

More D2C Brands Are Relying on Traditional Channels. Here's Why.

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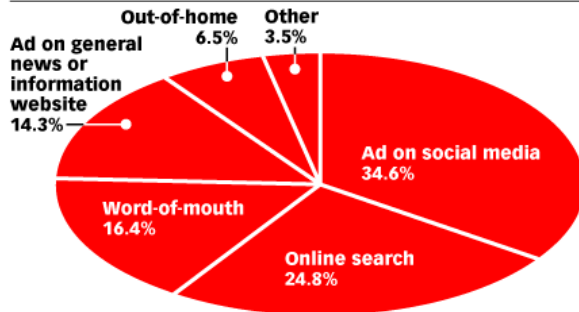
Lucy Koch

With a robust cache of data in tow and proven success with social, direct-to-consumer (D2C) brands have shifted their focus to more traditional mediums with the hopes of attaining a broader customer base.

That make sense given that some consumers first learn about D2Cs through word-of-mouth or seeing an ad on the subway, in addition to popular channels like search and social. Nearly one in four US internet users said they first heard about a D2C brand they purchased from via traditional channels, such as out-of-home (OOH) and word-of-mouth, according to a March 2019 survey from [Toluna](#).

How Did US Internet Users Hear About the First Direct-to-Consumer (D2C) Brand They Bought?

% of respondents, March 2019



Note: n=896 ages 18+; among internet users who have purchased a D2C brand; numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding
Source: Toluna, "D2C Survey," March 6, 2019

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But leveraging traditional marketing isn't a one-size-fits-all approach. It requires continuous testing to determine the most effective channels for specific products or audiences. We spoke with several C-suite executives from food, beauty and apparel brands to better understand how companies are utilizing and measuring more traditional channels, and to what end.

Imran Khan, Co-Founder, CEO of Verishop

We're testing everything from OOH to digital to out-of-mailer and affiliate marketing. With OOH in New York, we saw quick success. We have done that in Chicago and San Francisco as well.

And we've seen that more consumers are interested in experiences — so, we want to get the word out and create a water-cooler moment for what we're doing.

Lorna Sommerville, CMO of Function of Beauty

In our promotional subway ads, we offer consumers a 10% off promotion that they can redeem online, and we do that to really understand the immediate impact of that media. We're focused on two things: understanding what traffic it draws to the site in the short term and doing a health brand survey.

The promotional subway ads allow us to understand how consumers move from brand awareness to interest in the brand perspective, and ultimately, if they're open to converting on one of our more conversion-

oriented messages. Harnessing the data in a purposeful way allows us to determine someone's propensity to convert. After we understand that, we're able to re-target them on digital later.

Heidi Dorosin, CMO of Madison Reed

Traditional advertising is different today than in the old days when you just ran TV or radio [ads] and hoped for the best. Back then, you didn't know much about the consumers who came to your brand via that channel. But now, we are measuring much more precisely because we have that data.

For radio, one of the strengths that we have is our exit survey. Through our in-house attribution model, the exit survey allows us to determine how consumers came to us and after we know that, we can better determine our return on investment for specific channels.

Jonathan Regev, Co-Founder and CEO of The Farmer's Dog

People are finding out about us through their friends, the dog park and media such as OOH ads, TV and social. We started trying out different ways to get our name out there, and we're seeing people coming in from a variety of ways. Our most successful channel is word-of-mouth, and sometimes our advertisements are that extra push that they need.