

# 2020

YEAR IN REVIEW

When retail  
needed us the most,  
NRF stepped up.

# 2020 starts on a high note

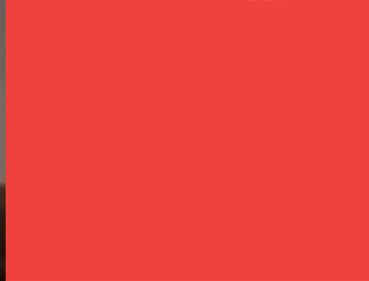
In January 2020, before the COVID-19 pandemic spread globally, NRF hosted 2020 Vision: Retail's Big Show. The annual convention gathered a **record-setting 40,000 attendees from 100 countries** at the Jacob Javits Center in New York. NRF's 109th annual convention featured more than 400 speakers across 200 sessions. Highlights included an expanded Innovation Lab and Expo hall with more than 850 companies displaying state-of-the-art technologies, The Female Quotient's FQ Lounge spotlighting retail's brightest female leaders, and the launch of NRF Retail Week showcasing seven days of retail activities taking place in NYC surrounding Retail's Big Show.

NRF's educational arm, the NRF Foundation, awarded more than \$200,000 in college tuition scholarships and **raised more than \$4 million for retail's future leaders** at the 6th Annual Foundation Honors, held in conjunction with Retail's Big Show. More than 1,100 college students attended the NRF Foundation Student Program at Retail's Big Show to connect with and learn from retail professionals as the students prepared to launch their careers.



1. Kohl's CEO Michelle Gass and fashion designer Vera Wang
2. Honorees from the NRF Foundation List of People Shaping Retail's Future
3. Mastercard President and CEO Ajay Banga and NRF President and CEO Matthew Shay

4. Actress and Goop CEO Gwyneth Paltrow
5. NRF Chairman and Qurate Retail, Inc. President and CEO Mike George
6. The FQ Lounge



# Prioritizing health and safety

**From the onset of the pandemic, NRF held regular calls with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other public health experts** to keep retailers informed on the virus's progression and to help them prepare for the challenges ahead. When states started requiring businesses to temporarily close in March, NRF convened retailers deemed “essential” by government mandate to share best practices and protocols for operating safely.

As the health crisis stretched into summer, NRF brought together hundreds of retail leaders to build a roadmap for safely reopening the retail industry through a digital initiative called Operation Open Doors. More than 1,600 retail professionals from 500 member companies put competition aside and participated in information sharing across eight Operation Open Doors webinars made possible by American Express. We also released 52 benchmarking surveys covering COVID-19 supply chain impacts, workplace policy updates and store operations. In July, NRF called on retailers to implement a national mask standard to protect the health and safety of employees and customers.

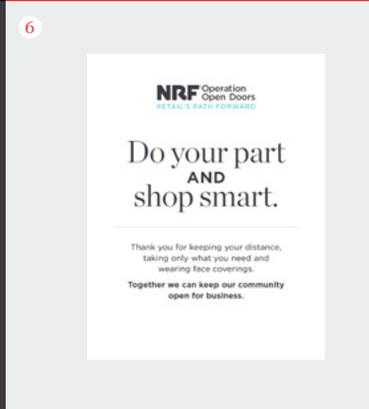
NRF's Operation Open Doors state-by-state map outlined coronavirus-related laws, executive orders, regulations and guidance governing store operations. It's the first map of its kind published by any trade association, and has been viewed more than 30,000 times.



## Coronavirus Retail Restrictions by State

State-by-state look at coronavirus-related laws, executive orders, regulations and guidance governing store operations for retailers.

[Explore map](#)



1. Jay Ahern, Principal and Head of Strategic Advisory Services, The Chertoff Group
2. Jill Dvorak, Vice President of Content and Retail Strategy, NRF
3. Michael Chertoff, Co-founder and Executive Chairman, The Chertoff Group

4. Aaron Roth, Managing Director, The Chertoff Group
5. State reopening map
6. Store signs available in 11 languages

# Working for COVID-19 relief

**NRF advocated for and won COVID-19 relief legislation that supported retailers during a critical time.**

Between two stimulus packages, the retail industry received billions of dollars in economic relief through the Paycheck Protection Program, the expansion of unemployment insurance and fiscal relief for retailers, their employees and consumers.

We activated 19,644 retail advocates who delivered 40,452 personal messages to Congress in support of targeted and timely pandemic relief, expanding NRF's virtual reach to every member of Congress.

