

GETTING STARTED GUIDE

# Bitly for CPG



# Getting Started Guide:

## Bitly for CPG

Some of your lifelong customers may have fallen in love at first sight when they saw your product on shelves or first learned about your brand. But most consumer packaged goods (CPG) buyers have a different story—and they rarely become raving fans overnight.

Instead, their path to loyalty consists of 10, 20, or even hundreds of interactions before they're all-in, and many of those touchpoints are both digital and physical. That's the modern customer experience, and **every connection counts**.

That's why big and small CPG brands around the world choose the Bitly Connections Platform to deliver better customer experiences and meet their business goals from every package. The Bitly Connections Platform offers an entire suite of solutions, including short links, QR Codes, 2D Barcodes, landing pages, and analytics—and CPG brands take advantage of them all.

In this eBook, we'll share some of the many use cases for the Bitly Connections Platform within the CPG industry. Brands today use the platform to:

- Drive sales and build loyalty
- Support sustainable practices
- Streamline supply chain operations
- Uncover consumer behavior
- Expand reach and awareness

Plus, we'll help you envision a start-to-finish customer journey and how to use Bitly at every touchpoint. Let's jump in!

# Table of Contents

- 01 Drive sales and build loyalty**
- 02 Support and showcase your sustainability**
- 03 Transform your supply chain processes**
- 04 Uncover and encourage consumer behavior**
- 05 Expand your reach and awareness**
- 06 See how the Connections Platform works**
- 07 Create meaningful and measurable experiences**

# Drive sales and build loyalty

Whether you sell direct-to-consumer or rely on big-box retailers to get in front of your audience (or both!), your business' top priority should be building loyalty with your customers.

The dedicated fans who engage with your content, recommend your product, and keep up with your brand are so much more than a following. They're a key source of sales and revenue for the long haul.

Luckily for CPG brands, your product packaging is the perfect place to greet customers with information and offer added convenience—all you need are [Bitly Codes](#) to help you drive loyalty and grow your business.

## Customer experience

What do your customers see when they pick up your product for the first time? Hopefully, they encounter different ways to engage with your brand—because every touchpoint offers an opportunity to connect.

Print a QR Code directly onto your packaging so customers can scan to learn how they can get the most out of your product by sharing a how-to video or product demo. Whether it's recipes for food brands or suggested makeup looks for cosmetics companies, these interactive offerings draw buyers to your brand.

2D Barcodes—a type of QR Code—are poised to change the game for retail and CPG brands over the coming years ([more on that later!](#)). These powerful codes offer your customers more value from every package. You can use [2D Barcodes](#) to enhance the customer experience by bridging the physical world with the digital by sharing:

- Special promotions and exclusive coupons
- Reviews in exchange for a discount on a future purchase
- Sustainability efforts like sourcing and production

When you level up your customer experience across every touchpoint, your brand creates the opportunity for lasting relationships to unfold.

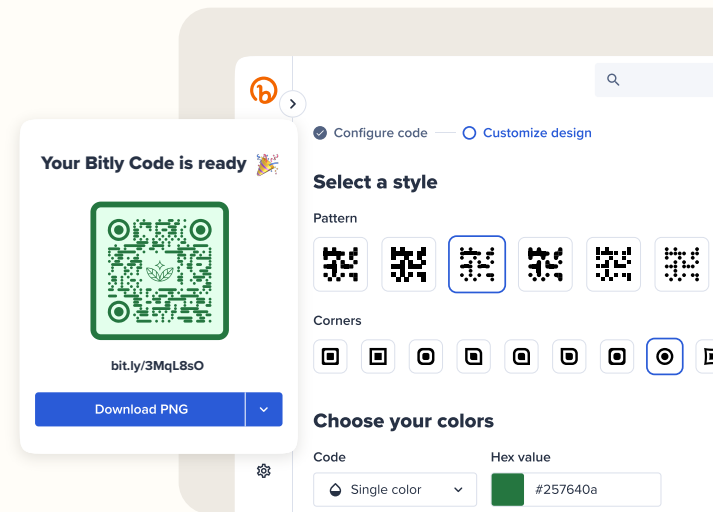
## Brand recognition

It's tough out there for CPG brands of all sizes—the market is fiercely competitive, shelf space is limited, and there are countless brands vying for the attention of consumers. That's why improving brand recognition is not only helpful for distinguishing your products from the competition—it also boosts trust and loyalty among consumers.



