

January 2024

10 Top Brands to Watch in 2024

This report analyzes the latest location intelligence data to identify ten brands poised to succeed in 2024.

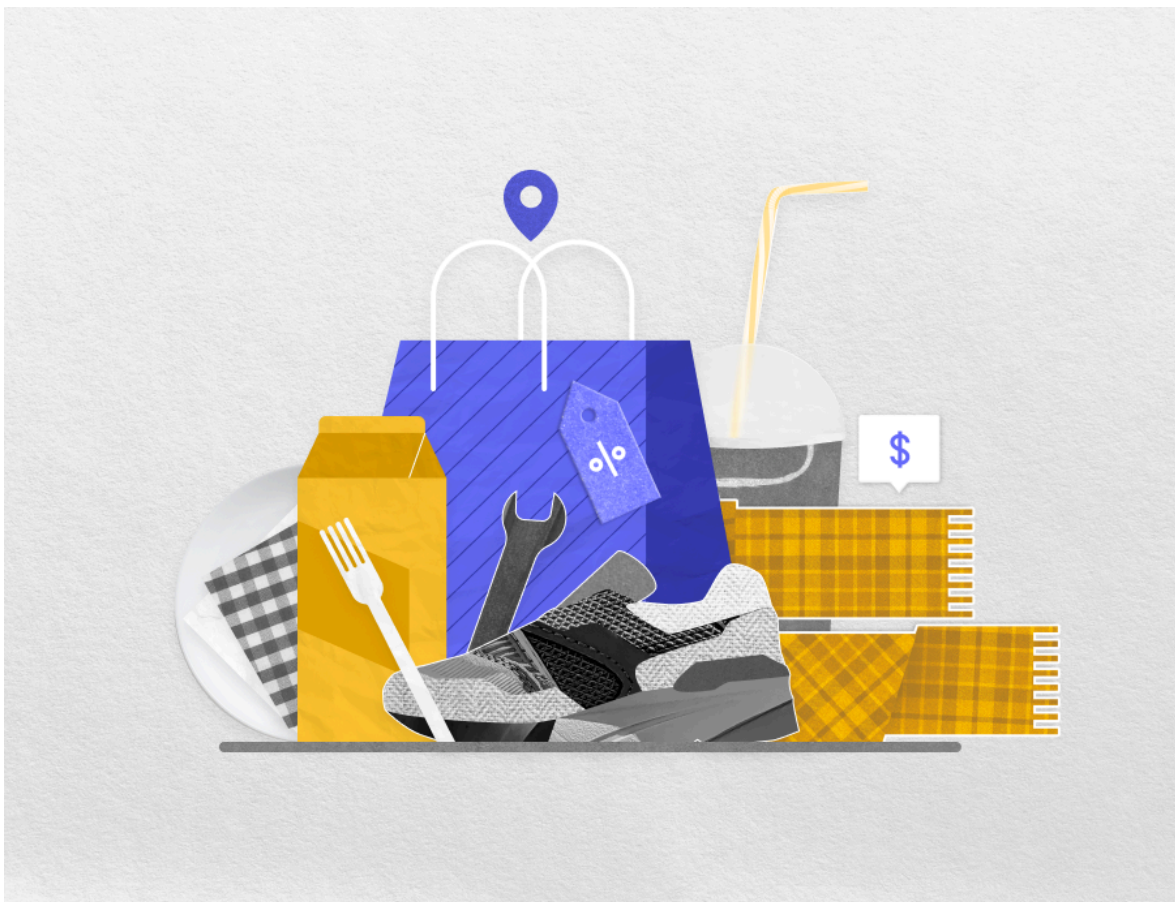


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The State Of Retail

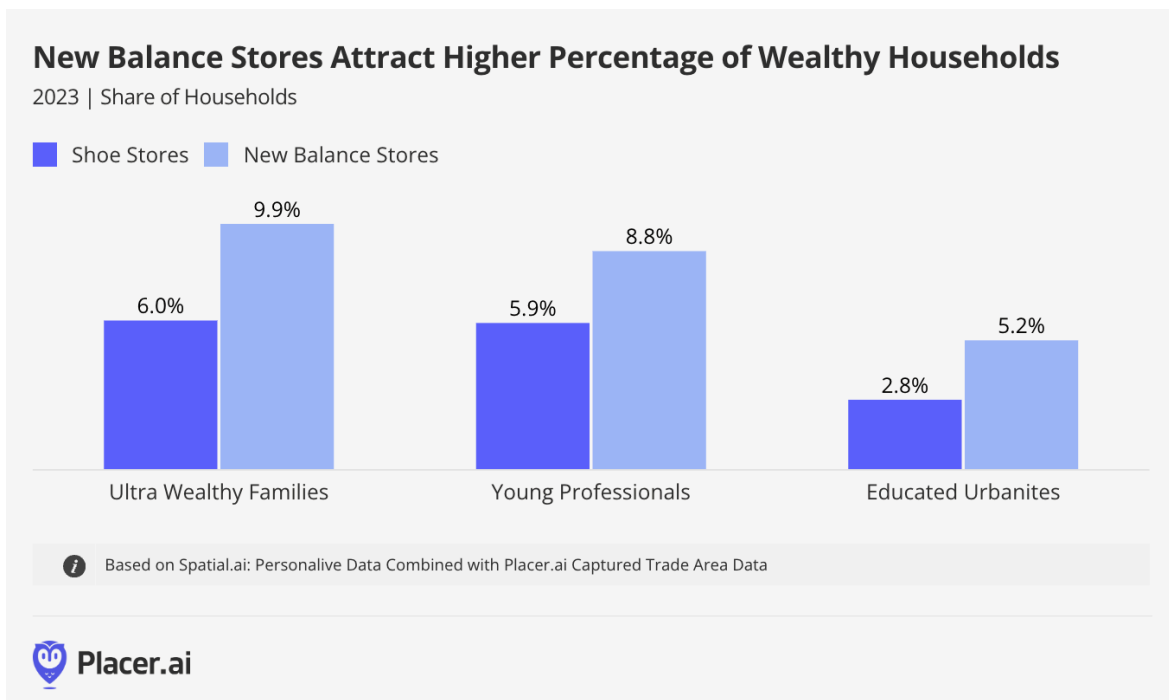
New year, new retail opportunities. And though 2023 is firmly in the rearview mirror, the economic headwinds that characterized much of the year have yet to fully dissipate. But every challenge also brings with it new opportunities, and many retailers are adapting to meet their customers' changing wants and needs.

