

*braze*

# The Cross-Channel Marketing Difference



## INTRODUCTION

These days, leveraging a cross-channel approach to customer engagement isn't a nice-to-have, it's an imperative. And truly effective engagement today depends on your ability to reach customers where they are. If you can do it successfully, the impact can be enormous: Braze research has found that when brands embrace cross-channel, they can [boost their users' average lifetimes by 76%](#).

But knowing what channels to leverage to achieve your business goals can be hard, even for experienced marketers. To make it easier to find the channel mix that fits your unique business needs, we've put together an exclusive report exploring how different channel combinations impact engagement, monetization, retention, as well as providing insight into how brands can make the most of their messaging.



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# Get Up to Speed on Today's Messaging Channels

The foundation of any successful cross-channel strategy is the right messaging channel mix. At their core, messaging channels are designed to deliver content and outreach to your brand's customers across different platforms and devices. But to find the right mix of channels for your business, it helps to know how they differ from each other. So let's take a quick look at seven major messaging channels and how they support customer engagement.

# Out-of-Product Channels

These channels can reach beyond an app or website to engage recipients who aren't currently engaged with your digital platforms.



## Email

[Email](#) is the original messaging channel and arguably still the most impactful. This flexible channel can support messages of varying lengths and visual approaches, making it a key tool.



## Mobile Push Notifications

[Push notifications](#) are attention-grabbing alerts that pop up on a recipient's smartphone homescreen, sent from a mobile app.



## SMS/MMS

[SMS](#) (Short Message Service)/[MMS](#) (Multimedia Messaging Service) messages are sent natively via the messaging app on a mobile device. SMS are text-focused, while MMS can include visuals.



## Web Push Notifications

[Web push notifications](#) reach web visitors the same way that traditional push notifications reach people on mobile, even when they're not currently visiting your website.

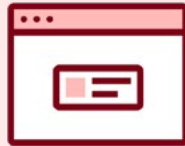
# In-Product Channels

By their nature, in-product messaging channels reach individuals who are particularly likely to be interested in what you have to say—namely, users who are actively engaging with your website or mobile app.



## In-App Messages (IAMs)

[In-app messaging](#) allows brands to deliver messages directly to users who are actively using the mobile app. That makes them an ideal way to message your customers when they're inside your product.



## In-Browser Messages (IBMs)

[In-browser messages](#) function like in-app messages for the web. These flexible messages allow brands to easily surface personalized, targeted outreach to active web visitors.



## Content Cards

[Content Cards](#) are persistent messages within websites and mobile apps that make it possible for brands to engage active users in unobtrusive, compelling ways.

# Multi- vs. Omni- vs. Cross-Channel

If you've spent any time in the marketing world in recent years, you've likely heard terms like "multi-channel," "omni-channel," and "cross-channel" used pretty interchangeably. But they're not the same thing, and the differences are instructive.

## Multi-Channel

This approach **uses multiple messaging channels to reach users, not necessarily in a coordinated or optimized way.**

Technically, any brand that sends messages using more than one channel (think email and push notifications) could be considered to have a multi-channel approach.

## Omni-Channel

This approach tends to be **focused on bringing together digital and in-person engagement**, and is often used to talk about the vision of communicating with consumers across every available channel. **Omni-channel strategies tend to focus on a more-is-better approach to channels**, rather than looking to find the ideal channel mix for a given audience or situation.

## Cross-Channel

This approach is focused on **ensuring that you're using the ideal mix of channels to reach customers in a complementary, cohesive way**, with an eye toward making the most of each channel's strengths. **True cross-channel campaigns should include a mix of both in-product and out-of-product channels** in order to ensure a truly coordinated customer experience.

# The Impact of Cross-Channel Engagement

Successful cross-channel messaging is all about finding the right mix of channels for your audience and your business goals and deploying them in concert to provide brilliant experiences that get results. And when you combine out-of-product and in-product messages, those results can be exceptional:

## The Impact of Cross-Channel Messages vs. In-Product Messages (e.g. IAMs/IBMs) Alone

**1.9X**

Increase in sessions per user

**6.4X**

Increase in purchases per user

**5X**

Increase in customer lifetime value (LTV)

**55%**

Increase in average user lifetime

## The Impact of Cross-Channel Messages vs. Out-of-Product Messages (e.g. Email/Push) Alone

**3.2X**

Increase in sessions per user

**2.7X**

Increase in purchases per user

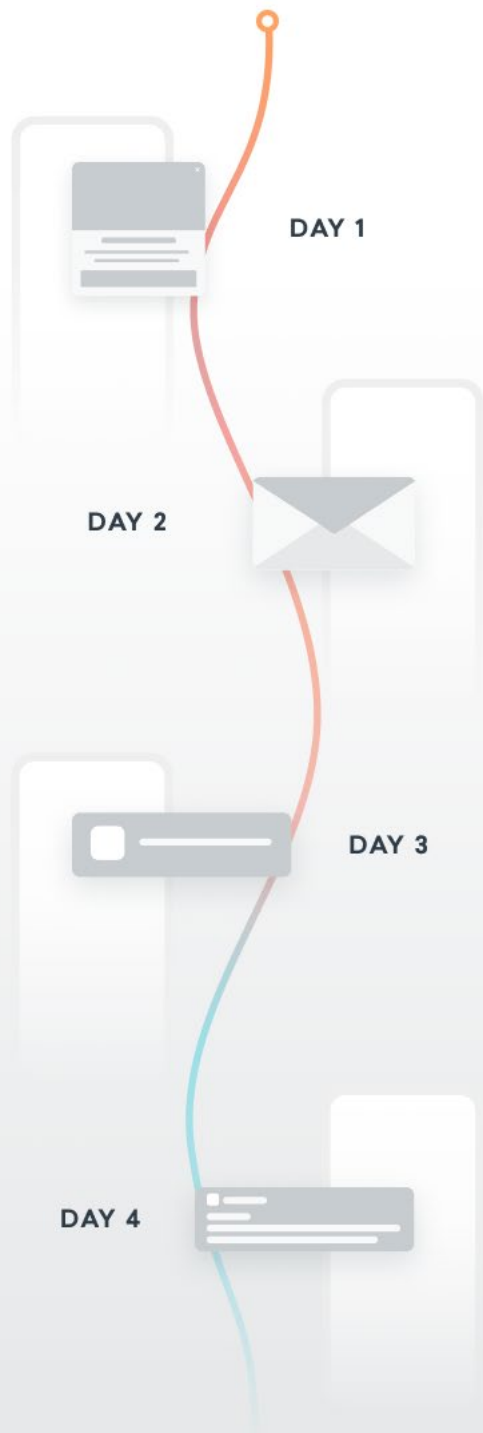
**8.8X**

Increase in customer lifetime value (LTV)

**2X**

Increase in average user lifetime





# Optimize Your Messaging Results With Cross-Channel

You know the channels that matter for your business—but you can see even stronger results by supplementing them as part of a cross-channel strategy.

To help you out, we've looked at three major messaging channels (mobile push notifications, email, and in-app messages) and highlighted ways to optimize each one for key KPIs, allowing marketers to fit their messaging mix to their strategy.

# Optimizing Email



Email is more than just a channel—it generates revenue, creates loyalty, and can serve as the foundation of a comprehensive marketing strategy. But while email is powerful, it isn't an island...and one of the best ways to make the most of your existing email program is by complementing the emails you're already sending with supplemental outreach channels. Let's explore how to use the right mix of channels alongside email to drive stronger results when it comes to:

**Sessions**

**Purchases Per User**

**Average User Lifetime**

**Customer Lifetime Value (LTV)**

## ▶ **Email:** Boosting User Sessions

While Braze research has generally found that combining in-product and out-of-product messages provides the strongest customer engagement outcomes, that doesn't mean that pairing two out-of-product channels is necessarily a bad idea. In fact, when it comes to juicing user sessions, it turns out that supplementing email with another out-of-product channel—mobile push notifications—is a powerful way to get customers to open your app.



