

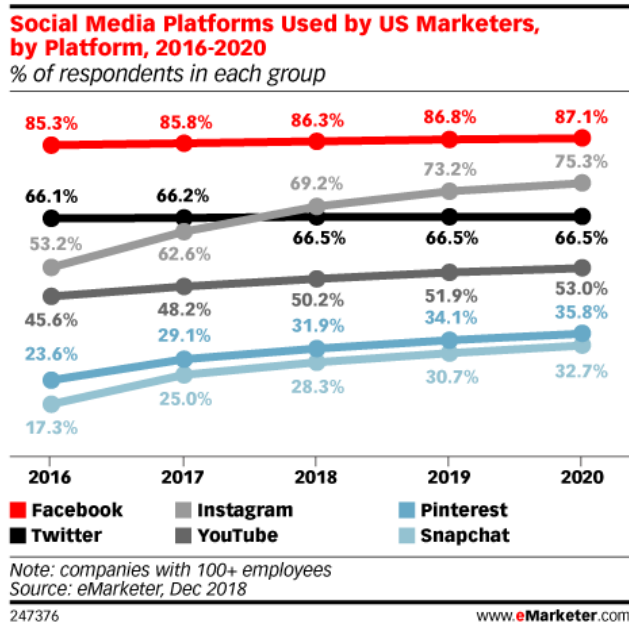
# Why Facebook Provides Scale, but Instagram and Pinterest Offer Relevance for Social Commerce

## ARTICLE |

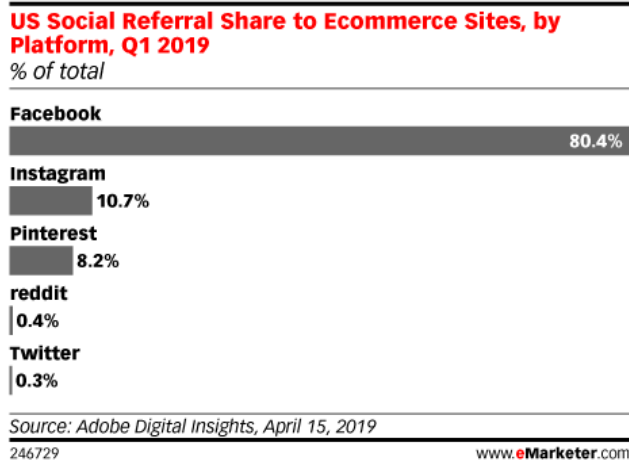
**Andrew Lipsman**

**T**he majority of social commerce in the US takes place on Pinterest, Instagram and Facebook, though Snapchat is also part of the mix.

We forecast that 86.8% of US marketers will use Facebook for social media marketing in 2019, and 73.2% will use Instagram. While the usage of Pinterest (34.1%) and Snapchat (30.7%) are considerably lower, this is perhaps a reflection of the more skewed audience profiles of females and young people, respectively.



Although Facebook’s user experience is less dedicated to social shopping, the platform’s dominance of the social media landscape, along with retail brands’ usage of targeted ads for customer acquisition, makes it a key traffic driver to ecommerce sites. According to Adobe, Facebook drove 80.4% of all US social referral to retail sites in Q1 2019, followed by Instagram (10.7%) and Pinterest (8.2%).



“The first platform for many marketers is Facebook, mainly because of the size and scale,” said Zvika Goldstein, chief product officer of Kenshoo, a digital advertising technology platform, who was

interviewed for our recent “Social Commerce 2019” report. “But in certain categories, they look at Instagram as the stronger vehicle for ecommerce.”

For example, Instagram has a more distinctive aesthetic that attracts younger users and lifestyle brands, particularly in fashion and beauty. The platform offers a unique combination of scale and contextual relevance that has made it the first choice many brands in these categories turn to for social commerce. Instagram may be on its way to becoming an ecommerce powerhouse if it can prove that its relevance drives purchase.

In its most ambitious push into ecommerce so far, the company launched “Checkout on Instagram” in March 2019, with retail partners that included adidas, H&M, Nike, Prada and Warby Parker. The new capability, which helps brands streamline checkout directly within the app for products seen on Instagram, is part of a larger move into commerce-adjacent services like messaging and payments.

Pinterest is another key player in social commerce, as it offers users a venue for creative and aspirational pursuits that aligns particularly well with shopping content. According to a February 2019 survey by Cowen and Company, 47% of social media users saw Pinterest as the platform for discovering and shopping for products—more than three times higher than those who cited Facebook or Instagram.

**Social Media Activities Performed by US Social Media Users, by Platform, Feb 2019**  
% of respondents

	Instagram	Facebook	Snapchat	Pinterest	Twitter
Viewing photos	77%	65%	64%	59%	42%
Watching videos	51%	46%	50%	21%	32%
Sharing content with everyone	45%	57%	46%	21%	32%
Sharing content one-to-one	31%	43%	45%	12%	20%
Networking	23%	33%	21%	10%	26%
News	18%	38%	17%	9%	56%
Finding/shopping for products	11%	15%	5%	47%	7%
Promoting my business	9%	7%	6%	5%	7%

Note: ages 18+  
Source: Cowen and Company, “Shoptalk 2019: Key Takeaways for Ecommerce, Visual Search, and Fulfillment,” March 11, 2019

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Pinterest also offers a valuable audience for marketers. According to Comscore data cited in Pinterest's March 2019 S-1 filing, the platform reaches 80% of US mothers who use the internet—a key demographic that wields a significant amount of discretionary purchasing power. The filing also included data from Oracle indicating that Pinterest households spend 29% more than the average household.

Despite reaching an ideal audience that is ready, willing and able to spend, Pinterest sometimes struggles to get credit for its ability to influence what people end up buying. Much of Pinterest's user experience still revolves around curation of product content pertaining to an interest or aspirational pursuit, but it lacks certain capabilities around conversion—particularly the ability to buy within the platform.

"Pinterest is a really popular platform for planning your wedding, and you're doing that over a year," said Rachel Tipograph, founder and CEO of MikMak, an ecommerce platform for social video. "But if you're a performance marketer, you look at ecommerce sales through a 24-hour and seven-day lookback window. In that universe, Pinterest often doesn't get credit for the sale."