

MARKETING

## Consumers want gamification, technology in shopping journey: Bazaarvoice

August 1, 2022



*Shopping is no longer about a sole purchase, but also an experience. Image credit: Shutterstock*

By KATIE TAMOLA

For many consumers, nothing beats a memorable shopping experience a reality reflected in a new **report** from ratings and review provider Bazaarvoice.

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Consumers are looking for engaging shopping experiences, seeking out entities like exciting rewards programs and gamification. Even when considering inflation, 98 percent of consumers said there is a certain case where they would buy something based on experience versus price, indicative that they are actively seeking shopping that is fun, interactive and informative.

"Consumers spent the last two-plus years shopping online more than ever," said Zarina Lam Stanford, chief marketing officer at Bazaarvoice.

"Which is a win-win for brands and retailers are they're having no trouble getting their shoppers to make e-commerce purchase," she said. "But now, they're being expected to offer shopping experiences beyond the baseline.

"Consumers are seeking experiences that will not just inform, but entertain and reward them as well."

Bazaarvoice commissioned market research company Savanta in surveying 10,585 shoppers across Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States in April 2022.

The ideal shopping experience

Several consumers are seeking more than a simple selection and credit card information entry. It is no longer about a sole purchase, but also an experience.

Shoppers are seeking excellent, informative and unique transactions. A rewarding exchange also proves beneficial for both brands and shoppers.



*Many shoppers will spend more money than originally planned in order to unlock an achievement from a rewards program. Image credit: Getty Images/NerdWallet*

Eighty percent of consumers have spent more money than planned while shopping in order to unlock a brand or retailer's reward. Additionally, 65 percent said they are more likely to purchase something if they can participate in a rewards program.

Seventy-two percent of consumers said they would spend longer in an app or on a website if they received points converted into a discount in return, while 77 percent said they would offer user-generated content (UGC) to gain a reward.

There is also the gamification craze.

Consumers are increasingly seeking transactions that offer the enjoyment and satisfaction of playing games. Seventy percent of shoppers said they would enjoy gaming elements online, while 42 percent said they would enjoy them in-store and 36 percent said they would appreciate them in-app.

When asked why they enjoy gamification, 50 percent of consumers said to unlock discounts and rewards, 22 percent said to join and engage with communities around product types and 22 percent said to connect with the brand.

As brands tap into new markets, including the non-fungible token (NFT) arena, there remain many consumers who are not familiar with the concept but also several shoppers who remain curious.

While 59 percent of Americans said they do not know what an NFT is, 53 percent said they are going to buy one in the next 12 months, while 22 percent said they are planning to in the coming years. Twenty-two percent of American consumers said they "kind of" know what an NFT is, while 15 percent said they do not, indicating there is ample opportunity for brands to introduce consumers to the concept.

As new shopping experiences are constantly unveiled, reward systems that encourage interaction and feedback, gamification and NFTs ostensibly are just the beginning.

Futuristic finds

As the retail sector and the world at large are brought into a more technologically advanced era, shoppers are enthusiastic.

When asked which shopping experiences they are most excited about, 51 percent of consumers said live shopping, 43 percent said virtual reality (VR) and 33 percent said augmented reality (AR).

Fifty-nine percent of consumers said they want AR and VR options in-stores.

Live commerce has proven successful in China and other parts of Asia and is now 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 2021 whitepaper from McKinsey, sales originating from live commerce could account for 10 to 20 percent of all ecommerce by 2026 ([see story](#)).

There is also ample opportunity inherent in the metaverse.

Zero percent of consumers said they have never heard of the metaverse. Conversely, 44 percent of Americans said that although they are aware of it, they do not understand it.

In turn, brands have an opportunity to educate and invite shoppers into this world.



*The gallery features an initial slate of 29 artists. Image courtesy of Gucci*

Last month, Italian fashion house Gucci took its presence in digital reality one step further with the launch of Vault Art Space and its first online exhibit and auction, "The Next 100 Years of Gucci."

Created in partnership with NFT marketplace SuperRare, the gallery served as a place to view and collect innovative pieces from contemporary artists. For the project, the brand selected 29 artists to create a telescopic vision of Gucci's future through NFT installations ([see story](#)).

"Luxury brands need to provide offerings that will take their customers' experiences to the next level, including rewards programs, gamification, AR and VR and one day, opportunities in the metaverse," Ms. Stanford said.

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