HARNESSING SHOPPER EMPATHY TO BUILD LOYALTY
Ignite the LIMITLESS POTENTIAL of women and girls
WITH THE TWIST OF A VOWEL WE CREATED AN ATHLETIC BRAND THAT PUTS WOMEN FIRST.

'98
A Brand Is Born
Athleta is created with a vision to provide products designed to meet the unique needs of athletic women. Our first catalog offered curated activewear.

'07
Acquired By Gap Inc.

'10
First Store
Athleta opens its first store in Mill Valley, CA, launching the next phase in our growth. Today, we’re up to 200 stores, and counting.

'16
Athleta Girl Launches
We bring our mission to life by introducing the premium performance of Athleta to the next generation.

'16
Power Of She
Athleta launches our Power Of She campaign, aimed at creating a sisterhood of women and girls fueled by the core belief that alone we are strong, but united we thrive.

'18
A Force For Good
Athleta is recognized as a B Corp, which means we’ve proven that we put people and planet up there with profit.

'19
Athleta Sponsorship
Our first sponsored athlete, Allyson Felix

'20
$1B Milestone

'20
Power Of She Fund
Power of She Fund, a grant program for organizations in partnership with the Women’s Sports Foundation that reach women and girls in all life stages.

'21
Inclusive Sizing
1x-3x in 500+ styles available online and in every Athleta store nationwide
All store employees are bodySTRONG certified

'21
The Beginning of Our Athlete Sponsorships
Athleta welcomes Simone Biles, Alison Felix and The Toronto Six

'22
Expanding Beyond Athlete Partnerships
Athleta welcomes Alicia Keys
FIERCE & CAPABLE COMPETITORS

Needed to:

- elevate our brand
- differentiate our offerings
- build loyalty
OUR STRATEGY:

BRAND TRANSFORMATION

FROM

A supplier of high-quality athletic and athleisure apparel.

TO

A performance lifestyle brand with a mission of empowering a community of active women and girls.
AN AUDACIOUS GOAL

We set out to develop a truly empathetic understanding of current and prospective shoppers.
OUR APPROACH

DIGITAL ETHNOGRAPHY
Inviting target segments to share every aspect of their lives – where they find joy and challenge.

FOCUS GROUPS AND IDIS
With shoppers - and even included employees who fit those segments.

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH
To prioritize categories that are associated with well-being and begin to predict the size of the prize.
TARGETING TRUE EMPATHY

We studied artifacts in her life that revealed what’s important to her.

Without her having to tell us.
DELCED INTO HER DAY-TO-DAY

her calendar  how she eats  her closet  her playlists
Well-being is holistic concept with more emphasis on mental than physical.

Wellness is more focused on the physical.

Self-care centers on beauty, skin care, and pampering.
DUG DEEPER INTO MENTAL WELL-BEING

- Balance is a primary goal and a constant struggle
- Time – and giving herself permission to take time for herself – are the barriers to balance
- “Me time” is essential, but it isn’t always solitary – it can include community
- She always feels like she’s playing a role – employee, mom, wife, daughter, sibling
- They want to remember who they were before these roles emerged
A SEGMENT IN NEED: MOMS

1. Identified moms as the segment for whom well-being was most needed.

2. Used qualitative and quantitative research to develop detailed and empathetic personas of high-income moms.

3. Uncovered new directions for product innovation, line extensions, marketing, and branding.
TEAM ENGAGEMENT
TEAM ENGAGEMENT KEY TO EMPATHY

Created engagement activities and regular debriefs throughout the process to keep the team highly engaged - and constantly ideating and iterating.
Team feels like they’re truly making a difference where help is needed.

Not just selling to consumers – rather, empathetically serving people who trust us and see us as part of a community.
RESULTS
EXPANDING OUR ROLE AS INNOVATOR

A trusted creator of new products and experiences that empower women to pursue physical and mental well-being.

- Taking a bold stance on inclusive sizing, offering sizes up to 3x in over 500 styles, online AND in-store
- Creating the brand’s first digital community
NEW EXPERIENCES

A digital-first community dedicated to helping women on their wellbeing journey – across all life stages.

RESULTS:

10X: time spent on AthletaWell platform vs. average Athleta.com visitor

40% MoM member growth

More than 2M pageviews and 1M unique visitors since launch in summer 2021
PRODUCT EVOLUTION

Understanding our customers’ needs for versatile, comfortable clothing and becoming her go-to destination for performance lifestyle apparel.
Celebrities and experts willing to show that we all need empathy, understanding, and support.

The approach to partnership is holistic, based on what we learned about a holistic definition of well being: a focus on their whole selves: not just who they are on the track, on the stage or on the mat.
OUR TEAM

More engaged than ever – doing work they believe in
It’s true: we design, produce and sell exceptional athletic gear.

But our brand is much more.

Making measurable strides to becoming a true lifestyle brand that supports and empowers women.
Evolving our use of empathetic understanding to grow the brand, drive loyalty, and better support the women we serve.

WHAT’S NEXT...
LESSONS LEARNED FOR INSIGHTS PROFESSIONALS

- To create true customer empathy, seek to understand them as humans - not just shoppers
- Be diligent about team engagement
- Iterate as you go
- Combine qual and quant methods to first inspire - then validate
THANK YOU!