![aytm logo]

When the click meets the aisle

**UNDERSTANDING CHANNEL SYNERGY IN
A TRADITIONALLY IN-STORE CATEGORY**

A case study on how American Greetings leverages category
intelligence to better understand online shopper behavior.

MARCH 2026

AMERICAN GREETINGS

— 1 —

The role of ecommerce in a traditionally in-store category: Greeting cards

Establish current behavior and interest

— 2 —

Two shopping environments, two behavioral patterns

Aisle and digital shelf differences

— 3 —

What drives decision in each environment

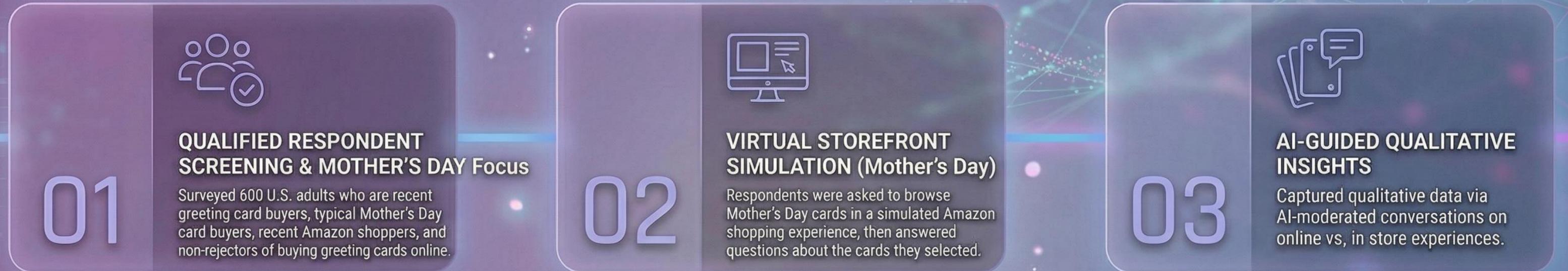**Attention shifts and why it matters**

— 4 —

Designing for the aisle and the click

Strategic implications for channel synergy

How We Studied Online Card Shopping

Our multi-method approach combined a quantitative survey with qualitative AI-moderated insights.

01 QUALIFIED RESPONDENT SCREENING & MOTHER'S DAY Focus

Surveyed 600 U.S. adults who are recent greeting card buyers, typical Mother's Day card buyers, recent Amazon shoppers, and non-rejectors of buying greeting cards online.

02 VIRTUAL STOREFRONT SIMULATION (Mother's Day)

Respondents were asked to browse Mother's Day cards in a simulated Amazon shopping experience, then answered questions about the cards they selected.

03 AI-GUIDED QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS

Captured qualitative data via AI-moderated conversations on online vs, in store experiences.

600

TOTAL RESPONDENTS
(N=600)

100%

44 CARDS TESTED ACROSS 5+ BRANDS

Including American Grestings, Hallinark, Papyrus, Decorably, and others.

95%

95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL

Analysis at 95% confidence level.