The NRF Foundation developed a job board for workers displaced by the pandemic, sharing more than 1.2 million retail job openings.

1

POSITIONS available NOW

Discover your next job. Learn More

Immediate POSITIONS available

Walmart

Find a job in retail. Learn More

NRF NATIONAL RETAIL FEDERATION

LOOKING for meaningful WORK?

Retail jobs are available. Learn More

2

3

4

1. Facebook ads for the Job Board  
2-4. Employees at Kroger and Express



**NRF**  
Policymakers  
SERIES



# Advocacy goes virtual

NRF quickly pivoted advocacy efforts to virtual channels for both new and existing initiatives.

**We hosted 225 retailers and 24 lawmakers through the virtual NRF Retail Advocates Town Hall Series, and connected retailers with their representatives through 13 virtual store tours.**



In 2020, NRF launched a new webinar program called the NRF Policymakers Series to give retail industry leaders the chance to hear from our nation's top policymakers leading efforts to address the pandemic. Guests included Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer; U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin; Christopher Krebs, director of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) at the Department of Homeland Security; and Chadwick Carlough and Ben Harris, senior advisors from the Trump and Biden election campaigns.



The inaugural NRF Retail Law Summit — a half-day, free webinar — provided 317 corporate counsel and legal professionals with retail in-house counsel tools and strategies to guide their organizations through economic, social and public health challenges impacting the retail industry. Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credits were available for attendees.

1. Rep. Josh Gottheimer, D-NJ
2. Abigail Jagoda, Vice President of Government and Community Affairs, Westfield Corp.
3. Jason Straczewski, Vice President of Government Relations and Political Affairs, NRF

4. Leon Buck, Vice President of Government Relations, Banking and Financial Services, NRF
5. April McClung, Owner, Emily's Heirloom Pound Cakes in Pelham, Ala.
6. Alison Hosp, Vice President, Alabama Retail Association

# Convening the industry

**In 2020, NRF hosted more than 200 calls, webinars and virtual roundtables with industry leaders, policymakers and health care experts about the pandemic's impact on retail and the economy.**

Beginning in March, all NRF events converted to virtual offerings providing content and sponsor/exhibitor involvement. Our team learned the full scope of virtual events, working as a production crew, flexing our stage management muscles and training our speakers to “break through the screen.”

NRF NXT ALL ACCESS, a free, three-day virtual event, saw more than 1,500 attendees log on to experience the speaker content and Expo. The event format was so well-received by attendees that we have decided NRF NXT will remain virtual moving forward.

NRF PROTECT ALL ACCESS evolved into a three-and-a-half-day virtual event for 3,000 attendees from the loss prevention and cyber risk communities to discuss the latest retail crime insights. Continuing education credits were available for attendees.

In May, NRF launched the NRF Retail Leadership Series, candid conversations, over Zoom, with CEOs from the world's most iconic brands. Topics ranged from leading through times of crisis and accelerated innovations to the state of retail and the way forward for the industry. More than 2,000 industry professionals registered on average for each of the 13 webinars.

The NRF Foundation debuted NRF Foundation All Access, virtually connecting thousands of undergraduate students nationwide with retail professionals. The free programming included weekly conversations with industry leaders, online mentoring, professional development sessions and a virtual career fair.



1. Rodney Williams, Co-founder and CCO, LISNR
2. Stefan Miller, Co-founder and CMO, Young King Hair Care
3. Flora Ekpe-Idang, Senior Brand Marketing Manager, Target
4. Matthew Shay, President and CEO, NRF

5. Marvin Ellison, President and CEO, Lowe's
6. Michelle Gass, CEO, Kohl's
7. Mike George, President and CEO, Qurate Retail, Inc.
8. Michael Mason, Senior Vice President and Chief Security Officer, Verizon Communications

9. Dajana Gajic-Fisic, Head of Ecommerce Risk Operations, Finish Line
10. Chris Nelson, Vice President of Global Loss Prevention, Gap Inc.
11. Daniel Faketty, Vice President of Asset Protection and Safety, Southeastern Grocers LLC

# Stepping up for our members

**NRF welcomed 90 new retail and industry partner members in 2020. They joined our community of 16,000 member companies for collaboration and education through councils and committees, member benefits and new offerings.**

