# How Affluents Use Mobile for Shopping and Buying

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Do the habits of the ultrawealthy point to the future of m-commerce?

The best mobile commerce user experience comes from downloading shopping apps on a smartphone.

Though growth in smartphone sales is increasing and the devices are spreading through the population, smartphone owners still tend to be more affluent than average.

And affluents may be taking the lead in shopping and buying via mobile. According to a spring 2010 survey by PriceGrabber.com, 13% of all US web-enabled mobile users reported purchasing online.

That was up from 10% in 2009. InsightExpress found predictably lower usage among all mobile users, at 5% in Q2 2010.

Based on a report from The Luxury Institute, affluent and ultra-affluent mobile users are more likely to make purchases from their mobile devices.

One in five respondents with incomes of at least $150,000 said they did so at least rarely, and among users with net worth of at least $5 million m-commerce was even more popular.

Movie and event tickets, along with technology and personal electronics, were the most popular items purchased via mobile by affluents, similar to the general population.

But ultra-affluents were more likely to also use their phones to buy high-ticket items like designer bags and shoes, jewelry and automotive products.

Affluents also differed from the general population when asked about the barriers to further mobile commerce usage.

Most were not worried about security problems or mobile web hassles, but simply felt no need to shop via mobile.

The types of activities the wealthy used their mobile phones for while shopping were similar to those of the general population. As in the InsightExpress survey of all mobile users, respondents to The Luxury Institute poll were most likely to have used their phone to call and talk to someone about an item.

Sending a text or picture message was also popular in both surveys.

Looking up product information was also common, with a view to comparing prices, getting product descriptions, looking for deals and checking store information.

These are typical mobile shopping behaviors of all mobile users. Ultra-affluents were less interested in some activities, like price comparison.

While wealthy shoppers have a few unusual habits, like purchasing luxury products on the go, many are simply using the same mobile tools as the general population with greater frequency and fewer concerns.

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