

iOS Dominating UK Mobile Commerce

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Despite making up a smaller portion of the smartphone user base, iOS users constitute the majority of the mobile commerce market, according to new research from EPiServer into the mobile buying habits of smartphone and tablet owners in the UK, across iOS, Android, Windows and BlackBerry devices.

The survey of 1,000 UK adults who own smartphones and tablets reveals that 66% of iPhone users are making purchases via mobile sites at least once a month, compared to only 47% of those with an Android smartphone. iPhone owners are also the most frequent shoppers, with one in 10 making a purchase using their mobile every single day.

Despite Android's larger smartphone user base in the UK, 44% compared to 38% for the iPhone, iOS is still the dominant platform for shopping. Apple device users make up 46% of the 25.5 million UK consumers that make mobile site purchases on a monthly or more regular basis, compared to 38% on Android.

More tablet owners make regular purchases than smartphones users and Apple's domination is even greater here, with iPad owners representing a higher proportion of the user base and also being more likely to shop. More than three quarters (76%) of iPad users making a purchase via a website on their device at least monthly, a number that drops to 54% for those using Android tablets. With iPads accounting for around 65% of the 18 million tablets in the UK, this means 6.6 million iPad users are making regular purchases using their device.

Apple's dominance is echoed for purchases made via apps, with 54% of iPhone users buying regularly this way, versus 37% on Android. Windows users are also more regular shoppers than those on Android for both Surface tablet and Windows Phone users.

The most likely mobile spenders are those aged 25 to 34 years, with 78% in this age group making a purchase in the last six months, compared only 48% of mobile device owners aged 45 years or over.

The most common type of purchase is music, followed by books, travel, digital products (such as apps or ebooks) and apparel. The variety of purchase choices in the top five suggests that it is convenience rather than price that drives mobile purchases, as users are opting for high-value items such as train tickets, hotels and clothing alongside less expensive items.

When it comes to location, mobile does not necessarily mean 'out and about' as 64% of mobile device owners say 'at home' is the primary place where their mobile website browsing takes place, a figure that is even higher for tablet browsing at 80%.

Commenting on these findings, David Bowen, Commerce Product Manager at EPiServer, stated: "While Apple remains the top choice for mobile commerce, adoption across the other platforms is increasing. Consumers are also using both tablets and smartphones to shop across apps and mobile sites, which adds complexity for retailer mobile strategies. Online retailers need to explore these trends and evolve their approach to mobile to ultimately develop a strong presence on every platform and device, with a consistent user experience."

"The overriding lesson from our study is that commerce must be increasingly omnichannel in order to meet customer demand. Consumers, particularly those in the 25 to 34 age bracket with busy lifestyles and secured incomes, are increasingly multi-device owners and expect commerce experiences to not only span those multiple devices, but to integrate with offline too."