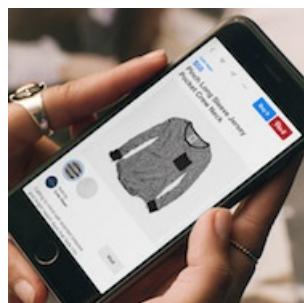


MARKETING

Social beats television in impact on purchasing decisions: report

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Social media is influencing purchasing decisions

By CHANTAL TODE

Seeing a positive post or product review on social media impacts the decision to buy for more than three times as many people compared to those seeing a television advertisement, according to a new report from Influence Central.

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The findings reflect the significant impact social media has had on the shopping journey beyond research and inspiration to drive purchases, loyalty and advocacy. Per the report, social is a powerful tool to help marketers convert awareness into purchases, leverage the recommendations of friends and family as well as support financial incentives such as coupons and promotions.

"With only 1.9 percent of consumers say seeing a TV ad impacts their decision to buy a product and just 2.2 percent decide to buy a product when seeing an article or mention of it in a newspaper or magazine, traditional media's low rates of conversion proved surprising," said Stacy DeBroff, founder and CEO of [Influence Central](#).

"Instead, respondents shared that seeing a positive post or product review on social media impacts the decision to buy for more than 3 times as many people," she said.

Authentic content

Key findings from the report include that 81 percent of consumer say they frequently buy items they have seen shared on social media.

Additionally, 86 percent of female consumers agree that social media has become a chief source of online research when they are thinking about making a purchase.

One of social's key benefits is the availability of authentic, first-person content, with 82 percent of women consumers saying the ability to review insights and recommendations from social media channels has changed the way they gather opinions and information.

Additionally, 81 percent of consumers say product reviews influence the way they shop while 72 percent say the ability to check social media recommendations takes the guesswork out of buying a new product.

Traditional media lags

In contrast, traditional media generates awareness but is not as influential on sales, according to the survey. Key

findings include that 64 percent saying they become more generally aware of a product when they see an ad for it on television. However, only 1.9 percent of consumers say seeing a TV ad impacts their decision to buy the product.

Print media also lags social media in influencing purchasing decisions with just 2.2 percent deciding to buy a product when seeing an article or mention of it in a newspaper or magazine.

"Today's retailers have found themselves in the midst of a transformative shopper movement," Ms. DeBroff said. "Social media has profoundly upended the consumer purchasing journey from initial inspiration to closing the sale as 82 percent of women consumers say gleaning insights and recommendations from social media channels has changed the way they gather opinions, and 72 percent say checking these social media recommendations has taken the guesswork out of buying a new product.

"Moreover, respondents say social even transforms traditional retail approaches, as 55 percent find in-store promotional messaging more persuasive when they first learn about the product via social media," she said.

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