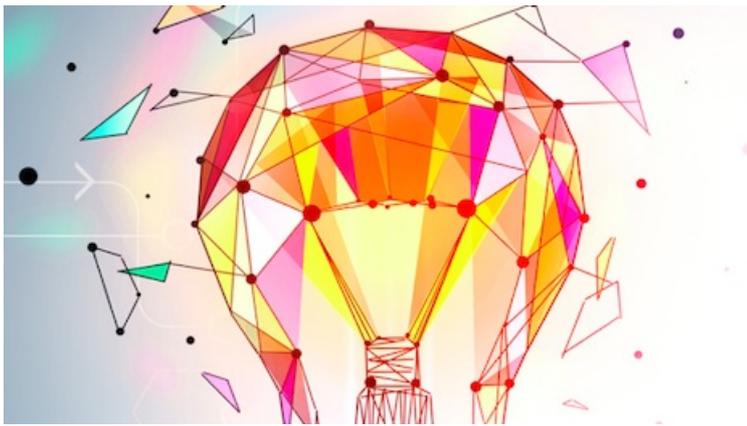


CONSUMER ELECTRONICS

COVID-19 will force brands to let consumers experience products and services outside the store

March 31, 2020



Social-distancing behavior may alter the relationship of consumer to bricks-and-mortar retail store. Image credit: Strategy Analytics

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

The long-term effect of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic on consumer purchasing behavior will manifest itself clearly through mobile devices and at-distance shopping.

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A new report from Strategy Analytics claims that focus needs to shift to alternative ways of showcasing products to allow consumers to experience products and services outside the store as much as possible, thus affecting real estate decisions.

"Currently we are still in the very beginning of this pandemic, and the length of breadth of it will greatly determine the long-term impacts on how consumers use technology in the post COVID-19 world," said Chris Schreiner, director of syndicated research at Strategy Analytics, Boston, in a statement.

"Based on the current situation, we would expect some long-term changes in consumer preferences," he said.

Three changes

The report found that the COVID-19 pandemic will have a long-term effect on what consumers want to purchase as well as how they purchase them.

In addition to the inevitable uptick in use of delivery services for grocery and food, alternative shopping experiences such as Amazon Go's contactless shopping experience where consumers do not have to proceed through a checkout experience will grow in popularity.

Next, for consumer electronics, where some devices such as smartphones are typically sold more on "in-hand" experience, this pandemic delivers a more challenging situation as consumers are less inclined to handle in-store displays, the report said.

Finally, marketers must think of alternative ways of showcasing products.

Prior research has shown that try-before-you-buy is a key use case for foldable phones and augmented reality.

Now, given social distancing, consumers will need to be able to experience products and services outside the store as much as possible, Strategy Analytics said.

SUCH BEHAVIOR could also spill over to other products and categories, not just consumer electronics.

"Consumers will likely gravitate even more to try out new devices from home and augmented reality, conversational UIs, and other interaction methods will need to be further developed to support this," said Kevin Nolan, vice president of UXIP at Strategy Analytics.

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