

Amanda Rassi Transcript

Amanda: So I do think there are big pieces of our business that are a bit AI-proof if you will. If you think of someone who loves making friendship bracelets, that's inherently a physical thing you make, if you put on your arms and people do like doing that, there is the joy of making the thing with your hands that I think will continue to be a thing. That said, AI can be a tool for creativity as well.

Matt: To thrive in a rapidly evolving landscape, brands must move at an ever-increasing pace. I'm Matt Britton, founder and CEO of Suzy. Join me and key industry leaders as we dive deep into the shifting consumer trends within their industry, why it matters now, and how you can keep up. Welcome to The Speed of Culture. Today, we're thrilled to be joined by Mandy Rassi, the SVP and Chief Marketing Officer of Michaels Stores. Mandy's at the helm of sharing the mission of spreading creative joy and injecting her 20-plus years of marketing and analytics into all our exciting innovations at the great Michaels Stores. Mandy, so great to see you, and thanks so much for joining today.

Amanda: Thank you for having me. Great to be with you guys.

Matt: Absolutely. So it's interesting because I've mentioned this many times before, but so many of our guests at The Speed of Culture podcast cut their teeth, so to speak, at Procter & Gamble. And your background is no different. You spent 14 years at P&G coming in in the early 2000s. Tell us about your experience at P&G and more specifically, what it was like to play such a critical role in the insights and research function at Procter & Gamble.

Amanda: I loved my time at P&G. So I joined P&G right out of undergrad. I had studied psychology and what was then called women's studies, which was part of sociology, and got a job in consumer and market knowledge at P&G coming right out of there and thought I would spend a couple of years and then go back to grad school, but fell in love with the company and with the work that we were doing. I spent about half my time on the global brand side, much of that on the global laundry business, working on brands like Tide and Ariel, Gain, and Downy. And then I spent the second half of my time there on the retailer side. So still part of the brand function, but working with retailers across North America. So I spent a lot of time in the grocery channel. Working with Kroger, Safeway, Albertsons, and a lot of smaller regional grocers. Then I spent some time in the Club and Home Improvement channel and did some innovation work across retail and all the brands in North America. So it was a great experience where I got to do lots of things in 14 years, which I think is part of what's very cool about P&G it's big, but that allows you to try lots of different things and learn a ton within the same company.

Matt: So I'm fascinated with the laundry category with a brand like Tide because I've spoken before about why a wouldn't a brand like Tide just buy a company that makes washing machines. And then you could have washing machines in consumers' households and they could be smart washing machines. And every time they run out, it just orders more Tide. And the washing machine only takes Tide. Basically, almost the same model that you see Apple doing where they have a vertically integrated solution where they have the hardware and the software. So in the case of Tide, the software is the detergent and the hardware is the laundry

machine. Do conversations like that ever happen? I know you probably can't share what happened at P&G, but just more generally in the category because it's always fascinated me. Why a brand like Tide wouldn't go in a direction like that?

Amanda: Yeah. So what I will say is lots of conversations happen. I worked in a new business as part of my time there and things like tie dry cleaners came out of that, which is a similar thing along a different vector of fabric care. And P&G's approach was always sort of build buyer partners. So figuring out like one, I think the discipline at P&G, and this is a lot of what we did in consumer and market knowledge, is understanding the consumer and understanding the DNA of the brand and where your competitive advantage lies. So in terms of R&D, supply chain, retail, sort of arms into retail, et cetera. And I think P&G is not in the business of making appliances. So I think your take on partnership is more where something like that would have happened. And certainly, you see lots of places where P&G did partner or frankly acquired technology. So if you look at Swiffer would be a great example of that, where the technology or some of the components that go into the more durable mops.

Matt: Or Gillette too, right?

Amanda: Yeah, or Gillette. Absolutely. But always there was a discipline. At P&G, it wasn't just like getting into a space to play. It was you want to get into a space to win with that brand. And so there was always a great discipline of like, one, should we do this from a consumer point of view? Is it within the DNA of this brand to do it? Do we have the ability to go in and do this in a way where we're going to win and have some potential to become a market leader? And, if you didn't check a lot of those boxes sufficiently, then there was a great discipline to not just go chase the shiny object or thing that we could do, but maybe wouldn't be the best investment of resources.

