

**Brightpearl**  
by Sage

**CHECKLIST**

**B.**

**Turbocharge Your  
Online Success:  
10 Explosive Growth  
Hacking Secrets From  
Top Online Businesses**

[BRIGHTPEARL.COM](https://brightpearl.com)

We've just wrapped up our latest season of our [Growth Hacking podcast](#), where retail expert Caroline Baldwin chats with some of the fastest-growing online brands across the world.

While recording the podcast, we collected the inside 'growth hacks' shared with us by leaders in scale up and enterprise brands across fashion, homeware, sports and leisure and more – and those insights are revealed below; fantastic news for any retail businesses looking to supercharge their own sustainable growth!

Throughout this checklist, we've woven in some key anecdotes and insights taken from our interviews with brands like The Turmeric Co., Lovehoney, SkateHut, Serge DeNimes, and more.

## Before you get to the checklist

Do be sure to subscribe to the Retales Podcast and get an instant notification when a new episode is released. We're available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Amazon, Stitcher, or wherever you get your podcasts.

Read on for the growth hacks...

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# 1. Data, data, data

It's a truth universally acknowledged that when a growing business becomes more operationally complex, the data does, too - and what may at first have been an adequate spreadsheet system starts to break. Customer details get missed, extra spreadsheets are used to plug gaps, and a simple human error can have domino effects further down the line and end in the ultimate disaster: dissatisfied customers.

Almost all of the successful e-comm retailers we spoke to mentioned harnessing cross-business data as the most essential technique to growing their business. This could include using key software to mine in-depth marketing analytics, gaining access to full inventory visibility right down to variant level, acquiring customer data in numerous ways along the buyer journey, and constantly checking operational performance insights from your suppliers and in-house processes, end-to-end.

The more accurate, dependable data you have access to, the more you can make confident, data-backed decisions into your next movements. You can spot operational blackspots that could use improvement, work towards personalised KPIs, create in-depth sales reports, and be more enlightened on where to invest your valuable funds.

**Nick Torday**, Founder and CEO of sustainable home products brand **Bower Collective**, says knowing how to translate data into action is what carried the retailer into new ground.

**“Be laser focused on the data. If you’re operating in just a vacuum of information, you’re flying blind. So having real clarity about the questions you want answering, how you go about answering them, and then how you respond to those answers - that’s really important.”**

Furniture retailer **Industry West** initially set up a custom data management dashboard for their growing business, before upgrading to new AI data platform TripleWhale. CEO of the brand, Ian Leslie said:

**“The key to growth is data, and making sure all of your data across online and offline is accessible and transparent as possible. That could mean updating your Google Sheets system and turning that into a data studio, or using a powerful tool like Triple Whale.”**

**Thomas Hal Robson-Kanu** took his health supplement brand **The Turmeric Co.** from a father-son curiosity about turmeric drinks to a multi-million dollar e-commerce store. He says the secret was making all business decisions based on solid, actionable data:

**“Be data obsessed. It all comes down to data - because if you’re running a business and you’re not data obsessed, you’re going to hit roadblocks.”**

## 2: Leverage collaboration tools

According to Forbes, almost 1 in 5 companies are now fully remote; so having each staff member working in synergy - even when not in close proximity - is now a pivotal step to reaching communal goals. This means the technological foundations of a remote business have to be efficient, secure and fully connected in order for everything to run smoothly.

The most successful e-commerce brands championed remote team project management tools - such as Monday.com, Trello and ClickUp - as being fundamental to their success. All said the multi-functional, collaborative workflow element of these tools allowed clear communication and goal-setting between staff based in different locations.

**“I’m a lover of organization, so ClickUp, Slack, Google Drive, Google Voice are all amazing tools for collaborative working. We’re a smaller team so utilizing these collaboration tools has been fundamental to making sure we’re all on the same path and working together.”**

Kath Senior, CEO of [EcoStardust](#)

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**“Use a really good project management tool like Monday.com and set really clear goals to review on a regular basis. Hold your team to account - that’s really going to help you grow. Every month we’ll pick a project and, as a non-negotiable, commit to doing it that month. Before you know it, a year has past and your business has skyrocketed.”**

James Tighe, Founder and CEO of [Project Jiu Jitsu](#).