This white paper analyzes location intelligence for 10 brands poised to succeed in 2024. Some, like low-cost apparel and home furnishing stores, are benefitting from consumer trade-down. Others are expanding into [rural or suburban areas](#) to meet customers where they are. Read on for some of 2024's retail winners.

1. New Balance: From Dad To Dapper

Until around four years ago, New Balance sneakers were commonly seen on the feet of suburban dads – not exactly a recipe for high fashion. But all that began to change in 2019 when the company began collaborating with [Teddy Santis](#), who eventually became New Balance’s [creative director](#). Since then, the brand’s popularity has surged among [Gen Z and X](#) and is now one of the [fastest-growing](#) sneaker companies in the industry, despite the [increasing competition](#) in sneaker space. In 2023, foot traffic to New Balance stores grew 3.3% year-over-year (YoY) and the brand has firmly established itself as ultimate retro cool.

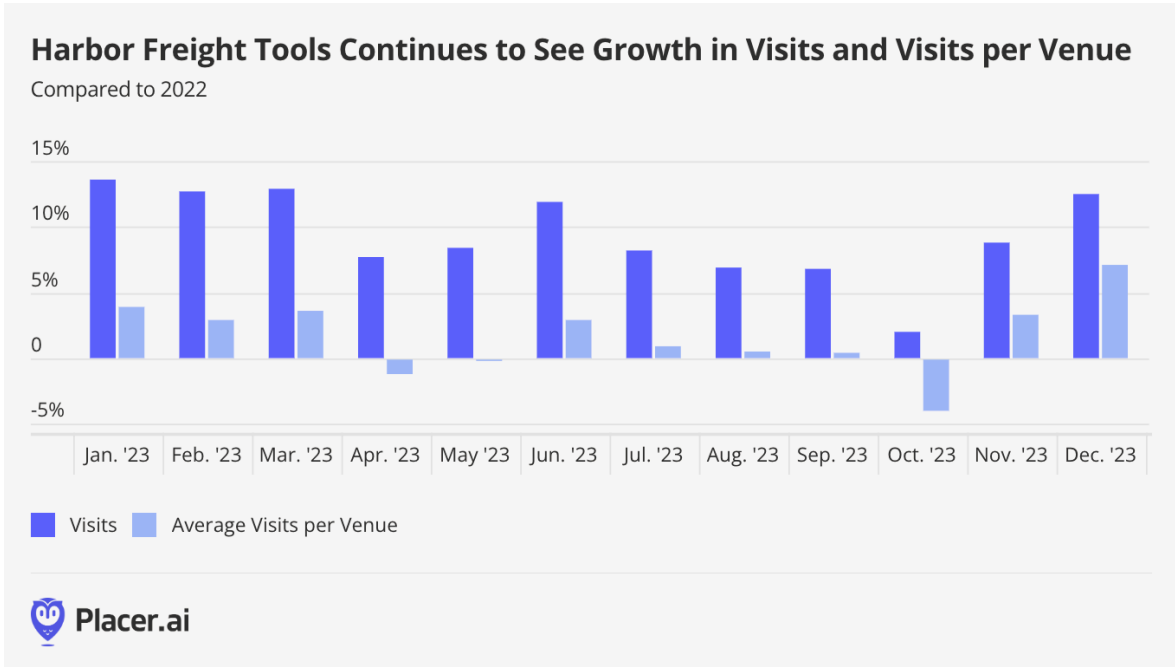
Diving into the demographics of New Balance stores’ [captured market trade area](#) reveals the success of the chain’s rebranding. In 2023, New Balance’s trade area included larger shares of “Ultra Wealthy Families,” “Young Professionals,” and “Educated Urbanites” than the average shoe store’s trade area – highlighting New Balance’s successful reinvention as a brand for the young and hip.



2. Harbor Freight Tools: A Wide Reach

The home improvement space is dominated by Lowe’s and Home Depot – but Harbor Freight Tools is quickly making a name for itself as a go-to [destination](#) for affordable tools and supplies.