As technology continues to permeate shopping experiences online and offline, businesses need to maintain consistent brand experiences across all interactions. Luckily, Bitly Codes are highly customizable, so you never miss an opportunity to reinforce your brand identity with consumers.

Core elements of your QR Code design—like colors, styles, logos, and more—drive recognition with your audience so they know the code is uniquely yours. As you build affinity with your brand, customers will come to expect something valuable, interesting, or even personalized wherever they encounter you. Your design and branding elements spark customers' excitement to scan and reinforce the power of your brand.



### Audience insights

You can make your marketing pop and get your product in the hands of happy customers with more data at your fingertips, too. With the Bitly Connections Platform, every QR Code scan gives you valuable insights about your audience. Imagine being able to see which geographic region is scanning your products the most so you can double-down on your localized marketing strategy. It's all possible with Bitly!

Learn which codes and calls to action are performing best, where customers are located, and which offers are most compelling to them. Based on that data, you can strengthen your approach to reaching customers and invest your budget in campaigns that will be most effective—all thanks to a small square printed on every package.

## Bitly 101

Access your click and scan data in one place with [Bitly Analytics](#). Our analytics dashboard comes with a set of default modules that show data like top-performing clicks and scans over time, by referrer, and by location. You can modify any of these default modules and create your own to suit your needs!

You can also view more granular data for your links, QR Codes, and landing pages. Check out what's possible below:

#### Links

- Total engagements
- Engagements in the last 7 days
- Week-over-week change
- Engagements over time
- Locations (city and country)
- Referrers
- Devices

#### QR Codes

- Total scans
- Scans over time
- Scans by location (city and country)
- Scans by browser
- Scans by operating system

#### Landing Pages

- Total views for your landing page and aggregate link clicks
- Views over time
- Link activity for a selected time period
- Views by referrer and device
- Views by location (city and country)

# Support and showcase your sustainability

From the first step of production to when your customers take your products home, there are countless ways to go green and adopt earth-friendly practices as a CPG brand. And whether or not your brand is putting sustainability first, your customers definitely are:

- 80% of consumers consider sustainability in their daily purchasing decisions. ([Boston Consulting Group](#))
- 68% of Americans say they're willing to pay for more sustainable products. ([PDI Technologies](#))

Sustainable practices aren't just a consumer preference—they're a competitive advantage.

If you're not sure where to begin or want to take your sustainability efforts to the next level, start with Bitly Codes. These small but mighty QR Codes don't just help you tell your customers about how you're working to reduce your carbon footprint. They actually let you do more to help the planet.

## Information about your impact

Sustainable brands put their best foot forward with consumers by being upfront about details like:

- The materials they use and how they're sourced
- The people behind the production process
- How they distribute products to consumers

Bitly Codes let you share about your earth-friendly practices straight from every package, flyer, insert, or advertisement. With a simple scan, shoppers can view a video or infographic about your production processes or even learn exactly where an item came from and who was involved.

When consumers feel connected to the story of your product and can see your environmental efforts in action, you help convince them to buy—and maybe become customers for life.

## Fewer printed materials

Instead of printing instruction booklets or in-depth manuals to go along with your products, easily share these details digitally with a quick scan. Add a 2D Barcode or QR Code to packaging or a single

## Bitly 101

You can customize every part of your QR Code in the Bitly Connections Platform!

- **Patterns:** Choose from nine preset QR Code patterns.
- **Corners:** Elevate your QR Codes with ten unique corner styles.
- **Color:** Bring your QR Codes to life with vibrant colors. You can choose colors for the code itself, the background, and the outer and inner corners.
- **Frames:** Make your QR Codes pop with a host of attention-grabbing frame options that entice people to scan your codes.
- **Logos & Icons:** Upload your logo for ultimate brand recognition or choose from one of several social media icons

An added bonus? Bitly seamlessly integrates with tools you already use, like [Canva](#). Connect your accounts to easily drag and drop Bitly Codes (and short links) into your designs.

