

The Wheels on the Social Shopping Cart Will Finally Start Moving

Article



In 2019, social properties finally started making measurable gains in social commerce. Instagram led the way with several new shopping features, including Checkout, that make it easier for consumers to go from inspiration to purchase.

Now, there's evidence to suggest a real uptick in adoption.

According to Civic Science's trend adoption tracker, the percentage of internet users who had bought a product directly through social media channels grew each quarter between Q4 2018 and Q3 2019, rising from 13% to 21%. The biggest jump came in Q2, shortly after the launch of Instagram Checkout.

"Instagram Checkout definitely helped jump-start the appeal of completing a purchase on a social platform," said Debra Aho Williamson, eMarketer principal analyst and author of our latest report, "[US Social Trends for 2020: eMarketer's Predictions for the Year Ahead](#)."

"The idea has been around for years, but never really gained much traction," she said. "Now, hundreds of businesses are testing Instagram Checkout in the US."

Even with these gains, we don't think social media will suddenly become a massive conduit to purchasing in 2020. On Cyber Monday, when an estimated \$9.2 billion was spent online (according to Adobe), just 2.6% of sales came via social channels. On a better note, social media drove 8% of visits, up 17.5% from 2018's Cyber Monday.

The best chances of success for brands and retailers will continue to be in the mid- and upper-funnel, where social properties like Instagram can introduce consumers to new brands, create awareness and stimulate demand over time.

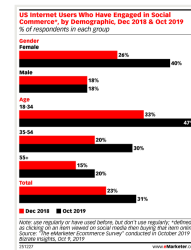
"The good news is that the wheels on the social shopping cart are definitely turning," Williamson said. "The progress is slow, but the momentum is gaining."

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Report by Debra Aho Williamson Jan 15, 2020

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