KEY CRITERIA
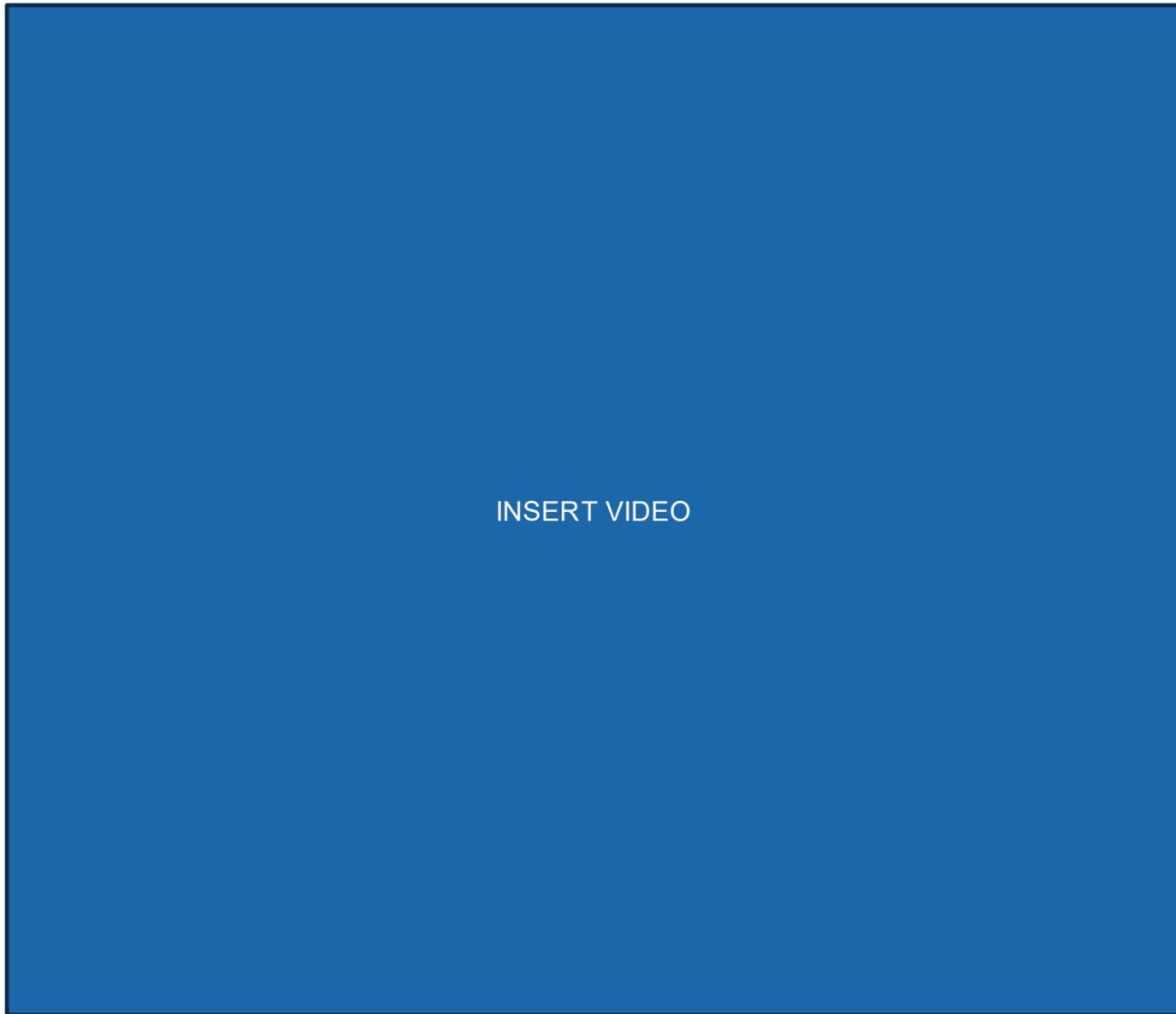
Non-rejectors of buying cards online