You can create new QR Codes within Canva or easily insert any of the 50 most recently created codes from your Bitly account. All Bitly Codes created in Canva can be accessed again within the app or your Bitly account, so you can reuse the same codes on multiple designs!

printed insert that links to a video or online graphic with that same information. Not only does this save you paper (and maybe even added costs for printing materials!), but it also gives consumers a more interactive and engaging way to learn about your product.

## Sustainable disposal and green causes

Going green is a group effort—so invite your customers to participate with you.

Share the proper way to dispose of packaging or recycle your products, like Scrub Daddy does with its [recycling rewards program](#)—which starts with a QR Code printed on every single package.

You can even encourage shoppers to donate to your favorite sustainability cause with QR Codes. Farm-frozen food brand Daily Harvest collaborates with shoppers by [including Bitly Codes](#) on freezer door clings in grocery stores. Each time a customer scans the code, the brand donates \$5 to sustainable causes.



“There’s not a lot of incentive for customers to type in a URL while they’re standing in the aisle. But with Bitly Codes, we were able to easily point people directly to our values and share what makes Daily Harvest special.”

**Courtney Kociemba**

VP of Performance, CRM, and Loyalty at Daily Harvest

# Transform your supply chain processes

The supply chain for retail and CPG brands big and small is entering a new era, and it all starts with the simple scan of a code.

For decades, the retail industry has almost exclusively used 1D or UPC barcodes—the vertical lines consumers know, love, and look for in the self-checkout line. But 2D Barcodes (like QR Codes) are poised to become the new retail industry standard over the coming years. This point-of-sale solution can better keep pace with modern supply chain needs, benefitting brands and customers alike.

## More information for more efficient operations

While traditional 1D Barcodes store up to 20 characters—enough for the product's Global Trade Item Number (GTIN®) and little else—2D Barcodes can contain up to 7,000 characters. With more information in every code, teams throughout the production, distribution, and point of sale process have the ability to:

- Track products through their entire lifecycle, from shelf to recycling
- Collect localized data to accurately target geographic market opportunities
- Monitor consumer behavior and trends in real-time
- And soon, track batch and lot numbers, expiration dates, and unique product IDs

And unlike 1D Barcodes, 2D Barcodes give supply chain teams easier self-service access to item information. Teams from CPG warehouses to customer-facing retail reps can all use their smartphones to scan 2D Barcodes and get the insights they need.

## Better customer experiences

Customers will also reap the benefits of the industry's shift to 2D Barcodes.

Additional information like batch numbers and expiration dates will soon let vendors and retailers better oversee inventory. This means they'll be able to remove expired items from shelves, discount aging products sooner, and remove recalled products from shelves before customers can even buy them. That adds up to better quality items and enhanced customer satisfaction!

2D Barcodes also offer a gold mine of information for CPG brands. Brands can now finally connect directly with consumers and learn more about their unique preferences and shopping habits every time someone scans a QR Code with their smartphone. See where customers are scanning from geographically as well as the number of scans and performance of each code so you can better understand your audience's preferences and, ultimately, better serve them.

## What to know about the 2D Barcode transformation:

GS1 Global, the not-for-profit organization that oversees global standards for barcodes, has announced the retail industry's upcoming transition from traditional UPC barcodes to 2D Barcodes (like QR Codes) by 2027.

CPG brands can prepare for this transition now by taking steps like these:

- Explore GS1's resources, like the [Getting Started guide](#) and [test kit](#).
- Start using QR Codes to connect with your audience now—on packages and in your marketing.
- Revisit your package design to ensure you have room to add a 2D Barcode for the interim period while most products have both a UPC barcode and a QR Code.

Have more questions? Bitly is here to help! Don't hesitate to [reach out and connect with us](#) about all things 2D Barcodes.



