

# How Lush's focus on human connection optimized the digital customer experience

Lush is a cosmetics company known for its emphasis on fresh ingredients and cruelty-free products—not to mention being credited as the original inventor of the bath bomb. From early days in England to currently operating 250 stores across North America, Lush continues to have a dedicated following for its soaps, shampoo bars, moisturizers and scrubs.

## Challenge

For retailers (and all businesses for that matter) entire strategies had to be reworked in response to COVID-19. Digital became the central, if not sole, channel to focus on.

At Lush, the team had implemented a travel campaign before social distancing and non-essential business closures were government-mandated. While the campaign had initially been performing well, there

Increase in  
Click-Through  
Rate

**+250%**

More Sales during  
the Experiment

**+\$7.5k**

was a drastic dip in engagement as travel restrictions tightened.

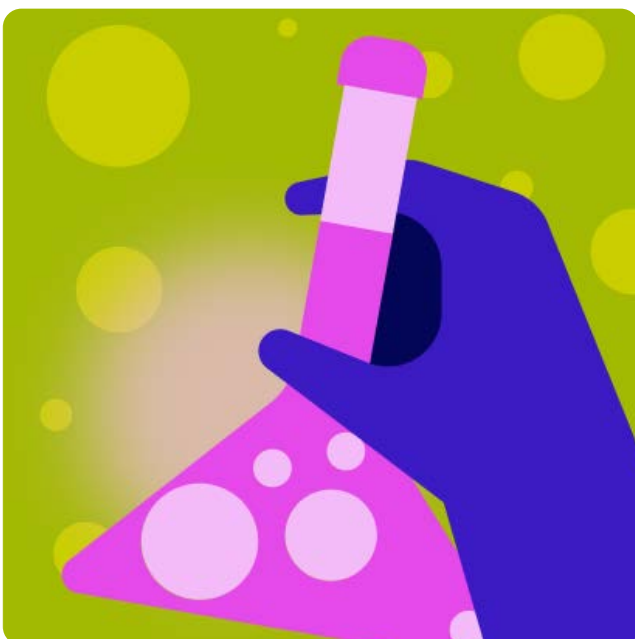
Lush knew that they needed to pivot. But they also needed to consider how current circumstances were affecting their customers. What was the best way to connect with people during this time? How could they strike a balance between offering familiarity while not coming across as out of touch?

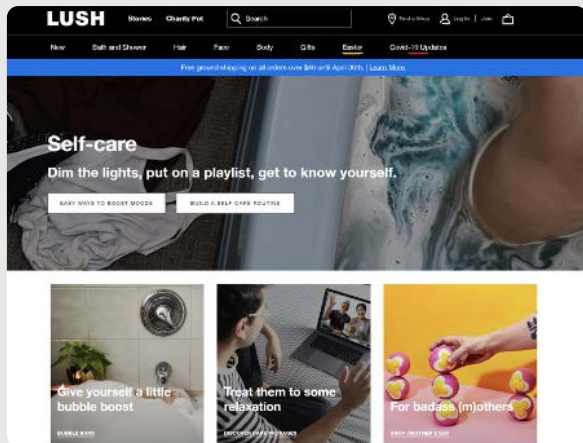
## Test

Lush focused on their homepage promotions, evaluating everything from the banner image to CTA phrasing and featured products. The team created two campaigns that subtly addressed the new reality of staying at home and socially distancing.

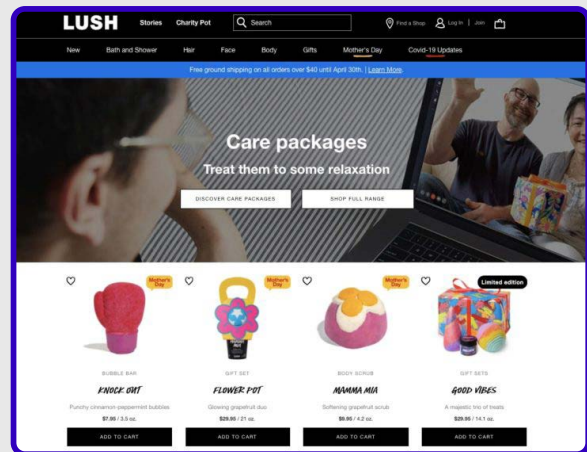
The first variation was centered around self-care. Lush offers head-to-toe cosmetics products that range from relaxing to invigorating. The idea was for customers to put together an entire regimen for themselves, perhaps gravitating to products they wouldn't normally have had time for (like scalp treatments and bath bombs).

The second variation was built around the theme of sending care packages to loved ones. Even though people couldn't physically see friends and family, they could send these gifts as a thoughtful gesture or for special occasions.





Variation 1



Variation 2  
(Winner)

## Results: Part 1

It quickly became clear that the care package promotion was the better performer, with a 250% higher click-through rate than the selfcare campaign. During this experiment, the care package promotion also generated \$7,500 more in sales than the variation. While the team couldn't know with absolute certainty if people were buying care packages for their own use, it was clear that this messaging had more of a pull. So, Lush decided to dig deeper into this trend. They launched another A/B test that compared the general care package promotion with a variation focused specifically on Mother's Day.

Truthfully, the team wasn't sure how users would react. Would they gravitate to the theme of Mother's Day or would it be unintentionally upsetting for those unable to see their parents in person? Testing provided a safe framework to find out.

## Results: Part 2

The Mother's Day campaign did appear to resonate with users more, gaining a higher click-through rate than the more general care package promotion. Following the results from this test, Lush started mapping out a similar campaign that focused on Father's Day to keep the momentum going.

As Lush demonstrates, effective experimentation is continuous. In one of the first tests launched in this series, Lush saw the positive impact of messaging that focused on human connection. Leveraging this insight, they were able to develop a series of campaigns that explored this further: considering everything from how users would respond to specific holidays to whether promotional images that featured people performed better than those with just products.

## TAKEAWAY TIP

It takes users approximately 50 milliseconds to visually assess a website and decide whether to stay or leave. Lush's strategy shows a sharp awareness of this short timeframe. They weren't concentrating on refining just one or two details of their website, but how every element came together to form a holistic experience. In this way, their approach became more psychographic, asking questions related to what piqued users' interest and how this impacted the customer experience. And in doing so, Lush was able to stay in sync with its customer base during a time of rapid and widespread change.