

Online Shoppers' Expectations for Visual Merchandising Rise Dramatically

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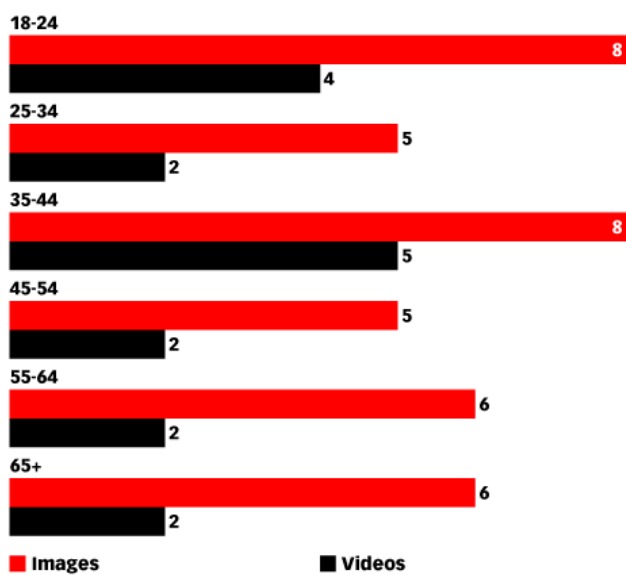
Shoppers have high expectations for retailers' image and video content on an online product page, and a lack thereof is a consumer deal breaker.

When consumers research products prior to purchase, roughly one-third will look to a brand's website or an online marketplace, according to a December 2018 survey from [Adobe](#). And these shoppers expect a robust array of content.

According to a January 2019 survey from product experience management platform [Salsify](#), US digital shoppers expect an average of about six images and three videos when looking at a product on Amazon or another retailer.

What Is the Average Number of Images and Videos US Digital Shoppers* Expect to See for a Product on an Ecommerce Site?

by age, Jan 2019



Note: *digital shoppers made an online purchase in 2018
Source: Salsify, "2019 Consumer Research: 5 New Rules to Tackle Shoppers' Rising Expectations on Your Brand," March 4, 2019

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Those in the 18-to-24 and 35-to-44 age groups had the highest expectations for content—with both cohorts expecting eight images and at least four videos. These expectations have increased substantially when compared with the company's 2016 findings. Three years ago, consumers expected an average of three images per product, and because video content was relatively new, it wasn't included as a possible response. Today, consumers across every age group expect nearly double the number of photos and a minimum of two videos per item.

"Retailers have gotten a lot better about visual merchandising online, and that has only served to raise the bar of shoppers' expectations," said Andrew Lipsman, eMarketer principal analyst. "Shoppers once resisted buying products like apparel online because they couldn't touch, feel and try on the products, and while they are much more receptive to this dynamic, the risk of returns still looms large. Additional product imagery and video content helps shoppers get a better sense of the product and reduce their perceived risk, so they can feel more confident in their purchase."

The increase in demand for product content emphasizes the growing significance of providing quality information to shoppers, but sometimes images and videos aren't enough. When Salsify asked consumers why they had abandoned product pages on a retailer's site, 69% said that there wasn't enough information or details—topping a high price tag as a deal breaker. Low-quality images or videos were the No. 3 reason not to buy, suggesting that when it comes to product content, consumers expect both quantity and quality.

The least likely reason shoppers noted leaving a product page was because of an unfamiliar brand (this is likely specific to online marketplaces and retailers like Amazon and Walmart), illustrating the idea that consumers are not necessarily turned off from new brands. To appeal to new customers, these brands should provide the right product information in the formats that shoppers want.