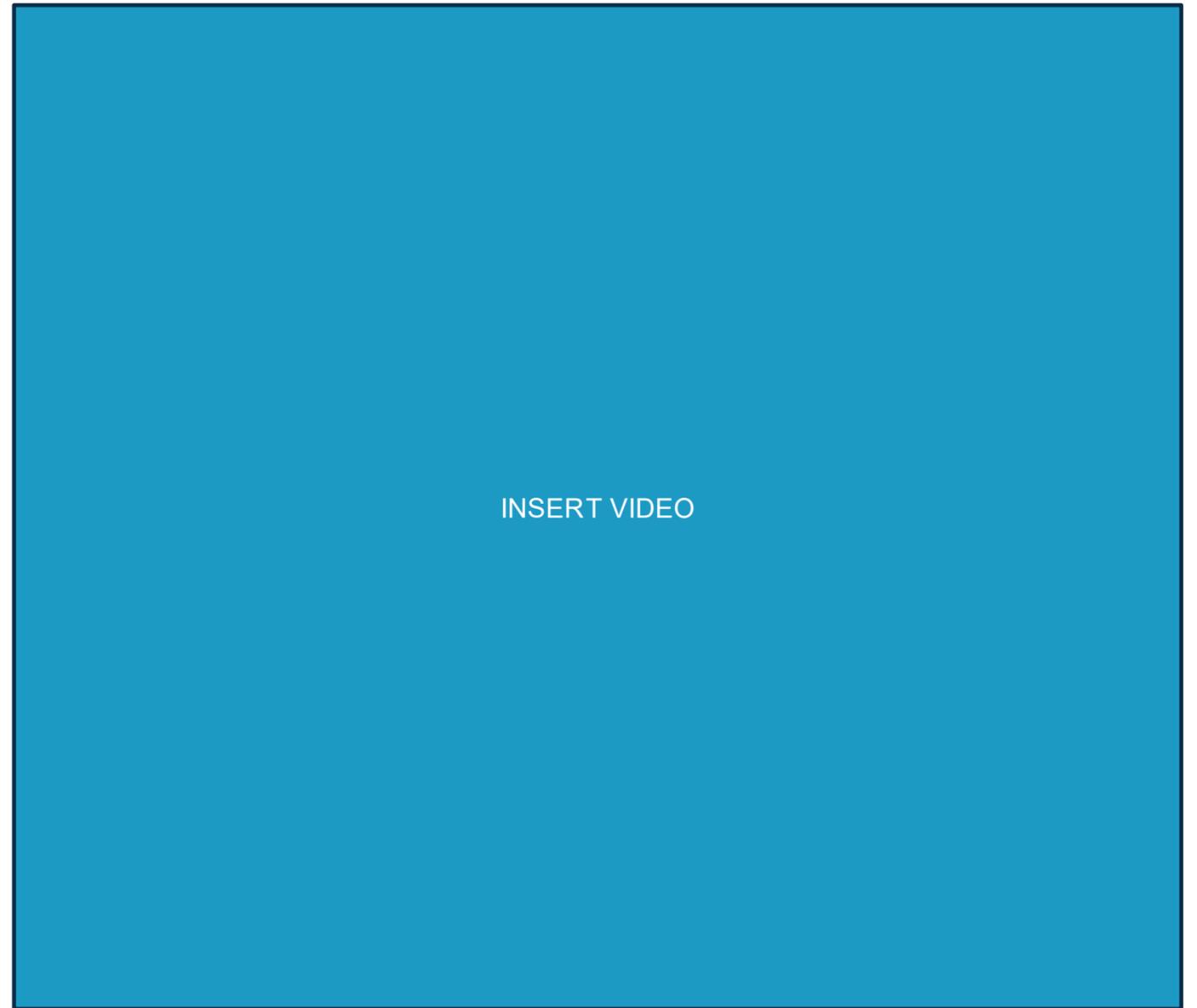
Ecommerce shopping simulation

