



# How TurnTo + Pixlee Helped Tarte Cosmetics Supercharge its Guided Selling Strategy

# The Challenge

When it was founded in 2000, Tarte Cosmetics quickly established a new paradigm for beauty companies with a product line that combined glamorous makeup & good-for-you ingredients such as Amazonian clay and plant extracts.

Beauty shoppers embraced Tarte's eco-friendly and cruelty-free approach, and those shoppers quickly became loyal to the brand—and spread the word. Today, the company ships its cosmetics and skincare goods to more than 190 countries.

With the tarte.com assortment nearing thousands of SKUs, Tarte uses what's known as a “guided selling” process to make it easier on its shoppers. It's an approach designed to identify customer needs—sometimes by soliciting information directly from them—and then providing a tailored product recommendation based on the results.

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Rather than asking the shopper to search through a massive catalog, Tarte's guided selling allows them to suggest specific products an individual customer is likely to be interested in and guide them through the browse and purchase journey with strategies like reviews, quizzes, and personalized recommendations. That makes for a simpler customer journey (and happier customers).

Tarte knew that an excellent Customer-Generated Content (CGC) strategy, like Ratings & Reviews, would be an anchor of its guided selling strategy. The company recognized that quality reviews were a solid driver of conversions, in no small part because they gave shoppers solid product information from a highly trusted source—other shoppers.

Tarte had been using a homegrown Customer-Generated Content tool that delivered a high level of customer engagement, but the company felt like its approach wasn't as fruitful as it could be.

Tarte also wanted to tap into the power of visual content like photos and videos that were being posted to social media platforms such as Instagram.

A tool with solid reporting and analytics capabilities was also high on the wish list—something their existing tools didn't offer.

“Reporting and analytics was really important to us. Having access to a dashboard that was easily to manipulate and pull data at the granular level—but also at the macro level over time was a key factor in our decision on who to choose,” said Kellen Fitzgerald, Director of Marketing, Digital & Client Experience at Tarte Cosmetics.

Tarte cast a wide net when searching for new vendors, but quickly settled on TurnTo for Ratings & Reviews and Pixlee for user-generated content curation after assessing the competition.

*“TurnTo was definitely ahead of the curve in terms of technology and offerings out of everyone we spoke with,” said Fitzgerald.*

Pixlee was also a solid choice for the company, thanks in part to its ability to work seamlessly with several other third-party vendors Tarte uses—including TurnTo.

## The Solutions

### Highly Customizable Ratings & Reviews

Tarte gives its customers an impressive number of products to choose from. But their individual paths to purchase were influenced by highly personal variables like “skin type” and “beauty personality.”

TurnTo provided Tarte's shoppers an easy way to leave organic written reviews. Additionally, TurnTo gave Tarte's customers the ability to tag their reviews with highly specific details, such as whether they had oily skin, or if they

identified as a specific beauty personality, such as a “Makeup Maven.” This tagging solution gave shoppers a quick and easy way to drill down in a large product catalog.

