

Pion (Student Beans) Closes Gap Between Online and In-Store Retail Engagement and Retention with Student Shopping UK Acquisition

- **Pion, the brand behind the world's leading student discount marketplace, Student Beans, has acquired Student Shopping UK, in an industry-first move bringing physical retail, digital verification and student engagement into one connected ecosystem.**
- **The acquisition combines SSUK's nationwide in-person reach with Pion's digital verification and data platform to enable scalable, measurable student engagement across retail destinations and shopping centres.**
 - **Together, the two networks unlock access to 2M+ verified students, linking real-life experiences to long-term loyalty and sales impact.**
- **It offers online brands a simple route into experiential retail with SSUK's established student shopping events and venues nationwide, engaging thousands.**

6th May, London UK: Pion, the brand behind Student Beans, today announces the strategic acquisition of Student Shopping UK (SSUK), the UK-based events agency behind the popular 'Student Shopping Nights', marking a strategic shift from long-standing partnerships to full integration.

The move brings together SSUK's nationwide physical footprint, at over 15 shopping centres, including the Trafford Centre Manchester and St David's Cardiff, with Pion's digital verification and data infrastructure to create a unified sales ecosystem for brands that connects campus life, in-person retail and online engagement.

This acquisition will fuel a 360-degree student economy, addressing one of retail's most persistent challenges: bridging digital intent with physical sales, while enabling brands to build measurable long-term loyalty within the student market.

For retail landlords, shopping centres, and high street brands, this moment unlocks immediate access to over 2 million verified student users through Pion's Student Beans marketplace, driving high-intent footfall at scale. For ecommerce and digitally native brands, the integration of SSUK's Student Shopping Nights provides brands with a powerful 'physical stage', offering a turnkey route into experiential retail to engage thousands of student shoppers every year.

Pion's infrastructure connects every student interaction, before, during, and after an event, into a continuous loyalty loop, replacing one-off transactions with ongoing, data-driven engagement.

With SSUK fully integrated, Pion uniquely combines large-scale, verified in-person activations with digital data ownership, giving brands a clear, measurable path from first touchpoint through to repeat purchase.

At its core, the closed-loop model turns real-world engagement into owned, actionable customer relationships. By linking physical activations with digital ecosystems, brands can

seamlessly connect discovery, purchase, and retention in one system, fully integrated with CRM and discount programs.

This 'loyalty loop' enables brands to move beyond fragmented, manual event strategies, with a single connected approach to student engagement that is trackable, attributable, and built for long-term value.

On the acquisition, Head of Experiential Marketing at Pion (previously Director at Student Shopping UK) [Alex Ludlam](#) highlighted...

“This acquisition is a milestone opportunity for our shopping centres and brands aiming to connect and retain student audiences. The experiential element to SSUK via our well established Student Shopping Nights, teamed with Pion’s verification model provides a ‘cultural currency’ to a brand’s messaging - enabling brands to show up in a student’s physical environment, become a lived experience and leave with a lasting connection to the consumer via Pion’s digital infrastructure. I am excited to see our events continue to grow over the coming years.”

If you’d like to find out more about Pion’s Student Shopping Nights and the power of experiential activations for a brand’s customer retention and growth, learn more [here](#).

About Pion

Pion is a verified-audience marketing platform, helping brands run and promote offer programs, verify customers and reach new audiences, whilst keeping full ownership of their data and customer experience. Growth, without compromise.

About Student Shopping UK

Student Shopping UK is a leading student marketing and events company that specialises in delivering high-impact Student Shopping Nights across retail destinations in the UK. The company connects shopping centres and brands with the student market through exclusive one-night-only discounts, live entertainment, and engaging in-store experiences, driving both footfall and sales.

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