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Reliance on ecommerce at an all-time high: Rightpoint

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Ecommerce is preferred, but brands should optimize omnichannel strategies to meet the demands of all consumers. Image credit: Rightpoint

By NORA HOWE

As ecommerce continues on a rapid upward trajectory, consumers are beginning to adopt new models of shopping, highlighting their willingness to replicate elements of the in-store experience beyond store walls.

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According to market researcher Rightpoint, 70 percent of consumers purchase items online at least once a week and 94 percent are satisfied with recent ecommerce experiences. Rightpoint's latest study, "[Stocking Up and Seeking Out: Online Shopping Dynamics in the Roaring Twenties](#)," examines the evolution of ecommerce in 2020 and how it forced the global marketplace to evaluate the consumer retail experience.

"We believe that no matter your buying mode, creative financing and modern consumer payments flexibility, such as the acceptance of a mobile wallet, will be a key factor for physical in-store retail in H2 of 2021," said Phillip Jackson, chief commerce officer at Rightpoint, Palm Beach. "That said, the customer is now more digital than ever, and this will only become further entrenched in the second half of the year as certain states deal with the Delta variant and going back into closures."

Rightpoint surveyed 1,000 U.S. consumers between April 25-30, 2021 to explore channel preferences, purchase motivations and category affinities. All participants were screened to ensure they shop for themselves online regularly, across the beauty/personal care, fashion, wellness and home categories.

Stocking up and seeking out

People are shopping online more than ever and are overwhelmingly happy with their experiences. According to Rightpoint, online shopping is preferred over brick-and-mortar across a multitude of categories, so it is imperative that brands offer omnichannel experiences to maintain consumer satisfaction.

Two behavioral modes, seeking and stocking, have emerged and Rightpoint forecasts a long-term shift towards keeping things on-hand and comparison shopping from home.

"Seeking" consumers actively engage in brand experimentation, consuming for belonging and brand community.

According to Rightpoint, nearly 50 percent of "seekers" are millennials, with about 66 percent considered city

dwellers.



Almost 3 in 4 consumers (70 percent) crave consistency and often stock up on multiples of items they love. Image credit: Rightpoint

"Stocking" consumers find comfort in the status quo and tend to be older, suburban individuals uninterested in diverging from the norm. They consider themselves to be loyal to brands with established reputations.

More than half, 58 percent, of Gen X consumers engage in "stocking" behaviors and have more loyalty to specific brands.

Additionally, consumer appetite for brand experimentation differs by category and generation.

To understand how consumers shop online, Rightpoint created the "Experimentation Index," normalizing response data across four categories: discovery; spending; variety; and novelty.

Across categories, older millennials are shown to be the most experimental group and the least attached to specific brands across key categories.

"Seeking" behavior is most common within fashion, while "stocking" is significantly more prevalent within beauty and wellness.

Categorically, the greatest purchase motivator in the beauty and personal care sector is to replenish at 67 percent, followed by replacing at 52 percent and trying something new at 33 percent. Convenience is the number one reason beauty shoppers purchase online.

The greatest purchase motivator in fashion is to replace at 67 percent, followed by trying something new at 44 percent and replenishing at 42 percent. Convenience, speed of fulfillment, selection and ease of comparison shopping are most motivating for online fashion consumers.

Older millennials and Gen Z are most experimental in the fashion category, driven by discovery and quest for novelty.

In wellness, the majority of consumers at 62 percent make purchases to replenish, 54 percent aim to replace and 38 percent are trying something new. Convenience, speed of fulfillment and prices are the most motivating for wellness consumers, with product discoverability also contributing to preference for ecommerce.

Within the home furnishings category, 60 percent of consumers are looking to replace items, 34 percent are replenishing and 38 percent are looking for something new. Ease of comparison shopping is number one when it comes to shopping for furniture, bedding and home decor.



Shopping online is a way for consumers to take ownership of their customer experience, allowing them to manage their time, choices and the outcome of their transaction. Image credit: Rightpoint

Consumers are virtually split on whether they prefer using computers or smartphones to purchase goods, highlighting a key opportunity for brands to utilize social media and mobile applications to reach consumers.

Social shopping

Live commerce has proven successful in China and other parts of Asia and is rapidly spreading to Western markets, indicating it could hold enormous potential for brands and ecommerce platforms.

The channel combines instant purchasing of a featured product and audience participation through a chat function or reaction buttons. According to a recent whitepaper from McKinsey, sales originating from live commerce could account for 10 to 20 percent of all ecommerce by 2026.

According to McKinsey, live commerce can help brands, retailers and marketplaces primarily in two areas: accelerating conversion and improving brand appeal. These experiences can be both entertaining and immersive, keeping viewers watching longer ([see story](#)).

In July, social media platform Snap Inc. partnered with Southern California-based online retailer Verishop to launch Verishop Mini.

The new curated shopping experience, which lives exclusively within the Snapchat app, allows users to discover and shop fashion and beauty products without leaving the app. Verishop Mini, which is accessible through Snapchat's rocket icon within chat and search, will feature a rotating selection of cult-favorite fashion labels.

Snapchat users can shop their "mood" via 10 themed categories, created exclusively for Verishop Mini, that run the gamut from free-spirited and mid-century modern to high glam. Verishop Mini integrates directly with Snapchat's chat function, making it easier to share products in real-time with other users ([see story](#)).

"To appeal to the seekers,' influencer marketing will become pivotal to reach their audiences," Mr. Jackson said. "To appeal to stockers,' content marketing and in-house content studios will drive loan-to-value by making new customers feel connected to the brand and provide product education, retaining them for longer."

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