

What Shoppers Want From Retail Apps

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Ending consumer frustration with m-commerce offerings

As more consumers make smartphones their everyday companions, mobile commerce is taking hold. But the mainstream of mobile commerce is not yet based around making purchases via mobile, but in using phones as a shopping aid—for store location, product research and finding deals.

Consumers are eager to check their phones for info, but retailers have been behind the game.

According to October 2010 data from mobile and social marketing consultancy Brand Anywhere and Luth Research, for example, fewer than 5% of retailers have a mobile site.

And research from Adobe found consumers were unimpressed with retailers'™ mobile apps and preferred to simply browse the mobile web.

A fall 2010 survey from Accenture uncovers what shoppers would most like to see in a mobile app, separating the possibilities into apps designed for use in or out of the store.

Coupons were considered the most useful app features for any location.

Other useful features for apps used out of the store focused on giving the customer a reason to go in: The ability to view in-store specials before entering a store, to get driving directions and to find out if an item is in stock were all considered more useful than being able to purchase a product via mobile.

Inside the store, shoppers were focused on ways to get more information about products, use their phone as a loyalty card and find items.

“Companies need to use all of their customer information to better understand how and when their customers want to engage with them, ask them questions or just check some basic product details,” said Janet Hoffman, managing director of Accenture's™ Retail Services, in a statement. “Only then can they deliver a personalized and enjoyable experience, while lessening the risk of alienating customers through unwanted approaches.”

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