Email

**Boost User Sessions With These Pairings**

Top-Performing 2-Channel Combination



Email



Push

**+2.6X\***  
more sessions

Top-Performing 3-Channel Combination



Email



Push



IAM

**+5.6X\***  
more sessions

Top-Performing 4-Channel Combination



Email



Push



IAM



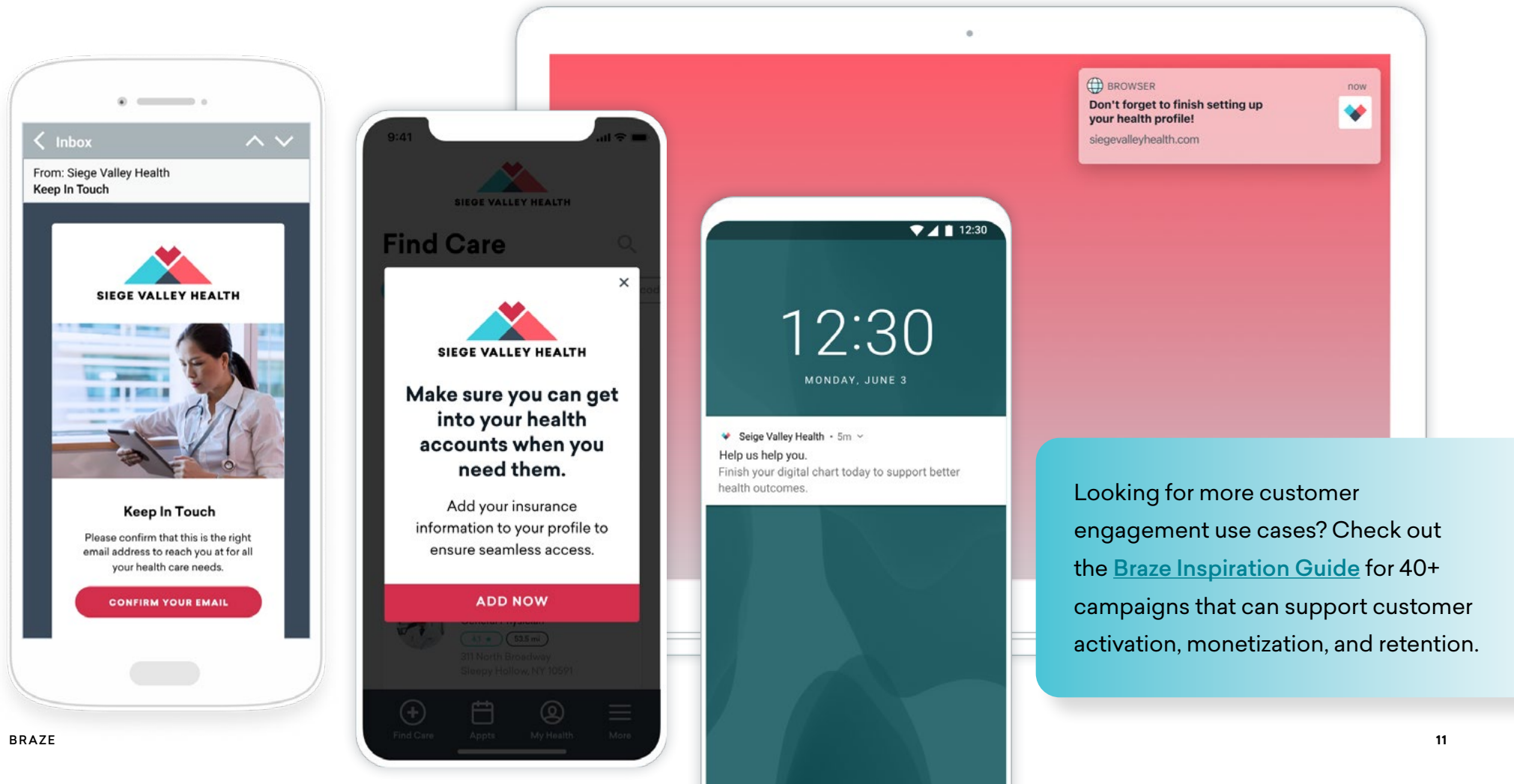
Web Push

**+14.9X\***  
more sessions

\*COMPARED TO USERS WHO ONLY RECEIVED EMAILS

# What a Top-Performing, Session-Boosting Cross-Channel Campaign Could Look Like

By adding push notifications, in-app messages, and web push to your email campaigns, you can **increase sessions by nearly 15X!**



Looking for more customer engagement use cases? Check out the [Braze Inspiration Guide](#) for 40+ campaigns that can support customer activation, monetization, and retention.

## ▶ **Email:** Driving More Purchases Per User

When it comes to encouraging email recipients to make a purchase, the smart move is to leverage SMS. Combining these two long-standing channels has an immediate, powerful impact—and one that makes sense given these channels' strengths. After all, a phone number is more personal than an email inbox for most people, so a customer who you're able to reach on both of these channels may be uniquely primed to respond and engage to your calls to action. Plus, SMS works best in a cross-channel context, making it an ideal add-on for your email campaigns.



Email

**Boost Purchases  
Per User With  
These Pairings**

Top-Performing 2-Channel Combination



Email

+



SMS

**+7.1X\***  
more  
purchases  
per user

Top-Performing 3-Channel Combination



Email

+



SMS

+



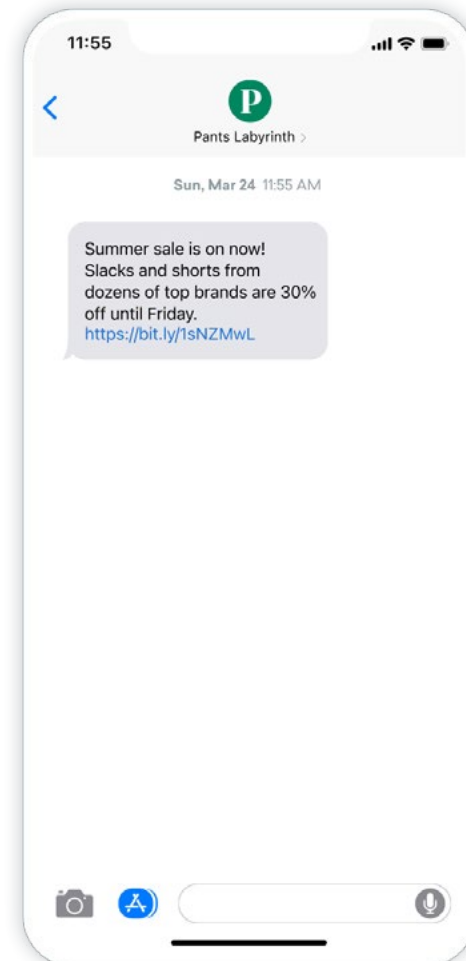
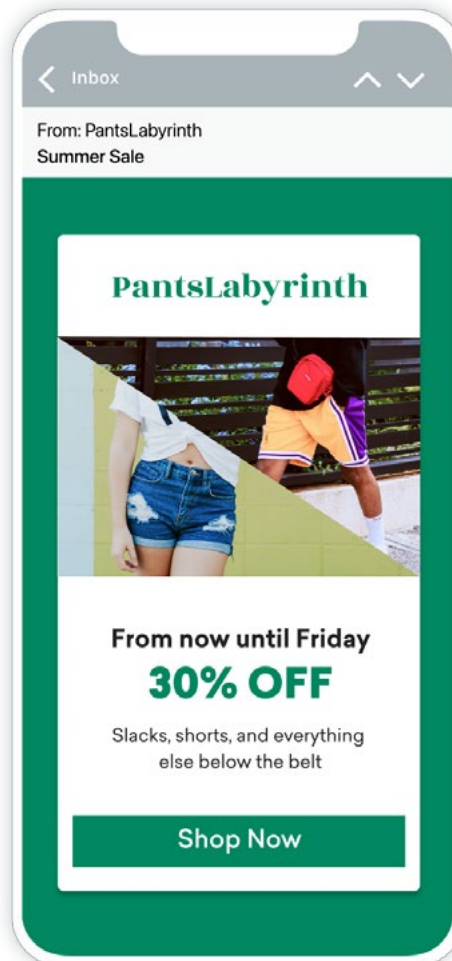
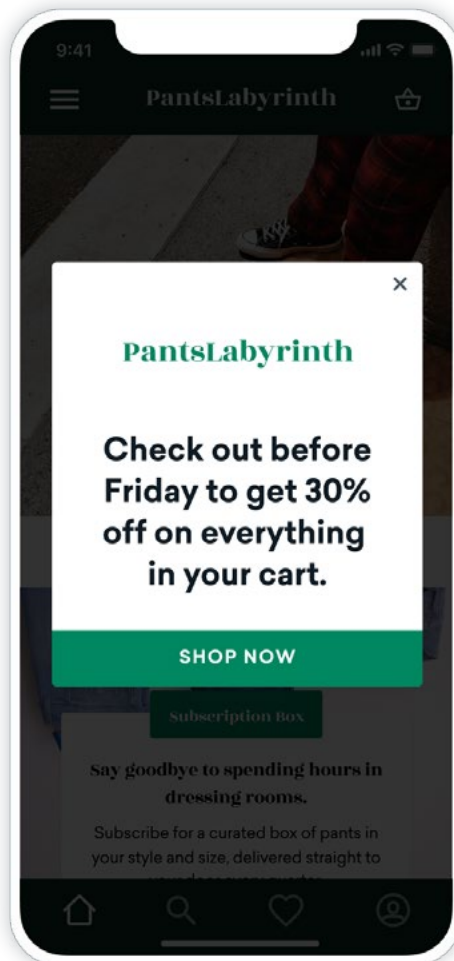
IAM

