

# Millennials as Digital (and Nondigital) Shoppers

## ARTICLE |

**Mark Dolliver**

Millennials' propensity for digital usage carries over to their shopping. And it exposes them to plenty of digital advertising, about which they have mixed feelings—especially since online reviews are an appealing alternative source of information.

As their lives get busier—and as they need more stuff for family households—millennials appreciate the convenience of ecommerce. We estimate that 84.8% of millennials will be digital buyers this year.

---

### US Digital Buyers, by Generation, 2019

% of population



*Note: digital buyers are defined as internet users who have made at least one purchase via any digital channel (including online, mobile and tablet) during the calendar year; millennials are individuals born between 1981 and 1996; Gen X are individuals born between 1965 and 1980; baby boomers are individuals born between 1946 and 1964*

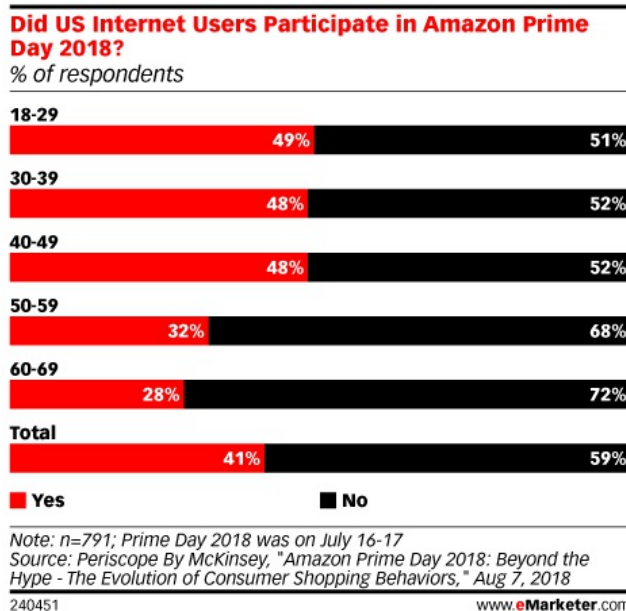
*Source: eMarketer, Oct 2018*

244959

www.eMarketer.com

Amazon is a major beneficiary of this. Fancifully or otherwise, 44% of 18-to-34s in a Max Borges survey in June said they would rather give up sex for a year than quit Amazon. More prosaically, the Roth Capital Partners polling identified 62% of 18-to-38s as Amazon Prime members. In Periscope By McKinsey polling, nearly half of 18-to-29s

and 30-to-39s reported participating in Amazon Prime Day last July.



Part of Amazon’s appeal for millennials is that reviews posted there make it a valuable information resource. “If you look at why Amazon has been so successful, a lot of times [millennials] are going into Amazon and Amazon Marketplace and doing their initial research on products based on those reviews,” Roth Capital Partners’ Zaffaroni said.

Amid all of their digital shopping, millennials have not forsaken physical stores. Rather, their buying often combines online and in-store elements. The Roth Capital Partners survey found evidence of this when 18-to-38s cited their preferred shopping method for making a significant purchase. The most popular approach was to do research digitally and then buy in-store.

While convenience is an obvious factor in millennials’ usage of digital resources for shopping, price is crucial as well. Michelle Skupin, senior director of marketing and communications at RetailMeNot, pointed to research her company has done (in conjunction with Forrester Research) in which nearly seven in 10 millennials said they “cannot complete a purchase without searching for a deal or offer.”