



## Are You Meeting the Needs of Today's Multi-Device Shopper?

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I don't know about you, but the first time I stood in front of a product in a store and realized I could whip out my smartphone to check a price was one of the great "aha moments" of my life.

From past research, we know consumers were quick to adopt the smartphone as a browsing tool. And before mobile responsive design, that was about all the device was good for. Check-out forms, for instance, were designed for a bigger screen. Trying to fill one out on a smartphone ranged from tedious, to nearly impossible. You could click on a link from your phone, but you likely purchased from a laptop or desktop.

That's changing more rapidly than we ever could have imagined. This was clarified for us in January of this year when we commissioned Ipsos to survey 1,000 U.S. adults about the devices they own and how they currently use them. "[The Influence of Multi-Device Ownership on Ecommerce](#)" explores ownership across desktops, laptops, smartphones, tablets and wearables, and the relationship to the digital shopping behavior of U.S. consumers. Consider these numbers:

- Nearly two-thirds of shoppers with a smartphone are using their device more frequently to buy items than they did 12 months ago.
- Smartphone ownership has increased from 51% to 75% in the three years that we have commissioned surveys.
- More than half of shoppers ages 18-44 use their smartphones to buy products.

But before you assume that the smartphone is becoming the main device for shopping understand that a majority of surveyed consumers are shopping on all of the devices they own more often this year than last – and that includes desktops. In fact, no device has a significant proportion of users whose shopping has decreased. The survey shows consumers own an average of 2.9 devices, use an average of 1.9 devices for shopping and purchase from an average of 1.8 devices.

These survey results emphasize the need for a seamless experience because consumers have told us in the past that they might shop on one device and place an item in a cart, revisit the cart from another device and then use a third device to view the product again while shopping in a physical store. Or they might do all their shopping for one kind of product on one device and all their shopping for something else on a different device.

## Is an Online-First Shopper Emerging?

Along with asking survey respondents about any changes in their device usage, we asked whether they were visiting physical stores more or less frequently in the past 12 months. Thirty percent report shopping less frequently in stores, while 29% say they are shopping in stores more frequently. While the two segments balance each other in overall impact, it does offer the opportunity for segmentation based on these behaviors.

Merchants that offer online and brick-and-mortar stores need to make the shopping experience as seamless as possible for customers who might like to pick up or return items at the store. If there is an option to buy online and pick up in a store, make it convenient. And for online-only merchants wondering whether they can continue to experiment with offerings that have historically only been bought in-person – take heart. It looks like a subset of the population is very open to avoiding stores.

## More Food for Thought

We discovered some other interesting trends in our survey:

## Wearables aren't just for tracking your steps and heart rate anymore

Thirteen percent of our respondents own a wearable, and just over a third of them say they use the device to shop. The study found that men own more devices than women, and that goes for wearables, too. In fact, 19% of men reported owning wearables versus just 9% of women.

## Device Shopping Preference Varies Significantly by Age

Differences aren't just seen between the youngest and oldest shoppers. People in the 45-54 demographic are 25% more likely to purchase from desktop computers than those ages 35-44. When you look at statistics for purchasing from a smartphone, the reverse is true: 45-54 year-olds are 46% less likely to buy from a smartphone than 35-44 year-olds.

## Laptops and Desktops Are Still Relevant

Despite the popularity and influence of mobile devices, laptops and desktops still play a large role in the online purchase process. Nearly two-thirds of the adult population (63%) have purchased from a laptop in the past year, and almost half (49%) have purchased on desktops. Not surprisingly, purchasers using laptops and smartphones tend to be younger (18-44), and those using desktops tend to be older (45+).

## Putting It All Together

If there is one thing you take away from this survey it should be this: You never want to lose a sale because the shopper is using the one device that your emails, website and checkout process don't support. If your organization has hesitated to adopt mobile-first design, this should be a wakeup call. And if you've run up against a wall in advocating for an omnichannel experience here is the data to help back up your strategy. The shopping experience is shifting, don't let your brand be a laggard.

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