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Mobile Web vs. Mobile App: Where Do Shoppers Spend Time and Money?

ARTICLE

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A strong in-app experience heightens engagement and loyalty, thus increasing time spent by users. And more user attention can lead to greater spending.

In 2018, total worldwide app revenues grew 63% year over year, according to a March 2019 report from app commerce company Poq, based on data from the company's platform clients. Global time spent in shopping apps on Android devices grew to 18 billion hours in 2018, up 45% from two years prior, per a January 2019 report from app analytics platform App Annie.

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**Time Spent with Shopping Apps Among Android
Users Worldwide, 2016-2018**
billions of hours
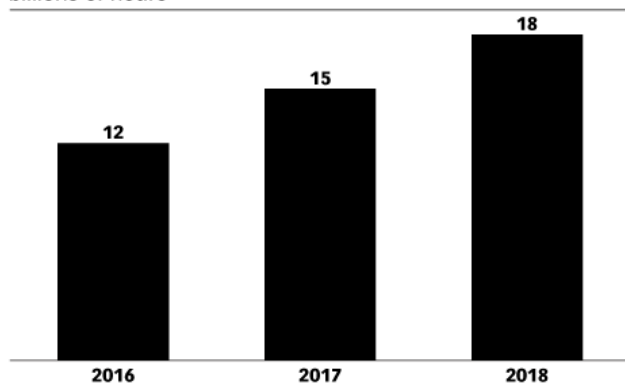
Source: App Annie, "The State of Mobile 2019," Jan 16, 2019
246385   www.**e**Marketer.com

Looking at total time spent, November 2018 marked the biggest mobile shopping month ever. And sessions—comparable to brick-and-mortar foot traffic—grew 65% worldwide from 2016 on Android devices, according to the App Annie report.

In the US, mobile shopping sessions grew 70% from 2016. Amazon's app ranked third for number of active users per month across both iPhones and Androids in 2018. The ecommerce powerhouse was the only retailer to make the top 10 apps in the US, trailing Facebook and Facebook Messenger.
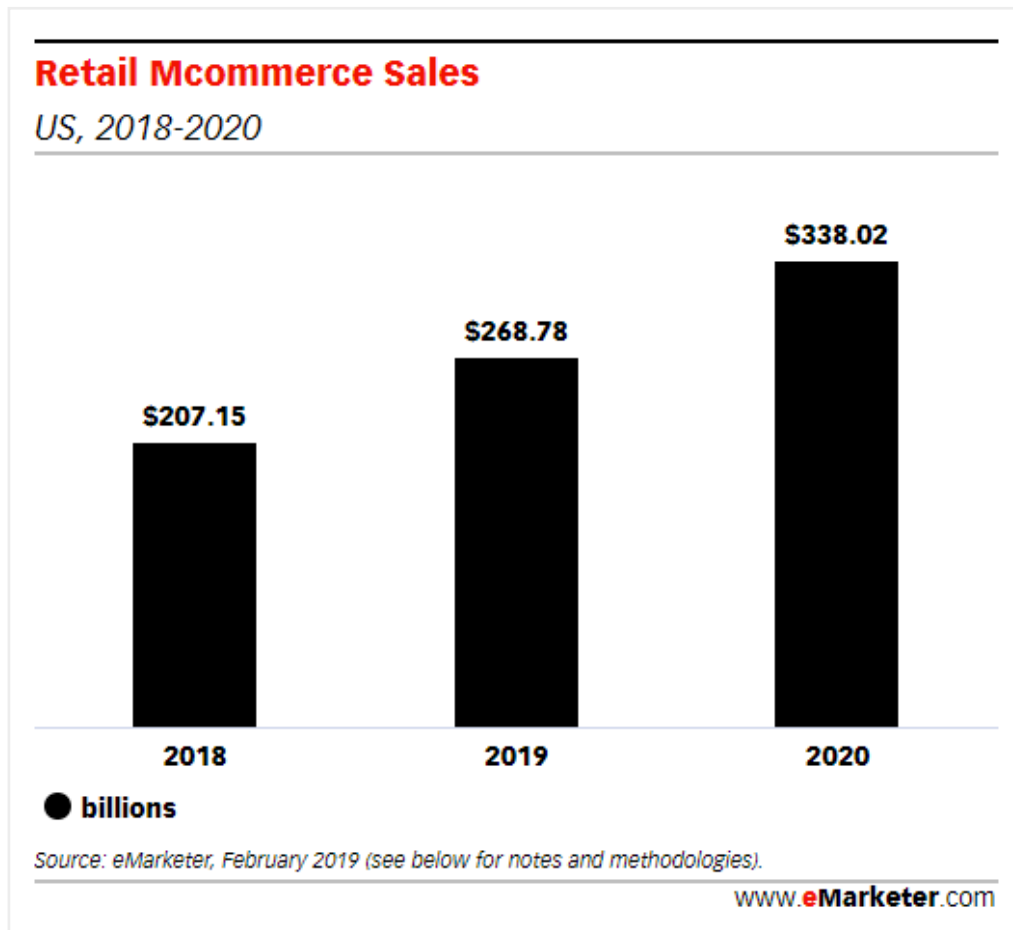
Last year, Amazon's mobile web audience was larger than its app audience, a 2018 Comscore study found. It averaged roughly 152 million unique users per month on mobile web, compared with approximately 112 million unique mobile app users.

However, the vast majority of Amazon's engagement took place in its app, with 85% of time spent vs. 15% on mobile web.

According to App Annie, time spent by US consumers in shopping apps and increasing digital sales had a strong positive correlation of 0.97 between Q1 2014 and Q3 2018—further exemplifying the importance of the user experience.

We forecast that US retail mcommerce sales will reach $268.78 billion in 2019, up nearly 30% year over year. By 2020, that figure will increase

to $338.02 billion and account for nearly half of total US retail ecommerce sales.

Retail Mcommerce Sales
US, 2018-2020

Year	Sales (billions)
2018	$207.15
2019	$268.78
2020	$338.02

● billions

Source: eMarketer, February 2019 (see below for notes and methodologies).

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Retailers haven't always done a great job of encouraging mobile conversion, but they are getting a lot better at connecting with their customers. Continued mcommerce gains can be driven by improved marketing tactics.

"Retailers must activate every phase of the marketing funnel to maximize customer lifetime value," eMarketer principal analyst Andrew Lipsman said. "They can do so by using tactics such as explicitly communicating the value of their app, targeting the right customers through relevant channels, and directly incentivizing downloads, usage and transactions with compelling discounts and promotions."