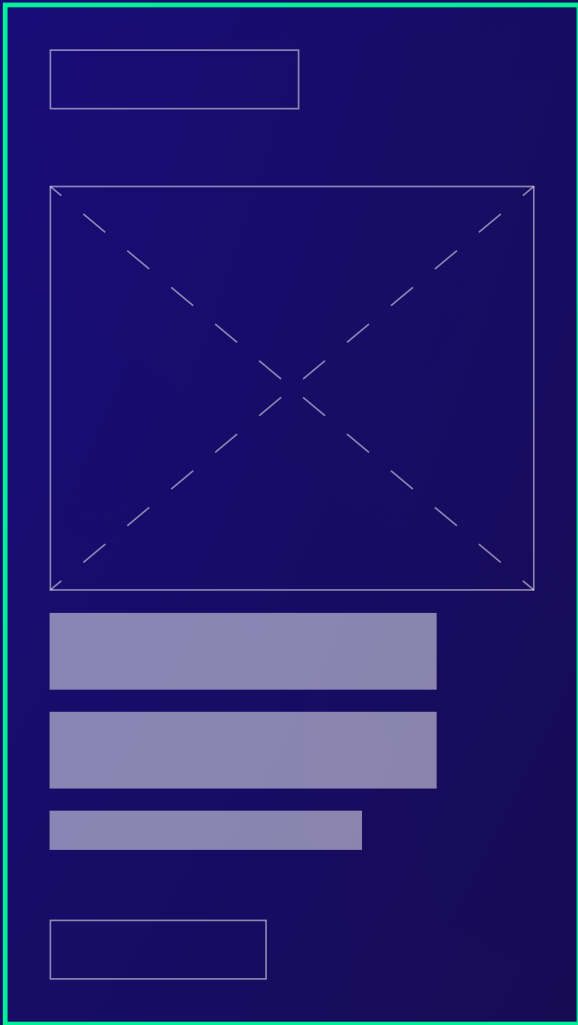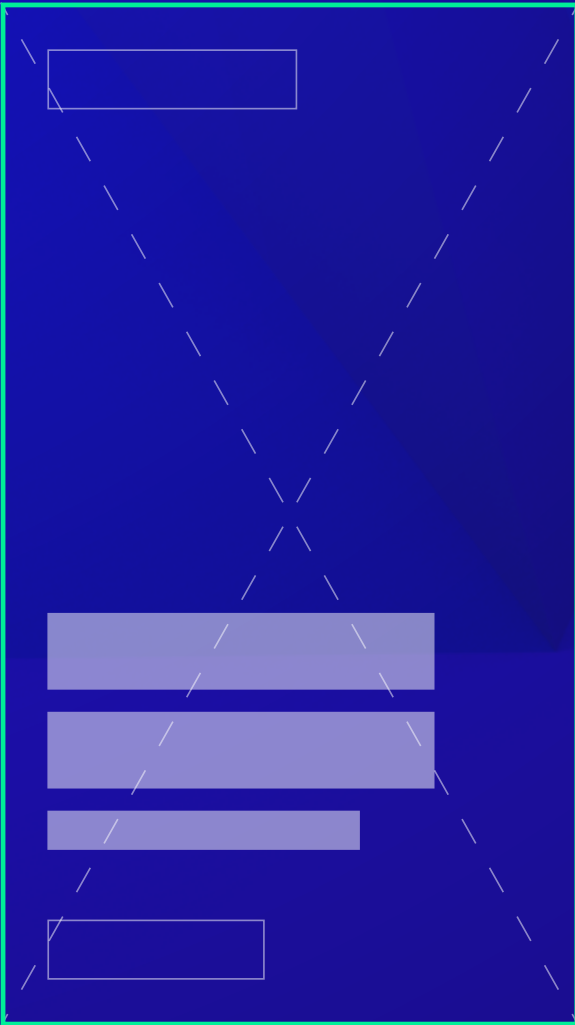
Supporting offer or secondary message

Legal

HANNAH
BEAUTÉ

70% OFF

PLUS FREE US SHIPPING

SPEND $200 TO GET AN EXTRA 10% OFF

SALE ENDS DEC 22

SHOP SALE

Sale in Style

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Who says sale ads have to be boring and promotional? Sale it with style (no typo or pun intended). Avoid those run-of-the-mill ads, and opt for a stylized approach through adding elements like product or imagery, to create variants that will keep your consumers engaged with your brand through the holiday season.

HANNAH
BEAUTÉ

20% OFF
EVERYTHING

+ FREE US SHIPPING

SHOP NOW

HANNAH
BEAUTÉ

15% OFF
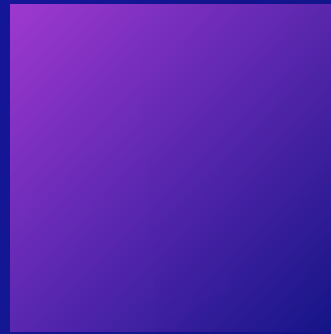SITEWIDE

+ FREE US SHIPPING

SHOP NOW →

Our Key Takeaways

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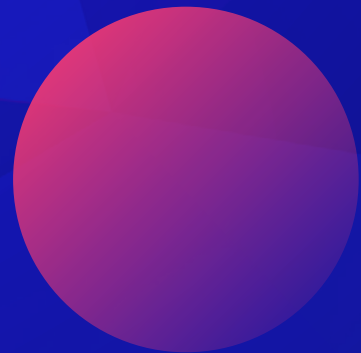
Plan **early** and plan for **more** variety than you think you need.