Matt: Sure. And to be clear, I wasn't suggesting it just because it was a fun place to play. I was suggesting more that one of the biggest challenges I know for CPG companies is customer acquisition and driving loyalty. So if you had a built-in distribution channel, i.e., the washing machine in the home, then, really it takes a lot of those customer acquisition costs away. And in a world where consumers are more and more embracing IoT, I just thought it was an interesting concept. But I get it was interesting to hear. I always want to hear about it from the client side, because I have these ideas. And it was just good to hear your take on it. So then you went over to Kroger, and obviously, Kroger is a retailer. So you went from being on the manufacturing side and overseeing CPG products to a retailer. How was that different? And what precipitated your decision to leave a company like P&G after being there for 14 years? Because many who've been in a company like that for so long just decided to be a lifer there. You decided to jump over the Kroger.

Amanda: Yeah. So to your first question, very different in many regards. So people will say like, oh, retail moves fast. And I will say P&G also moves fast, especially sort of within the cohort of CPG. But you really cannot underestimate how fast retail moves. We're watching the sales daily and not trying to overreact on that, but you do react. P&G makes more premium brands. And while discounting is a piece of it, Kroger is very low. And where I am at Michaels now is even more high-low. So really the promotional nature of marketing on a brand where promo is such a core part of the brand is quite different as well. And then obviously, the space for food is really fun. It also works very differently in some regard than things like laundry detergent, paper towels, diapers, the kinds of things we were doing at P&G. And so I was able to apply a lot of

the same skills and core fundamentals. I think the consumer understanding pieces, the brand strategy, and customer experience fundamentals can go anywhere. You just have to learn the industry and the consumer of the business that you're on and figure out how to best apply those things in a way that will grow loyalty with the customer, grow the customer base, and then ultimately accelerate the business.

Matt: Sure. One of the biggest differences working in the retailer is you have so much ability to capture that first-party consumer data, which is more challenging for a company like P&G, which sells through Kroger Target, and Walmart of the world. How did you, I guess, lean into that at Kroger? And what were your learnings in terms of your ability to build loyalty and leverage that first-party data, which is now more important than ever before?

Amanda: I went there at a really interesting time. So Kroger had bought out Dunnhumby USA, which had been a really important partnership doing all things customer data and loyalty for Kroger for quite a while. And I went there when they were not quite a year into the full acquisition and creation of 8451. So there was tons of customer data. And I got to be there at a fun time when we were figuring out how to best apply it. Kroger had long used it for things like the loyalty program, sending you coupons for things that you buy the most, and using it for pricing and promotion. But we weren't using it for marketing when I first got there. And so we got to stand up what is now the marketing and retail media ecosystem at Kroger. Kroger has a ton of data to your point. Food also moves fast. So if you think of even the number of trips your average customer is making in food, it's more than once a week. So not only do you have a lot of households, you have a lot of depth in terms of the profile that you have because you've got the food side, you've got the more household goods side, you've got beauty, you've got general merchandise. To an extent, we also had financial and healthcare. Obviously, there's a lot of regulation around data in those two spaces, but we really had a great view of who the customer was and got to figure out lots of interesting ways of going beyond just sending relevant offers, and actually using the data through our paid media ecosystems and having the right series of clean rooms and a media ecosystem where we could push audiences and find lookalikes, which a lot of people are doing now. But back in 2017, and 2018, I think Kroger, along with Walmart, Target, and probably a few others were pretty on the front end of figuring out how the modern sort of more personalized media ecosystem is going to work.

Matt: Absolutely. And a big trend we've also seen in the last couple of years is just the explosion of retail media. I speak to so many brand managers at big CPGs and they talk about how more and more of their budget is going there. Some of them question the value in terms of whether is it something that they're just doing because they need to get the shelf space where other retailers I think do deliver great value. Kroger has a precision marketing unit. What is your take on retail media overall? How can it continue to drive impact for the brands that it serves and where do you see it going?

Amanda: If I were sitting on the CPG side, I think there are pros and cons. So retail media is fantastic in terms of being able to get very close to the customer near the point of purchase or the purchase decision. And also the transparency, I think, is far and away better than a lot of what we get in traditional media. So the ability to close the loop on a media activation and then a purchase happening in the store is about as transparent as it gets in the likes of retail media.

Matt: The attribution.