### Top tech tools for working with a remote team:

1. Slack
2. Trello
3. Monday.com
4. Google Workplace: Docs, Sheets, Slides
5. Dropbox
6. Google Drive
7. Lastpass (for password protection)

### 3: Garner support for new business stages

Ambitious retail businesses benefit from constant support along the way, not just at launch but at every new phase of growth. Making the most of accelerator programs, networking communities and pitching or crowdfunding sites such as Kickstarter are an excellent way to garner a boost to business at these times - whether it's financial support, advice from mentors, feedback from potential customers or otherwise. You'd be foolish not to harness the growth power of engaging those who could already be big fans of your brand.

The retailers we spoke to found that with the awareness and funds raised, they could upgrade operational systems, break out into new geographical territories, hire elite staff or invest the money into product innovation and development.

Andrew Gibbs-Dabney, Founder and CEO of sustainable outdoor apparel retailer LIVSN Designs, mentioned using Kickstarter as a fundamental means of building a keen community of LIVSN fans before they'd even officially launched.



Andrew Gibbs-Dabney, Founder and CEO of sustainable outdoor apparel retailer **LIVSN Designs**, mentioned using Kickstarter as a fundamental means of building a keen community of LIVSN fans before they'd even officially launched.

**“Kickstarter is somewhat of a hack - we’ve done it four times and I think that’s been a crucial thing for us. If you think you’ve got that product, go out and test it, and use crowdfunding to go out there and build up hype - because there are potentially hundreds of thousands of people that are immediately going to be your biggest supporters.”**

In terms of entrepreneurial support, **Kath Senior**, Founder and CEO of **EcoStardust** gained contacts and advice through the NatWest Entrepreneur Accelerator program.

**“For me, being on a program was one of the best six months for business growth, and I would do it again. Do it yourself - just get out there, network and sit in a room with other e-commerce people and chat about your challenges.”**

## 4: Walk the talk when it comes to sustainability

Gone are the days when only alternative, environment-focused retail brands shouted about their eco-credentials - caring about sustainability is now undeniably mainstream. It's long been reported that consumers care more and more about ethics and sustainability when they shop; and research by Capgemini found 77% of consumers were more likely to buy from, and remain loyal to, brands with a social responsibility pledge.

At the same time, 'greenwashing' and half-baked promises around sustainability are a no-go, and if discovered, can be an absolute wrecking ball to your brand integrity. If you're an e-commerce retailer who champions eco-friendly products, and especially if it fuels your core brand messages, backing up your claims with real, action-based evidence is the only way to go.


As well as offering recycling or repurposing schemes and using ethically-sourced materials and suppliers, being assessed for recognized certifications is a great way to prove to your customers and industry that you're the real deal. Becoming B Corp certified is arguably the most impressive (and notoriously difficult to achieve), however a Carbon Neutral certificate, Fair Trade recognition or similar can all grant powerful proof of your credentials, giving your customers peace of mind that your brand is trustworthy and their money is being responsibly spent.

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**“Deloitte did a massive global consumer survey and 70% of respondents said that eliminating single-use plastic from their lives was their number one priority as a consumer. So our clarity of mission and purpose is ultimately why people love Bower Collective. This huge shift in consumer recognition of a problem and an appetite to solve it - that has been the single driving factor behind our success.”**

Nick Torday, Founder & CEO of sustainable products brand **Bower Collective**

**“We’ve had a lot of competitors come in and try and do similar things - but the fact that we are selling a true product that has been independently tested and is in completely sustainable packaging; because we’re being true to our values, that’s what cuts through against other ‘greenwashing’ brands.”**

Kath Senior, Founder of **EcoGlitter**

## 5: Invest in best-in-class technology

You may run a heritage brand which started in the early 20th century, but no matter how many decades old your company is, if you aren't investing in a roster of great technology to supercharge your business, you're going to be left behind. The scope for using key tech in all areas of retail operations just keeps expanding - from warehouse ops to marketing, customer service to inventory planning, finances to shipping and fulfilment.

When running an omnichannel retail outfit this becomes even more essential. Point-of-sale systems, multiple warehouses and workflows both domestic and international will need to be connected into one central source of truth if you're to have full visibility of how your business is performing across the board. Each application and platform in your techstack should

be easily synced to your central system. **Brightpearl by Sage**, for instance, offers a full library of Plug & Play integrations that quickly extends to the apps you run your business with such as **Shopify, Amazon, Shipstation, PeopleVox** and more.

