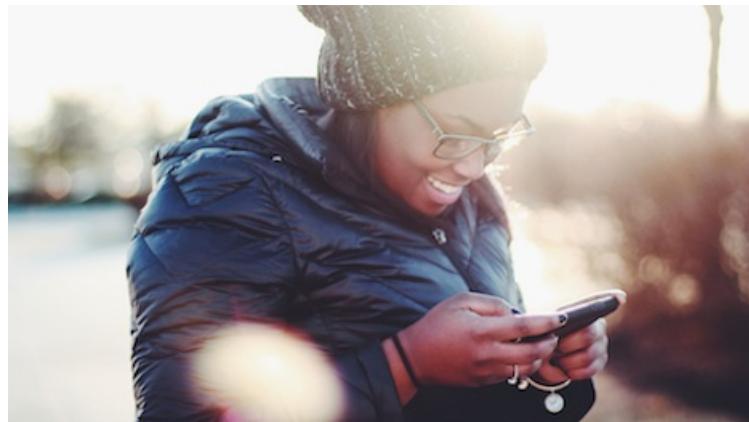


RETAIL

Mobile reigns supreme as holiday shopping channel

October 11, 2021



Holiday shoppers prefer to purchase holiday gifts through mobile devices, but still want to exchange gifts in person. Image credit: Unsplash

By NORA HOWE

As the second holiday shopping season impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic gets underway, consumers remain dedicated to shopping via mobile devices.

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Use of mobile devices for commerce drastically increased during the height of the pandemic as precautionary regulations restricted people from physical shopping, and as safety remains a top priority, the proclivity for online shopping is expected to continue. In its "2021 Holiday Shopping Survey" report, [AdColony](#) found that consumers in the United States and Canada predominantly want to shop online, and even rely on mobile devices when shopping in-store.

"The pandemic still looms over holiday shopping, but the introduction of vaccines paired with some relaxed mandates should mean that more people will shop in-store," said Jean Ortiz-Luis, content marketing manager at AdColony, Los Angeles. "However, our data found that 81 percent of consumers plan to shop online and have products delivered to their homes."

"We also found that majority of these shoppers will be using their smartphones to shop in-app, proving that mobile will be playing a huge role in holiday shopping this year," she said. "Brands and retailers need to make sure that their apps and websites are polished, prepped and perfect before the holiday season, using what they learned last year to give them a boost."

The survey was distributed across North America and collected more than 400 responses, and asked respondents, aged 18 to 75 and older, about their shopping behaviors and preferences during the holiday season and how their mobile device plays a role in the buying process.

Holiday shopping behavior

Despite 5 percent more consumers planning to shop in-person this year compared to last, 81 percent will order gifts online this holiday season, preferring delivery over curbside or in-store pick up.

More than half of consumers, 53 percent, use smartphones the most when making online purchases, with a majority,

82 percent having purchased gifts for others on mobile devices.

Despite making gift purchases via mobile, the majority of shoppers still prefer to exchange gifts in-person rather than shipping gifts to the recipient's home, a potential response to being socially distant for the past 18 months.



Nearly a third, 32 percent, of consumers will still use desktops for holiday shopping. Image credit: Unsplash

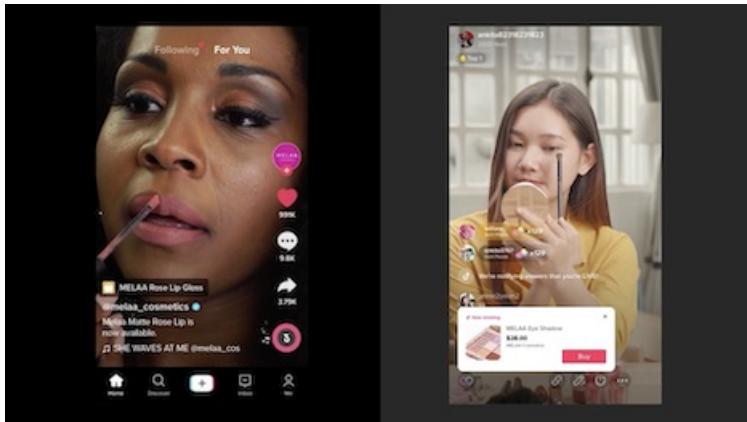
In comparing channels for online shopping, 61 percent of shoppers prefer to shop on mobile over desktop devices. Of those shopping via mobile devices, 45 percent prefer to shop in-app.

The majority of shoppers said it is important to have a mobile device while shopping in-store and will use their mobile to look up product reviews, research competitor prices and more.

Retailers should keep this data in mind when considering how omnichannel strategies would benefit the overall consumer journey.

When shopping on mobile, easy navigation is a top priority at 47 percent among consumers, followed by easy payment and transaction processes at 29 percent and exclusive mobile offers at 13 percent.

Compared to last year, consumers still feel that shopping via mobile devices is as secure as shopping on a desktop.



TikTok Shopping gives brands more ways to sell products. Image credit: TikTok
Additionally, clothes, gift cards and electronics remain the top product purchases for the holidays, followed by books, groceries and home goods. Spending on travel, events and transportation are seeing lower purchase rates, likely due to the pandemic.

When it comes to mobile advertising, consumers are likely to purchase a product directly from a mobile ad if it is relevant.

While less than half, 43 percent, of respondents have purchased something directly from a mobile ad, 66 percent would make a purchase directly from a mobile ad if the product was relevant to them.

Social shopping

Over the last several years, mobile advertising has been shifting to social media apps, and social commerce is rapidly accelerating.

The benefit of social shopping is that consumers can view products in an environment in which they already find relevant to them.

Social video-sharing platform TikTok recently added new marketing solutions, with an emphasis on strengthening

brand and creator collaboration and social shopping.

From its #TikTokMadeMeBuyIt trend, which has more than five billion views, to countless influencer product reviews, TikTok's influence on consumer trends and digital community marketing has proven exceptionally powerful.

As social commerce accelerates, TikTok is equipping businesses with a new suite of commerce solutions to better serve brands, helping them utilize the authentic power of the platform to drive product discovery and sales ([see story](#)).

Social media platform Snap Inc. partnered with Southern California-based online retailer Verishop to launch Verishop Mini, a curated shopping experience which lives exclusively within the Snapchat app.

Verishop Mini allows users to discover and shop fashion and beauty products without leaving the app. The platform is accessible through Snapchat's rocket icon within chat and search and features a rotating selection of cult-favorite fashion labels ([see story](#)).

"Over half of our survey respondents said it is important to have their phones as they shop, using them to research competitor prices and product reviews while physically eyeing the product themselves," Ms. Ortiz-Luiz said. "This means that mobile ads can reach the consumer at every step in their customer journey, both in-store and online."

"Shifting marketing and advertising budgets to mobile for this holiday shopping season can therefore provide direct access to consumers while they are making their purchasing decisions. An added plus is that mobile is also cheaper than other channels, so adjusting the mobile budget higher could be more cost-effective for the brand."

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