Amanda: Huge. Yes. And I think especially over the last five-plus years, there's been so much conversation in the media industry about transparency as a brand. I'm investing in media. How much of that is going to the working dollars of what's happening there? What is the reach? What is the frequency? Am I not over-frequency? Am I not serving up garbage impressions that a bot is seeing? And a human is not seeing? And I think retail media has a really interesting sort of unique position of that ability to close the loop and give you a very clear measurement of what you're getting. Now, it's not perfectly unduplicated because they all exist within their sort of walled gardens, which we'll talk a lot about like a Facebook or a Google walled garden. But in some ways, the likes of Walmart, a Kroger, are showing you the purchases within their ecosystem. And you can't perfectly dedupe that. I'm like, was that person going to buy Tide at Walmart? And I just got them to buy it at Kroger. So I think that's where the CPG then needs some other mechanisms to try to tease that out, even with more, I guess, sort of old school things like marketing mix, which I know lots of us still use, and it serves a purpose. That said, as every retailer is seeming to spin up retail media, I can see where CPG might see it as a cost to serve, where it becomes part of the relationship you have to have, not just with the big retailers. But all the retailers. And I think that's what's going to be interesting to see is over time, how many of these smaller ones can survive, especially if you're in more of a niche. Like if you're a P&G, you've got Walmart, Amazon, Target, and Kroger, which probably covers a lot of your customer base.

Matt: Right. When you talk about deduping, right?

Amanda: Exactly.

Matt: Right. It overlaps.

Amanda: And managing all of them, right? It's like that's also a lot of buys to place, to measure, to have a point of view on, to optimize, et cetera.

Matt: Yeah. And I think there are a lot of macroeconomic factors impacting the big box retailers, right? You have rising commodity costs. It's putting pressure on margins, increasing costs to acquire customers. And then you have, obviously, other pressures like private labels that are impacting the CPG companies on the other side. And I think the danger in all of this is that the retailers get too comfortable with retail media being part of their overall operating model, and then just keep kind of inching up the costs. And then to your point, I like the way the price is served. And then ultimately, the CPG companies say, well, wait, what are we paying for here? At the same time, I think it's interesting that you see platforms get into the retail space. You have Uber, which has tons of first-party data. And I wouldn't be surprised if you start to see companies like Uber get more into the retail space, just so they're taking their data and getting the retail, just like retail companies are getting into the data and advertising space. I think you're going to see a lot of convergence moving forward.

Amanda: Yeah, it'll be interesting to also see how partnerships evolve in that space as well of how data sharing could happen, especially as the big, big platforms like the Googles and the Metas of the world are increasingly walled gardens. It'll be interesting to see if others can sort of form some networks and collaboration to try to connect the dots when we increasingly can't do it across big pieces of our buy.

Matt: You're right. But yeah, it's almost like they're frenemies, right? Ultimately, Facebook and Google are going to be competing with the retailers for those dollars.

Amanda: Yeah, right.

Matt: Right. But they need each other. So there's a lot of convergence going on. So obviously Kroger, I've always kind of admired them being a very forward-thinking retailer with what they were doing with 84, 51 after the Dunnhumby acquisition. And I'm sure that experience gave you a much more broad-ranging view of what marketing is being at a company like P&G and then going to Kroger. And all that culminated with you joining a couple of years ago as CMO at Michaels Stores. And Michaels Stores, I saw them post about a week ago on LinkedIn saying, Michaels, our purpose is to fuel the joy of creativity. Talk to me about what that means and why the company thinks that's important as an overarching purpose to, I guess, impose on consumers.

Amanda: Yeah. So we just moved to that purpose in August, and I am very passionate about it for a few reasons. One, creativity is joyful. And we hear that from our customers who create in all sorts of ways. So it can be traditional sort of arts or crafts, but decor is a huge piece of our business. So you'll also see creativity in spaces like decking out your house for Halloween. The common thread that we have seen across is the joy either in the excitement of starting to think about what you're going to create and sort of that spark of the idea moment, joy throughout the process, though we also know people can kind of get stuck in their creative process a little bit. And part of Michael's role is to help them get unstuck. And then obviously the joy at the end when you get to appreciate what you've created. So as we look at really our purpose to fuel the joy of creativity, we want to be that partner for all creative people wherever they are in that cycle. So it could be where you are in the cycle of a project. It could be across types of creativity that people sort of want to play in or where people are in their journey. So we'll have people who are just getting started on a creative journey for the first time, all the way to like on our MakerPlace business. We have sellers who are professional creators who are selling handmade goods as part of their livelihood. So we love the new purpose because I think it paints the canvas of the role we want to play across that whole ecosystem of creativity and the spirit of joy. I mean, I will just say it makes for a really fun place to work when inherently you are anchored to joy as your purpose for being, but it also really resonates with our customers. And it's a fun place. You'll even hear customers say like, Michaels is my happy place. I love going to Michaels just to browse around and get inspired. And I will say that's something that I've been doing for a long time. That's been fun for me coming from, albeit great brands, but brands that lived more in the space of a chore, right? Doing your laundry, cleaning your house, grocery shopping to be in a category where people are like, I can't wait to go to Michaels is a ton of fun.