**+11.9X\***  
more  
purchases  
per user

\*COMPARED TO USERS WHO ONLY RECEIVED EMAILS

# What a Top-Performing, Purchase-Boosting Cross-Channel Campaign Could Look Like

By adding in-app messages and SMS to your email campaigns, you can **increase purchases per user by nearly 12X!**



## ► **Email:** Improving Retention

In order to boost retention, marketers should consider using supplemental channels alongside email. But to get the most out of your messaging, it pays to add at least two additional channels. Our research found that adding a single channel to email increased average user lifetime by up to 96%, compared to a 4X rise when the top-performing mix of four channels is considered. By creating a messaging strategy that reaches across platforms (mobile, web, email) and combines in-product and out-of-product messaging, you can maximize your ability to hold on to customers.



Email

**Boost Average User Lifetime With These Pairings**

Top-Performing 2-Channel Combination



Email



IAM

**+96%\***  
longer  
average user  
lifetime

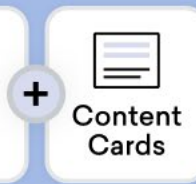
Top-Performing 3-Channel Combination



Email



IAM



Content  
Cards

**+3.6X\***  
longer  
average user  
lifetime

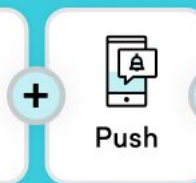
Top-Performing 4-Channel Combination



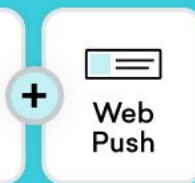
Email



IAM



Push



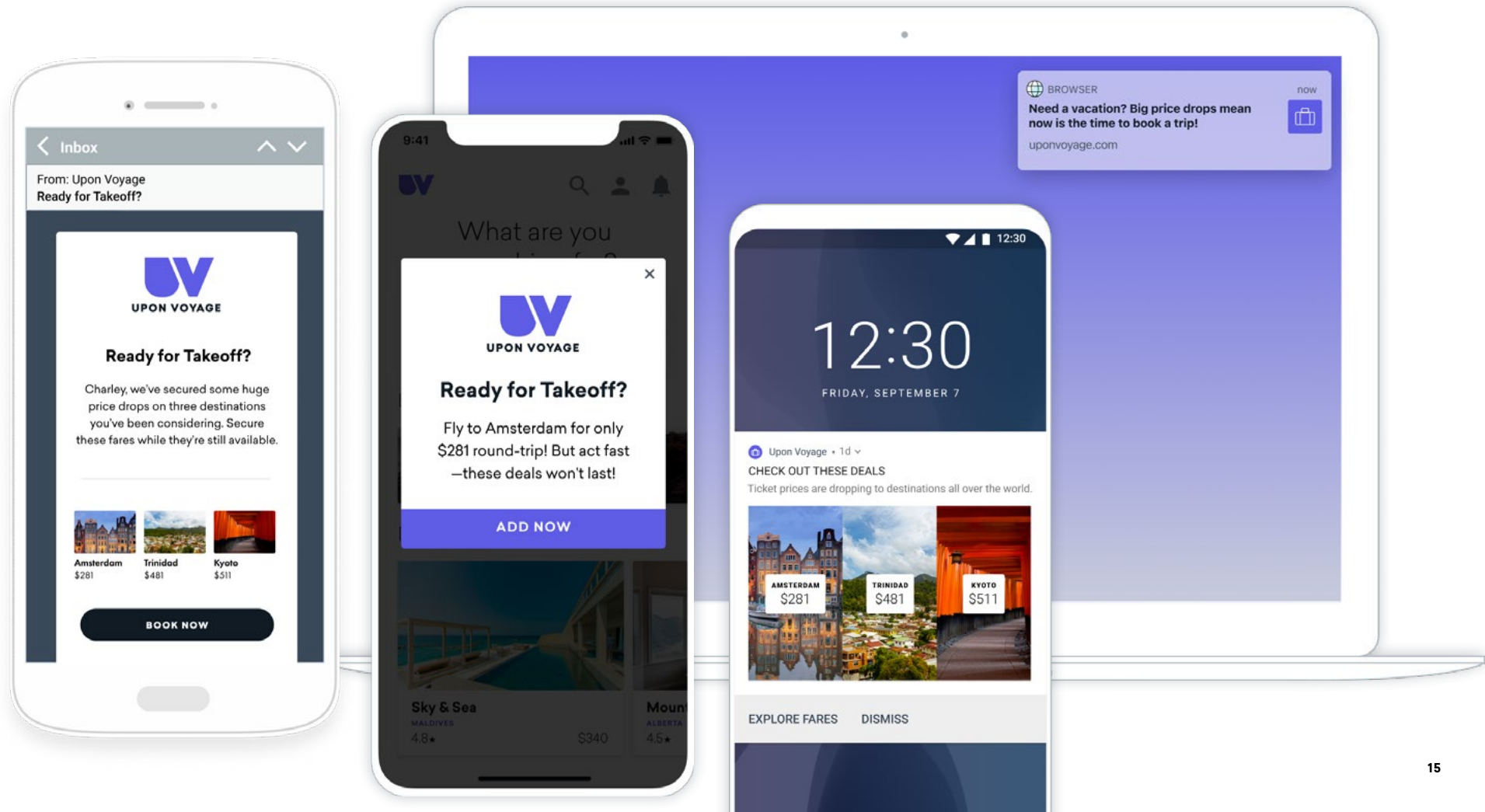
Web  
Push

**+4X\***  
longer  
average user  
lifetime

\*COMPARED TO USERS WHO ONLY RECEIVED EMAILS

# What a Top-Performing, Retention-Boosting Cross-Channel Campaign Could Look Like

By adding push notifications, in-app messages, and web push to your email campaigns, you can **increase retention by 4X!**





## ▶ **Email:** Maximizing Customer Lifetime Value

If you're looking to boost your customers' lifetime value, you could do worse than messaging them via email. This channel sees strong outcomes on its own, but for marketers looking to uplevel their results, the smart money is on leveraging in-app messages together with email. That approach gives you the mix of in-product and out-of-product channels you want. If you want to take things further, consider adding in push notifications and web push to ensure a comprehensive cross-platform messaging experience.