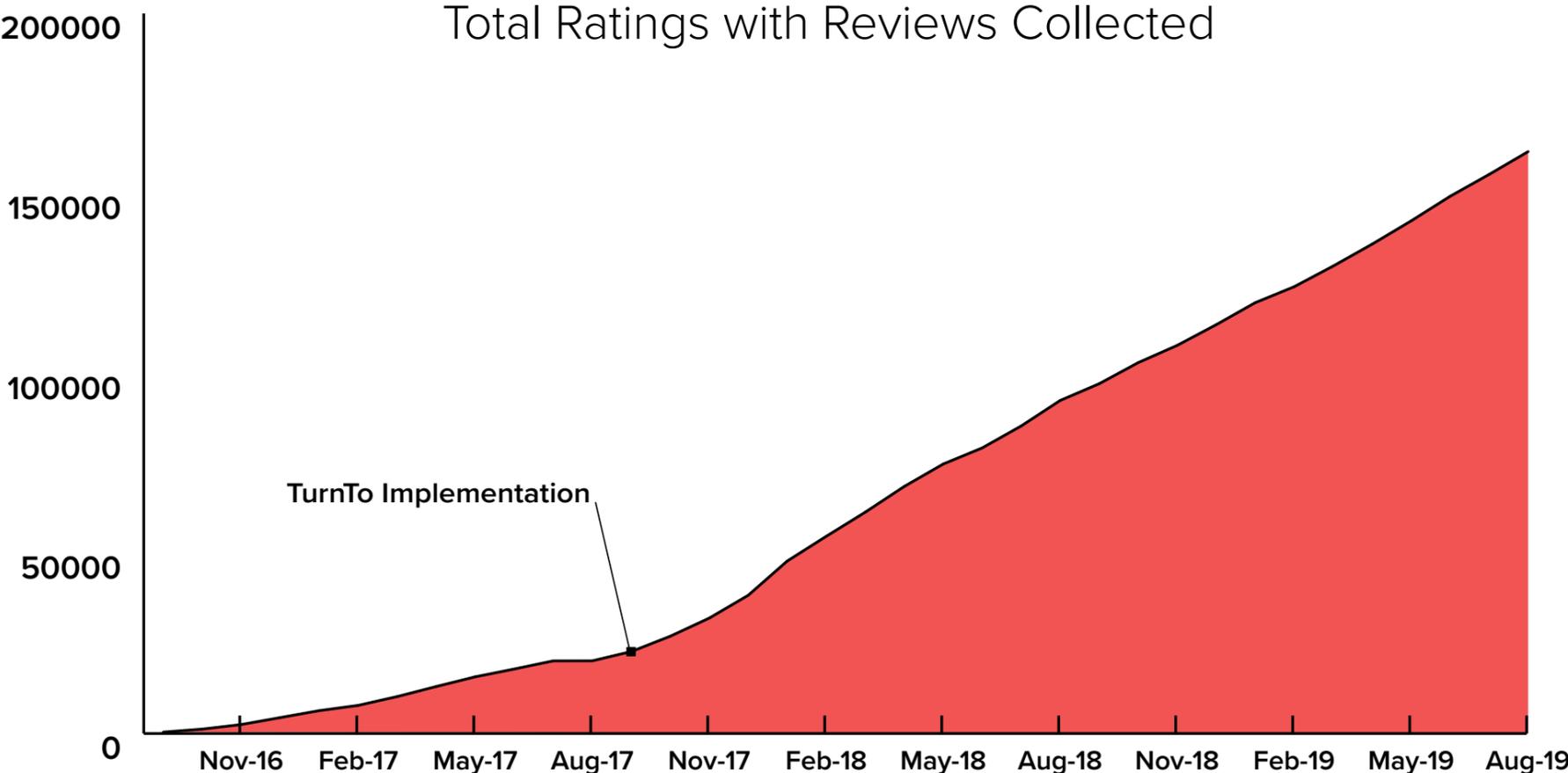
*“Shoppers can go to the reviews on a product page and immediately filter down into the oily skin sub-dimensions. That way they can quickly see a review from someone who tagged that product as ‘great for oily skin.’ The approach merges the guided selling approach and social proof all into one experience,” said Fitzgerald.*

In fact, more than half of Tarte’s reviews now include at least one product dimension, such as “skin tone,” or “skin type.” With products from TurnTo and Pixlee, it’s even easier for Tarte’s shoppers to find what they’re looking for.

### A Higher Volume of Reviews

Tarte’s guided selling approach was also buttressed by an increase in Customer-Generated Content collection rates courtesy of TurnTo. Since Tarte implemented TurnTo’s Ratings & Reviews product, the average number of monthly reviews collected has shot up by 250%.

**250%**  
increase in  
average monthly reviews



“Our review submission rate continues to surprise me,” said Fitzgerald. “It’s above and beyond what we expected it to be. I think part of that comes from having a really socially active audience. But I also think ease-of-use and the intuitive platform we’ve build with TurnTo has helped the review collection process grow by leaps and bounds.”

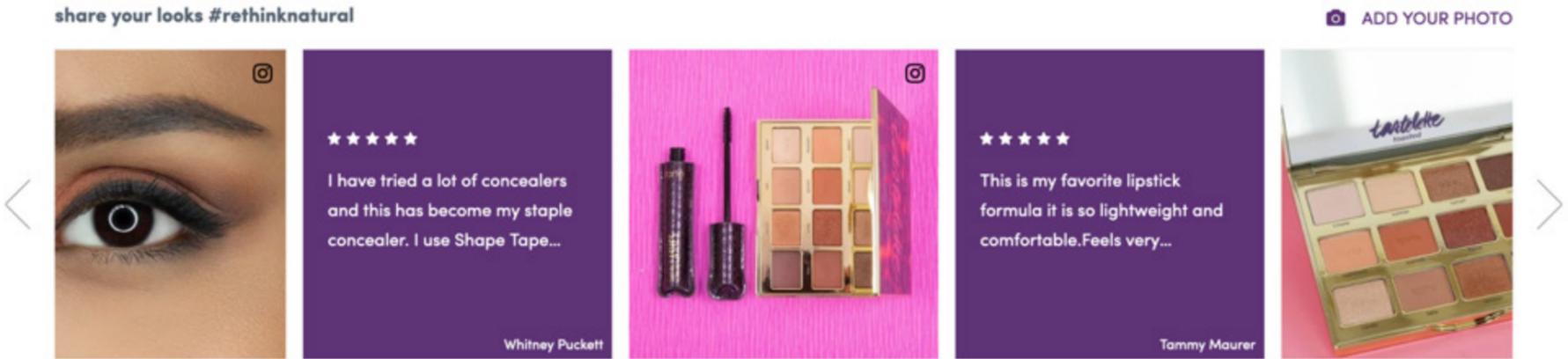
Tarte has also seen success with TurnTo’s Community Q&A product, which lets customers ask questions about products that can be answered by a pool of owners who’ve previously bought those products.