Over the past few years, Harbor Freight Tools has [expanded](#) rapidly, with many of its new stores opening in [smaller](#) towns and cities. And the expansion appears to be paying off, with visits up YoY during every month of 2023. And although the chain is now operating with a significantly larger store fleet, the average number of visits per venue has generally increased – indicating that the company is expanding into markets where it is meeting a ready demand.

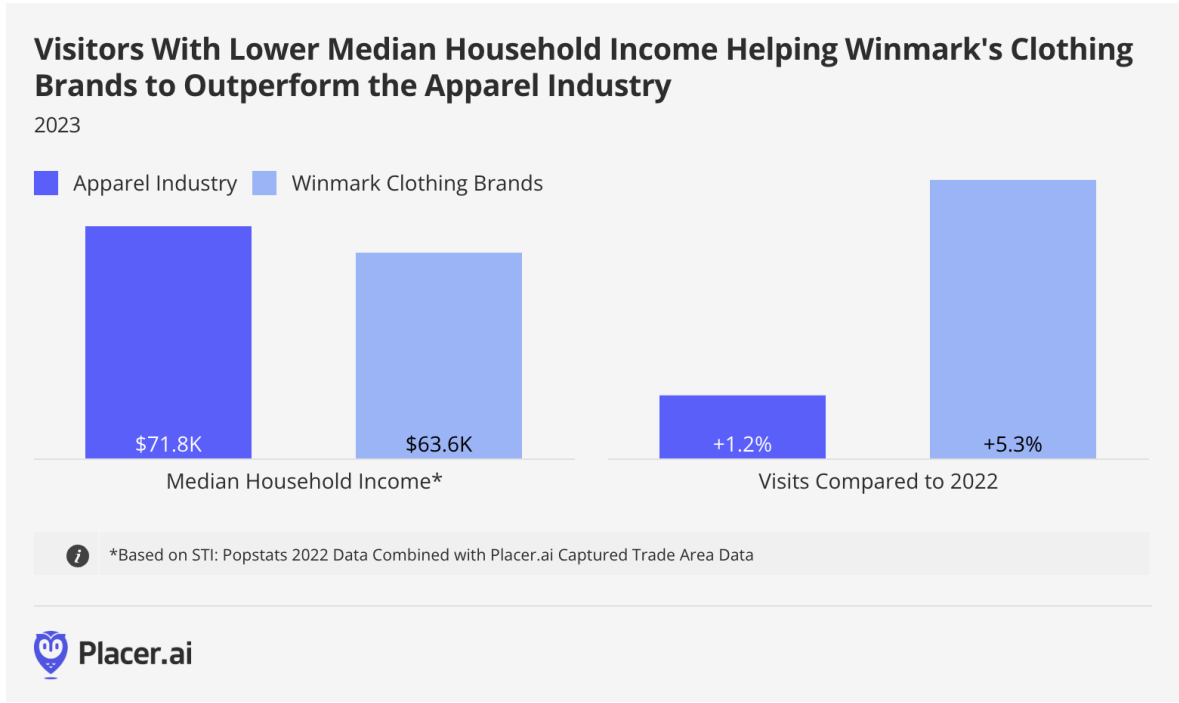


3. Winmark: Poppin’ Tags

Over a decade after Mackelmore dropped his smash hit “Thrift Shop” in [2012](#), second-hand stores are still enjoying their time in the limelight. Shoppers, driven by a desire to [reduce waste](#), find unique styles, and to save a few dollars at the till, continue to [flock](#) to thrift stores. And Winmark Corporation, which operates five

secondhand goods chains – including apparel brands [Plato's Closet](#) (young adult clothes), [Once Upon a Child](#) (children's clothes and toys), and Style Encore (women's clothing) – has benefited from the strong demand. Visits to the three Winmark clothing banners increased an average of 5.3% YoY in 2023.

The median household income (HHI) in the trade areas of Winmark's apparel chains tends to be lower than the median HHI in the wider apparel category – so budget-conscious consumers are driving at least some of the company's growth. With more consumers [looking for ways](#) to cut back on spending in 2024, the demand for second-hand clothes is expected to [grow](#) even further – and Winmark is likely to continue reaping the benefits.

