BE THERE
WHEN IT COUNTS

How To Reach Shoppers In The Moment Of Purchase

connexity

As consumers take the shopping process across channels, the retail industry is forced to evolve in order to meet their needs. The proliferation of mobile devices — and widespread use of social, e-commerce and content platforms — have given consumers a variety of options when it comes to discovering and evaluating products to buy.

How and **when** consumers browse and buy has changed. New research shows that the buyer's journey might not always take the shape of a linear path, but occur in a series of "micro moments" filled with high consideration and purchase intent. These moments typically strike when one of four kinds of desires come to mind. They are:

I want to know information about specific products or services to learn about product features and benefits.

I want to go somewhere — a store, website or app — to buy the specific product.

I want to do all that I can with this product and I need instructions and how-to information.

I want to buy a specific product and I need information to help me decide such as purchase options, reviews and pricing.

The desire to "**buy**," is perhaps the most precious and yet elusive moment for brands to creatively predict and identify.

The E-Commerce Challenge:
The Mystical "Moment" of Purchase

A shopper's initial requests for information (wanting to "know" or "go") often starts on mobile, but they can also begin on the desktop and culminate on a different device or in-store. As they move across channels, consumers expect the same thing: a fast, informative and seamless experience.

While most journeys comprise of similar kinds of micro moments, the order and cadence in which those moments occur varies by individual. That dynamic makes it challenging for retailers to follow consumers through their omni-channel journeys.

Many retailers leverage a combination of first and third-party data in an attempt to reach shoppers with the right message in the right moment; however many still struggle to effectively reach shoppers in an exact moment of intent, particularly the **zero moment of truth** before purchase.

What You'll Learn

We'll explain how retailers can use data to reach a shopper in that crucial moment of high purchase intent, and dynamically serve personalized message that compels the shopper to action.

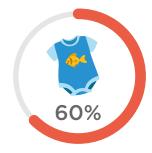# 1 Understand the Difference Between Audience Interest and Purchase Intent

You can't take advantage of moments without understanding the shopper's mindset as these moments occur. Data is the key to getting inside consumer hearts and minds, but it can be tricky to disentangle true shopper "intent" from other signals.

A marketer can segment or model audiences based on **category-specific activity** (for example, auto, travel, electronics), but *interest* in relevant categories doesn't necessarily indicate *intent* to buy a particular product. For example, a man who reads car blogs is not necessarily intending to purchase a car in the near future. A woman looking for face lotion is not necessarily also interested in foot cream—although both may fall under Beauty Products, even under the "Lotion" sub-category.

Similarly, while **audience profiles** and **demographic information** may provide useful segments for awareness or brand campaigns, they don't necessarily indicate consumer interest or intent. Many marketers use demographics as a way to target the "right" audience for their product; however, knowing what product shoppers are looking for and *when* they want it turns is a much more accurate predictor of their likelihood purchase than their demographics. In many cases, demographic segments can go against the grain of traditional expectations:

50%

50% of people searching for "**beard oil**" are women

60%

60% of people searching for "**baby clothes**" don't have kids at home and aren't expecting

39%

39% of people searching for "**coupons**" have household incomes of $100,000 or more

** For more info see pg 9

2 **"In the Moment" Needs to Be Just That**

We all know the importance of data recency. But when it comes to capturing shoppers in the micro-moment before purchase, the need for continuous real-time data is even more intensified.

People's desires, needs and contexts change—and each of these may affect their decision in from moment-to-moment. As the consumer decision process becomes tighter and more moments-based, so must your data.

3 **Not All Clicks are Created Equal**

Clicks are a common metric to optimize against in any campaign, but many marketers mistake clicks as a signal of intent.

A click could be a mistake.

A click could be part of a comparison journey.

A click could be a moment of curiosity.

If you're optimizing against clicks above all else, you're not truly connecting with your customers and how they behave.

Tweaking campaigns to obsessively bump your click rate can lead marketers to be reactionary rather than becoming more predictive. Your goal should be to get *ahead* of what customers want—and when they want it—not solely to increase clicks by .2%.

4 Be Prepared With The Right Creative for the Right Moment

Once you understand the difference between profile data, audience interest and true "purchase intent"—you must be prepared to connect meaningfully with the shopper in that moment before purchase. Rich intent data is useless if your creative fails to connect with the consumer.