# Uncover and encourage consumer behavior

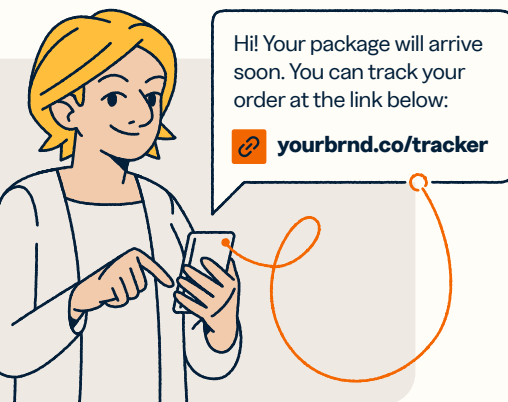
Give your customers the real-time order updates they crave and gain instant feedback on your products by using [Bitly Links](#) in your SMS communications. Whether you're targeting local markets or reaching global audiences, you can uncover which touchpoints are causing friction and which are helping customers navigate their path to purchase.

See which communications generate the most interest and identify areas for improvement by digging deep into engagement metrics. After all, when you combine the reach and engagement of text messages with the trust and flexibility of a short link, you get a dynamic and efficient method for driving customer engagement.

For CPG brands, making data-driven decisions is key to staying competitive, so let consumer behavior be your compass.

## Customer communications

With the rise of e-commerce platforms and online shopping, the convenience of having products delivered directly to your door has become increasingly popular among consumers. And that leads to excitement, anticipation, and...impatience. Waiting for a package to arrive can make customers feel all of those things—so lean into those emotions by providing real-time updates on their order's status and location via SMS.



Send a personalized, branded short link to each of your customers at key milestones like these:

- Order confirmation
- When an order ships
- To provide updates before and after the expected delivery date
- When a return is received
- To follow up about a support request
- To let customers re-order

Review click-through rates to see which touchpoints customers engage with most and uncover when they might need more communication (or less!). Best of all, you can send unique, secure links so customers don't need to sign into their account or track down an order number to see their updates. And you can do it all at scale using the Bitly API.



“When customers receive a status update from us, they can click on our encrypted link through the Bitly Link and directly view their order without having to log in, which is a smoother user experience and still keeps their information secure.”

### Phil Gergen

Chief Information Officer at Koozie Group

## Information-gathering and analytics

Between orders, send Bitly Links via SMS to build relationships, learn about your customers' preferences, and better serve their needs.

For instance, you can text personalized offers based on customers' prior purchases, browsing behaviors, or abandoned carts. Share promotions or discounts that match their interests, then analyze which SMS campaigns perform best so you can adjust your next campaign to match customer behavior.

Sending click-worthy SMS messages is also a great way to ask customers for more information. You can request reviews after an order is delivered, send surveys to gather feedback, or share referral programs in exchange for discounts on your products. With powerful analytics behind every link in your SMS campaign, you have the tools to analyze ROI and adjust your messaging, channels, and products in every interaction.

## Bitly 101

With Bitly, you can easily find the perfect domain to use for all of your short links. A **branded link** is a shortened URL that uses a brand name—or a word or phrase closely tied to the brand—to associate the company with the shared information.

Some examples of branded links include:

- Bitly: **bit.ly**
- New York Times: **nyti.ms**
- Huffington Post: **huffpo.com**
- LinkedIn: **lnkd.in**

Branded links help build awareness and recognition, are a powerful way to promote specific products or services, and can help improve the customer experience.

With Bitly, you can:

- **Replace the “bit.ly” in your links with a custom domain.** Search for, select, and set up a complimentary custom domain in minutes.
- **Create custom back-halves** by inserting your own words at the end of a link and give audiences a preview of what they're clicking.
- **Use auto-branding** so any link shortened by a third party automatically uses your domain.

## Expand your reach

When current and future customers visit your social media profiles, view your ads, or engage with your marketing materials, where are you directing them? Are you sending them to a generic page on your website, or are you encouraging them to explore your content or products in a way that's a bit more personal? Get the most out of every click and scan your customer makes with Bitly Pages.

[Bitly Pages](#) are more than just an easy way to bring all of your brand's latest links, videos, updates, and offers under one "roof." These customizable landing pages serve as a hub for increasing your reach, engagement, and conversions. With Bitly Pages, you can create a customized experience for your audience, guiding them through your brand story, showcasing key products or content, and ultimately serving them better.

### On-brand landing page

Build a mobile-friendly landing page that unmistakably matches your brand. You can create destinations for all of your short links and QR Codes to showcase fresh content, like promotional videos for a new product line.