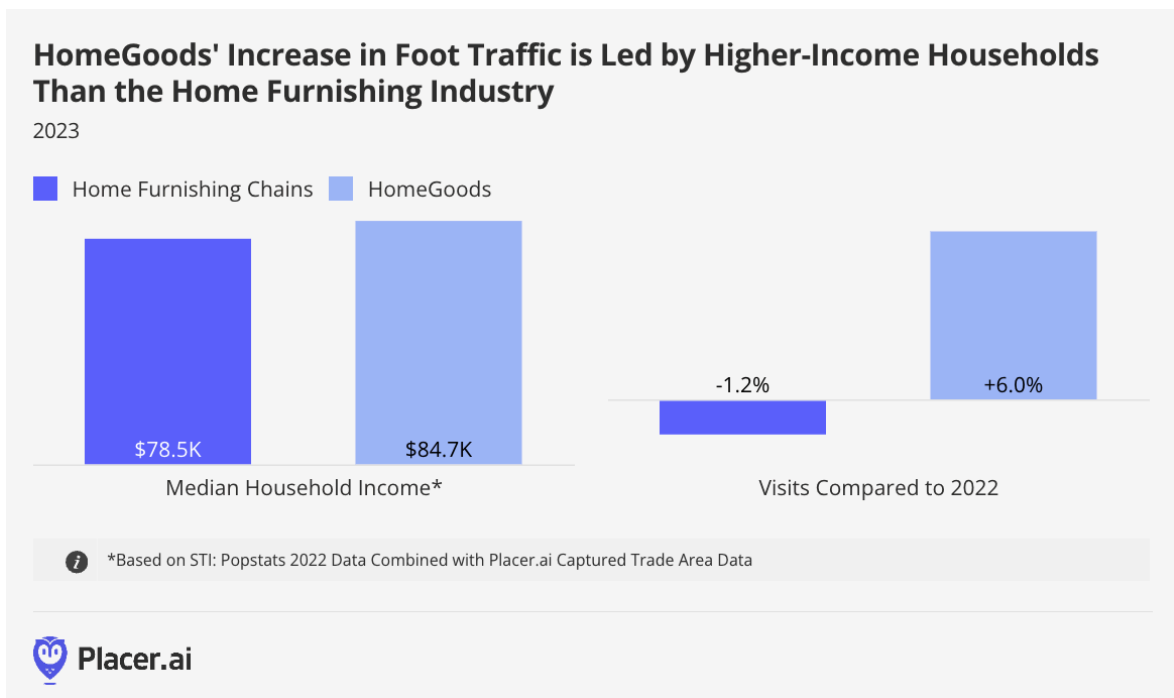


4. HomeGoods: Hunting For Deals

HomeGoods, a [treasure hunter's](#) dream, is the discount home furnishing retailer owned by off-price retail giant [TJX Companies](#). The chain, which operates [over 900](#)

brick-and-mortar stores, [recently closed](#) its e-commerce platform to focus on its physical locations – where foot traffic grew 6.0% between 2023 and 2022.

HomeGoods carries kitchen and home decor items along with furniture, and may be benefiting from the relative strength of the [houseware segment](#), driven in part by an increase in [at-home entertainment](#). And in a surprising twist, this low-cost retailer attracts more affluent visitors than visitors to the home furnishing segment overall. The median household income (HHI) in HomeGoods' trade area stood at \$84.7K/year compared to a \$78.5K median HHI in the trade area of the average home furnishing chain. As economic uncertainty and the [resumption](#) of student loan payments impact consumers, wealthier shoppers seeking a [budget-friendly](#) home refresh are likely to continue choosing HomeGoods over pricier alternatives.

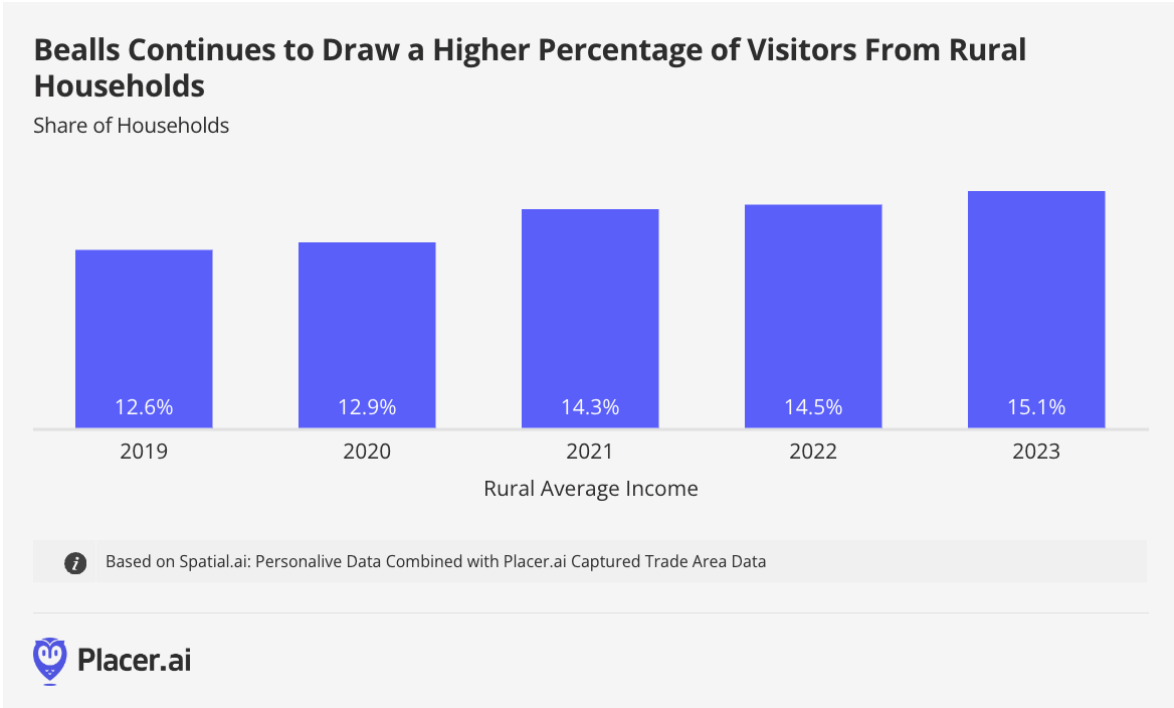


5. Bealls: Rural Expansion

Florida-based Bealls, Inc., which got its start as a small town five-and-dime in [1915](#) in Bradenton, Florida, now operates over [600 stores](#) across the country. The company,

which saw an impressive 9.0% YoY increase in visits in 2023, recently [consolidated](#) its two largest banners – Burkes Outlet and Bealls Outlet – under the Bealls name.

