

Want to Bring Customers In-Store? Get Them to Follow You on Social Media

ARTICLE

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Building a social media following is not only a great way for brands to engage customers online, it can also help increase brick-and-mortar foot traffic.

More than three-quarters of US internet users said they would visit a brand's physical store after following it on social media, according to a February 2019 survey conducted by social media management platform [Sprout Social](#).

What Actions Do US Internet Users Take When They Follow Brands on Social Media?

% of respondents, Feb 2019



Note: ages 18-73

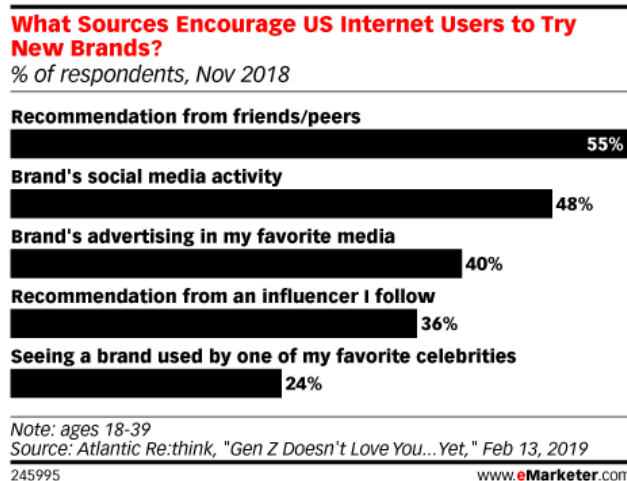
Source: Sprout Social, "Sprout Social Index Edition XV: Empower & Elevate," May 7, 2019

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Loyal customers will typically follow a brand on social media as well as have an interest in visiting its retail location, likely contributing to the high figure. But that doesn't mean social isn't a great tool for engaging new, younger customers and getting them interested in visiting a physical store.

Most US consumers discover new brands the old-fashioned way: by receiving recommendations from friends. Even among internet users ages 18 to 39, 55% were encouraged to try new brands from their friends and peers, according to a November 2018 survey conducted by **Atlantic Re:think**, the creative marketing group of The Atlantic magazine. But nearly half (48%) said they discovered new brands through their social media activity, and 36% said they were encouraged by a recommendation from an influencer they follow.



Despite popular belief, brick-and-mortar still plays a role in the shopping experience for **millennials** and **Gen Z**.

What can brands do to get consumers to engage with them online? The Sprout Social survey asked which trends and features consumers wanted to see more from brands on social media; 45% said live video, while 24% of respondents said they wanted to see more user-generated content (e.g., **influencers**) and **Instagram Stories**.

"Shoppers look to social media to engage with brands and retailers in a new way," said Andrew Lipsman, principal analyst at eMarketer. "Rich

media content, like video and stories, offers a huge opportunity to draw shoppers in to the brand experience and deepen the relationship. Once they think of themselves as brand loyalists, customers will shop wherever that brand is present—whether online or in-store.”