Put the spotlight on your logo or an image of your choice, choose from preset templates to get started quickly, and customize to your heart's content. Each time a loyal fan clicks or scans from anywhere in the world, greet them with a landing page that feels friendly and familiar.

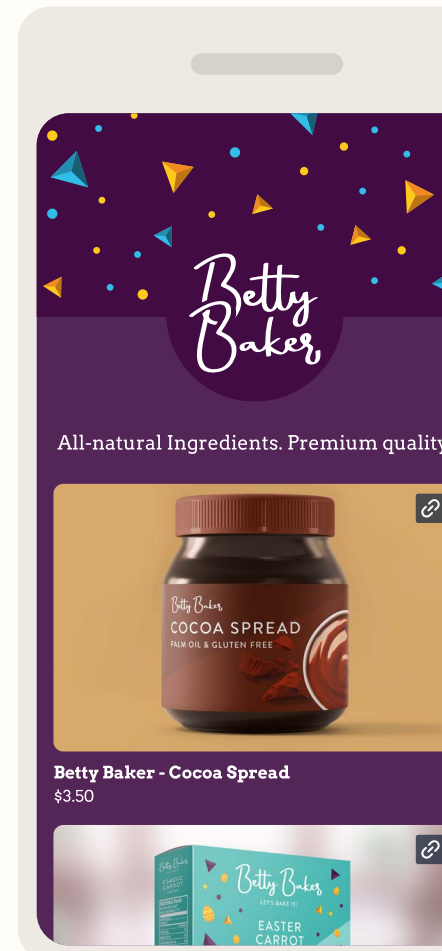
### Timely product content

A Bitly Page gives you the flexibility to surface the right content, offers, and products to your audience at the right time. Instead of being limited to a single link, your landing page becomes the "choose your own adventure" of customer connection. Shoppers can purchase something they saw on your Instagram feed right away or browse for similar products. Direct them to other social media channels or take them to a how-to video featuring your products.

Plus, you can adjust each of the links you share in real time and even schedule link changes well in advance of time-sensitive activities. These features let you:

- Feature seasonal offerings
- Promote limited-time discounts
- Correct and redirect outdated links
- Reorder your links to match changing priorities

Direct your audience's attention, time, and traffic to what matters most to them—and see meaningful results for your business.



## Audience analytics

Of course, the goal for the [Bitly Pages](#) you create isn't just traffic for traffic's sake. In reality, you're after what that traffic leads to—increased sales and more loyal customers—and Bitly Analytics helps you achieve those goals.

Instantly track your Bitly Page views and clicks to understand what resonates with your audience. Use these insights to craft better messaging, create engaging social content, and run more effective campaigns across all channels. Bitly Analytics enhances your CPG brand's presence, driving more purchases with every click or scan.

# See how the Connections Platform works across the buyer's journey

Now it's time to put all of these pieces together! How does the Bitly Connections Platform fit in from the moment someone learns that your product exists to when they become a lifelong fan? Let's explore how customers might encounter short links, QR Codes, 2D Barcodes, and landing pages throughout their journey with your brand.

**Let's introduce you to our fictional friend, Leah.** She's an amateur baker who loves whipping up treats and trying out the new baking products she spots at her local store. We're going to walk you through her journey with a fictional CPG brand called Betty Baker. We'll show you how Betty Baker could use the Bitly Connections Platform to win over fans like Leah every step of the way. Plus, you'll see how some real brands currently use Bitly to make customer connections.

## Promotion

Leah first encounters Betty Baker via a poster she passes on her daily commute. The ad features a QR Code that links to recipe videos and usage instructions. Leah scans it, and in seconds, she learns more about the selection of baking products available on Betty Baker's website and how to use them best.

From the Betty Baker website, Leah heads to Instagram to check out more content featuring their products. She visits their profile and clicks the branded link in their bio, which points to a Bitly Page with links to their other social channels and previews of upcoming seasonal items.

### Bitly in action

Feline-friendly cat food brand, Smalls, [uses Bitly Codes on its subway ads](#). The ads feature adorable cats and concise, compelling messaging to make scanning the QR Code a no-brainer for New York City's cat owners. These campaigns drive brand awareness and website traffic by reaching the city's 3.6 million subway riders.

