

How Mobile and Social Figure into Gen X Shopping

Article

Mobile and social usage are major elements of Gen X's digital activity, so it's no surprise that those also figure into their shopping. But while such usage is a default behavior for millennials, Gen X is selective in using mobile and (especially) social as shopping tools.

eMarketer/Bizrate Insights polling in April 2019 found that Xers using mobile apps for a variety of shopping purposes. Among US smartphone/tablet owners ages 35 to 54, more

than half said they had used a mobile retail app to find information about a product or service (61%) or to transact a purchase (54%).

Which Activities Have US Smartphone/Tablet Owners Done Using Apps on Their Smartphone/Tablet in the Past Month?

% of respondents, by demographic, April 2019

	Gender		Age			Total
	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	
Used a mobile retail app to look for more information about a product or a service	52%	56%	63%	61%	39%	54%
Used a mobile retail app to buy a product or service	47%	53%	61%	54%	36%	50%
Used a mobile wallet app to pay in-store (e.g., Apple Pay, Android Pay, Starbucks App, etc.)	28%	32%	42%	35%	12%	30%
Used a shared economy service app (e.g., Uber, Lyft, Airbnb, etc.)	27%	25%	39%	27%	13%	26%
Used a grocery app (e.g., AmazonFresh, FreshDirect, Walmart Grocery, etc.)	18%	26%	25%	26%	16%	22%
Used a meal kit subscription service app (e.g., Blue Apron, HelloFresh, etc.)	2%	4%	7%	3%	0%	3%
None of the above	29%	20%	11%	20%	41%	24%

Source: "The eMarketer Ecommerce Survey" conducted in April 2019 by Bizrate Insights, April 9, 2019

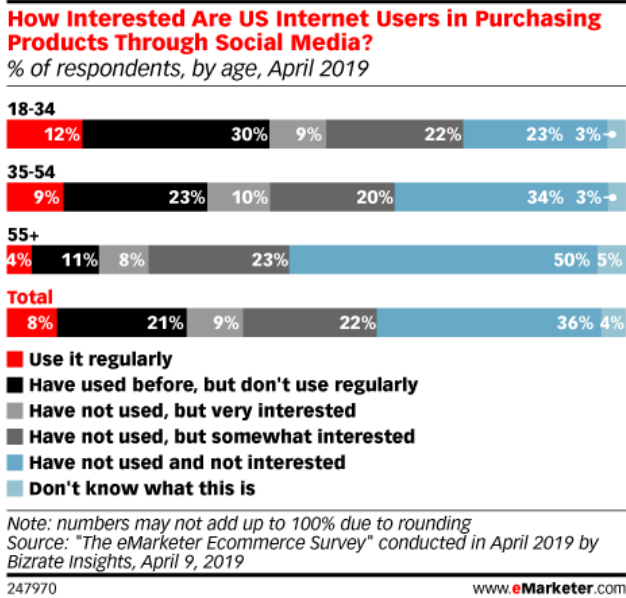
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Some Xers use mobile apps to keep up with brands, but Alliance Data's polling found this was fairly low on their hierarchy of methods. While 18% of Gen Xers said they use mobile apps to keep up with brands, many more said they do so by visiting a retailer's website regularly (44%), subscribing to its emails (40%) or receiving direct mail (28%).

While marketers are eager to connect with consumers on social media, Xers don't want to be inundated with ads. In September 2018 polling from Morning Consult polling, 56% of Xers said there is too much advertising on the social platforms they use. The same survey found many Xers looking askance at marketers' efforts to engage consumers via social. While 31% said they like it "when companies or brands interact with people on social media," 42% said they don't like it. For that matter, just 11% said they follow brands on social, per Alliance Data.

Xers also express limited interest in transacting purchases via social media. In the April 2019 eMarketer/Bizrate Insights polling, 9% said they do this regularly. Among those who haven't bought that way, just 10% said they are very interested in doing so. As one might expect, Xers showed less interest than millennials but more interest than older consumers in social commerce.

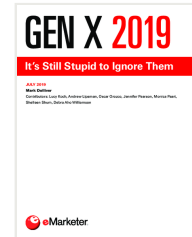


For that matter, Gen Xers are less inclined than younger consumers to use social media as a platform for venting about a product or company. Ericka Podesta McCoy, CMO at research firm Resonate, who was interviewed for our recent “**Gen X 2019**” report, ties this to the “middle child” tendencies of Gen X, who have always gotten less attention than boomers and millennials. At any rate, they are “less likely to share their opinion of a product or company or engage in their societal programs” via social media, she said.

For more information on the digital habits of Generation X, eMarketer PRO subscribers can read our recent report:

Report by Mark Dolliver Jul 01, 2019

Gen X 2019



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