Every successful e-commerce retailer we spoke to said technology was fundamental to their continued growth as a business - as full connectivity, visibility and operational automation had driven them towards higher levels than they ever could have working manually.

**“We’ve put some real solid foundations in place - we’ve invested a lot into technology, we’ve automated a lot of our processes and that’s enabled us to grow with a lot less pain. It’s also freed up a lot of time so that instead of putting fires out, we can concentrate on growing the business in the right way. We use best-in-class across most of our tech stack - the likes of Shopify, Klaviyo, Gorgias - and we also use Monday.com to manage our workflows.”**

James Tighe, Founder & CEO of Progress **Jiu Jitsu**

**“Growth is all about having the right technology in place to scale. In my experience, embracing change is crucial, as technology is constantly evolving. Don’t be afraid to try new tech solutions and if they don’t work, replace them. My biggest tip is to implement a solution that works for the next year or two and then adapt as needed.”**

Peter Gough, COO at **ROKA London**

## The Most Essential Tech For Growing a Retail Business

(as mentioned by successful e-comm retailers)

1. Shopify
2. Klaviyo
3. Brightpearl
4. Inventory Planner
5. PeopleVox
6. Nosto
7. Slack
8. Google Analytics
9. Recharge
10. Gorgias
11. Trustpilot
12. Meta

## 6: Texting is back - get into SMS marketing

For a while it may have seemed texting was old hat, with email and social media running the online show when it came to retail marketing. Now SMS campaigns are back in a big way, and for undeniable reasons. Evidence has shown direct marketing through text, when opted into, has higher open rates and is received more positively by customers due to its to-the-point clarity. This applies more than ever when texts are limited to good news - a birthday discount or delivery notification, for instance.

As ever, direct marketing is most successful when it strikes a delicate balance in its delivery and never annoys the recipient. Many of the high-growth e-commerce brands we spoke to had huge success with SMS campaigns, and had gathered key experience in what makes a texting campaign most impactful and profitable.

### Key Benefits to SMS Marketing for E-Commerce Retailers:

1. High open-rates - those that opt-in to texts are more willing to receive them
2. Higher conversion rates than email
3. Cheaper than other forms of acquisition
4. Constrained character limit means every word counts
5. Using texts for good news nurtures a positive association with your brand

**“SMS marketing has been so big for us. For a welcome campaign, we offer a 5% discount code for SMS sign up, and it works. I don’t think you should be texting people daily or even about product drops - but send a welcome message, a discount code and a nurture text. The figures speak for themselves. It’s been a big success.”**

Ian Leslie, CEO of **Industry West**

**“Owning first-party data - so opt-in emails, SMS - helps people to help you. Owning mobile numbers for SMS campaigns helps you communicate to the customer in a more informal way, and you pay a flat fee compared to expensive online acquisition. That’s massive, and stops you from overspending when you’re trying to get their attention.”**

Samuel Darcy, Managing Director at **Serge DeNimes**



## 7: Get serious about inventory planning

As retail businesses grow with customer demand, so, too, does inventory. Inventory is the huge turning wheel of a retail business - the impact of keeping it streamlined and profitable is monumental. If you lose track of what products are coming in and out, you can easily drain potential revenue, or block cash in a surplus of items that won't sell. For this reason, having full visibility of all of your products, including locations and variants such as sizes and colors, is key to keeping a sleek, profitable inventory that works for your business rather than against it.

The rise of inventory planning tools, such as industry-leader [Inventory Planner by Sage](#), also offer game-changing functionality such as data-fueled demand forecasting. Using your historic sales data, it also takes into account seasonality, microtrends and lead times to make regular, accurate purchasing recommendations. With this sophisticated technology, you don't make risky buying decisions that are based on guesswork or being overly-cautious.

Many of the successful e-comm retailers we spoke to use [Inventory Planner](#) to keep their inventory slick and cash flow moving like clockwork, meaning they always have the right amount of products for demand, and have the funds free to reinvest into other parts of the business.