*“When we first launched Community Q&A with TurnTo, we saw a lot of text-based exchanges. But now we’re seeing visual content playing a bigger role as well. It’s kind of like a customer chat room where prospective customers can really understand our products and have their questions answered. It’s been a really big driver for us, not only in terms of conversions, but also for encouraging customer activity on Tarte.com,” said Fitzgerald.*

### Better Customer Testimonials

Tarte has also drawn on its Ratings & Reviews as a source of customer testimonials to help power their marketing efforts. Tarte has smartly drawn from Customer-Generated Content as a source of marketing materials it sprinkles throughout its marketing channels, such as paid search, emails, and dynamic ads. The company often uses a product’s average star rating, or quotes taken from a review, as a way of demonstrating social proof in its marketing.

“We’re always testing the use of reviews in our marketing messaging to drive traffic to Tarte.com and individual product detail pages,” said Fitzgerald. “We have reviews highlighted across different parts of the site. That approach has always been a winner for driving higher intent—and higher conversions.”



# Visual Reviews

The implementation of Pixlee and TurnTo has proven to be a winning combo for Tarte. For example, Tarte’s customers are able to hover over user-generated visual content collected by Pixlee and see a customer review gathered by TurnTo.

Tarte has specific products that benefit from the blending of shopper-supplied visual content with text reviews. That includes products that have a powerful before-and-after effect, or that really need to be seen on a model for their effects to be understood.

“The ease of use offered by TurnTo and Pixlee to—not just to our clients, but to our marketing team as well—was a big differentiator in terms of what we could do and how fast we could do it,” said Fitzgerald. “They work very well together in terms of connecting reviews with the user-generated content collected by Pixlee. Now we’re making that relationship even more powerful by surfacing reviews collected by TurnTo across the Pixlee ecosystem as well.”

# Checkout Comments

For Tarte, perhaps no other strategy embodies the benefits of their TurnTo/Pixlee integration than Tarte Talk, a white labeled TurnTo product called Checkout Comments that asks customers a simple question right after they make a purchase: Why did you buy this item?

“The customer can basically write a review before they’ve received the product. They might say, my mother told me about this lipstick and I had to try it. Or, I’m buying this as a gift for my best friend. All of those comments are aggregated into on single site experience,” said Fitzgerald.

Fitzgerald and her team have been drawing on the deep insights offered by Tarte Talk to power their Pixlee strategy.

