

4 creative ways your brand can experiment with livestream shopping

Article

In the US, just 18% of adults say they've **used livestream and video ecommerce**, according to an October 2022 Insider Intelligence survey with Bizrate Insights. Brands shouldn't shy away from livestream shopping in the US, but they need to be intentional about how they implement it.

Ask, “what’s the thing that makes it live instead of just another short-form video or something to watch at a later date,” said Sarah Henry, Walmart’s vice president of content, influencer, and commerce, speaking at eTail West 2023 in Palm Springs this past February.

Here are four creative ways to encourage buy-in via livestream.

1. Energize a specific community through a media partnership

Walmart has had success livestreaming for “highly engaged communities that others have built up over time,” said Henry. She pointed to a series the retailer did on cooking with BuzzFeed and a holiday shopping experience with NBCUniversal.

Livestream has a “fear of missing out” (FOMO) factor that normal video content does not. By branding streams as events and working with communities that already exist, Walmart was able to transform something that could have been a simple ad into an experience and push shoppers closer to the point of sale.

2. Boost the exclusivity factor for luxury

Luxury fashion brand **Telfar** has leveraged that same FOMO factor in a very literal sense with livestreams that offer exclusive access to certain products. The brand already releases bags via “drops,” where consumers need to be in the know. With smaller “drips,” Telfar has leveraged its linear TV channel to push bags only available to viewers who are actively watching.

“It’s a little bit of a hybrid between livestreaming and mobile shopping and what you can do with traditional TV or connected TV,” said our analyst Sky Canaves on our “**Behind the Numbers: Reimagining Retail**” podcast. “It shows how an in-demand product can really drive this kind of livestreaming commerce.”

3. Examine the resale opportunity

A similar focus on exclusivity has gone a long way for resale platform **Whatnot**, which focuses on collectables where consumers must be watching the livestream to buy specific products. Much like Telfar, the need-to-watch aspect sets Whatnot’s livestreams apart from on-demand or short video.

4. Focus on entertainment

At its core, livestream is an entertainment opportunity. “I think there’s a big entertainment factor to livestreaming in China that the UK and the US haven’t quite got[ten] right yet,” said our analyst Carina Perkins. “Hosting livestream shopping is quite a different skill from the more sort of traditional influencer content that we’ve seen thus far.”

Some brands have figured out this entertainment factor. Perkins pointed to sofa company Snug, which hosted events with comedian Katherine Ryan and several 2000s bands to boost engagement with its customer base.

Determining how to transform influencer content that can be seen whenever into livestream content that must be viewed at a certain time will draw in viewers and, in turn, shoppers.

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