**“Inventory Planner is a game-changer, taking us to another level. We’re reaching a point where stock management and finance are becoming more complex; and we need better insights into our operations and purchasing decisions. Traditionally, we relied on gut feelings and instincts, but now we have data coming into the picture. This will be the next big shift for us.”**

Peter Gough, COO at [ROKA London](#)

**“We were doing everything manually and had nearly a thousand SKUs, trying to guess months in advance what we think would sell. The data right down to product level from Inventory Planner has been a lifesaver. I could never handle those manual spreadsheets from two time zones - I just wouldn't sleep.”**

Samuel Darcy, Managing Director at [Serge DeNimes](#)

**“We’ve made choices on inventory-buying that were either too aggressive or not aggressive enough. Inventory Planner offers really good predictive ordering, so that we order more efficiently. And I’d say that’s the biggest risk for us - because we’re so small and so much of our budget goes into our inventory.”**

Andrew Gibbs-Dabney, CEO of [LIVSN Designs](#)

## 8: Be inventive in how you sell your story

It may seem a somewhat overdone message in the marketing world, but it still rings true - a good story sells. So engage people's love of storytelling, and be sure your brand cuts through, by getting creative in your delivery of your message.

Almost every business has intriguing human interest stories behind their products - ensure those powerful marketing hooks are rolled out in endless ways across multiple channels - blog content, email, social media such as Instagram

**“The difficulty of not being able to use social media just basically made us be more inventive and work harder, coming up with different ideas and different stories to give the press an excuse to write about us. We set up a sex toy recycling service, for example, which got great media coverage.**

**“My biggest growth-hacking tip is being creative and innovative in having a story, a product, a message that is newsworthy and stands out. Have something that will get you written about, linked to, talked about, Tik-Tokked about - because there are so many other companies fighting for attention.”**

and TikTok, video platforms such as Youtube, even online messaging forums like Reddit; alongside traditional offline media - to build reputation and influence among your target market.

**Richard Longhurst**, Founder of e-commerce giant **Lovehoney** and inventor of the PocketTimer, explained to us his biggest media breakthroughs when promoting their often media-censored sex toy products.

### CASE STUDY: A turn-out for Turmeric

Thomas Hal Robson-Kanu, former professional footballer and Founder and CEO of The Turmeric Co., worked hard to sell his brand story to maximum effect. After he embarked on a mission with his father to discover the most effective turmeric blend to soothe his sporting aches and pains, they found a winning formula and decided to go to business. On selling the story, they were sure to accumulate a glut of scientific backing - the support of nutritionists, sports physios and athletes - to prove their product to the world.

**“We leveraged one of our sports partnerships with over 100 different nutritionists to create education around our product and its benefits. We ran a clinical trial on an elite group of athletes, and the results all supported the fact that there is up to a 75% reduction in inflammation post activity, and over a 50% reduction in pain and muscle soreness when using our products. It’s groundbreaking stuff, and it definitely got us noticed.”**

## CASE STUDY: Progress Jiu-Jitsu:

James Tighe, CEO of Progress Jiu-Jitsu found a gap in the global market for authentic Brazilian jiu-jitsu supplies, and now is the go-to provider of 'gis' and other jiu-jitsu wares for over 75 countries. James told us that investing in the creation of engaging content has solidified their brand reputation, as it ensures the fans come to them, and only them.

**“We took on a full-time content creator, which has been a game changer. [...] We’re building content with our sponsored athletes and the gyms that we support, competitions and events, whereas not a lot of our competitors are doing that. Our customers love it - they can’t get enough jiu jitsu content. They want to learn from world champions, they want to watch jiu jitsu videos all day. That’s been really good for us.”**

## 9: Evolve with the new tools on the block

As an e-commerce retailer, having a core tech stack that serves you well and you’re happy with is a good spot to be in - but there’s always the risk of getting complacent. Technology is an ever-evolving beast, much like the world of e-commerce itself. You’ll want to stay on top of what’s out there to avoid being left behind.

During our discussions with high-growth e-comm retailers, many mentioned the importance of constantly assessing the technology they use in order to reach growth goals while also

keeping up with, or ideally bypassing, competitors. Particular areas of focus for the future of tech: the undeniable possibilities of AI when it comes to content creation, data-mining and imagery; and the uses of virtual reality to create a more tangible on-site shopping experience for the consumer.

Below we’ve listed some new, intuitive technologies that the retailers we spoke to were very excited about becoming big in the e-commerce space.

