

## What Shark Week And 'Sharknado' Can Teach Marketers And Retailers

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A couple of weeks ago I wrote an article entitled [What Jaws, Brand Managers And Consumers Have In Common](#). This piece spoke to the need to get personal when it comes to [customer relationship management](#).

Little did I know at that time that I would be scribing another article with sharks as the main topic of discussion. But, given the insane popularity of the SyFy cult-hit *Sharknado* and the yearly ritual (26 years and counting) that is the Discovery Channel's *Shark Week*, how could I not? I mean think about just how much the word "shark" has permeated American pop culture over the past month or so.



Clearly there is something afoot that is almost reminiscent of the whole vampire craze that swept the nation not long ago. Remember how everywhere you turned something was branded with a vampire or had a vampire-esque feel to it?

So what is it? Why the fascination with sharks? Aren't we all supposed to be deathly afraid of them?

According to Charles Riotto, president of the [Licensing Industry Merchandisers Association](#) "sharks have captured the imagination of consumers around the world, with shows and events focused on these intriguing creatures becoming more popular than ever."



Riotto says it is that capturing of consumer's imagination that ties directly into the retail merchandising success of a given brand or company.

"As with any desired brand, licensing and the availability of licensed merchandise helps fans display and extend their devotion beyond the core programming, and stay connected throughout the year," he added. "It's a way for fans to jump into the proverbial tank and actively engage with the brand, and a way for the brand to capture an

even broader audience."