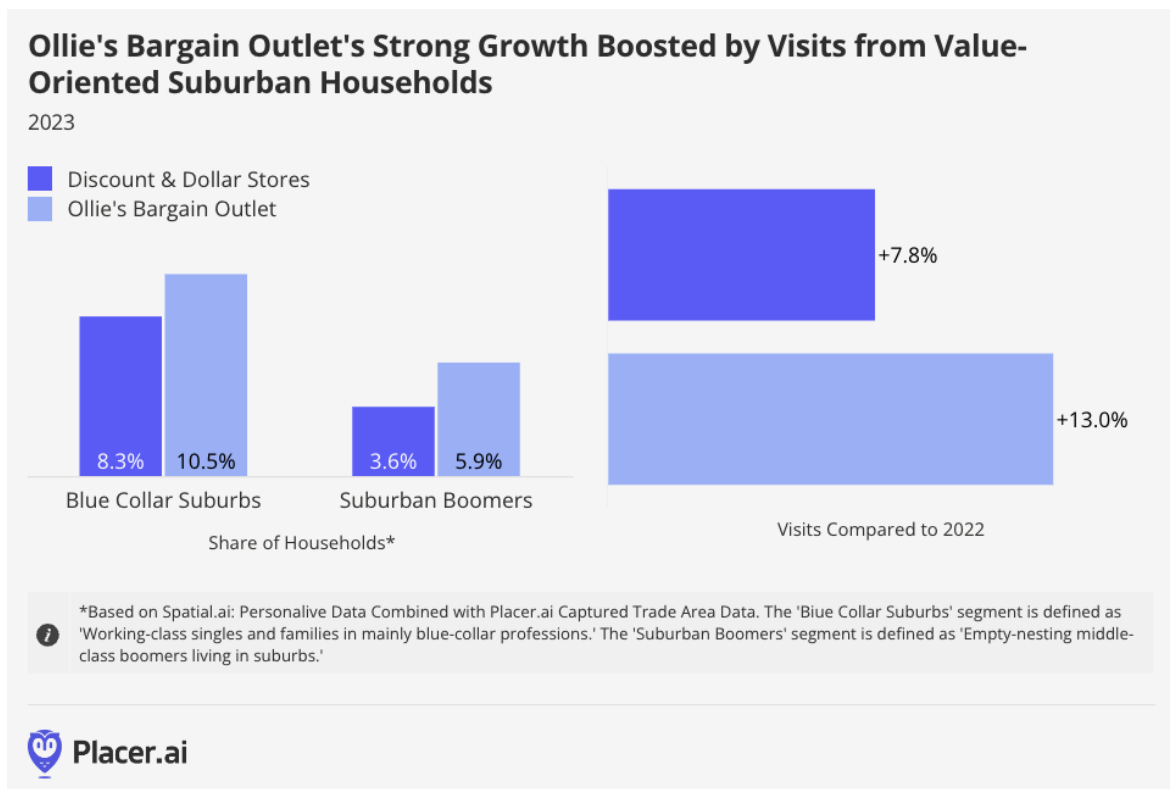
One reason for Bealls’ success could be its appeal to rural consumers. Over the past five years, the share of households falling into Spatial.ai: PersonaLive’s “Rural Average Income” segment has steadily increased, growing from 12.6% in 2019 to 15.1% in 2023. With rural shoppers continuing to [command](#) ever-more [attention](#) from retailers, the increase in visits from this segment bodes well for Bealls in 2024.



6. Ollie’s Bargain Outlet: Built To Last

Ollie’s Bargain Outlet was [built](#) for this economy. The chain saw a 13.0% YoY increase in visits in 2023, thanks in part to its popularity among a wide array of [budget-conscious consumers](#). Ollie’s has found success with [rural shoppers](#) while maintaining its appeal among value-oriented suburban segments – and the chain’s diverse audience base seems to be setting it apart from other discount retailers.

A closer look at the chain's captured market data, layered with the [Spatial.ai: Personalive](#) dataset, reveals that Ollie's trade area includes larger shares of the "Blue Collar Suburbs" and "Suburban Boomer" segments when compared to the wider Discount & Dollar Stores category. As the chain plots its [expansion](#), focusing on suburban and rural areas may help Ollie's meet its customers where they are.

