

COMMERCE

Facebook sees mcommerce spike to 30pc of online sales

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Mobile sales are jumping higher each quarter

By [Alex Samuely](#)

Facebook saw 30 percent of online sales between January and May stem from mobile devices and predicts another jump in the fourth quarter, underscoring the need for merchants to optimize content for the platform.

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Facebook IQ's newest insight highlights the rise of mobile commerce while placing a spotlight on mobile, the one channel experiencing dizzying highs when it comes to retail purchases. During the January to May 2015 time period, the network saw the frequency of mobile purchases jump by 35 percent, perhaps due to Facebook's recent rollout of commerce-friendly features for brands, such as updated Pages and buy now buttons.

"Facebook Stores went out as fast as they came in 4 years ago, because the intent to purchase was not there," said Wilson Kerr, vice president of business development and sales at [Unbound Commerce](#), Boston. "But a lot has changed since then, as the rising tide of confidence in mobile commerce lifts the social commerce boat with it.

"This will be accelerating in coming years, as mobile commerce keeps expanding."

Shifting shopping behavior

Facebook has seen firsthand the increasing shift from purchasing on desktop to buying via mobile. Three out of ten online purchases made on Facebook in the first few months of 2015 came from mobile platforms, with 24 percent stemming from smartphones and six percent from tablets.

Facebook IQ also realized that the frequency of mobile purchases in that time period jumped 35 percent. Fourth quarter predictions suggest the amount of online buyers who purchase on mobile will increase by 30 percent.

Convenience and mobility are two of the top reasons for this massive shift, as 56 percent of omnichannel-friendly consumers admitted that they bought an item via mobile because their device was already in their hand.



Consumers purchase services and items more readily on mobile nowadays

The future of mobile commerce bodes well, due to 60 percent of these shoppers claiming they will begin purchasing or buy more on personal devices next year.

Facebook also concedes that many consumers' shopping journeys are no longer linear. Customers frequently browse or research on one device and convert on another, an equation that becomes even more complicated when the in-store experience is thrown into the mix.

However, mobile remains a constant in the omnichannel journey, thereby offering marketers a reliable, direct channel to influence purchases. Consumers can use their smartphones or tablets to search for specific products, compare prices and check availability, regardless of their present location.

For millennials, 57 percent of shopping experiences contain a mobile-oriented action. Meanwhile, 61 percent of users believe they will use their devices more when shopping in-store, a move which brands should be aware of.

Small-screen real estate

Although some smartphone screens are growing larger, thanks to the phablet trend, some customers are still wary of purchasing on mobile because they find the screen to be too difficult to navigate.

Fifty-four percent of consumers said they chose to buy products on desktop over smartphones because it was easier to use a bigger screen, whereas 26 percent did not care for entering personal data into their mobile phones.

Consequently, brands should consider how to showcase product details in a more visually-oriented manner, as well as ensure they test and optimize content for mobile.

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Facebook's updated business Pages

Facebook IQ recommends for marketers to design for the thumb, a strategy that requires more than optimal design. Experimentation, personalization and visualization are all key parts of the customer life cycle when it comes to driving digital sales.

The social network has also been doing its part to help brands in their mobile commerce efforts.

It recently updated its Pages feature to aid businesses in bolstering their mobile presence and sales via more prominent call-to-action buttons, improved layout and new sections for showcasing relevant information to users ([see story](#)).

"Many retail Facebook pages feature a Shop Now' link to their ecommerce sites and the Facebook buy button remains a good way for retailers to test the linkage between social media expense and hard sales upside," Mr. Kerr said. "Facebook has a business site dedicated to helping retailers bridge this gap between social media advertising and mobile and ecommerce-fueled ROI."

Final Take

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