## Councils and committees

- Engaged 900 industry professionals on NRF councils and committees, spanning 300 retail companies
- Doubled council member involvement over 2019
- Launched a new Diversity & Inclusion Working Group, bringing together more than 100 retail executives in human resources and corporate leadership roles responsible for incorporating diversity and inclusion within their company cultures



## Member benefits

- Implemented customized, virtual member briefings for retail member executives. They joined our community of 16,000 member companies for collaboration and education through councils and committees, member benefits and new offerings.
- Programmed dozens of new webinars and presentations for our digital content platform, NRF On Demand, with over 100 videos and 75 hours of content available exclusively for NRF members



## New offerings

- Hosted CIO, IT security and loss prevention community members in major cybersecurity exercises led by the Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Secret Service
- Expanded member participation in the NRF Cyber Risk Exchange, our threat-sharing portal in collaboration with PwC for cybersecurity professionals at retail member companies



# Shaping the retail workforce of today and tomorrow

The NRF Foundation pivoted to offer online training and updated credentials.

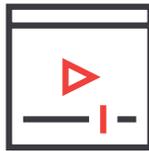
## RISE Up

In 2020, more than 13,000 people earned a credential from the NRF Foundation's Retail Industry Skills and Education (RISE Up) training and credentialing program, gaining in-demand skills for careers in retail and beyond.



## Virtual training

When hundreds of the NRF Foundation's training partners went virtual because of the pandemic, we provided free online trainings so they could smoothly transition to distance learning. In this difficult year, more schools, retailers and community organizations have realized the value of our training; we've added more than 500 new partners nationwide.



## COVID-19 credentials

The Foundation launched two new credentials in 2020 focused on retail operations and customer conflict prevention to further ensure retail workers — and the millions of customers they serve — can work and shop more safely and help keep the economy open. More than 1,800 front-line, customer-facing and distribution workforce employees have taken advantage of the training.





# Supporting small business

The NRF Foundation and Qurate Retail Group partnered to shine a light on small businesses impacted by the economic challenges of COVID-19, launching the Small Business Spotlight initiative.

During summer 2020, QVC and HSN featured 20 small businesses from across the United States on-air, online, on social media and on their streaming services, websites and podcast. All small businesses that applied for the Small Business Spotlight initiative also received complimentary RISE Up trainings.

Recognizing the retail industry's important role as a voice for change in the face of racism and social injustice, the NRF Foundation and Qurate Retail Group expanded the success and reach of the Spotlight program to showcase 40 Black-owned small businesses with exceptional stories on Qurate's platforms throughout the fall.

**A snapshot of the program's impact:**



Stowe Mercantile in Stowe, Vt., received 25 online orders in one hour after its airtime; it typically receives 15 online orders a week



Kahmune in Atlanta noted an influx of 2,000 visitors to its site after its airtdate



Nutz About Popcorn in Hatboro, Pa., quadrupled orders after its airtdate

- 1. Jamela Acheampong, Founder and Brand Director, Kahmune in Atlanta, Ga.
- 2. Lynette Smith, Owner, Nutz About Popcorn in Hatboro, Pa.
- 3. Stowe Mercantile in Stowe, Vt.
- 4. Scott Demietriek, Founder and Chef, Creole BBQ in New Orleans, La.
- 5. Margaret Barrow, Founder and CEO, Brooklyn Granola in Brooklyn, N.Y.
- 6. Jeannell Darden, CEO, Moisture Love in Atlanta, Ga.
- 7. Candice Cox, owner, CanDid Art in Oakland, Calif.
- 8. Amaya Smith and Kimberly Smith, Co-founders, Brown Beauty Co-op in Washington, D.C.

# Telling retail's story

NRF found new and compelling ways to tell retail's story of resilience in 2020. Early during the pandemic, we launched a digital thank-you campaign to recognize retailers, employees and customers for their collective efforts to keep our communities safe. The campaign showcased retailers going above and beyond to create a safe environment for their teams and customers, as well as consumers stepping up and shopping responsibly and considerately.

During the fall, we ran a nationwide consumer education campaign called "New Holiday Traditions" to encourage consumers to shop safe and shop early amidst the pandemic. The campaign included advertising across digital and social media, radio and Connected TV. NRF research found that 42 percent of consumers started their holiday shopping earlier than usual in 2020, and October retail sales increased 10.6 percent from October 2019.

NRF's podcast, Retail Gets Real, spent the year covering the effects of the coronavirus on consumers and retailers. Each episode averaged 1,800 downloads and we recorded our 200th episode with NRF President and CEO Matthew Shay on the state of retail in 2021.

