

RESEARCH

62pc of affluent adults prefer to purchase online: report

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By ERIN SHEA

The majority of affluent consumers prefer to purchase products and services online rather than going into a store or through another method, according to a new report from the Shullman Research Center.



The “Shullman Luxury and Affluent Monthly Pulse: Very high-income consumers are still shopping” report detailed affluent consumers’ preferable shopping methods. Luxury marketers should make ecommerce a priority since many consumers are looking to shop online, the report's author said.

“I do not think luxury marketers are totally aware that [consumers] are using online for research and are getting comfortable buying that way,” said Bob Shullman, founder/CEO of the Shullman Research Center, New York.

“People are becoming comfortable that you can actually do some of this stuff online,” he said. “I think marketers need to become much more aware of that.

“Consumers, in particular, really enjoy convenience, and online offers convenience.”

The Shullman Research Center conducted this survey online Feb. 26 –March 6 among five samples of adult U.S. consumers – all household income levels plus four income

samples of 250 surveys each as follows: \$75,000-\$149,999, \$150,000-\$249,999, \$250,000-\$499,999 and more than \$500,000.

This survey takes into account the responses of adults with a household income of \$250,000 or more. Approximately 3 percent of adults in the U.S. live in these households, according to the Shullman Research Center.

Online preference

Online is both the preferred method of product research as well as purchasing, according to the report.

Eighty-six percent of affluent adults prefer to research products and services from any online device. Out of this group, 64 percent prefer using a computer, 18 percent prefer using a tablet and 5 percent prefer using a smartphone.

Online outweighs other choices by far for researching products.

Only 10 percent of affluent consumers said that they prefer researching in-store, while 2 percent said through a personal shopper, 1 percent said by mail order and another 1 percent said by phone.

Furthermore, 62 percent of affluent adults said they are comfortable using an online method to purchase products and services. Out of this group, 51 percent said they would use a computer, while 7 percent said they would use a tablet and 4 percent said they would use a smartphone.

Thirty-three percent said that they felt comfortable purchasing products from a person in the store.

However, 49 percent of affluent consumers said they would not be comfortable shopping through a personal shopper and 39 percent said they would not be comfortable shopping through a smartphone.



HAPPY LES 10 ANS BAG
IN CROCODILE
€17,900.00



IPAD CASE
€95.00



Products on Lanvin's mobile site

In addition, only 8 percent of affluent adults are not comfortable shopping at a store and 5 percent are not comfortable shopping online.

Non-luxury competitors

The survey also found that 73 percent of affluent adults shopped on Amazon in the past year.

“Probably the most surprising finding is that Amazon is now No. 1 for higher-income consumers and mass-market consumers,” Mr. Shullman said.

“Amazon offers a virtually unlimited selection, lower prices and delivery options,” he said.

Since affluent consumers are looking for convenience while shopping, it makes sense that Amazon is a top choice.

This means that luxury marketers should prioritize ecommerce as long as it works for their customers and products and so that they can remain competitive with mainstream

online retailers.

“This is reinforcement that [luxury marketers] need to truly get into the online business, as well as high-service business,” Mr. Shullman said.

“[Marketers] have to do ecommerce if it works for their clientele,” he said. “Marketers still, in many respects, look at online as a way to research and that people still need to come in and touch the product.

“Marketers are realizing that these consumers are more comfortable buying and returning online.”

Final take

Erin Shea, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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