

How Are Consumers Spending Some of Their Time? Reading Reviews. Lots of Reviews.

Some will even spend upwards of an hour before making a decision

ARTICLE |

Rimma Kats

Reviews play a central role in the path to purchase, and many consumers don't just skim them before purchasing—or passing on—a product. Some will spend anywhere from a few minutes to more than an hour to make sure they're making the right choice.

According to a November 2019 survey from Brightlocal, millennials were more likely to spend a substantial amount of time reading reviews than older cohorts. While nearly half of US internet users ages 18 to 34 said they spent fewer than 10 minutes, almost a third spent more than 25 minutes.

This group was also more likely to devote more than an hour to reading reviews before making a purchase decision. Some 7% of respondents ages 18 to 34 said they did, whereas fewer respondents ages 35 to 54 (2%) and those ages 55 and older (1%) agreed.

Average Amount of Time that US Internet Users Spend Reading Reviews Before Making a Decision, by Age, Nov 2019

% of respondents in each group

	18-34	35-54	55+
<1 minute	9%	8%	3%
1-5 minutes	18%	25%	32%
5-10 minutes	20%	24%	31%
10-15 minutes	12%	14%	14%
15-20 minutes	8%	9%	10%
20-25 minutes	5%	4%	2%
25-30 minutes	9%	6%	4%
30-45 minutes	7%	4%	2%
45-60 minutes	5%	4%	0%
>1 hour	7%	2%	1%

Note: numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Source: Brightlocal, "Local Consumer Review Survey 2019," Dec 11, 2019

251771

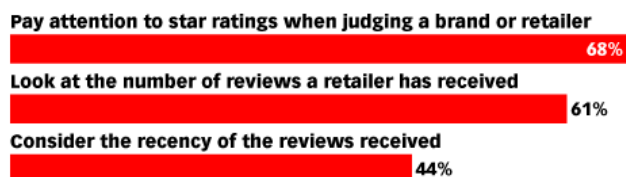
www.eMarketer.com

Older respondents, particularly those ages 55 and older, don't put as much weight on reviews—at least not to the extent of spending a great deal of time perusing them. Two-thirds of respondents in that cohort reported spending 10 minutes or less reading reviews, while considerably fewer said they spent more time than that. For example, 28% of millennials spent more than 25 minutes looking at reviews vs. 7% of those ages 55 and older.

By and large, reviews can make or break a purchase. On one hand, they can get shoppers to **spend more than they initially intended to**. But a product with a low rating—or a small number of reviews—can also steer consumers away. In a survey conducted last year by retail operations platform Brightpearl and Trustpilot, a community-driven online review platform, nearly seven in 10 US internet users said they mainly focus on star ratings when judging a brand or retailer.

What Factors Do US Internet Users Consider When Judging a Brand or Retailer While Making a Purchase Decision?

% of respondents, March 2019



Note: ages 18+

Source: Brightpearl and Trustpilot, "Rise of the Review Culture," June 25, 2019

248991

www.eMarketer.com

And in yet another sign that reviews matter, a separate June 2019 survey from Trustpilot asked digital shoppers worldwide what would lead to an increase in brand trust. **Three of the top 10 factors centered around reviews.**