## Ordering

Once Leah learns about Betty Baker's high-quality ingredients and unique products, she decides to throw a few items in her cart and checks out. She inputs her cell phone number during the checkout process and opts in to get real-time status updates on her order via SMS.

After placing her order, Leah gets a text confirming her purchase. She then receives a notification when it ships, one the morning it should arrive, and one after delivery. Each message comes with a branded short link, so she knows they're secure and can click with confidence.

### Bitly in action

Koozie Group sends [thousands of daily order updates](#) to its customers via SMS using Bitly Links. Customers can instantly view their order status via these secure links without having to sign in, and Koozie Group stays confident that its branded short links are trustworthy for customers.

## Support and returns

After her first order, Leah is hooked. She becomes a regular Betty Baker shopper, placing frequent orders online for specialty products while picking up their staples in her local grocery store.

Not every order she places online arrives perfectly, though, and she eventually receives a different product than she ordered. Luckily, every Betty Baker package features a code she scans that links straight to their support team. Leah scans the QR Code to reach out about exchanging the item. The support team then arranges to send her the correct item free of charge.

Plus, to apologize for the inconvenience and thank Leah for her loyalty, they send her an email with a unique Bitly Link she can click to redeem another free item with her next order.

## Referral

Raving fans like Leah are a CPG brand's dream. Betty Baker capitalizes on its loyal customer base by engaging its best customers through personalized referral offers. The brand simply sends a special referral offer to top customers like Leah via email or text message using a custom short link.

Then, Leah shares the link with friends and family. Whenever they make their first purchase, they receive a \$5 discount on their order. And Leah wins, too—for every friend that places an order using her unique referral link, she earns a \$5 reward.

**Bitly in action**

Long-time customers and new referrals love skincare brand Curology's rewards program. [Curology uses Bitly Codes](#) to share unique referral links with its customers, making it easy to invite a friend to try its non-prescription items with the simple scan of a QR Code. If the referral signs up, both customers get \$20 off their next order!

## Customer experience

Leah's a Better Baker fan for life—and CPG brands can connect with customers like her at many other touchpoints along their journey, too:

- Send a trusted short link via email or SMS, or include an insert featuring a QR Code with each delivery to survey your customers about the new products they want to see.
- Run a sweepstakes across all your channels—using QR Codes on packaging and short links sent via text—and then redirect those links after the contest has ended.
- Use short links in your customer support communications or chatbot experience to track inquiries and feedback patterns. See which articles or resources are most helpful and make improvements from there.

**Bitly in action**

With the hopes of rallying their fans behind them, [Modus Brewing turned to Bitly Codes](#) to get more votes for a coveted craft beer competition. Customers could scan the QR Code directly from their beer cans and cast their vote—and they sure did! The brewery racked up over 16,000 votes and won 30th place.

The more your customers can click and scan throughout their journey, the more data you gather. And with Bitly Analytics, you can better understand their behavior and learn what your customers want. Then, adjust your messaging, calls-to-action, content, and offerings so your marketing is more effective all around.

That's a win for your business and your customers, so you can make their next favorite brand yours.

# Create meaningful and measurable experiences

Just like marketing is both an art and a science, connecting with your customers is a winning combination of hard data and the intangible customer sentiment that you can't always measure.

Metrics like website traffic, clicks, and scans tell you a lot about how your audience is responding to your brand—and you need those numbers to improve your tactics. But if you neglect authentic customer connections, your audience can feel it, and building loyalty gets harder.

On the flip side, you can't put a number on the warm-and-fuzzy feeling your most loyal customers get when they open a package from you, see your branding in the wild, or even recommend your product to a coworker. But each of those moments endears customers to your brand and, ultimately, translates to more sales and a deeper connection.

That's why Bitly is here to help you build better customer experiences and measure the results. Our Connections Platform brings your brand to life in ways your audience loves and gives you the analytics you need for more data-driven marketing.

For CPG brands, every interaction counts. So what are you waiting for? Start making more meaningful connections today with the Bitly Connections Platform.

## Ready to put the Bitly Connections Platform to work for your CPG brand?

Let's get started