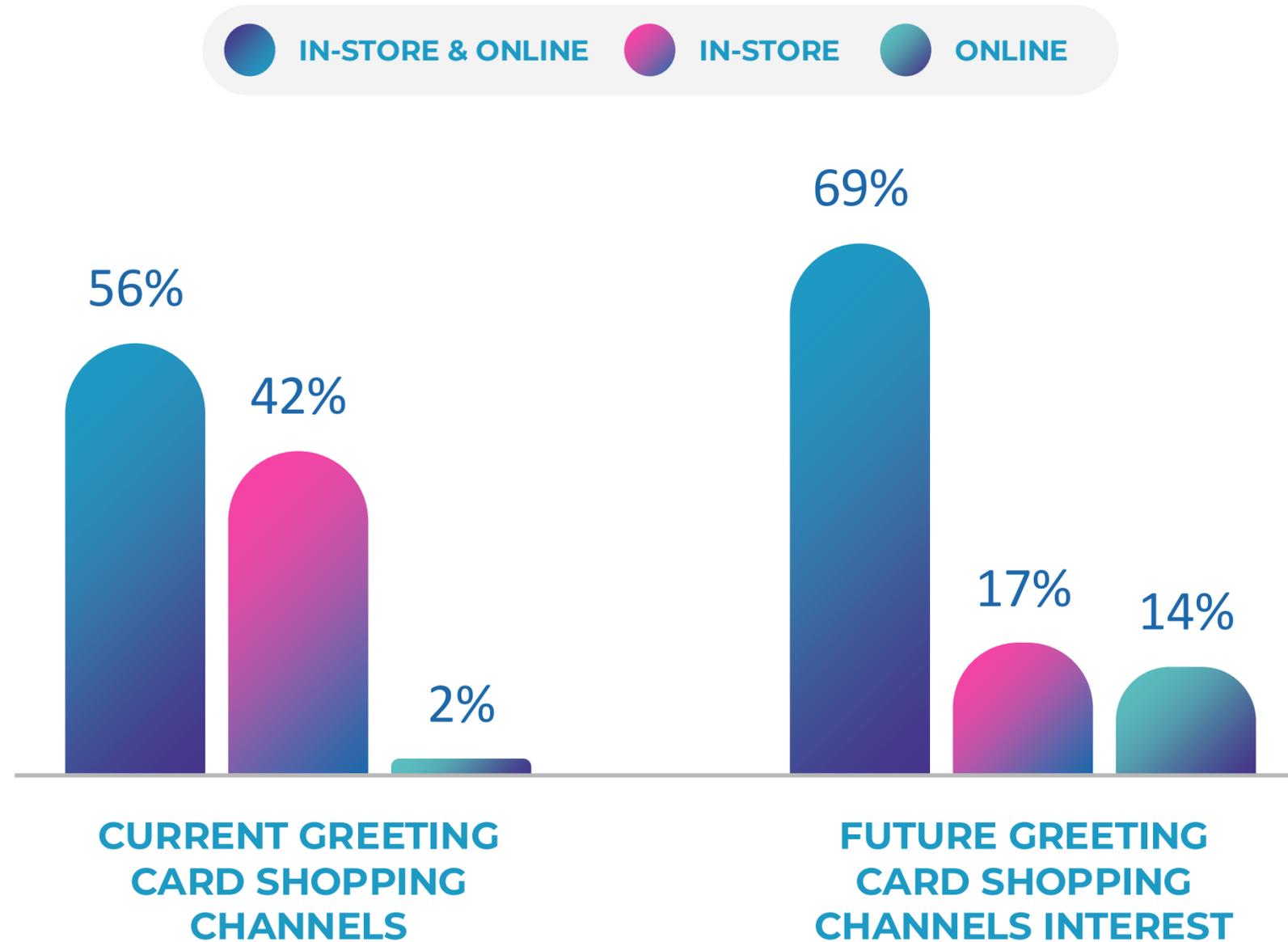AI captured insights