Email

**Boost Customer Lifetime Value With These Pairings**

Top-Performing 2-Channel Combination



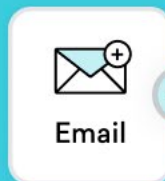
Email



IAM

**+17%\***  
higher  
customer  
LTV

Top-Performing 4-Channel Combination



Email



IAM



Push

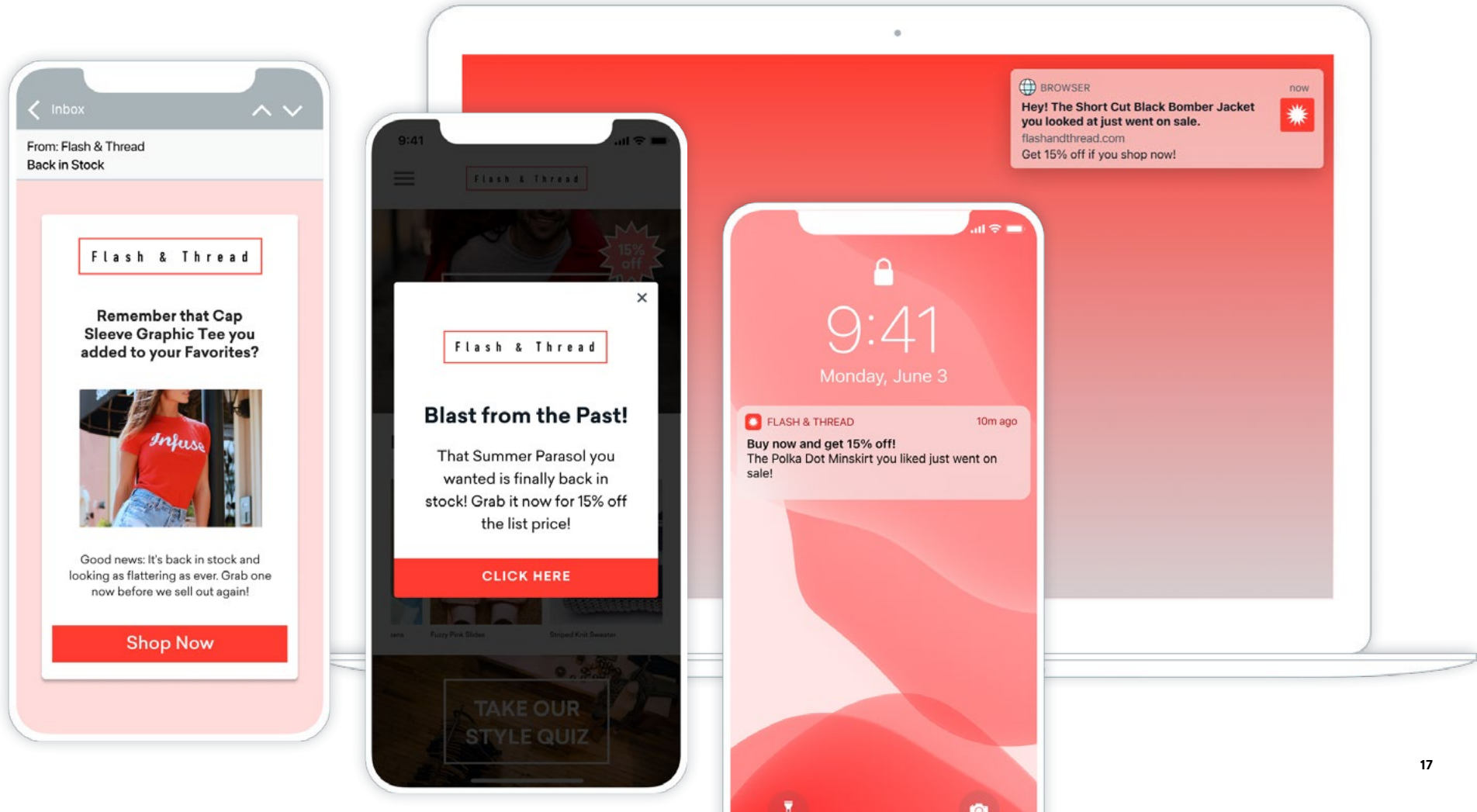


Web Push

**+80%\***  
higher  
customer  
LTV

# What a Top-Performing, LTV-Boosting Cross-Channel Campaign Could Look Like

By adding push notifications, in-app messages, and web push to your email campaigns, you can **increase customer LTV by 80%!**



# Optimizing Push Notifications



Push notifications are one of the most powerful tools that brands have when it comes to reaching their mobile app users. But push is even more effective when it's used as the foundation of a cross-channel campaign, allowing marketers to more successfully drive engagement, hold onto customers, and boost revenue. Let's explore how to use the right mix of channels alongside push notifications to drive stronger results when it comes to:

**Sessions**

**Purchases Per User**

**Average User Lifetime**

**Customer Lifetime Value (LTV)**

## ► Push Notifications: Boosting User Sessions

For marketers, push notifications can be a powerful tool for bolstering engagement. But our research found that push is most effective at reaching this goal when paired with other channels. In fact, adding any additional channel to push has a positive impact on sessions per user. However, adding an in-product channel may be particularly key, since the top-performing channel combination for this metric features in-app messages.



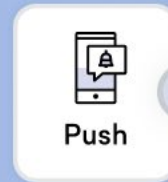
**Boost User Sessions With These Pairings**

Top-Performing 2-Channel Combination



**+4.9X\***  
more sessions

Top-Performing 3-Channel Combination



**+6.9X\***  
more sessions

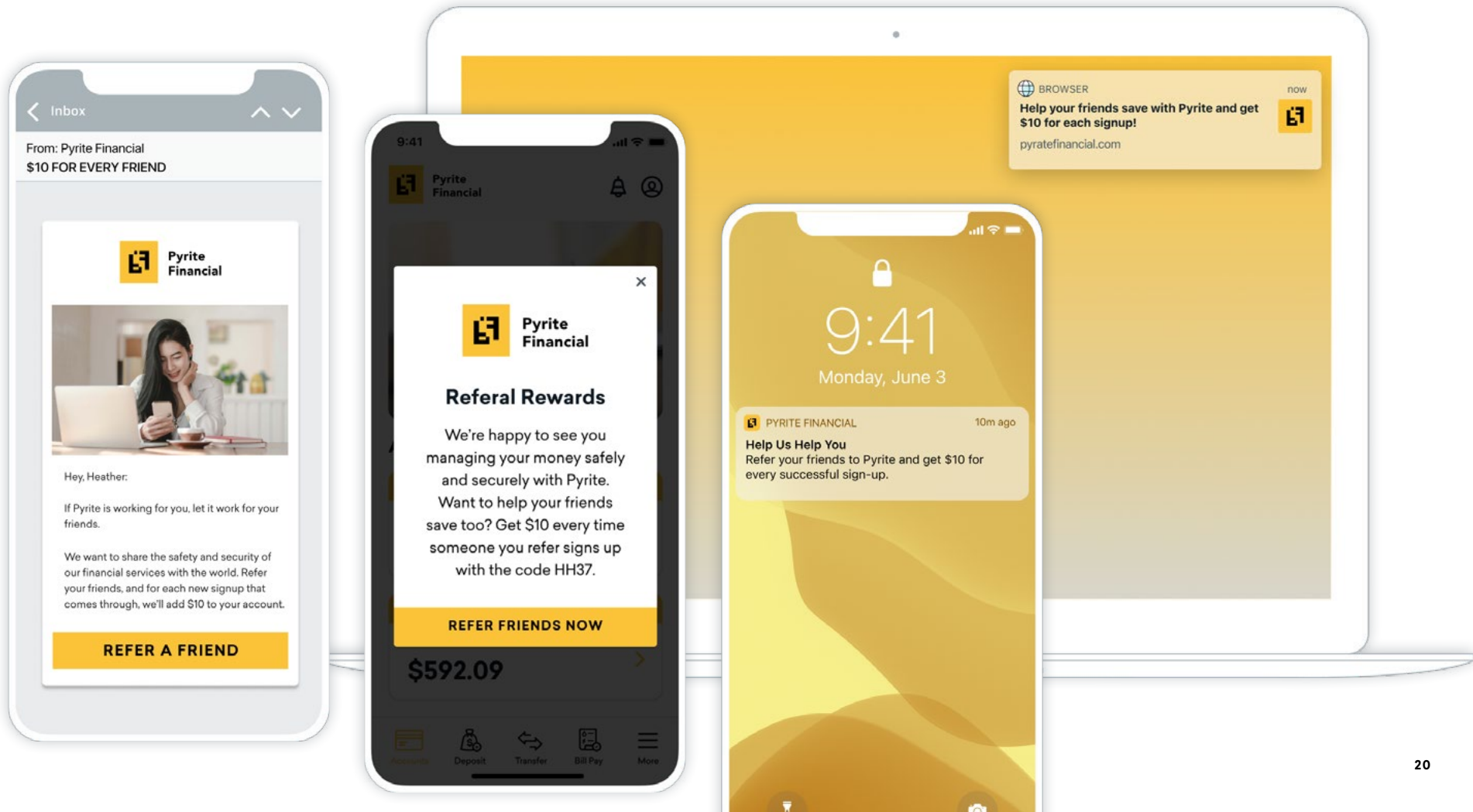
Top-Performing 4-Channel Combination



**+13.9X\***  
more sessions

# What a Top-Performing, Session-Boosting Cross-Channel Campaign Could Look Like

By adding email, in-app messages, and web push to your push notification campaigns, you can **increase sessions by nearly 14X!**



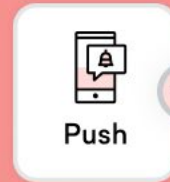
## ► **Push Notifications:** Driving More Purchases Per User

As with engagement, our research found that supplementing your push notifications with any additional channel had a positive incremental impact on the number of purchases recipients made. Email and in-app messages seem particularly impactful for this metric when paired with push, but the bigger surprise is web push notifications; this oft-neglected channel featured in the top-performing channel combination for driving purchases, suggesting that it may work best as a sort of “icing on the cake” in a rich cross-channel campaign.