### Nibble

Nibble is an intriguing new tool - an AI powered chatbot that appears on-site and negotiates prices with potential customers.

**“We use an AI negotiation tool called Nibble which comes up as a pop-up onsite, and acts in the same way an in-store sales rep might, negotiating prices. Nibble discounts are usually a fair bit lower than what we would tend to offer a first time customer or during a larger sale - so the customer is getting a discount and a good sales experience and yet Industry West is saving some margin.”**

Ian Leslie, CMO of furniture brand **Industry West**

## TripleWhale

TripleWhale is a new AI data platform that brings together metrics from across your business into one useful dashboard.

**“Triple Whale is an amazing tool - I use it more now than Google Analytics. I’m a huge fan of it for attribution, especially if you’re using Shopify for your websites. What’s really cool is it also looks at all audiences in your different ad campaigns, it looks at your inventory, it looks at a host of different data and offers AI based functionalities as well.”**

Ian Leslie, CMO of furniture brand [Industry West](#)

## Chat GPT

Special mention goes to the now notorious Chat GPT - as e-comm retailers are convinced by the value of the AI language-processing tool, and are sure it's here to stay. It's unsurprising that so many businesses are already using it for hundreds of tasks - it can create content such as web copy, blogs and social captions, assess and summarise data sets; even act as a virtual personal assistant.

**“Chat GPT is great for content generation, but also for technical problem solving as well. If I want to create quite a complex regular expression for Google Analytics, Chat GPT has done it in a fraction of the time it would have taken me to figure it out myself. In terms of time management - like when I’m pushing through a CSV file for my PPC campaigns - it has pulled key stats out for me in a matter of seconds.”**

Richard Skidmore, Head of Marketing at [SkateHut](#)

## 10: Use scalable technologies to create business agility

We've definitely experienced just how changeable the e-commerce world can be in recent years, and it's become more obvious than ever that agility is the key to business resilience.

In essence, this means embracing the possibilities of automation, connectivity and full data visibility so that the path to your next big business move, however off-piste, is always clear, actionable and swift.

The successful e-commerce retailers we spoke to saw the innate value in running a business that is quick to respond to sudden shifts in the consumer climate. Many use a central, retail-focused system, such as Brightpearl by Sage, to manage their multiple complex workflows, engage with up-to-date, cross-business insights, and to scale with technologies, like Shopify, or PeopleVox, that will propel them towards their next steps.

Not only does Brightpearl's powerful Automation Engine streamline all manual processes - from orders to warehouse, inventory to fulfilment, freeing up staff time to work on more complex tasks - its library of Plug & Play integrations allow quick and easy connectivity to whatever apps or channels you choose to scale business with, enabling retailers to be agile and flexible in the face of inevitable shifts and chapters.

Other brands we spoke to combined Brightpearl with systems like Peoplevox to really unlock scale. Peoplevox is the Warehouse Management System of choice for rapidly growing ecommerce businesses, online retailers and direct to consumer brands that are looking to add more firepower to their fulfillment capability.

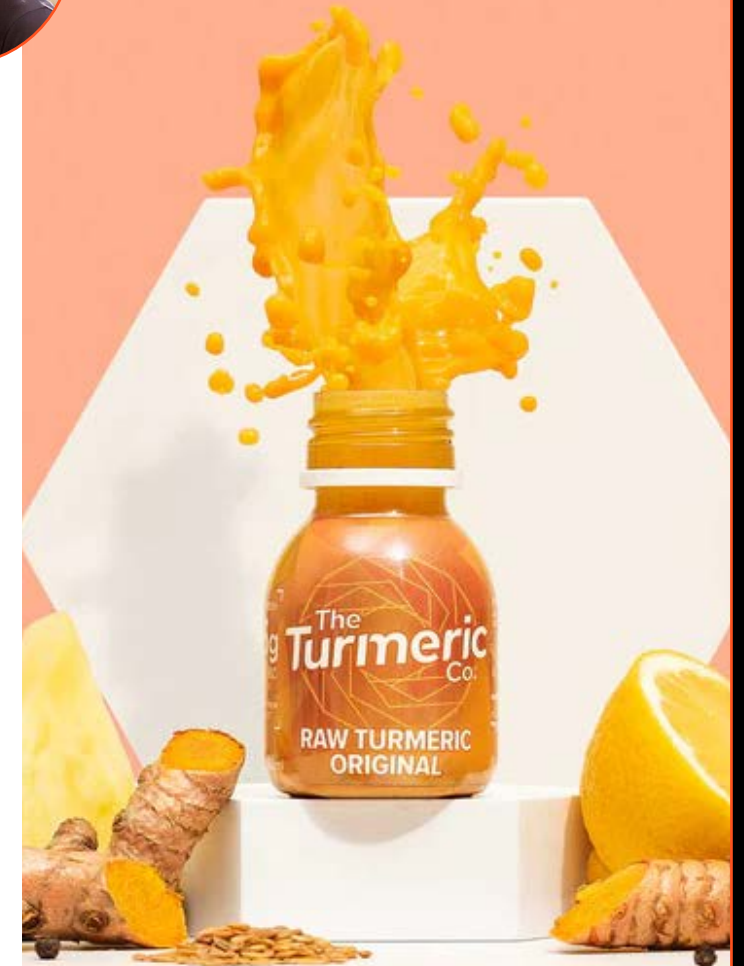
### CASE STUDY: The Tumeric Co:



