



For **Rachel Shechtman**, shopping is far from a mere transaction between a customer and sales representative. To this seasoned retail consultant, shopping ought to be like a story - an all-consuming experience that is as much about the process - or narrative - as the final product. Thus she launched Story (initially opened in beta and appropriately named A Startup Store), a retail space that curates like a magazine, changes like a gallery, and sells like a store. Every four to eight weeks, the 2,000 square foot Manhattan-based location undergoes a complete transformation both in its aesthetic and merchandize according to the new theme it adopts. Its first story, "Beta," allowed Shechtman to work out the store's final kinks (much like a website) while offering products from five New York City startups. Other themes since then have included "Love," "Color," and "New York."

Despite the store's frequent alterations, however, one element remains constant: Shechtman's dedication to fostering a sense of community, which she accomplishes by regularly hosting in-store events ranging from fresh pasta-making and mixology classes to book readings and small gatherings. "The future of retail will be less about consumption and more about community," she says. "There's all this energy and innovation around online communities, and that's great, but in addition, I want an offline community revolution by bringing the stories to life in my store." Named one of the 100 Most Creative People in Business in 2012 by Fast Company, Shechtman is a fourth-generation entrepreneur who loves finding the next big thing almost as much as sharing it with her clients. Currently, she is working with the City of New York on behalf of Mayor Michael Bloomberg's Fashion...

## Rachel Shechtman

### Speech Topics

- Marketing
- Innovation
- Creativity