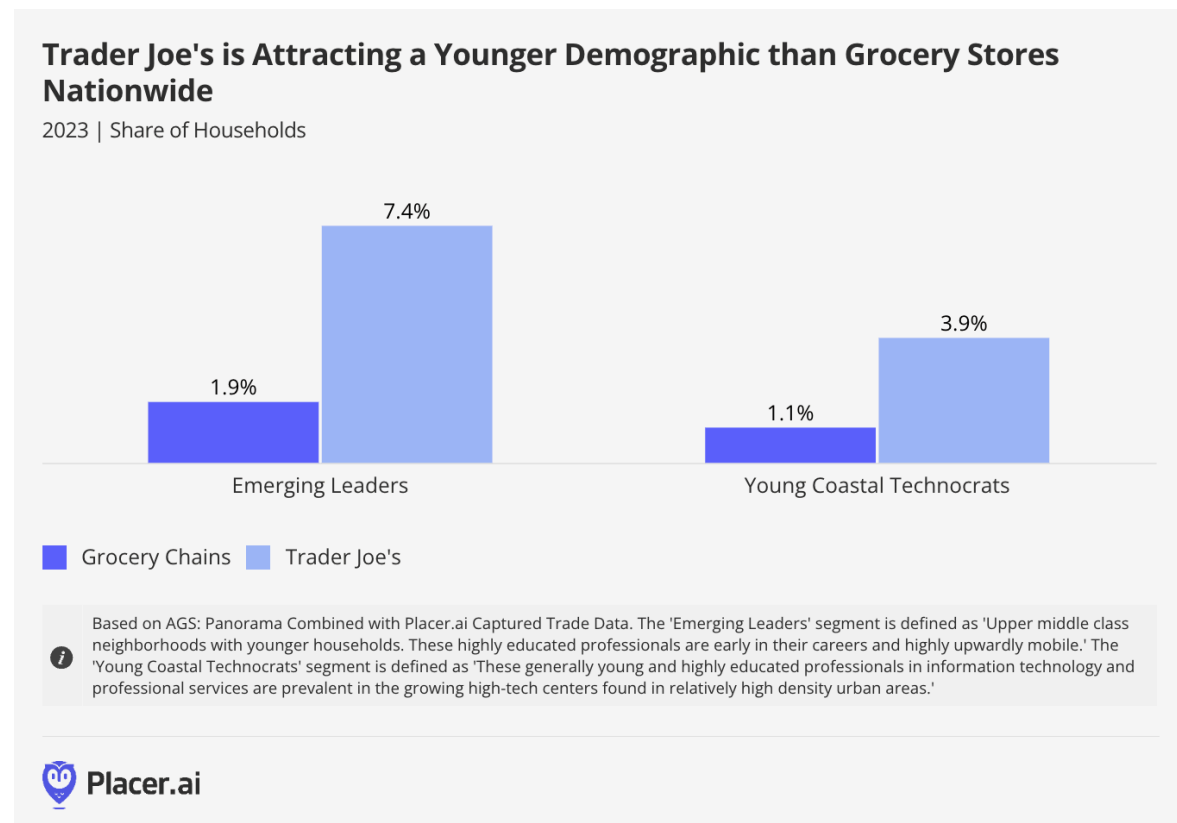


7. Trader Joe's: Young And Hungry

Trader Joe's has managed to do what few stores can. The company [does not invest](#) in marketing, has no online shopping options, and loyalty programs? Forget about it. But despite this unusual approach to running a business, the [California native](#) has enjoyed consistent success over the years, with a 12.4% YoY increase in visits in 2023.

Trader Joe's is particularly popular among younger shoppers, perhaps thanks to the company's focus on [sustainability](#) and social responsibility – as well as its [famously](#)