**Boost Purchases Per User With These Pairings**

Top-Performing 2-Channel Combination



**+3.2X\***  
more purchases per user

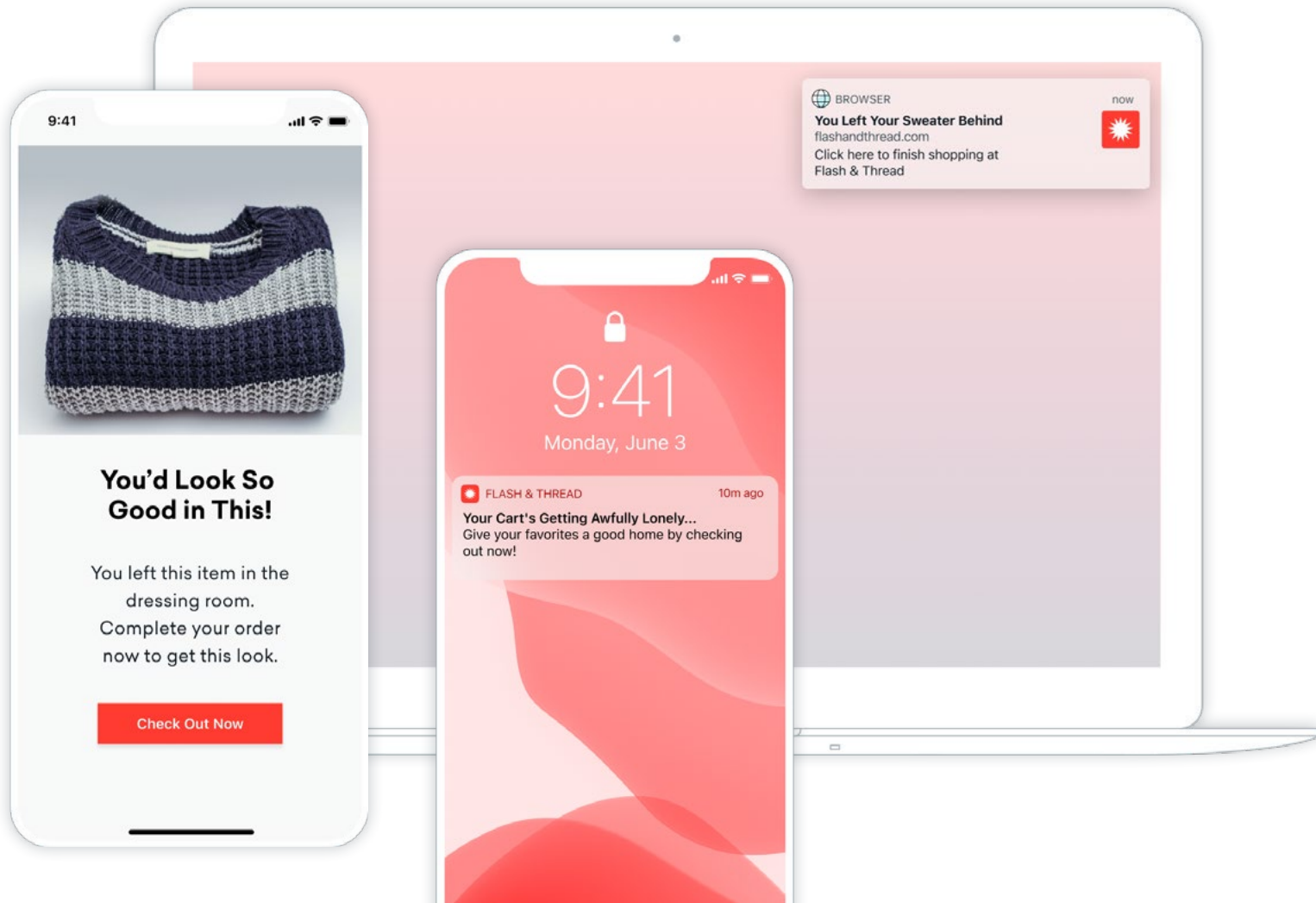
Top-Performing 3-Channel Combination



**+32X\***  
more purchases per user

# What a Top-Performing, Purchase-Boosting Cross-Channel Campaign Could Look Like

By adding in-app messages and web push to your push notification campaigns, you can **increase purchases per user by 32X!**



## ► Push Notifications: Improving Retention

When it comes to the long-term health of your business, few metrics matter more than retention. Our research found that push notifications do the most to improve average user lifetime when they're paired with multiple additional channels (especially when one of them is an in-product channel like in-app messages). This mix makes it possible to both pull users back to your app or website and keep them engaged and active while they're there, giving you the best possible chance at building a strong relationship.



Push

**Boost Average  
User Lifetime  
With These  
Pairings**

Top-Performing 2-Channel Combination



Push



IAM

**+2.5X\***  
longer  
average user  
lifetime

Top-Performing 3-Channel Combination



Push



IAM



Web  
Push

**+3.9X\***  
longer  
average user  
lifetime

Top-Performing 4-Channel Combination



Push



IAM



Web  
Push



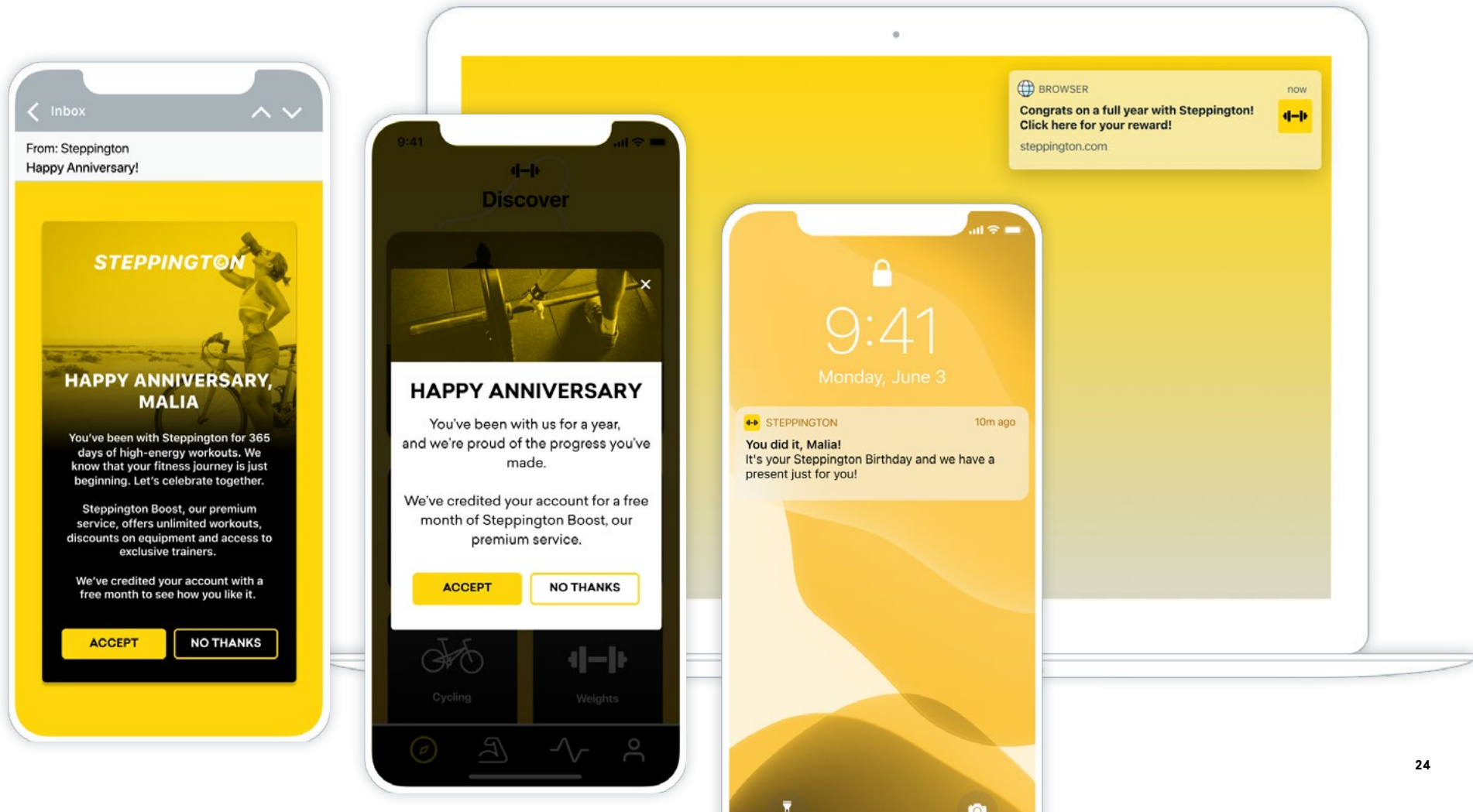
Email

**+4.3X\***  
longer  
average user  
lifetime



# What a Top-Performing, Retention-Boosting Cross-Channel Campaign Could Look Like

By adding email, in-app messages, and web push to your push notification campaigns, you can **increase retention by more than 4X!**