By the time the shopper begins browsing similar products, you should already be well-prepared with a pool of content—specs, creative and copy that can be dynamically served in the right moment to fit that customer's needs.

A few tips for better dynamic creative optimization:

- **Product photos** should be high-quality, and rendered in a consistent aspect ratio and size; this helps you avoid pixelation, which can look awkward and unprofessional.

- Dynamic ad copy should be short, eye-catching and **punchy**. Don't just dynamically pull the product title and description from your product page. Although visitors on your own website may be interested in more product detail, most of your ad views will only last for a split second. Experiment with highlighting key **value propositions** of the product (i.e. "100% cashmere") or your fulfillment options (i.e. "Free Shipping & Returns").

- Tailor your messaging based on their **device**. For example, mobile shoppers are less likely to convert on their device, but if they do convert they are likely to buy more; many mobile shoppers also use their devices to look for coupons and decide on a purchase in-store. Assist shoppers in accomplishing what *they* want to in that moment, on that device.

- Consider how you can leverage relevant **context** to tailor your message. Here are some examples:

  - Knowing the **location**, time-of-day or current weather experienced by the shopper may lend itself to an extremely personalized message.

  - **Web browsing and clickstream data** can provide an incredible window into a shopper's interests, behavior and upcoming actions.

  - **Purchase data** can help you understand the types of products or activities they are interested in, or even complementary items they've purchased which may pair well with your product.

  - As always, **A/B test** different elements, such as the price, the backdrop, arrows, the color of the button etc.

5 Predict the Next "Moment" Before it Actually Happens

Every brand wants to reach a "high intent" shopper who is clicking through products and preparing to buy — but many don't take the time to look ahead and anticipate when the *next* shopping moment will occur.

One of the easiest approaches is selling **complementary products** to recently purchased items; for example, a shopper who just bought a laptop may be interested in a laptop case next.

Retailers can be even more predictive by looking at **purchasing cycles**. For example, based on past purchase data, a shoe brand could estimate when a runner's shoes will wear down enough that she'll begin to consider buying another pair.

6 **Make It Easy for Shoppers To Evaluate and Decide Efficiently**

Winning a click is an important step; but getting them to buy is another. As consumers move back and forth among mobile, web, and in-store, they expect their relationships with the brand to move with them.

The product may be perfect, but a purchase opportunity can easily be lost due to slow loading times, confusing navigation, small product photos or a host of other frustrations.

So how do you provide the experience shoppers need to make a purchase decision? Here are some helpful tips for improving your product pages to increase conversions. Beyond that, consider how to give your shoppers complete confidence in their decision to purchase from you. You should preemptively answer any questions or doubts they may have: Is this product high quality? Is it the right size? Are returns easy?

A recent study from Bizrate Insights, a division of Connexity, found that a simple styling tool, which helps online buyers envision a product in their homes with visualization and pairings, could help 40% of buyers purchase online without needing to visit a retail store. Sizing tools can be even more effective in helping shoppers confidently buy online.

Another way to reassure shoppers is through buyer reviews and trust symbols; external "vouching" is one of the best ways to instill confidence in your store and increase your conversions.

7 Support All Touch Points (and Their Teams)

For moments-based targeting to work, all pieces must be in place. Brands must align marketing, technical and fulfillment teams to eliminate silos and focus on achieving the same goals.

Macy's took that step when it combined its separate online and in-store inventory systems to create a single system to give customers one view of availability.

Target also did away with separate online and physical store teams across the company while adopting a mobile-first attitude; the retail giant now considers mobile to be the "front door" of Target. This subtle yet important distinction puts their customers first, by fulfilling their desire for a seamless, on-demand and multi-channel experience.

If your digital and brick-and-mortar teams have a different sets of KPIs and incentives, it could lead to channel conflict and interfere with the customer's overall experience.

In our complex world of digital and mobile commerce, a customer can be won and lost in a moment.

When that moment arrives, will you be ready?

REACH SHOPPERS AT THE MOMENT OF PURCHASE

Connexity helps marketers find and target shoppers who are ready to buy. Find out how:

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