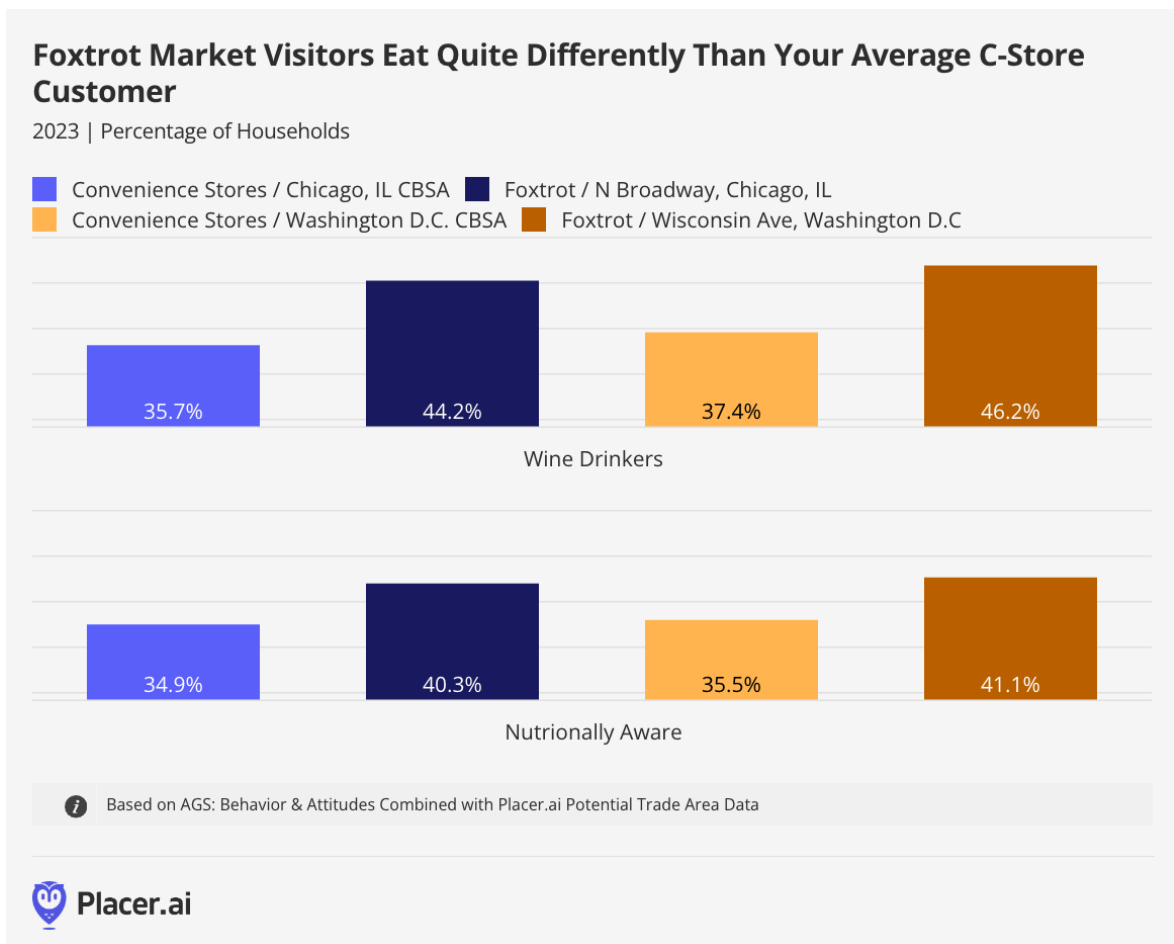
[low prices](#). Analyzing the chain's trade area using the [AGS: Panorama](#) dataset reveals that Trader Joe's attracts more "Emerging Leaders" and "Young Coastal Technocrats" (segments that describe highly educated young professionals) than the average grocery chain. With [Gen Z](#) particularly concerned about putting [their money](#) where their mouth is, Trader Joe's is likely to sustain its momentum in 2024 and beyond.



8. Foxtrot Market: The C-Store Connoisseur

[Convenience stores](#) are growing up and evolving into [bona-fide](#) dining destinations. And Foxtrot, a Chicago-based chain with [29 stores](#) across Texas, Illinois, Washington, Maryland, and Virginia, is one c-store redefining what a convenience store can be. The chain, which announced a merger with [Dom's Kitchen](#) in November 2023, offers an upscale convenience store [experience](#) and is particularly known for including local brands in its product assortment as well as its excellent [wine](#) curation and dining options.

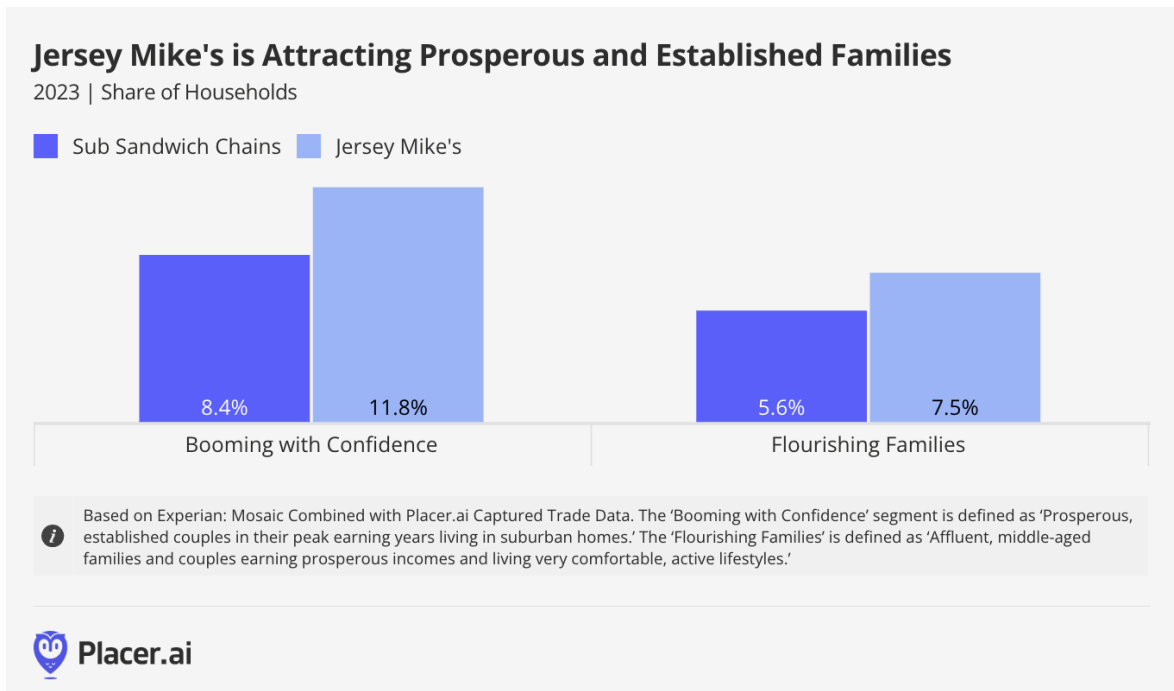
Visitors to the chain were significantly more likely to fall into [AGS: Behavior & Attitudes](#) dataset's "Wine Drinker" or "Nutritionally Aware" segments than visitors to nearby convenience stores. The company plans to [ramp up](#) store openings, particularly in the suburbs, where convenience and a good bottle of wine might just find the perfect home as a welcome distraction from the daily grind.