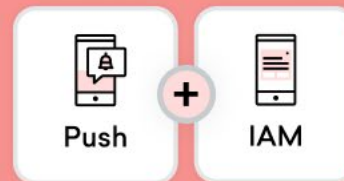
## ▶ Push Notifications: Maximizing Customer Lifetime Value

When it comes to encouraging customers to deepen their investment in your brand, few channels can rival push notifications. In fact, using this channel on its own has a major positive impact on customer lifetime value (LTV). But that doesn't mean there's no place for cross-channel engagement when you're optimizing for this metric. Our research shows that leveraging in-app messages in tandem with push notifications has the highest incremental impact, allowing brands to effectively double their LTV with just one extra channel, making this one of the easiest customer engagement wins out there.



**Boost Customer  
Lifetime Value  
With This  
Pairings**

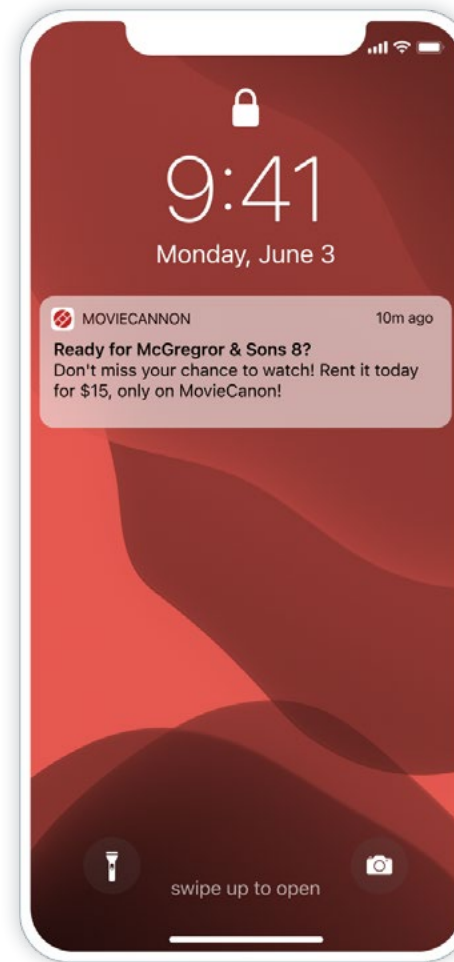
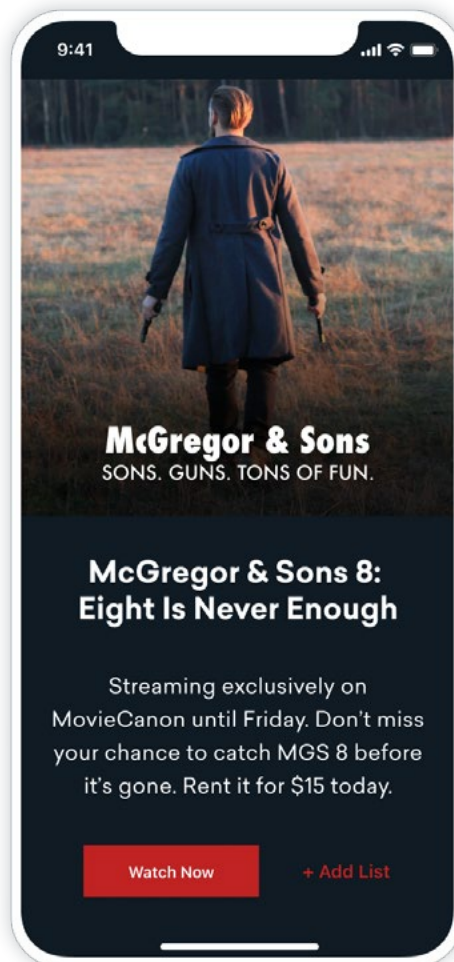
Top-Performing 2-Channel Combination



**+2.1X<sup>\*</sup>  
higher  
customer  
lifetime value**

# What a Top-Performing, LTV-Boosting Cross-Channel Campaign Could Look Like

By adding in-app messages to your push notification campaigns, you can **increase LTV by more than 2X!**



# Optimizing In-App Messages



Dating back to mobile's earliest days, in-app messages have been an essential tool for customer engagement. In-app messaging can drive customer activity at just about every stage of the user journey and for nearly every type of brand—but they can do even more to help you reach your goals as part of a coordinated cross-channel approach. Let's explore how to use the right mix of channels alongside in-app messages to drive stronger results when it comes to:

**Sessions**

**Purchases Per User**

**Average User Lifetime**

**Customer Lifetime Value (LTV)**

## ► In-App Messages: Boosting User Sessions

In-app messages are arguably the defining in-product messaging channel, providing brands with a powerful, flexible tool for engaging active customers within their mobile app. But while this channel benefits from being used in concert with out-of-product channels, when it comes to boosting user sessions, sometimes two in-product channels are better than one. Our research found that doubling down on in-product messaging by adding Content Cards to in-app messages has a strong positive impact on engagement—though the results get even stronger if you add an out-of-product channel (or two!) to the mix.