The Tumeric Co. has grown quickly from a family-run idea into a million-dollar company - and as the brand's core USP is its high-quality product, manufacturing with elite suppliers is extremely important. Founder and CEO Thomas Hal-Robson Kanu explained how having a flexible, interconnected foundation is essential to managing both its supply chain and all in-house processes as the business expands.

**“Having a robust retail operating system in place - one which interacts and interconnects with other platforms, whether that be your order management software, fulfilment, customer service platform etc - that has been essential for us. You can't have siloed departments if you want to grow, everything has to sync together. You need to create interconnectivity, visibility, transparency. Unless you use the right technology, it's so hard to actually implement that.”**

Thomas Hal-Robson Kanu, CEO of [The Turmeric Co](#)



## Conclusion

In the fast-paced digital realm, retailers must not only outshine competitors but also constantly adjust to evolving consumer preferences. Staying well-informed is crucial, which is why podcasts like 'Retales' are invaluable. They offer firsthand insights from visionary retailers and leaders who are facing similar challenges and opportunities, making them highly relevant and up-to-date sources of knowledge.

In almost every episode of the latest series 'data' is absolutely paramount to decision-making. E-commerce thrives on understanding customer behavior, optimizing marketing, and ensuring efficient operations. By leveraging cross-business data, retailers can make informed choices, leading to personalized customer experiences, enhanced sales, and optimal resource allocation. Being "data-obsessed" is no longer a choice but the bedrock of growth.

As a lover of our planet, sustainability also couldn't go a miss and so I was so glad that it was on the minds of every guest, no matter the product. Sustainability has transitioned from a niche concern to a mainstream consumer preference. To build trust and loyalty among environmentally conscious consumers, retailers must substantiate their sustainability claims with tangible actions and recognized certifications, contributing to long-term growth.

Lastly, as a Brightpearl employee, I'd be remiss not to highlight the recurring theme of 'cutting-edge' technology that resonated throughout this series. In today's digital era, technology is the backbone of nearly every operational facet, spanning inventory management, marketing, fulfilment, customer service and so much more. Retail Operating Systems like Brightpearl by Sage not only streamline and automate processes but also make it a lot easier to adapt to market changes at the drop of a hat. This technological edge empowers retailers to efficiently scale their businesses, ensuring they can remain ahead of the curve in the ever-evolving e-commerce landscape."



**Jodie Guichard,**  
Partner Marketing Manager,  
**Brightpearl by Sage**



**Leo Connolly,**  
Content Strategy Manager,  
**Descartes Peoplevox**

The value these podcast interviews have brought out is truly phenomenal. We know that every retailer is different, and there is no one size fits all approach to building a successful business in this industry. But to see the same themes come up again and again proves some of the real fundamentals are here to stay. Transparency between systems and people, robust processes that can handle growth, and that little bit of creative spark that gets people talking. Wrap that up in a genuinely exceptional customer experience and you've got the makings of a retail unicorn!

We will always advocate for the importance of logistics and inventory management as a key part of growth, not just an after-thought. With the cost of new customer acquisition rising and competition between retailers stronger than ever, it's clear that retailers need to focus on both the front and back-ends of their operations to keep moving forward.

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