Matt: We'll be right back with The Speed of Culture after a few words from our sponsors. I think it points back to your childhood, right? Like when you're a child and I have a young daughter, just watching her create things, it's so joyful for her because the world's open to possibilities. And I think as we get older in life, we lose that. And I think when you go into a Michael's, it kind of taps into that childhood joy of unlimited potential.

Amanda: Yeah. Oh, I love that. Yeah, that is very true. And I think now we also do a lot of work around mindfulness and there is so much stress, especially among young people, there is so much out there now about mental health and social media. It's nice to be able to work on a brand that is purpose-driven and where there's a lot of data to say that a lot of these creative

pursuits help people decompress and de-stress the repetitive motion of something like crocheting or knitting is proven to show that it will lower your stress hormones. People will say creating is their way of working through feelings through their artwork, things like that. So I think even now kind of where we are as a society, it's sort of being reimagined and playing a role that maybe we've not thought of creativity or at least maybe not as overtly have thought of creativity to play in the past.

Matt: Yeah, and I think the personal crafts movement got accelerated during COVID. And we saw that with outsized performance with platforms like Etsy. Has that continued post-COVID? And was that sort of an accelerator that you think is staying power? Or did you kind of see a bump from that and now it kind of normalized to pre-COVID levels?

Amanda: Yeah, so we saw a bump. And I will say I joined Michaels in 2022. So I came sort of right after what would have been like record-high years in 2020 and 2021. Because to your point, people were at home, they had kids at home who were bored. So it was a great time to do creative projects while you were there. We have seen things normalize a bit. So we're not back to totally pre-COVID levels. I think some people picked up creative pursuits and have continued them. But then you had people who were sort of COVID crafters. And then I think especially the demographic of parents with younger kids at home, who may have themselves have been doing creative projects. Now that kids are back in school, you're back at work, and all the activities have started up again. We hear a lot from those customers that just their time so while they would love to spend more time doing their creative pursuits, it just doesn't fit into life the way that it may happen in 2020 or 2021. But then you have a lot of younger people like the point of market entry is really big in our category. As you think about even looking at social media, I think that's a big accelerator for our category. If you look at what's going on in TikTok or Instagram, people showing projects that they're doing, finding different ways to express themselves with simple things, right? Like friendship bracelets went crazy last year, unsurprisingly.

Matt: Because of Taylor, right?

Amanda: Yes, exactly. The whole heiress tour. And it's continued, so that was one we saw pick up towards the very beginning of the summer. And while there was a peak in the summer, it has stayed as a hot sort of trend, if you will, that's continuing now. The other one is like the decorating of the Stanley tumblers. So you'll have these things that sort of cycle in.

Matt: I remember slime used to be a big thing amongst kids, where they're making slime at home. That was another big grass-strength.

Amanda: Oh, yeah. We had to like to ban the slime in my household. This was before I worked at Michaels because it was like we ruined seats in a car where the kids ground slime and all this stuff. But yeah, slime. Rainbow Loom was another one. Those like rubber band things that.

Matt: Silly Bandz?

Amanda: Yeah.

Matt: Yeah, it's crazy how those trends and fads kind of come and go. But it all, I guess, is fueled by the same human emotion, which is, again, an inner desire to create and build things.

It's interesting because last week I was giving a talk in front of a bunch of professors about the role of AI in education. And these were professors in higher ed. So we're talking about now a slightly older consumer than kids at home. And they're trying to grapple with when we allow AI in the classroom. Yes, we know it's going to be a big part of the workforce moving forward. But does that mean we shouldn't have kids going through the kind of critical thinking of creating term papers, right? Because theoretically, AI can do it for you, but then you'll never learn how to write. Do you think Michaels and their business model and crafts, in general, are somewhat AI-proof just because it's based upon, I guess, the physicality of touching and feeling things? And how does AI kind of play or do you think it plays into the future consumer relative to products you sell?

