

How consumers find new brands and products on social media, marketplaces, and brick-and-mortar retail in 5 charts

Article

Social media is important in product discovery, especially among younger consumers, but it's only part of the picture—marketplaces, search engines, and brick-and-mortar retail also influence where and how consumers find new products.

Here are five charts on what brands need to know about product discovery across digital and physical channels.

1. Younger consumers turn to social media, family, and friends

Ways in Which US Internet Users Are Informed About a Product or Service, by Age, Nov 2023

% of respondents

	16 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65+
Social media video made by a user that organically entered feed	67%	64%	60%	59%	46%	40%
A friend or family member	61%	62%	64%	71%	83%	81%
Customer reviews or testimonials	60%	65%	62%	72%	72%	75%
Social media by a verified user (influencer or user with checkmark)	44%	54%	54%	48%	42%	42%
Social media by a recognizable celebrity	38%	45%	48%	36%	29%	25%

Source: 5WPR, "2024 Consumer Culture Report," Jan 30, 2024

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Over two-thirds (67%) of US 16-to 24-year-olds say they've learned about a product or service through a social media video that organically entered their feed, according to a November 2023 survey from 5WPR.

However, nearly as many (61%) say they've discovered a product or service via a friend or family member. Word of mouth is still a powerful tool for brands.

2. Gen Z trusts user-generated content, especially from creators

Impact of User-Generated Video Content (UGC) on the Consumer Journey According to US Consumers, by Generation, Nov 2022

% of respondents in each group

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Baby boomers & seniors	Total
UGC videos help me discover new products and services to buy or use	70%	68%	47%	22%	48%
If an online content creator I trust has reviewed a brand's product, I am more likely to trust that brand	63%	66%	43%	26%	46%
I am more likely to purchase a product after I watch a review by an online content creator or influencer I follow	64%	57%	41%	16%	41%

Note: ages 14+; Gen Z born 1997-2009, millennials born 1983-1996, Gen X born 1966-1982, baby boomers born 1947-1965, seniors born 1946 and earlier
Source: Deloitte, "Digital Media Trends," April 17, 2023

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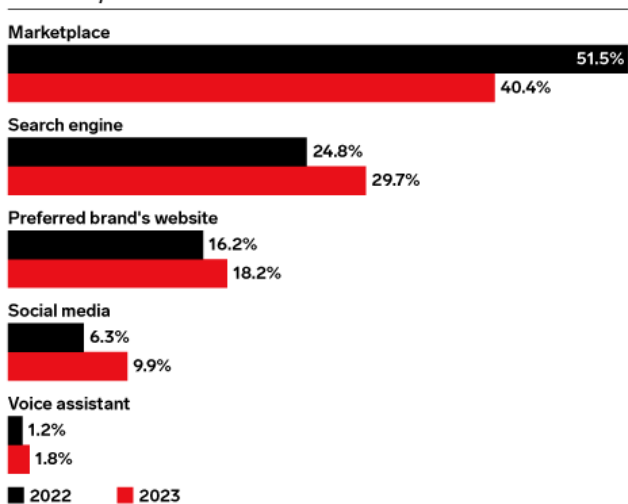
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Gen Z and **millennials** are more likely to discover new products or services through user-generated content than older generations, per an April 2023 Deloitte report. Brands targeting younger audiences may succeed with content creators. Gen Zers and millennials are more likely to trust or buy products recommended by creators they like or follow.

3. Where consumers start their online shopping journey varies

Channels Where US Internet Users Start Their Online Shopping Journeys, 2022 & 2023

% of respondents



Source: Attest, "2024 US Consumer trends report," Feb 1, 2024

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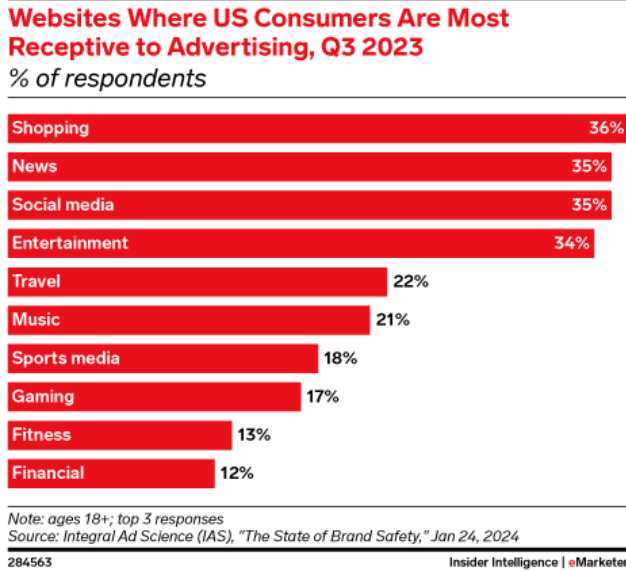
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Social media is just one part of the discovery mix. Online marketplaces or search engines are the top places where US consumers start their shopping journey, so it's key that brands use

those channels to promote discovery, namely through search and display ads.

This year, US [retail media](#) ad spend on display and search formats will total \$59.61 billion, nearly 20% of total digital ad spend, per our forecast.

4. Consumers are receptive to ads on shopping, news, and social sites



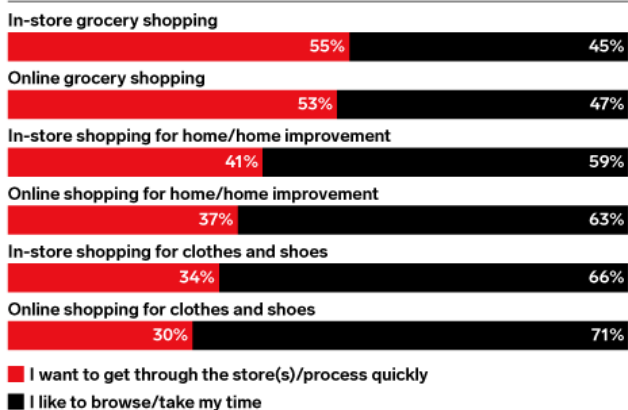
Apart from shopping and [social media platforms](#), consumers are most receptive to ads on news and entertainment sites, according to Q3 2023 data from Integral Ad Science.

To help advertisers expand their ad reach beyond retail platforms, some [retail media networks](#) have partnered with media companies to offer off-site ad placements. For example, [Walmart](#) Connect partnered with Roku on [connected TV](#) ads, while [Amazon](#) Ads teamed with Pinterest to offer Amazon Sponsored Product ads on the social platform.

5. Consumers shop differently across categories

Types of In-Store and Online Shopping Where US Adults Prefer to Shop Quickly vs. Browse/Take Their Time, Nov 2023

% of respondents



Note: ages 18+; numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding
Source: Kearney, "Consumer Experience Briefing Data Pack," Nov 29, 2023

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Most US adults want quick in-store and [online grocery](#) shopping experiences, according to November 2023 data from Kearney. However, when it comes to shopping for clothes and shoes, they prefer to browse a bit, particularly online.

Brands looking to increase discoverability in channels where consumers prioritize speed must embed chances to find new products throughout the shopping journey without adding more time or complexity to the [customer experience](#).

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