



Zipline

CASE STUDY

How Zipline is supporting lululemon's next decade of growth



The Challenge

lululemon's playbook is a game changer for the retail industry. The company relies on its store teams to drive its vision, which is to be the experiential brand that ignites a community of people living the sweat life through sweat, grow and connect.

To realize its ambitious vision, lululemon developed a business strategy to guide growth into the next decade. The Power of Three strategic initiative is anchored on doubling the size of its men's and digital business, quadrupling the size of its international business, and continuing to generate double-digit growth in North America and women's business.

Bold, audacious initiatives like these do not come without their challenges. lululemon knew that its retail employees were they key to realizing its goals but struggled with unifying the globally dispersed workforce. lululemon was managing store communications through a variety of homegrown channels, none of which were effective.

Kelsey, lululemon's Communications Implementation Manager explains, "We were emailing stores, sending calendar invites then sending announcements through our intranet. There was also a newsletter that came out once a week. It had links in it, but it was a printed PDF. We were losing right there." With so many communication vehicles, educators were left with a bunch of ineffective tools and no single source of truth.

lululemon also struggled with accountability. With no visibility into readership, lululemon store teams would often be left wondering who did what. That, in turn, led to even more back-and-forth communication and confusion. Kelsey summarized the problem by saying, "Ultimately, we were pushing a lot down, we didn't know what was being done. It was creating a bottleneck that created more stress for our teams."

How lululemon uses Zipline

Luckily, lululemon found a partner to help capture the power of store teams through communication. In early discussions, it became apparent that Zipline understood the nuances of the retail business and could dramatically impact the company's success. In addition, the lululemon team, which puts an emphasis on store associates, also felt aligned with Zipline's mission of building products that meet needs of America's most populous workforce: retail employees.



Today, Zipline is driving lululemon's key growth initiatives by pulling communication channels into one central place where tasks are targeted to individual stores, everybody has visibility into who-read-what, and HQ partners can see how initiatives are tracking in real time. This, in turn, allows teams at headquarters and in the field to focus on supporting the company's growth, product, and customer experience priorities - ultimately driving business forward.

How Zipline helps lululemon

Zipline helps lululemon drive brand equity and product innovation in stores.

Since its founding in 1998, product design and innovation have been at the core of lululemon's brand. With the help of uniquely sourced proprietary fabrics, the company is able to craft athletic apparel with unparalleled fit, feel, and function. But even the most innovative products can fail to make a splash in the marketplace if salespeople can't articulate what makes them unique. That's why delivering accurate, timely product knowledge and training modules is so important to lululemon's bottom line. "Product education is one of the most important things we send to our teams," says Kesley.

Prior to Zipline, lululemon's product education was limited. Information about new fabric arrivals, fabric technology and trending fashions was all compiled by the teams at headquarters and released as a one-page newsletter, The Juicy Goods. "We had incredible space constraints," says Samantha, a Product Education Team Member at lululemon's headquarters. "Everything we sent to stores had to fit within this 8.5x11 one-sided piece of paper."

Originally meant to be accessed on the back room computer, The Juicy Goods included hyperlinks to product videos, but computer access was always a problem, "We have one computer and dozens of educators," Samantha explains. "Managers often resorted to printing the newsletter for their teams, rendering the links useless." Once printed, The Juicy Goods often languished on breakroom tables, ignored and unread.

Today, Zipline puts lululemon's product innovation front-and-center by providing a simple platform that educators can access right from the sales floor. With product knowledge at their fingertips, educators can better articulate the benefits of new product lines without missing a beat. "Zipline is way more accessible for our educators," says Samantha. "Before, they would have to log on to the back computer, and now everyone has direct access to information."

Through Zipline, HQ can easily track engagement for each initiative with real-time readership and execution reporting, ensuring that every message is received. Because Zipline supports media-rich content, corporate can confidently invest more time producing in-depth product videos because educators will view them. "We know that people are actually watching the videos that we've created," says Samantha

"Zipline is way more accessible for our educators"





Zipline helps lululemon create a memorable, integrated guest experience

lululemon's growth depends on creating a fully integrated guest experience. From yoga classes to pub runs, lululemon is legendary when it comes to building brand awareness and loyalty in local communities. "Because we don't do a lot of advertising, getting involved in our local community is how we spread the word about our product," says Store Business Lead, Alex. "This grass-roots marketing strategy has created a strong community of like-minded people focused on the sweat life." Striking the right balance between brand-backed credibility and local flair takes practice - and the right tools.

Prior to Zipline, educators and managers cobbled together event plans with spreadsheets and sticky notes. Today, it's infinitely easier. "Zipline helps us keep track of that information. We know who is working the events and what needs to get done. It's so helpful," says Alex. Through Zipline, educators and staff can communicate in a centralized location and easily snap and upload waivers, contracts, or pictures to post on social media.

"I really love Zipline. It not only makes our teams' jobs easier, but it allows us to realize our vision of being truly global."



While managing a particularly complex event involving an aerial yoga set-up at her store in Hudson Yards, manager Emily found Zipline invaluable in tracking what needed to get done. She explains, "Zipline puts a task on our main page so we know exactly who is responsible for getting waivers uploaded every day. If it doesn't get done, we're able to follow-up. That accountability piece is taken care of so we're able to focus on creating fun and magic for guests in our community."

Zipline helps lululemon expand markets.

With successful store openings around the globe, lululemon has proven that "the sweat life" translates across borders. Bringing the lululemon brand to life globally takes more than just a universally-loved product - it also takes seamless consistent communication across markets. Kelsey sums up the challenge, saying, "Our brand and culture were developed in North America but now we have stores in China." Fortunately, Zipline makes it easy to share and exchange information globally. "It is our portal to that store." states Kesley.

As lululemon continues to expand, many of the regions have committed to translating messages into local languages to make communication easier. Historically a cumbersome, time consuming task that left little time for stores to act, it's now easy with Zipline. "Everything is laid out clearly and it feels like we are working as a team." says Yumi, lululemon's Regional Communications Specialist in Asia. "I really love Zipline. It not only makes our teams' jobs easier, but it allows us to realize our vision of being truly global."



Zipline bridges the gap between local store priorities and broader brand goals.

With Zipline, HQ can synthesize messaging and create tasks for local stores using a single platform. “We can finally tell our stores to go to one place - Zipline - to get all of the information that they need to do their jobs,” says Kesley. “I know that it has reduced stress, increased their clarity, and given them a solution to be their most successful. We wouldn't be in the position we are today without Zipline.”



About lululemon :

Founded in 1998, lululemon athletica is one of the largest yoga and fitness lifestyle brands, operating 440 stores across 15 countries. Not only is lululemon one of the most recognized brands in the fitness and yoga apparel industry, but the company has also received numerous accolades for being one of the best places to work. It is 57 on Forbes' Worlds Best Employers list and 22 on Glassdoor's Best Places to Work For list.

About Zipline:

Zipline is the leading provider of execution solutions for brands with field locations. Zipline360, the leading operations platform for field teams, is proven to drive better business agility, sales execution, and employee engagement. Brands that use Zipline experience a 130% increase in sales execution and millions of dollars in labor savings annually. The company has a Net Promoter Score of 78, and CBInsights ranked Zipline as one of the 100 most promising B2B retail tech companies in the world. Zipline is Great Place to Work-Certified for its employee engagement, culture, and healthy work-life balance, and was named to the Inc. 5000 list of fastest growing private companies. Today more than 65 brands like Rite Aid, Sephora, Gap Inc. and AEO Inc. depend on Zipline to align and empower their field teams worldwide.

