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Entry Kit  
2026

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# Next Gen Store Awards



The first-ever [Next Gen Store Awards](#) will celebrate the innovations reshaping the modern in-store experience. As retail evolves, creating spaces that capture consumer attention through community-building activations, unique store concepts and immersive experiences is more important than ever. This new awards program will honor the brands and retailers experimenting with in-store technology, innovative store formats and standout activations that are redefining how consumers engage with physical retail.

## Deadlines & Entry Fees

<b>EARLY DEADLINE</b>	May 20, 2026	\$499 per entry
<b>REGULAR DEADLINE</b>	July 10, 2026	\$599 per entry
<b>LAST CHANCE DEADLINE</b>	August 21, 2026	\$729 per entry

# Categories



## Best In-Store Media | NEW

Awarding the retailers that have used in-store media to effectively engage shoppers and influence purchasing decisions through strategic placement, messaging and creative execution.

## Best New Store Concept | NEW

Awarding retailers with a new store concept that rethinks physical retail through design, experience and customer engagement.

## Best Store Activation | NEW

Awarding in-store activations that have driven customer engagement, foot traffic and brand connection through creative experiences or programming.

## Best Store Pop-Up | NEW

Awarding temporary retail experiences that have driven buzz, customer engagement and brand discovery.

## Best Store Technology | NEW

Awarding retailers that have effectively used technology to improve the in-store experience, streamline operations or connect physical and digital commerce.

# Entry Tips



## Begin with favorable odds.

Search for the perfect category to enter. If you plan on entering more than one, make sure you curate your entries with intention.

## Tell a compelling story.

Chronicle your work with a classic beginning-middle-end framework. Keep it relevant with a problem-solution-results approach.

## Tie your results back to your campaign objectives.

Tell us what problems inspired your work, discuss how it solved them and provide KPIs for support. Remember, “the why” is just as important as “the what.”

## Keep your copy short and sweet.

Award winners share three distinctive traits: they’re direct, discerning and descriptive. Judges don’t need a copy-heavy description to get the full picture.

## Paint a complete picture.

Don’t just write about your work—judges want the full experience. Include supporting materials like videos, photos and campaign art to strengthen your story.

## It takes a village.

Get your team excited about your company’s submission by planning for edits together. A marketer’s eye and a copywriter’s wit might be exactly what you need to punch up your entry.

# FAQ



## **How do I start my submission?**

Submit here. You will be brought to the submission platform where you will be asked to register if not already.

## **Am I eligible to enter this program?**

Case studies must be relevant to May 2025 - August 2026.

## **How do I increase my chances of winning an award?**

Be sure to emphasize the goals of your campaign, as well as the achievements. Provide supporting materials and specific examples of success when possible (KPIs, ROI, etc.)

## **What if my company has a juror on the judges panel?**

Not a problem. You can still submit to the program. We recuse judges from scoring any categories that their company submits to.

## **Are the entry fees per category?**

Yes. Further, if you enter the same campaign into multiple categories, which companies often do, you will be charged the entry fee per category entered.

## **Need help deciding what categories are the best fit?**

Request a 15-minute call with our team by emailing [amy@digiday.com](mailto:amy@digiday.com).



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Contact

[help@modernretail.co](mailto:help@modernretail.co)

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