The more storytelling approaches you run, the more likely your audiences are to convert.

Creativity and simplicity can co-exist – lean on templates that will help you **stay true** to your brand, while producing **variety** to reduce ad fatigue.

Embrace and design for **change** – stay on your toes and be ready to make changes even after your campaign goes live.

About Celtra

Celtra helps creative and in-house marketing teams design, approve, and deliver digital creative across the ever-growing number of campaigns, markets, designs, and variants. Celtra's Creative Automation Software for Marketing helps brands move faster than ever while dramatically scaling content production. Companies like adidas, Spotify, Unilever, Lululemon, YETI, and hundreds more partner with Celtra to cut production costs while increasing efficiencies and output in the cloud.

Get started with Creative Automation today by **getting in touch** with us!
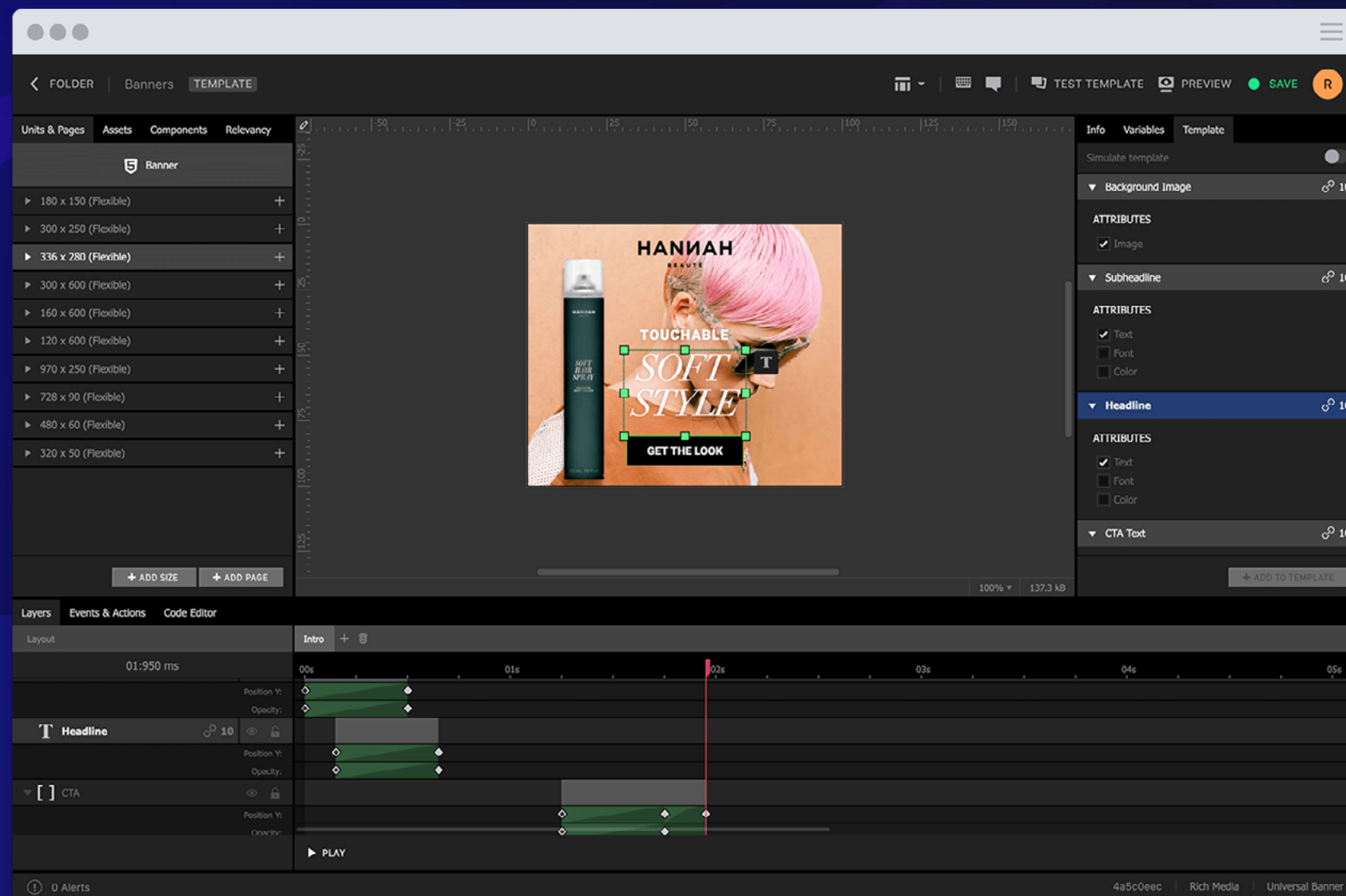
Sources

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3. Bureau of Economic Analysis, August 2020

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9. AdMap Magazine, *Advertising repetition: How it impacts emotions, cognitions and ultimately increases purchase intention*, March 2019: https://www.warc.com/content/article/admap/advertising-repetition-how-it-impacts-emotions-cognitions-and-ultimately-increases-purchase-intention/125642

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