9. Jersey Mike's: Suburban Style

Jersey Mike's is one of the [fastest-growing](#) franchise dining chains in the country, operating over 2,500 locations in [all 50 states](#). The sandwich chain has seen its popularity [take off](#) over the past few years, with 2023 visits up 14.1% YoY and plans to open [350](#) new stores in 2024.

The company has [long prioritized](#) affluent class suburban customers – and visitation data layered with the [Experian: Mosaic](#) dataset reveals that Jersey Mike’s has indeed succeeded in attracting this audience. The percentage of “Booming with Confidence” and “Flourishing Families” (both affluent segments) in Jersey Mike’s trade area was larger than in the trade areas of the average sub sandwich chain. As Jersey Mike’s continues its expansion, focusing on suburban areas may continue to serve the chain well.

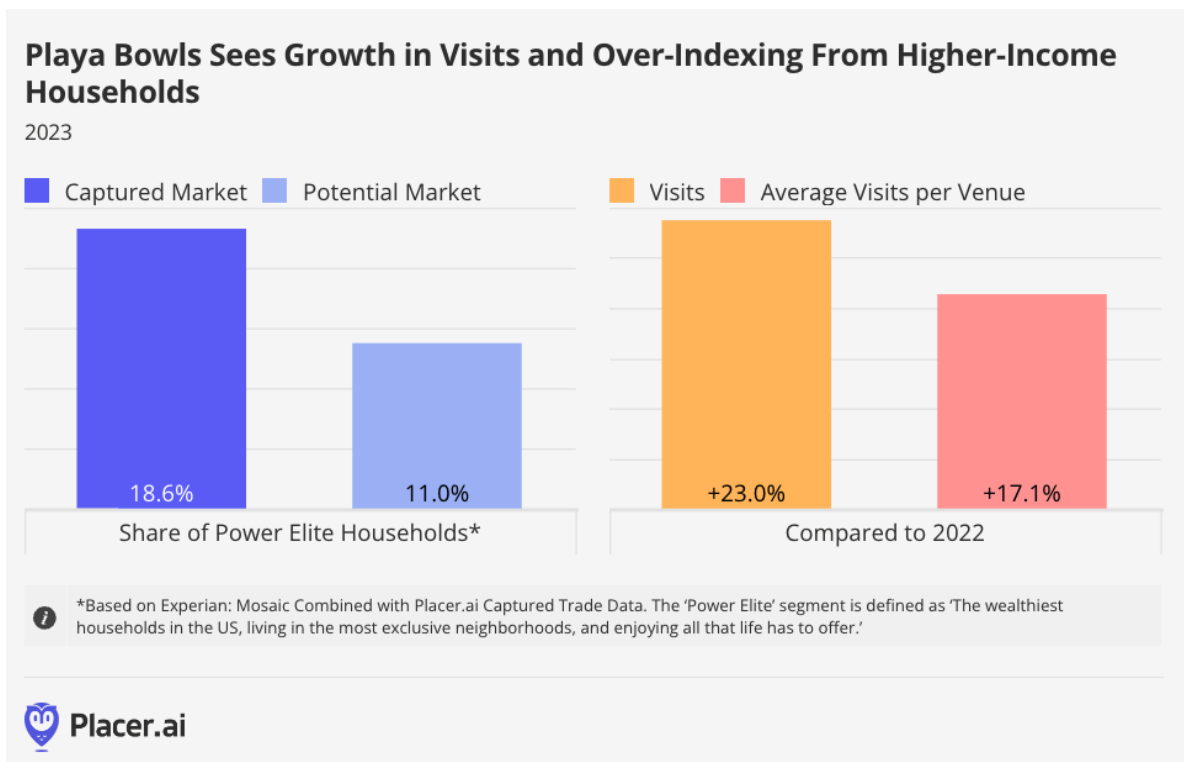


10. Playa Bowl: Surf's Up

The East Coast may not be the first region that pops to mind when thinking about tropical smoothies – but New Jersey-based Playa Bowls is [making it work](#). The company was founded by avid surf enthusiasts determined to bring the flavors of their [favorite surfing towns](#) stateside.

Playa Bowls has enjoyed strong visit numbers in 2023, with overall visits up 23.0% and average visits per venue up 17.1% YoY – and part of the chain’s success may be driven by its ability to draw wealthier customers to its stores. The [Experian: Mosaic](#) dataset

reveals that the “Power Elite” segment is overrepresented in the company’s trade areas: The share of households falling into that segment from Playa Bowl’s captured market exceeded their share in the company’s potential market. As the chain continues expanding its [domestic footprint](#), it seems to have found its niche among a wealthy customer base.



Starting The New Year Strong

The past year saw a wide range of challenges facing brick-and-mortar retailers as economic fears continued to shake consumer confidence. But there are plenty of bright spots as the new year gets underway. These ten brands prove that the retail world never stands still, and that the next opportunity is just around the corner.