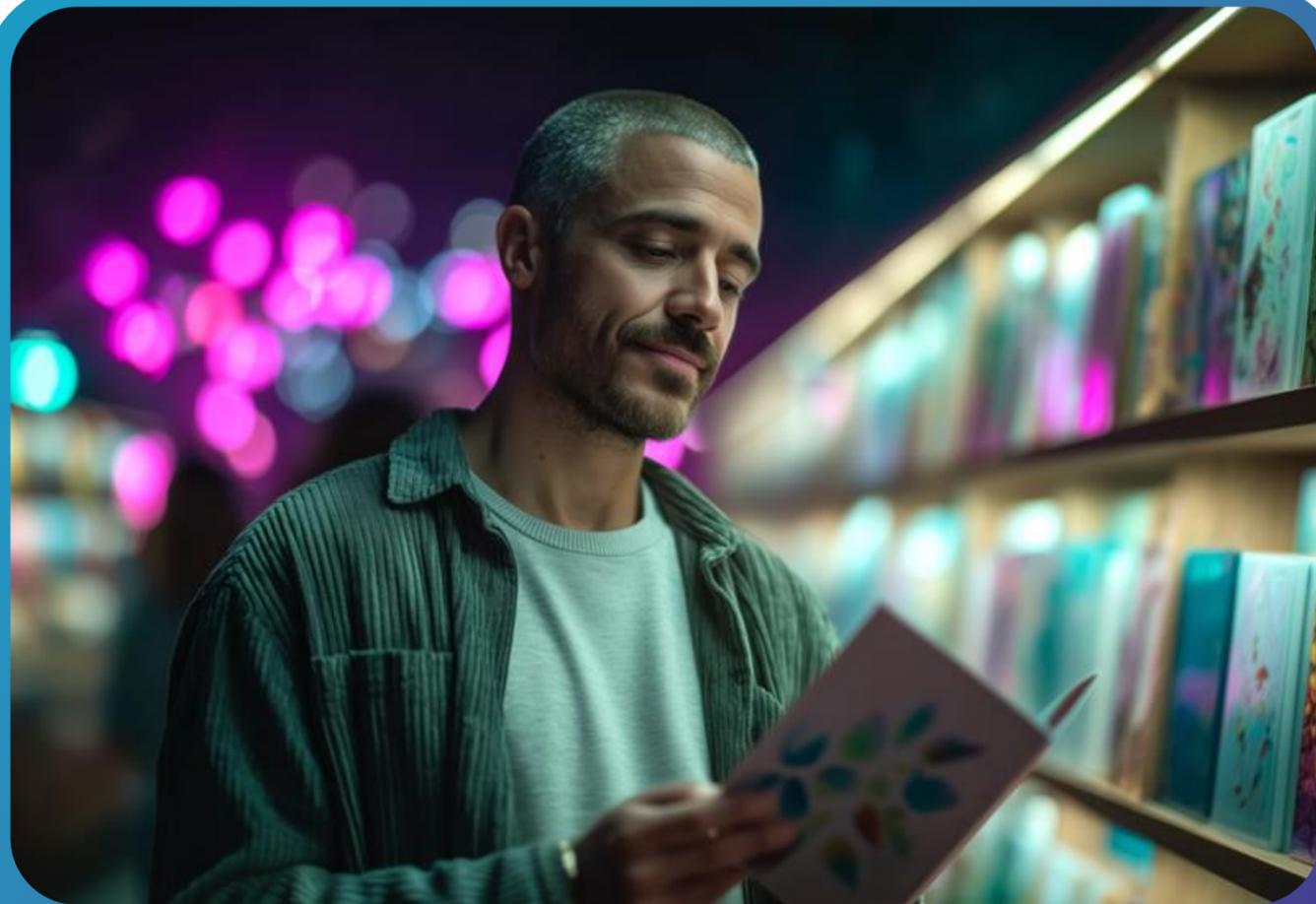
Ecommerce Simulation