Amanda: Yeah. So I do think there are big pieces of our business that are a bit AI-proof, if you will. If you think of someone who loves making friendship bracelets, that's inherently a physical thing you make and put on your arms. And people do like doing that. There is the joy of making the thing with your hands that I think will continue to be a thing. That said, AI can be a tool for creativity as well. And I think you do see creative, I mean, even, people drawing on their iPads and using digital drawing as a way of expressing creativity. I think we'll find new ways through AI to sort of accelerate or create new creative pursuits. I don't think we're all the way there yet. We'll have to figure out what that means for Michaels. But I think if you just look at from a consumer point of view, all the ways that people express their creativity, 100% there is going to be a role of AI in that. And already you see some of that with music, with imagery, people starting to play with things, which I think opens up a whole broader discussion on sort of IP and where all of that goes. But I do think if I look at sort of the core business, imagining like a map of our stores, a lot of that is about physically creating things. And I don't think that's going away. The same way people at one point maybe go back five or six years. It was like, oh, it's going to be all e-commerce. People won't want to go to stores anymore. But people love to come to our store. So, you know, I think there is a world where both coexist.

Matt: Yeah. I mean, I look at AI could be a facilitator in that a lot of people, when they go to a Michaels, they're like, oh, there's all this great stuff. But like, what do I make? What do I do? I can imagine if you're a mom and it's a rainy day and you have a five and three-year-old at home, you can say, I have a five and three-year-old at home. I'm going to Michaels to make crafts. What should I make? And what should I buy at Michaels? And then basically, it'll give you a shopping list and then basically come back almost like you're looking for ingredients to make a dinner. Because I think the creativity, the block comes in just understanding where to focus because it's almost like a restaurant with no menu. So I think that provides opportunities for sure. And helping people kind of get started in the world of Michaels.

Amanda: Yeah. And that is one thing we hear from customers sometimes getting started is the hardest part.

Matt: Yeah. Just like writing or any other creative pursuit.

Amanda: Yeah, it's like just looking at the blank screen, the blank sheet of paper, whatever it is like that needing the initial momentum is a big deal. And I think you're exactly right. We do a lot of classes and events today. We also have tons of projects, like hundreds and hundreds of projects online that you can go and look at exactly like a recipe, right? It will show you the thing and then give you the supply list of what you need to make that product. And I think to your point, AI could put that totally on steroids and probably make it far more immersive than it is

today. Or where we might have one version of Make This Product or Make This Project, maybe you could have 10 different or 100 different offshoots of that if AI could then iterate on the thing that we've created. Right now, we have humans in a project room who are sort of ideating and creating those projects for us. Or we're partnering with influencers and creators on social to work with us to do it.

Matt: Right, who is curating on your behalf? Interesting. And you mentioned earlier about MakerPlace. And I hadn't known about MakerPlace until I was preparing for this interview. But obviously, it's an idea that makes so much sense. Tell us a little bit about what MakerPlace is, what the impetus of it is, and where you see it going here in 2024.

Amanda: Yeah. So MakerPlace is new, which might be why you haven't heard of it yet. We launched in November, so still in our very early days, but it is all about handmade. So it is a place to buy handmade goods. We also have our sellers that are on there offering classes as well as how-tos. So exactly to that point of even getting started or learning new skills, the makers can create their classes or these projects with Supply List, which gives them another way to earn money, but then it gives our consumers another way to sort of interact with the brand and continue to build their skills as well. Our aspiration with MakerPlace, as part of the Michaels ecosystem, is really to become that end-to-end place for all creative people to get their needs met. So whether you are a seller who wants to buy your materials at Michaels, hopefully, and then create whatever it is you're going to sell and then sell it on MakerPlace, or if you're just a customer who loves to buy handmade goods and support small businesses, MakerPlace is a great place to come and find those unique, authentically handmade goods. And we saw a space in the marketplace around that where there had been handmade goods marketplaces, but as they have grown, more and more mass-produced things have come into them. And we've heard from customers, and we heard also from sellers who are like, look, I'm a small business. I'm making this stuff by hand, and now I'm competing with things that are mass-produced offshore. It's really hard to grow your small business that way.

Matt: Yeah. It's interesting.

Amanda: Yeah. So we have the luxury, I think, because we also have the Michaels side of it, we don't need MakerPlace to offer all of the mass-produced stuff because we also have our MakerPlace on michaels.com that has tons of pre-made decor, lots of supplies. So there is a place for that. We just don't need that place to be MakerPlace. So we can keep it pure to the intention of being all about handmade and all about small business.