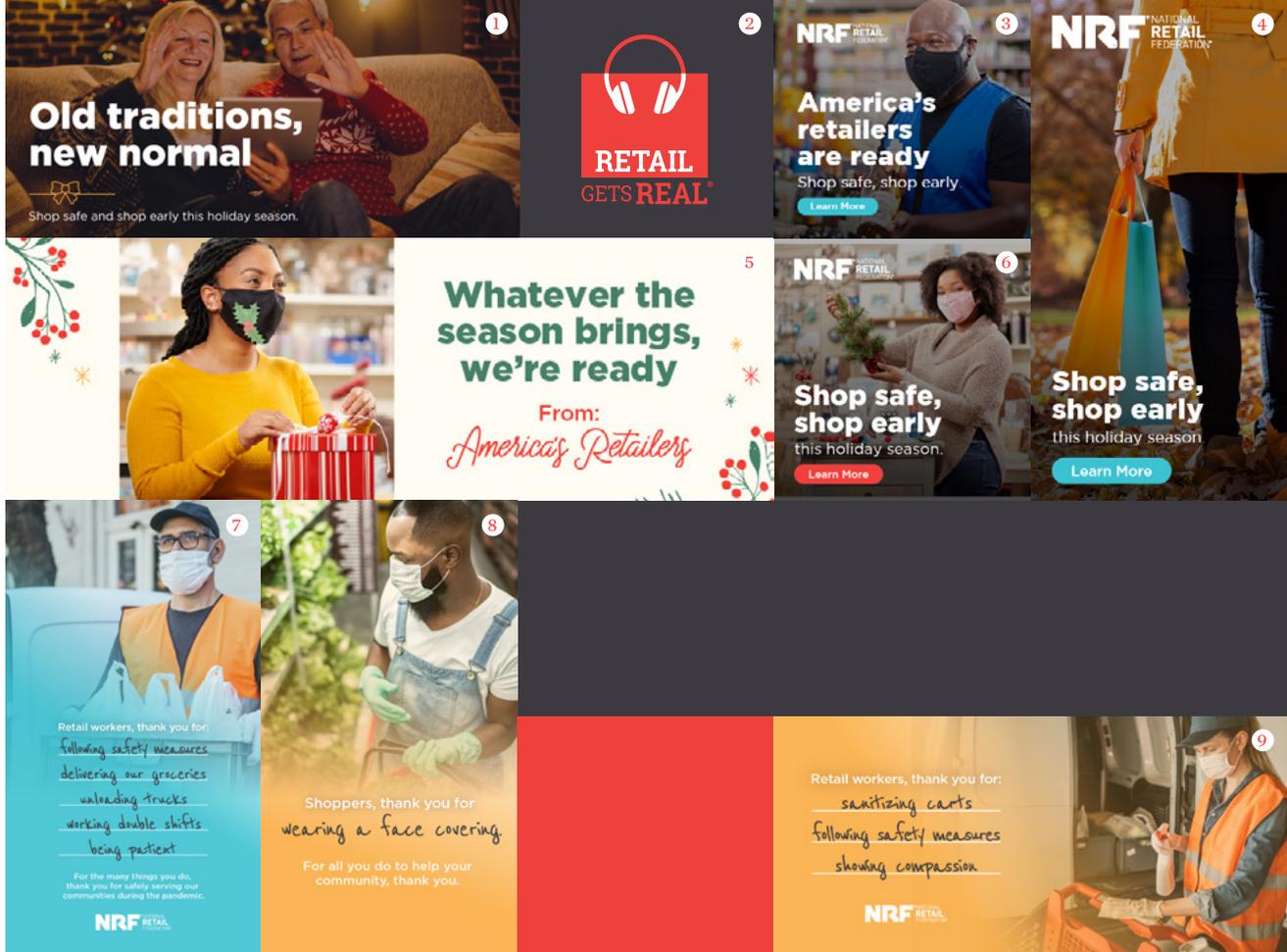
## NRF's 2020 reach:

**2.4M** website visits

**4.9M** Instagram impressions

**23.3M** Twitter impressions

**205,128** Retail Gets Real podcast downloads



1. Shop Safe, Shop Early campaign
2. Retail Gets Real logo
- 3-6. Shop Safe, Shop Early campaign
- 7-9. Thank You campaign

**NRF** National  
Retail  
Federation

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