Conversation AI

INSERT VIDEO

INSERT VIDEO

Key Learnings

Greeting card shoppers are expanding into online shopping while maintaining in-store shopping.

IN-STORE & ONLINE   **IN-STORE**   **ONLINE**

56%

42%

2%

69%

17%

14%

CURRENT GREETING CARD SHOPPING CHANNELS

FUTURE GREETING CARD SHOPPING CHANNELS INTEREST

6+ minutes in card aisle

5+ cards picked up before purchase decision

In-store greeting card shopping is tactile, personal, and discovery-driven

WHAT IN-STORE DELIVERS...

- A more personal, meaningful shopping experience
- The ability to physically touch and assess card quality
- Easy navigation and purchase
- A broad, browsable assortment
- Clear visibility of the message inside the card
- Immediate availability for last-minute occasions

"Selecting card at a physical store is more personal. I can take my time and read through all the messages and try and find out which card is the best. It's different when you can hold the card in your hand."

Online shopping prioritizes speed, control, and convenience over tactile experience.

WHAT ECOMMERCE DELIVERS...

- A fast, time-saving purchase process
- Seamless, convenient navigation
- Easy browsing across a broad assortment
- Clear and transparent pricing
- A low-pressure shopping experience
- Different/wider selection

"It's faster looking online. And it's easier to know the price of each card. I don't have to open the card to read the message online."
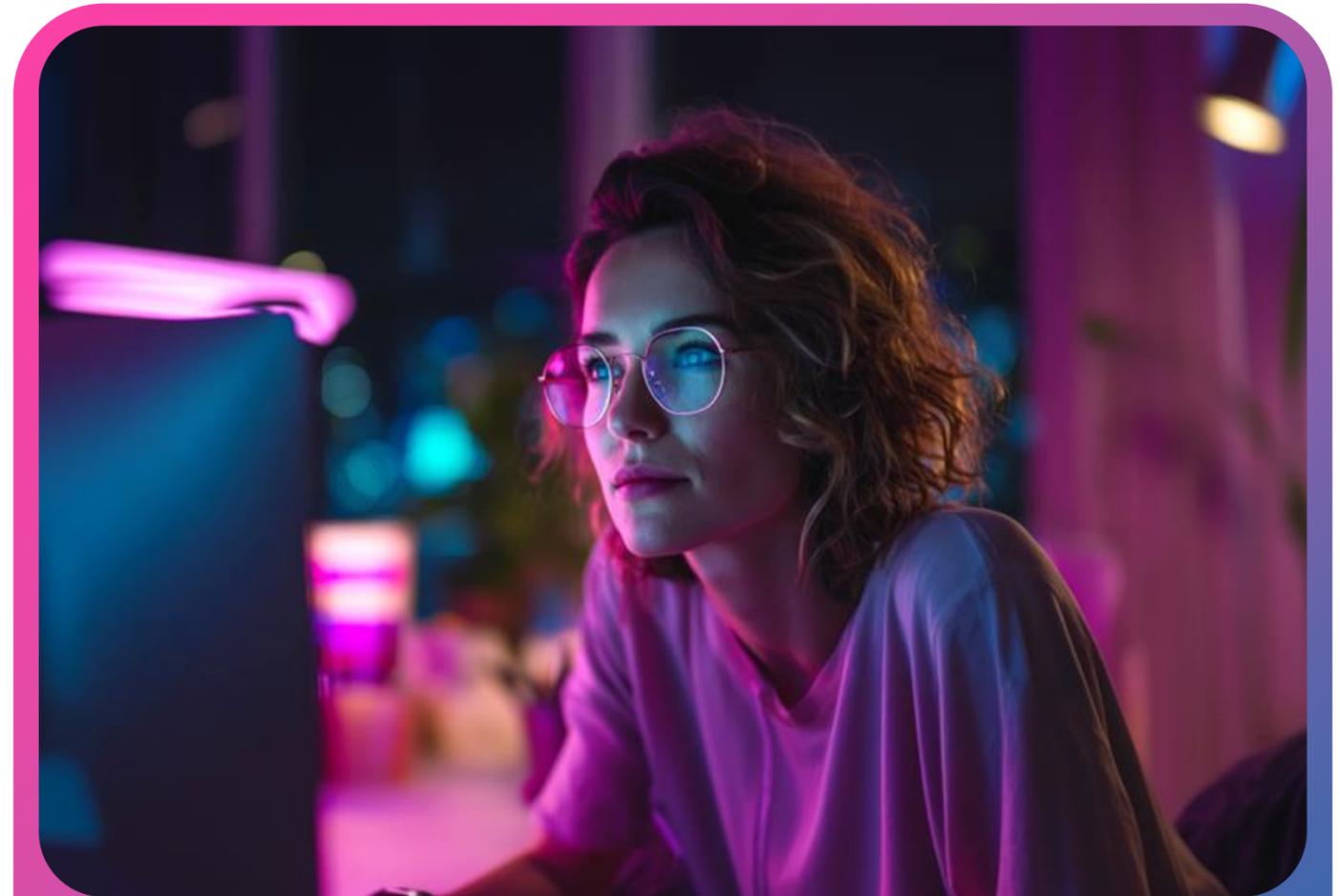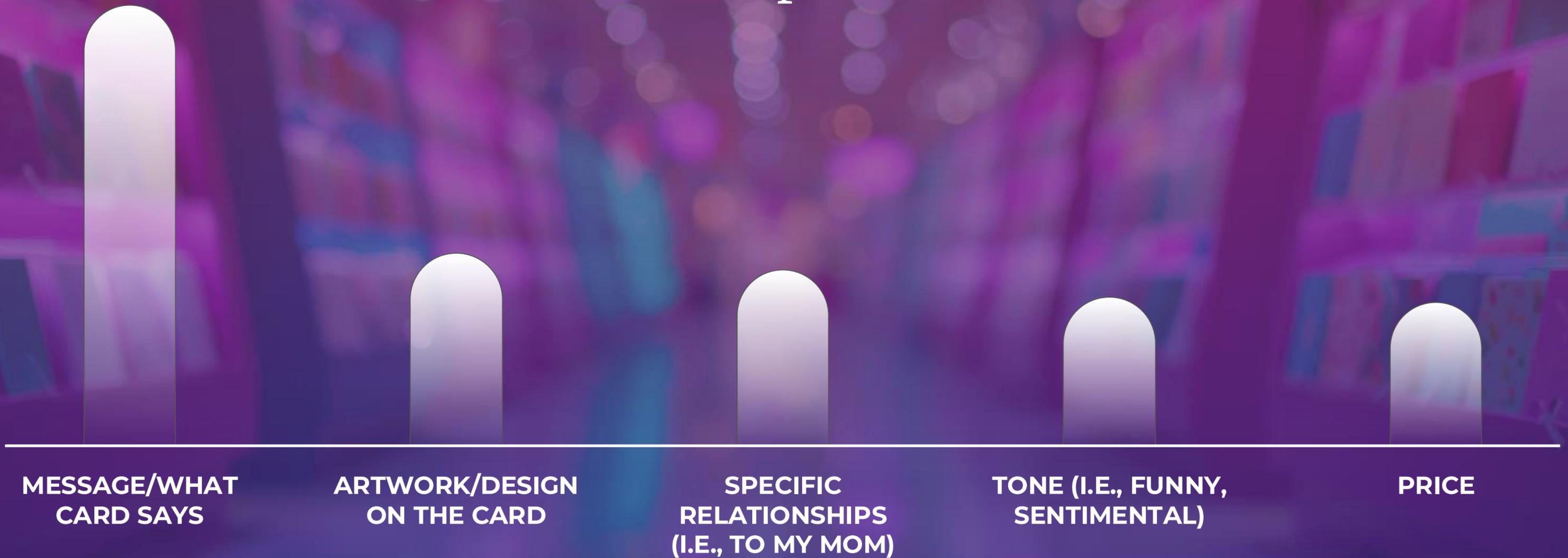

