

What consumers want in 2015: multi-screen experiences, personalisation and social shopping

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DigitasLBi's 2015 Connected Commerce study of retail trends reveals a significant rise in the use of connected devices, including wearables, and an increase in social commerce; urges retailers to personalise the shopping experience in order to boost sales.

Shoppers around the world now expect omnichannel, multi-screen experiences from brands and retailers, with the average consumer using a total of five devices when making a purchase – a significant increase from the 2.8 devices reported in 2014. This is according to DigitasLBi's 2015 Connected Commerce study of the latest retail trends across 17 countries including Australia, China, India, Japan, the UK and the USA.

The new connected consumer

As well as computers, smartphones, tablets and smart TVs, consumers are rapidly embracing wearable technologies, with 17% of shoppers revealing that they now own a wearable device – a figure that is likely to rise with the launch of Apple Watch and similar devices with the potential to offer new in-store experiences.

DigitasLBi's Connected Commerce study also shows that in 2015 shoppers are increasingly comfortable going beyond the traditional e-commerce experience to embrace mobile commerce (28%) and shopping via tablets (20%).

Products and services that allow this new breed of connected consumer to act on impulse are also proving popular. The survey shows that in-store pick-up is becoming a particular favourite of shoppers, with 51% taking advantage of 'click and collect' services globally, a figure that jumps to 73% in the UK.

"Customers want to save time and money whilst being able to choose from more ways to shop than ever before. Mobile is increasingly becoming the platform of choice for bargain hunters on the go, with 85% of those surveyed now using smartphones whilst in-store. A further 55% of consumers claim that smartphones have changed the way they shop altogether," says Jim Herbert, Managing Partner of DigitasLBi Commerce, the connected commerce division of DigitasLBi. "We also know that 62% of smartphone users would be happy to use their devices to pay in-store. With the launch of Apple Pay in US and the growing number of start-ups in the in-store payment arena, 2015 could be the year of mobile payment. Brands and retailers would be wise to take note of the fact that mobile is set to fundamentally change the retail experience."

Personalisation is key driver to online and offline sales According to DigitasLBi's Connected Commerce survey, personalising the shopping experience is the surest way to the consumer's pocket. 62% of respondents claim they buy more and/or more often when met with personalised retail experiences. A further 27% actively look for personalised offers when shopping online and 75% log in to e-commerce websites that cater for their personal preferences based on previous behaviour (40%) or to get product personalisation (34%).

The demand for personalisation goes beyond the online experience, with 70% of shoppers around the world admitting they are more likely to embrace new in-store technologies such as GPS and WiFi tracking if they receive customised benefits in return, such as personalised money-off vouchers.

"Personalising the retail experience and tailoring it to the needs of individual shoppers is a sure-fire way to attract more customers and boost profits both online and in-store", says Herbert. "The bricks-and-mortar store is going from strength to strength and behind retailer websites and apps has become the second most preferred point of information for customers. However, the in-store experience needs to become more agile, more digital and more connected. Retailers need to get smarter about using data in order to personalise the shopping experience to increase sales performance."

The continued rise of social

DigitasLBi's Connected Commerce study shows that social media is influencing an increasing number of purchases both on and off-line. Overall Facebook is leading the way with more than half (52%) of users now admitting that the social network impacts the way they shop, up from 36% in 2014. This compares to 46% for Pinterest, 43% for Instagram and 36% for Twitter.

Social shopping is also rapidly gaining traction, with 28% of social network users around the world claiming to have purchased an item directly via a social media platform. UAE leads the way in terms of social shopping with 56% of respondents now buying through social sites. Other social elements such as online reviews are also gaining importance

in the purchasing process: 66% of shoppers read them when buying online and 36% when shopping in-store.

"Peer pressure has always been a powerful influencing factor when it comes to making purchases and the Connected Commerce survey shows that social networks aimed at our personal lives rather than our professional lives are translating this online. Retailers need to ensure that social media is integrated throughout the entire customer journey and that they manage their social channels to make a real impact on purchase behaviour," says Herbert.

DigitasLBI's Connected Commerce survey is now in its fourth year. The study covers a total of 17 countries, up from 12 last year. Countries taking part are Australia, Belgium, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, UAE, the UK and the USA. The 2015 survey was conducted online by IFOP from March 5th to March 25th, 2015 with a sample size of 1,000 web users per country aged 18 and over using the quota method (gender, age, income or social profile and region).

Following the rapid growth of omnichannel commerce, DigitasLBI recently launched DigitasLBI Commerce - a next-generation connected commerce offering designed to help businesses thrive in the omnichannel world. DigitasLBI Commerce specialises in digital commerce implementation, systems integration, application support and managed services. These skills sit alongside DigitasLBI's core brand building, experience design, content creation and distribution capabilities to create a world-leading connected commerce offering. DigitasLBI Commerce was recently named "Global Service Delivery Partner of the Year" at the prestigious annual hybris Global Partner Awards.