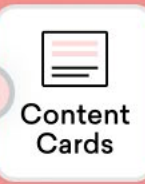
IAM

**Boost User Sessions With These Pairings**

Top-Performing 2-Channel Combination



IAM



Content Cards

**+2.4X\***  
more sessions

Top-Performing 3-Channel Combination



IAM



Content Cards



Push

**+3X\***  
more sessions

Top-Performing 4-Channel Combination



IAM



Push



Web Push

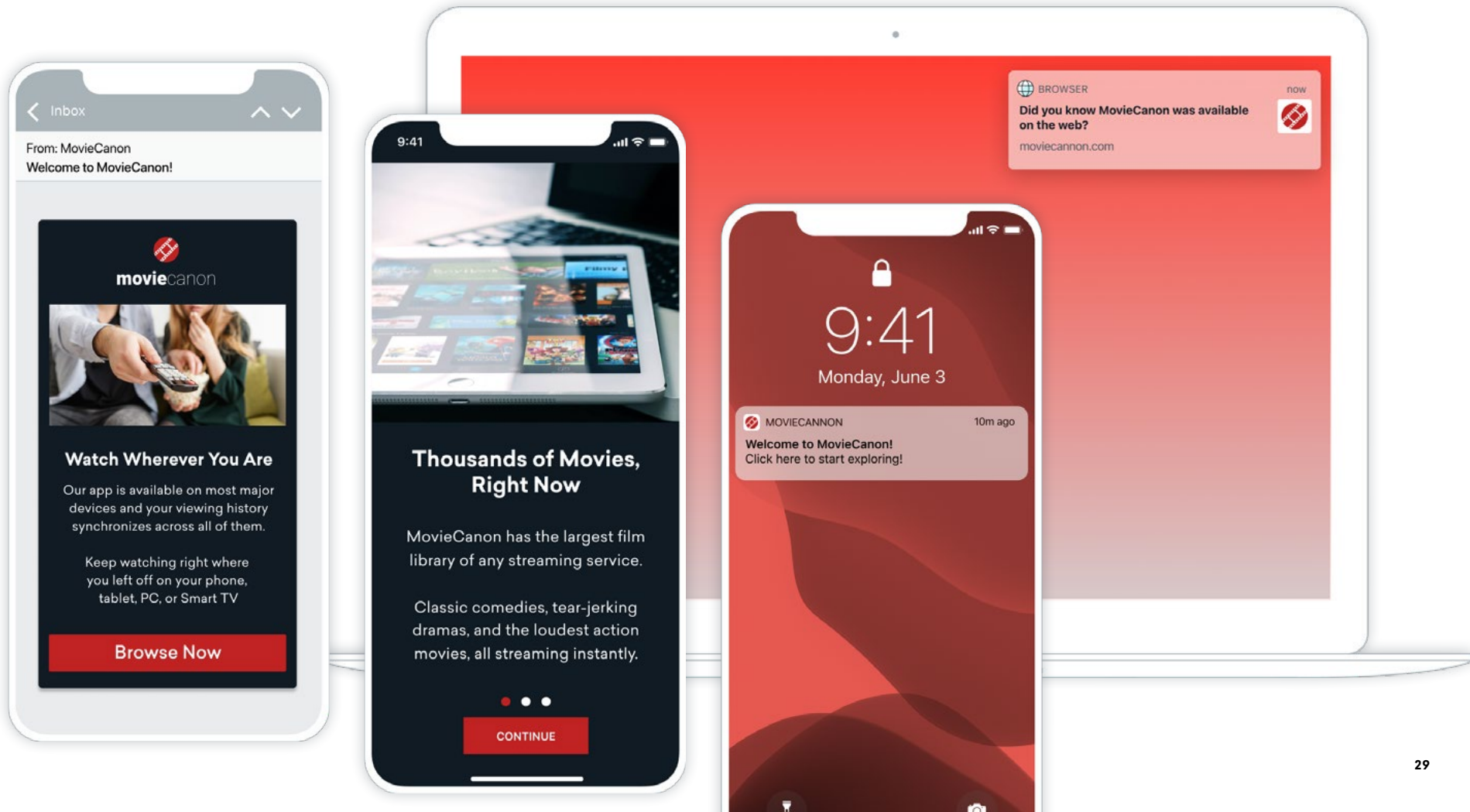


Email

**+5.9X\***  
more sessions

# What a Top-Performing, Session-Boosting Cross-Channel Campaign Could Look Like

By adding push notifications, email, and web push to your in-app messaging campaigns, you can **increase sessions by nearly 6X!**



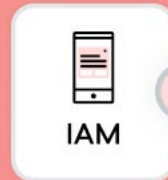
## ► In-App Messages: Driving More Purchases Per User

If your brand is looking to drive additional purchases per user, adding another channel to your in-app messages is the ticket. In this instance, our research found that the gap between using in-app messages alone and using them in concert with other channels is significant. In particular, adding multiple out-of-product channels was associated with stronger results than just adding one, suggesting that these outreach tools may be a powerful way to drive more users to your app, where in-app messages can engage them effectively.



**Boost Purchases  
Per User With  
These Pairings**

Top-Performing 2-Channel Combination



+



**+10.1X<sup>\*</sup>**  
more  
purchases  
per user

Top-Performing 3-Channel Combination



+



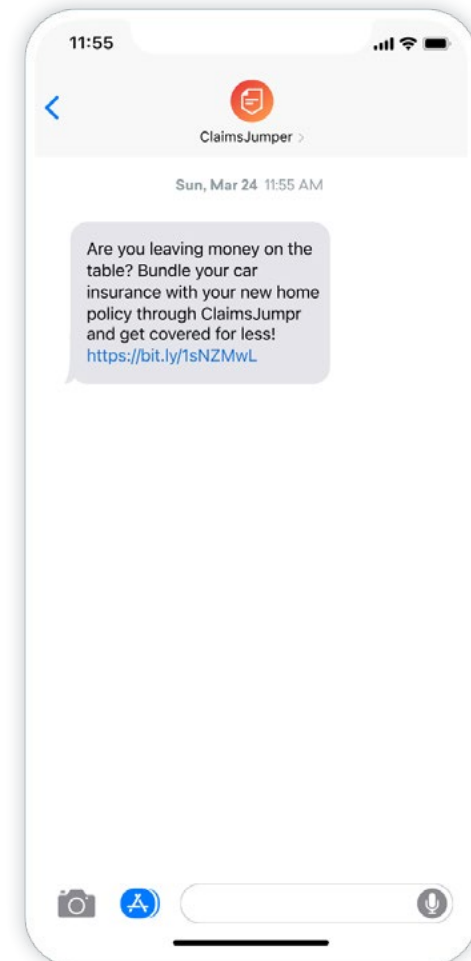
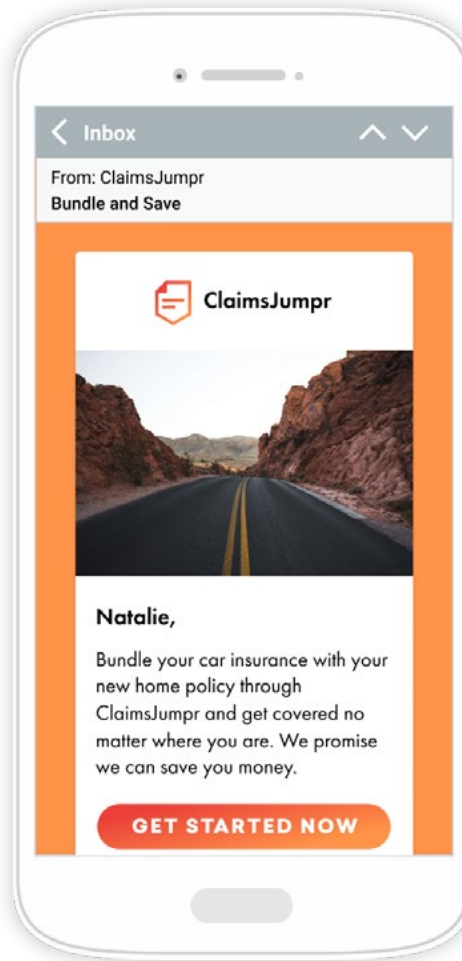
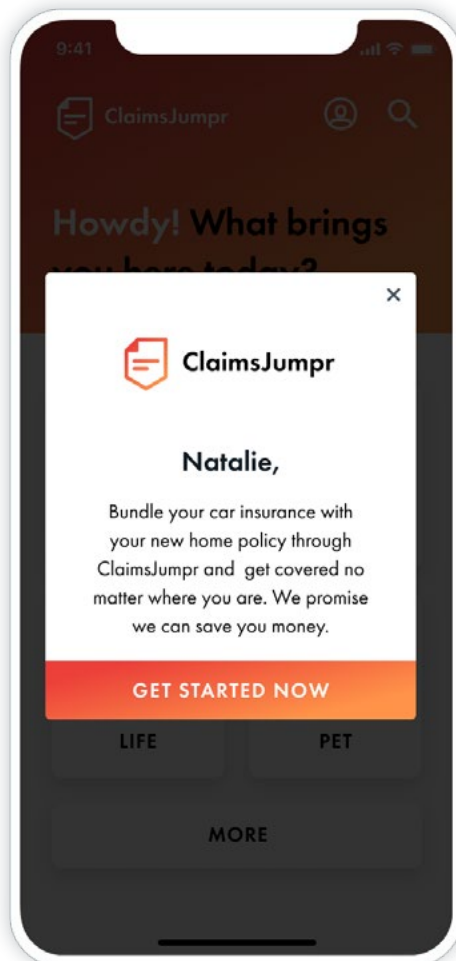
+



**+32.8X<sup>\*</sup>**  
more  
purchases  
per user

# What a Top-Performing, Purchase-Boosting Cross-Channel Campaign Could Look Like

By adding email and SMS to your in-app messaging campaigns, you can **increase purchases per user by nearly 33X!**





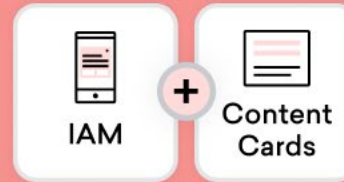
## ► In-App Messages: Improving Retention

According to our research, while in-app messages are already powerful tools for boosting customer retention, it's possible to move the needle further by adding in the right mix of channels. In particular, content-rich messaging channels like email and Content Cards seem to be particularly effective at boosting average user lifetime when deployed in tandem with in-app messages.