2–5 minutes in online exercise

2–3 cards picked up before purchase decision

What the card says is the primary driver of in-store purchase decision.

MESSAGE/WHAT CARD SAYS

ARTWORK/DESIGN ON THE CARD

SPECIFIC RELATIONSHIPS (I.E., TO MY MOM)

TONE (I.E., FUNNY, SENTIMENTAL)

PRICE

Our ecommerce simulation reveals a clear shift in decision dynamics, elevating artwork and design as a critical driver online.

ONLINE   **IN-STORE**

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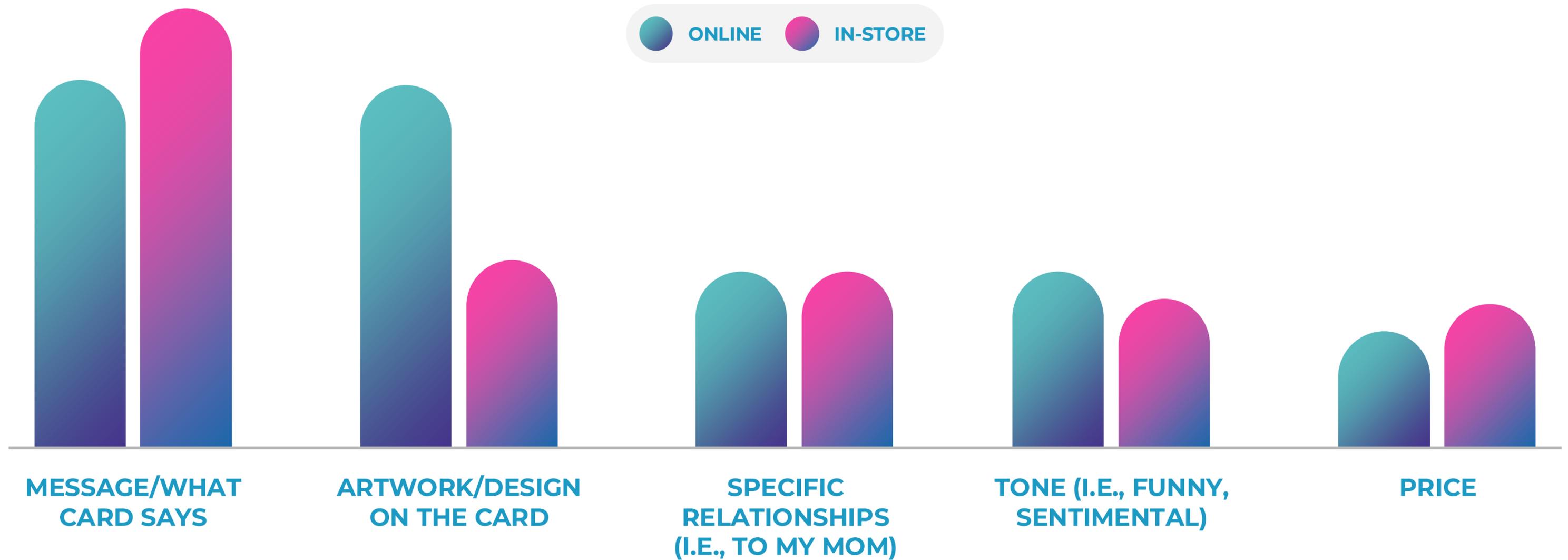
Online enhances the category rather than replaces it, so each channel must be optimized for its unique strengths.

Online

KEY LEARNINGS

- Meaningful but secondary participation
- Fast, visually filtered experience
- Shorter time; fewer clicks before decision
- Artwork earn attention before message

STRATEGY

- Lead with strong visual design
- Surface message clearly and quickly
- Optimize for speed and convenience

In-store

KEY LEARNINGS

- Primary purchase environment
- Immersive, tactile browsing
- Longer time in aisle; multiple cards handled
- Message tone, relationship guide decision

STRATEGY

- Preserve emotional and tactile discovery
- Organize by message and relationship
- Support browsing and comparison

Online Card Shopping: Complement, Not Competitor

Insights from our survey on shopper behavior and the potential for omnichannel experiences.

Current Greeting Card Shopping Channel

- Always in store — 42%
- Mix of in store & online — 57%
- Always online — 2%

Online Greeting Card Purchase Interest

- Both online & in store — 69%
- Not interested in online — 17%
- Online only (replacing in store) — 14%

What Drives the Purchase
(In-Store Data)

- Message/what card says
- Artwork/design on the card
- Specifies relationship
- Tone
- Price

Reason for Selecting in Ecommerce
(Online Purchase Factors)

- Message/wording on card
- Artwork/design on the card
- Quality
- Specifies relationship
- Tone
- Price

Questions?