Matt: Yeah, I think likely what happened is some of these online marketplaces had a mission and then during COVID exploded. And to keep the growth growing post-COVID, as consumers have to change, as we discussed, they have to expand their remit and put more inventory on there. They may slowly inch away from their core purpose to keep the growth growing because obviously, they have shareholders to report to. But to your point, that's not your core business. So you actually can stay true to that because you have this other brand and physical retail infrastructure so they could subsidize that business. So I think that does create a great opportunity. It's an interesting case study in business for sure. So, moving on and shifting gears as we wrap up here, it's been a fascinating interview, Mandy. So thanks so much for taking the time to do it. You've had an awesome career have worked at really big iconic brands and continue to grow as a professional. As you look back on your career, what are some of the

decisions that you think you made right? What are some of the areas that you focused on that you think paid off and allowed you to put yourself in the position of CMO today?

Amanda: A few things that I would say. One is I am naturally curious. If you buy into StrengthsFinder, Learner is my number one. And I think that has served me very, very well. I joined P&G never having taken a business class. So I had a ton to learn. I had amazing finance partners in my first few assignments who taught me a lot. But I will say I'm never shy about asking questions or spending time. I mean, YouTube is the most amazing resource. If you want to learn about anything. And so I think it has served me well, especially with the way marketing has evolved, that data science has evolved. It is always changing. So you have to be learning. And I think that has always served me well. I'm also curious about people. In general, whether you're in insights, data science, or marketing, it all fundamentally is about understanding the needs that people have and then figuring out how you can align your brand to better meet those needs and do it in a way that sort of aligns with the purpose of why the brand exists. The other thing I would say is knowing when to move on has probably served me well, which is not an easy thing to do. I think even to your point earlier like, a lot of people stay at P&G forever and grow their careers really successfully there. And I could have done that. But I think it has served me well to know when it's like, okay, I like to be on a steep learning curve. When I start to feel that leveling off, it's probably time to move on to the next thing, whether that is the next assignment within the company or the next thing outside of the company to move on. And I think that's what allowed me to make some of the jumps that I did to go from data science and analytics into marketing was just making some smart moves, even sometimes at a time, probably before I felt 100% comfortable that like, oh, I know how to do that next thing. It's feeling like, you know enough. And then taking the leap and learning the rest when you get there, which I think a lot of us, myself included, can have a little bit of the imposter syndrome thing of like, oh, wow, everyone else here seems to know how to do this. In reality, half of us sitting in the room are all looking around thinking the same thing. But sometimes it's just getting over that and leaping anyways, even if it's a little bit scary.

Matt: Yeah, it's about pushing yourself outside your comfort zone. And I think on the other side of your comfort zone, you hear so many people say is where all the real opportunities and growth lie. And you've been able to push yourself in that way. So to wrap up here, is there any mantra that you like to live by or, I guess, go by every day and focus on your career?

Amanda: I don't necessarily have a career mantra, but I will say what always has guided my career choices is one, I want to have fun with what I'm doing. So I do not subscribe to like work should be a, it's a job. It can be a grind. I love my work. So I always, I think, do my best work when I'm inherently interested in what I'm working on, when I'm trying to solve problems that I want to think about on the weekend, or I want to think about on my run in the evening. And then for me, purpose-driven is a huge piece of it. Probably 14 years at P&G will burn that into your DNA. But being clear about what we're doing good for consumers and how the brand can sort of play a meaningful role, doesn't mean it has to be a huge, world-changing purpose. I think fueling the joy of creativity feels very purposeful and motivating to me. But I think that's the other one that has sort of guided assignments I've taken or the way that I go about my work is always keeping the consumer front and center and then thinking about the role that that brand is playing to make their life a bit better.

Matt: Absolutely. Well, we're excited to see how you're going to continue to fuel that creativity and joy moving forward. And thanks so much, Mandy, for taking the time today. It was a great interview. I cannot wait for our listeners to hear it.

Amanda: Awesome. Thanks for having me.

Matt: Absolutely. On behalf of Suzy and the Adweek team, thanks again to Mandy Rassi, the CMO and SVP of Michaels Storea, for joining us today. Be sure to subscribe, rate, and review The Speed of Culture podcast on your favorite podcast platform. Until next time, see you soon, everyone. Take care. The Speed of Culture is brought to you by Suzy as part of the Adweek Podcast Network and Acast Creator Network. You can listen and subscribe to all of Adweek's podcasts by visiting adweek.com/podcasts. To find out more about Suzy, head to suzy.com. And make sure to search for The Speed of Culture on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and Google Podcasts, or anywhere else podcasts are found. Click follow so you don't miss out on any future episodes. On behalf of the team here at Suzy, thanks for listening.