**Boost Average  
User Lifetime  
With These  
Pairings**

Top-Performing 2-Channel Combination



**+89%\***  
higher  
average user  
lifetime

Top-Performing 3-Channel Combination

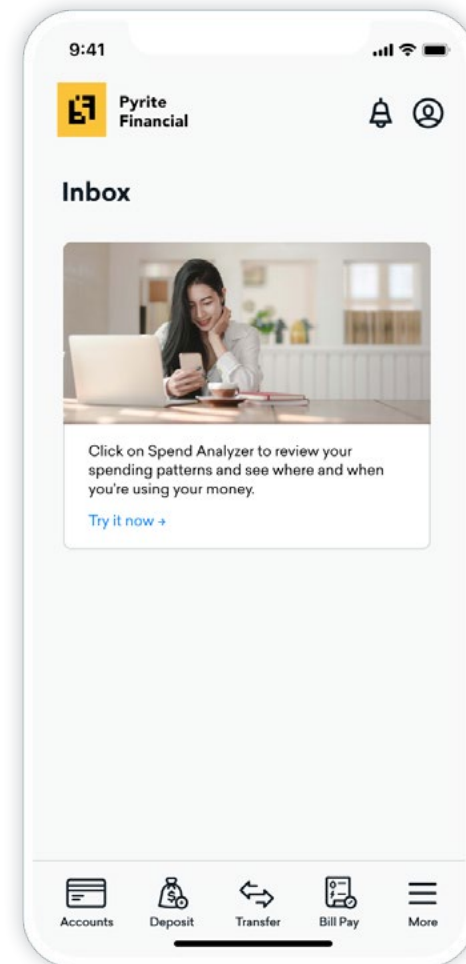
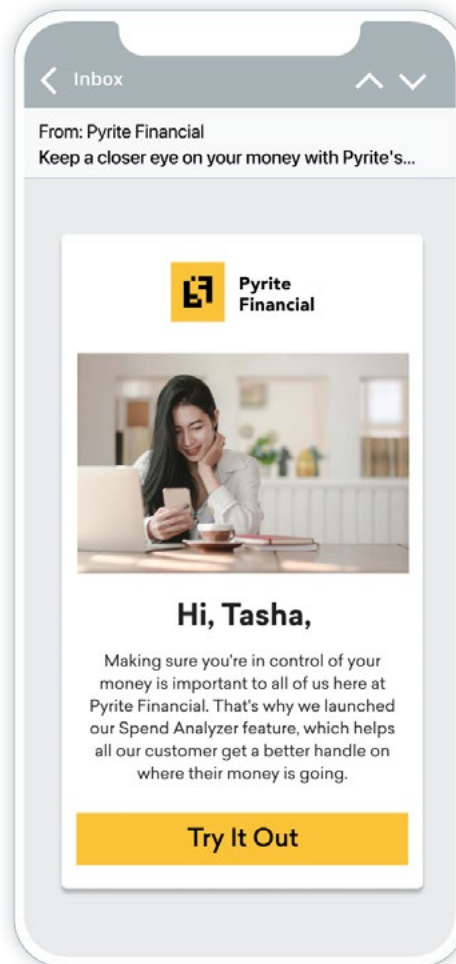
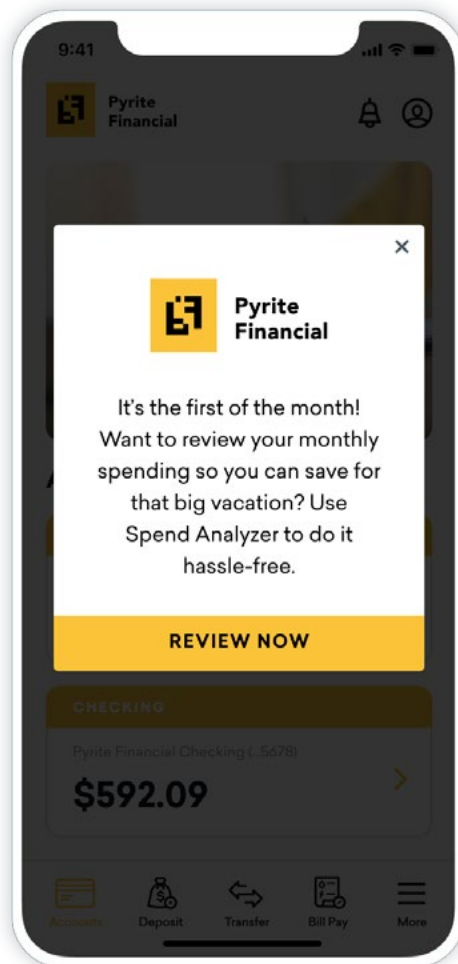


**+2.4X\***  
higher  
average user  
lifetime

\*COMPARED TO USERS WHO ONLY RECEIVED IN-APP MESSAGES

# What a Top-Performing, Retention-Boosting Cross-Channel Campaign Could Look Like

By adding email and Content Cards to your in-app messaging campaigns, you can **increase retention by more than 2X!**

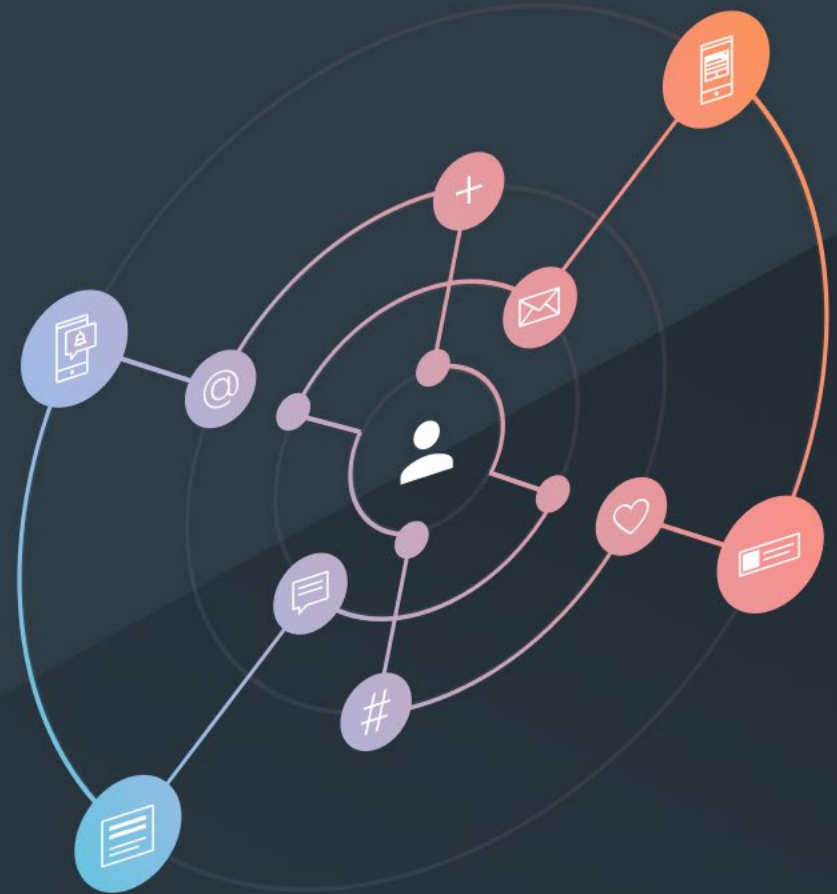


# Conclusion

Here at Braze, we talk a lot about cross-channel customer engagement, and there's a reason for that. Across the board, our research has found that brands see stronger results when they move beyond single-channel strategies and use a combination of in-product and out-of-product channels to provide their audience base with cohesive, coordinated messaging experiences across channels, platforms, and devices.

This report provides a road map for marketing, growth, and product teams who are looking to improve their engagement, monetization, and retention results. Take a look at the channels you're currently leveraging and take advantage of our research to determine what additional channels are worth trying out and which ones aren't a good fit for your business goals. Your customers—and your bottom line—will thank you.

To get up to speed on today's key channels and how to get started using them, check out [“Brilliant Experiences, Channel by Channel.”](#)



# Methodology



For this analysis, Braze pulled anonymized and aggregated behavioral data from over 770 brands across our US, APAC, and EU clusters to analyze app activity, message engagement, and purchasing trends.

These statistics span January 1–December 31, 2020 and include data from over 5 billion user profiles and 56 sub-industries. The raw data has been cleaned using volume and company count checks so that no one brand or group of brands is over-represented. For all purchase- and messaging-related stats, only brands tracking the relevant information have been included so as not to skew the analysis.

*braze*

Get in touch to learn more

**[BRAZE.COM/CONNECT-WITH-SALES](https://braze.com/connect-with-sales)**