



The  
global  
retail  
agency

# Big Store Energy.

JD Sports redefines  
flagship openings.



# Introduction.

JD Sports has just unveiled its biggest store in the world, a retail landmark at Manchester's Trafford Centre. Spanning a staggering 41,000 square feet with a 92 metre frontage, the space is more than triple the size of its previous unit and makes a bold statement about the future of sport fashion retail.

The launch wasn't just about scale. It was a masterclass in cultural relevance and experiential strategy. From an appearance by global icon Usain Bolt, to interactive challenges and pop-up grooming stations, to Beta Squad co-hosting the event and sneaker customisation experiences, JD turned a store opening into a full weekend festival for the TikTok generation.

But beyond the hype, the Trafford Centre flagship also delivers a smart fusion of design, digital innovation, service integration and brand storytelling, creating a blueprint for what next generation retail can look like.

So what can we as a retail agency, and as brands and retailers, learn from this record breaking, crowd pulling, experience driven flagship?

Here are five standout insights that define this flagship's impact.





# 1. Hype & Hero-Led Activation

JD knows the value of cultural capital. Bringing in Usain Bolt created instant credibility and newsworthy buzz. Featuring Beta Squad tapped directly into youth entertainment culture, bridging sport and social influence in a way few brands can replicate. These headline moments brought thousands to the launch and generated widespread digital engagement.



Image courtesy of Forbes.com

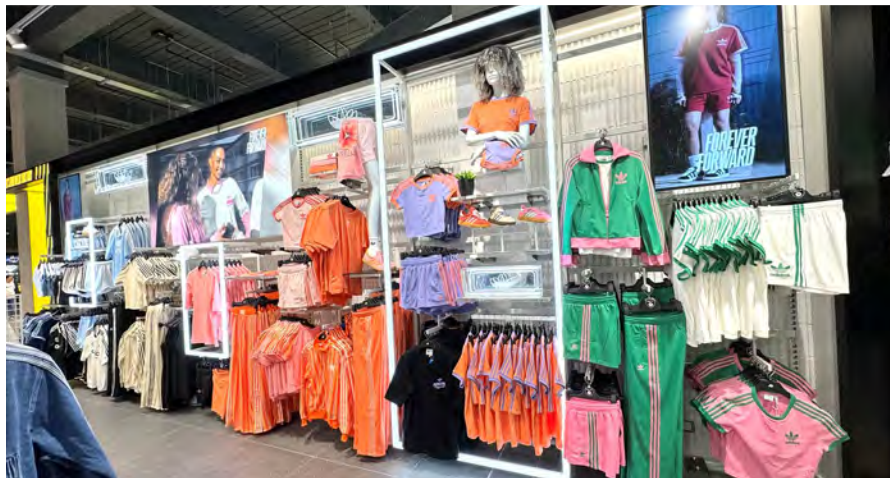


Images courtesy of Jason Roberts / Manchester Evening News



# 2 Immersive Brand Zones

By giving brands like Nike, Adidas Originals, PUMA, and Unlike Humans their own dedicated takeover spaces, JD creates natural points of discovery and repeat visitation. The layout allows flexibility for seasonal rotations and campaign-led storytelling, while community-centric integrations like the Manchester Originals Market help ground the store in local relevance.





# 3 Experiential Differentiation

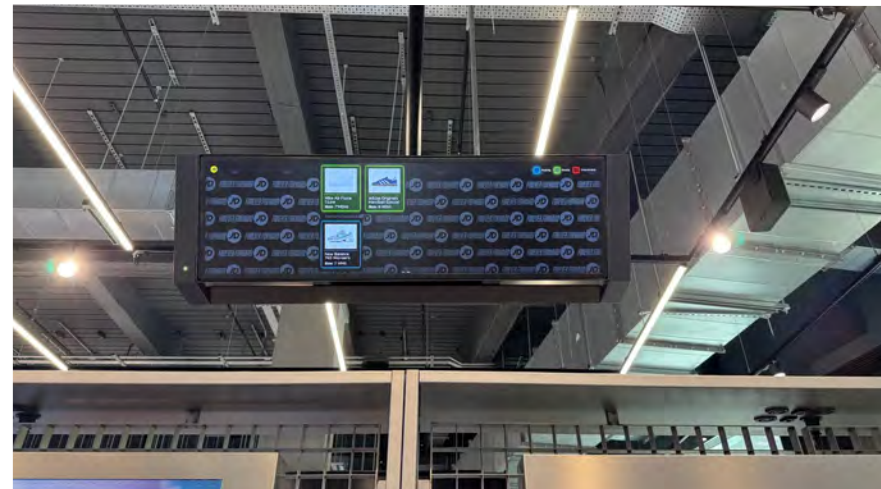
JD transformed the store opening into a full-scale live experience. From sneaker customisation and product giveaways to ice cream stalls, barbers and sprint challenges, the brand created a sense of occasion that extended beyond shopping. These activations encouraged longer dwell time, deeper interaction, and greater emotional connection with the space.





# 4 • Omnichannel Physical Design

The design of the store itself is bold and immersive. The 92 metre frontage commands attention and invites curiosity. Inside, a spacious layout supports customer flow while segmented zones allow for brand-specific storytelling. A mix of high-spec materials, integrated digital touchpoints and engaging visual merchandising elevates the in-store journey.





# 5 Experience Driven Upsell

JD has turned added-value services into commercial moments. A barber experience through Adidas Originals and sneaker cleaning from Crep Protect are not just free extras—they are tools for differentiation and upsell. These touchpoints create reasons to return and deepen brand affinity.



# Key Takeaways.

- 1. Insight is Everything: Know Your Customer, Then Design for Them**  
JD's Trafford launch proves that success starts with deep audience understanding. It's not just about reaching Gen Z and Millennials—it's about knowing what excites them. Brands that take time to understand motivations, behaviours and cultural triggers can design experiences that feel personal, social and worth showing up for.
- 2. Make Your Store Worth the Visit**  
In a time where physical retail competes with convenience and speed, JD has shown how to make a store irresistible. Think beyond transactions. Design spaces that invite people to linger, engage, share and return whether through services, entertainment or customisation.
- 3. Create Moments, Not Just Messages**  
Hero-led activations, from celebrity appearances to interactive games, turn a store into a content engine. Brands should look at ways to create real-world moments that also fuel digital sharing. The result is emotional engagement and free amplification.
- 4. Flex Your Format to Keep Things Fresh**  
JD's brand zones aren't just aesthetic—they're strategic. They allow the store to evolve with campaigns, trends and partnerships. Consider how flexibility in design and display can allow your retail environment to stay responsive and relevant.
- 5. Think Like a Lifestyle Brand, Not Just a Product Seller**  
Adding sneaker care, grooming, food and local market tie-ins helps JD position itself as a lifestyle destination. Retailers should look for similar opportunities to integrate meaningful services that reflect their audience's lifestyle and values.
- 6. Integrate Seamlessly Across Channels**  
From event teasers and influencer content to data-driven product recommendations, JD connects physical and digital in a way that feels natural. Don't separate your online and offline strategies—use each to strengthen the other.



# Other noteworthy displays.

















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