


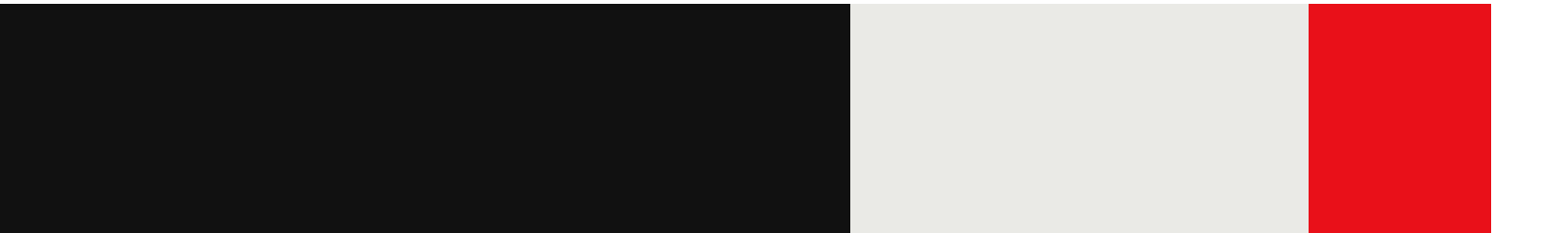
# Don't Count Out Older Grocery Shoppers

Article



**O**lder consumers often get short shrift in studies about online shopping behavior because they aren't digital natives like coveted Gen Z and millennials. US adults ages 65 and older do have the lowest digital buyer penetration, though at 46.6% of the population by our estimates, that's still a significant figure.

It's also true that younger internet users are more inclined to buy groceries online. According to "The eMarketer Ecommerce Insights Survey," conducted by Bizrate Insights in July 2018, 23.8% of 18- to 29-year-olds and 28.8% of 30- to 39-year-olds had purchased food and beverages digitally in the past month. The percentages for older cohorts are lower, but still



competitive. Around one-fifth (21.5%) of respondents ages 50 to 59 and 17.2% of those 60 and older had done the same.

A June 2018 survey by the **International Food Information Council (IFIC) Foundation** in collaboration with **AARP Foundation** shed more light on the digital grocery buying behavior of older adults (those 50 and older). They found lower levels of activity than Bizrate Insights did: 17% of respondents said they had ever bought groceries online and picked up in-store, while 17% had ordered prepared food from a meal delivery service, 16% had bought groceries online for delivery and 10% had ordered from a meal-kit delivery service.

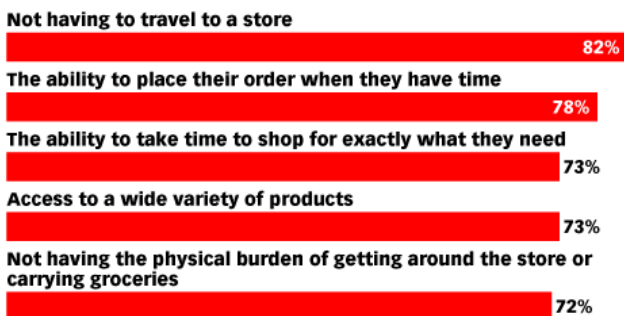
The study also found that these shoppers who buy food online fall into two distinct groups: high-income consumers who like convenience and those with mobility issues for which shopping digitally is more of a necessity. In many ways it makes sense that older consumers who may not drive or who may have trouble carrying groceries would take advantage of online grocery delivery if they could. In a June 2018 **Adobe** survey, more US internet users ages 71 and older had shopped online for groceries in the past year than those ages 53 to 71 (22% vs. 18%).

The IFIC/AARP study found that the leading motivation given for ordering groceries or a meal kit online was not having to travel to a store, cited by 82% of respondents. Ordering when they had time (78%), access to a variety of products (73%), taking their time to shop (73%) and not being physically burdened (72%) also had significance.

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#### What Motivates US Internet Users Ages 50+ to Order Groceries Digitally? June 2018

% of respondents



Note: n=370 ages 50+ who order groceries digitally  
Source: International Food Information Council Foundation, "Grocery Delivery for Older Americans," in collaboration with the AARP Foundation, July 25, 2018

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High cost was the leading barrier to online ordering, cited by 89%. Nearly half of those who had bought groceries for delivery had paid a fee, but only one-third of those who had not ordered groceries would be willing to pay one. There was also a bit of a disconnect regarding the amount of that fee. The average fee that consumers who hadn't ordered delivery would be willing to pay was \$7.60. However, the average fee among those who had paid one was \$9.70.

More and more services, though, have dropped delivery fees with a minimum order or offer "free" shipping with membership like Amazon Prime.

In reality, older grocery shoppers aren't that different from their younger counterparts. Most **consumers still prefer to buy food in-store** and for the same reason: They want **to see and touch items in person**.