

RESEARCH

Tablet users are more active holiday shoppers than smartphone owners: NRF

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By CHANTAL TODE

While holiday sales are expected to make only a modest 4.1 percent jump this year, smartphones and tablets are likely to play a bigger role in those purchases, according to a new report from the National Retail Federation.

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This holiday season, 52.9 percent of those who own smartphones and 64.1 percent of those who own tablets plan to use their devices to research and purchase holiday gifts, décor, food items and more. The bigger expected role for tablets points to the strong experience for shopping-related activities that these devices provide thanks to their larger screen sizes.

“The fact that more than half of holiday shoppers will use their smartphone and nearly two-thirds will use their tablet to aid in their holiday shopping is astonishing,” said Kathy Grannis, senior director of media relations at the [NRF](#), Washington.

“Retailers will definitely capitalize on this trend in the coming months using special promotions in their stores and on their Web sites, social media tools and in-store offers for mobile-toting shoppers,” she said.

“Three in ten will commit to actually purchasing something from a retailer's Web site via their tablet this holiday season and in years to come we expect that number to grow even more.”

Tablet commerce

The report finds that tablet owners are more likely to use their devices to aid in their holiday purchases, with 30 percent planning to make a purchase with their tablet while 15 percent of smartphone owners plan to buy via their device.

When it comes to researching products or comparing prices, 44.2 percent of tablet owners plan to engage with their tablets in this way during the holidays, while 27.6 percent of tablet owners will look up a retailer's location or store hours. Additionally, 19.8 percent will redeem coupons.

For smartphone owners, 32.9 percent of them will research products and compare prices with their devices. Additionally, 17.6 percent will use applications to research or purchase products and 24.9 percent will use their phones to look up retailer information, such as store location, hours and directions.

Overall, NRF expects holiday sales will increase 4.1 percent this year for a total of \$586.1 billion, with many consumers still cautious in the spending because of the economy.

As a result of this concern, 31.4 percent of consumers affected by the economy say they will comparative-shop online more often, while six percent will comparison-shop using their mobile device.

Mobile-toting shoppers

Other key findings include that 51.8 percent – or more than half of U.S. consumers – will shop online this holiday season, while the average person will complete about 38.8 percent of his or her shopping on retailers' and other companies' Web sites, a survey high.

Shop.org, NRF's digital division, is forecasting online holiday sales will grow 12 percent to as much as \$96 billion this year.

“There's no question that consumers are driving the mobile conversation, and this holiday season we expect retailers to answer their call by offering enhanced mobile Web sites and playing to the mobile-toting store shopper,” Ms. Grannis said.

“Consumers can expect better integrated shopping experiences this holiday season – whether it's enhanced Wi-Fi in stores or optimized Web sites for those who prefer to shop through their tablet,” she said.

Final Take

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