Product	Customer Review
	<p><b>gilded gifts collector's set</b></p> <p>Two products for the price of one??!! Eyes,cheeks, and lips??! How can I pay this up??! Maybe I will gift one of these after all 🥰 <b>Rachel M.</b>, 23 minutes ago</p> <p>Saw on Instagram page and thought super cute to give to my mom and have a palette for me as well for a wonderful deal <b>Meghan B.</b>, yesterday</p> <p>Beautiful and great value <b>Rebecca D.</b>, 5 days ago</p> <p>Great gift for christmas <b>Eva S.</b>, 5 days ago</p> <p>It looks beautiful! I'm so excited. <b>Kaitlin W.</b>, 6 days ago</p>
	<p><b>shape tape contour concealer</b></p> <p>Looking for a concealer for every day use that won't crease &amp; blends well with foundation <b>Rachel M.</b>, 25 minutes ago</p> <p>Best concealer I've ever used! <b>Caitlyn C.</b>, yesterday</p> <p>Gift <b>Natasha J.</b>, 2 days ago</p> <p>Trying something new <b>Kaycie T.</b>, 2 days ago</p> <p>my must haves <b>MARIBEL P.</b>, 2 days ago</p>
	<p><b>Amazonian clay full coverage foundation SPF 15</b></p> <p>Finding my current foundation routine is no longer flawless. Figured I would try Tarte- after all I love all my other tarte products <b>Rachel M.</b>, 26 minutes ago</p> <p>Received sample n ipsy bag n was amazing <b>KRYSTEN T.</b>, yesterday</p> <p>try it out <b>MARIBEL P.</b>, 2 days ago</p> <p>Actually covers my redness <b>Savanna</b>, 2 days ago</p> <p>I love it <b>Janessa B.</b>, 2 days ago</p>
	<p><b>drink of H2O hydrating boost moisturizer</b></p> <p>Good reviews <b>Caroline K.</b>, 51 minutes ago</p> <p>Purchased small size to try. Tried it and Love it for my dehydrated skin. <b>Melissa H.</b>, yesterday</p> <p>My skin is sensitive to fragrance, and this is the only fragrance free face moisturizer that I like <b>Chelsi Halim</b>, 6 days ago</p> <p>Love this moisturizer. It's the only thing that makes my face calm down and it gives me a glow. <b>Moriah A.</b>, 1 week ago</p>
	<p><b>Rainforest of the Sea™ deep sea collagen super serum</b></p> <p>Used sample and was fantastic on skib <b>Caroline K.</b>, 52 minutes ago</p> <p>Made my skin feel hydrated and plumper <b>Virginia L.</b>, 2 days ago</p> <p>I heard good things <b>Halley S.</b>, 4 days ago</p> <p>I tried the travel size one and I loved it. My skin usually looks dull but this serum makes my skin glow. I look much younger <b>Ofra v.</b>, 6 days ago</p> <p>Hello 🥰🥰🥰 I am a first time Tarte girl. I purchased this</p>

“With Tarte Talk, we can discover which products are on the rise that we might want to start soliciting user-generated content for. Or we can use the Checkout Comments alongside user-generated content we’ve garnered from Pixlee to create social proof marketing that we push out in other channels,” said Fitzgerald.

*She added, “I think the overall partnership has been super successful for us. The Pixlee and TurnTo integration has been a high point in terms of the integration between our vendors as well. We’re really excited about that.”*

## Top-Notch Reporting Tools

Tarte also found that TurnTo’s reporting tools made it easy for them to get useful data and insights on their products’ performance. Fitzgerald and her team review the ratings activity of products on a weekly—if not daily—basis. Insights gleaned from the Reporting tool get fed back to the company’s product and merchandising teams.

“We’re basically looking at reviews and tying that information back to product performance at a revenue and conversion level,” said Fitzgerald.

## The Bottom Line

Tarte cosmetics had been using a homegrown method to collect its Customer-Generated Content but knew that better software solutions would aid its guided selling approach.

With TurnTo and Pixlee, the brand was able to collect more Customer-Generated Content to simplify the customer journey and aid its guided selling approach. It also allowed Tarte to pack a one-two punch by combing visual user-generated content with text reviews, and to generate product and merchandising insights from TurnTo’s reporting tools.

That all helped Tarte improve its guided selling strategy, increase engagement with its site, and—at the end of the day—drive conversions.

## About TurnTo

TurnTo Networks is the customer content solution for online retailers and the brands that sell through them. With a unique suite of four innovative products that work beautifully together—Ratings & Reviews, Community Q&A, Visual Reviews, and Checkout Comments—TurnTo produces more content of more different types, delivering greater conversion lift, better SEO, and deeper merchandising insights.

## About tarte

tarte started in 2000 with a dream of combining glamorous makeup & good-for-you ingredients. Today, we're leaders in the beauty industry, offering eco-chic, cruelty-free cosmetics & hypoallergenic, vegan skincare. Every product is packed with naturally-derived, skinvigoring™ ingredients & always formulated without the bad stuff like parabens, phthalates, sodium lauryl sulfate, triclosan, & gluten.

tarte pioneered the use of high-performance naturals™, so no matter how hectic life gets, your makeup can hold up to the challenge. We travel the world to find the best, most efficient ingredients, like our longwearing, skin-balancing Amazonian clay and the highly nourishing, non-greasy maracuja oil. We are always looking for ways to #rethinknatural so you never have to compromise the quality of your makeup for the health & beauty of your skin!

## About Pixlee

Founded in 2012, Pixlee is a user-generated content and influencer marketing platform that helps brands harness the power of their customer stories. Pixlee makes using customer stories easy with an AI-driven solution that helps brands find compelling content, make it shoppable, and deploy it to the channels where it impacts customers most.

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