

RESEARCH

Super buyers identified as powerful luxury shopping group: Forrester

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By RACHEL LAMB

A new report from Forrester Research details the emergence of three new customer groups including the super buyer – shoppers who may be the most useful to marketers since they have high income and are likely to impulse shop.

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The other groups include traditionalists and connected traditionalists. Each group has its own benefits to luxury marketers depending on how they use technology and traditional marketing to engage with brands and shop.

“Super buyers have the highest incomes and are most likely to impulse-shop,” said Gina Sverdlov, Cambridge, MA-based consumer insights analyst for **Forrester**. “Those two characteristics can mean significant incremental revenue from these shoppers, if the product and marketing messages are right.

“Affluent consumers are more likely than the average person to own multiple connected devices like smartphones, tablets and laptops,” she said. “For those affluent consumers who are tech-savvy and like to shop, having the opportunity to discover, explore, engage and buy across online and offline touch points creates a more seamless shopping experience.

“Convenience is king when it comes to this lucrative audience.”

Super buying power

The first and probably most-lucrative segment is the super buyer, according to Forrester. Approximately 17 percent of the United States population is the super buyer.

Super buyers are the most connected across many channels including mobile, online and in-store. They like to mix-and-match their shopping by researching online and buying in-store, or vice-versa.

Their average age is 34 and average household income is \$88,900. This consumer group cares much about brand name, having what they consider the “best” label and paying more for a product they think will cause less hassle in the long run.

Interestingly, the super buyer is the most active in all types of marketing, not just digital.

Also, they are also the most likely to interact with a brand via a print magazine, catalog or newspaper, by phone, on Internet-connected television, a mobile application, a mobile site, Web browsers on tablets and Internet on game consoles such as an Xbox 360 or PlayStation 3.

Therefore, omnipresent marketing is key.

The super buyer is also very likely to recommend products to friends, stick with brands they like and buy a product based on the label.

Marketers can best reach this consumer through providing a cross-channel experience and offering flexible product pick-up options, fast and easy shipping options and “buy online, pick up in-store” services, according to the study.

Traditional marketing mavens

Marketers should not ignore the other two lucrative customer shopping groups. However, they do need to be targeted differently.

Connected traditionalists are the most loyal shoppers, with 64 percent of them saying that they stick to a brand that they like. Also, with an average income of \$93,000, this is the highest-income group.

However, they are more difficult to reach.

Internet on desktop computers and laptops are far and away the most favored shopping channel for this group, with 80 percent of connected traditionalists planning on buying a product via this method in the next six months.

Many own a smartphone or tablet, but they do most of their shopping on a computer or at a bricks-and-mortar location.

Moreover, Forrester expects the size of this group to grow and steal share from traditionalist shoppers as tablet and smartphone usage continue to grow.

Marketers looking to target this group should do so through offering engagement via

social media channels. Also, brands should highlight the same offers across all touch points.

The final group is the traditionalists, which prefer offline or traditional channels. This group has an average income of \$72,500 and are approximately 49 years old.

Traditionalists stick to offline stores for their shopping needs. Not many of them have smartphones or tablets, but even those that do are not likely to use them, per Ms. Sverdlov.

Brands that wish to reach this audience, which makes up 59 percent of the U.S. audience, should make sure that their in-store staff is knowledgeable about offerings across touchpoints.

Furthermore, brands might do well to highlight the availability of online ordering and in-store pick-up.

“The most surprising finding is that the majority of U.S. online adults are traditionalists,” Ms. Sverdlov said.

“While it is important to ensure a fluid cross-channel experience for your customers, as well as provide mobile, tablet and online solutions for those tech-savvy shoppers, most consumers still value the offline shopping experience,” she said.

Final Take

Rachel Lamb, associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York