

Turning Customer Insights Into Ecommerce Growth Opportunities

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Covid-19 has reshaped our world and many aspects of our day-to-day life. One area that was significantly transformed was online shopping. According to IBM's U.S. Retail Index¹, the pandemic has accelerated the shift away from physical stores to digital shopping by roughly five years, resulting in a 20% growth in eCommerce. However, while plenty of shoppers came online out of necessity, this doesn't mean they prefer shopping online and will stick around post-pandemic. This report examines questions like: What drove some consumers to increase their time online, and what kept others at bay? Were opportunities missed to retain the bevy of new online consumers? Can they still be won?

Although Covid-19 will eventually dissipate and pre-Covid lifestyles will resume, many of our daily routines and habits formed during these last 9 months will not—including online shopping. Brands and retailers can still bring more consumers online (and increase the buying frequency of those already there) with the right eCommerce experience. To help, CommerceNext fielded a survey, in partnership with BizRate Insights and Contentsquare, to understand current consumer intentions, behavior and sentiment around online shopping experiences.

From this research, we sought to learn more about:

- Changes in online shopping behavior due to Covid-19.
- Consumer intentions, behaviors and pain points throughout the digital journey.
- Aspects of the consumer journey that serve as opportunities and pitfalls for eCommerce growth.

¹ Source: techcrunch.com/2020/08/24/Covid-19-pandemic-accelerated-shift-to-e-commerce-by-5-years-new-report-says/



Summary of Results

Covid-19's abrupt and sweeping onset required our industry to focus on implementing appropriate messaging and solving unprecedented shipping and logistics issues. In the chaos and rush, some may have neglected the eCommerce experience and left shoppers frustrated when browsing their sites.

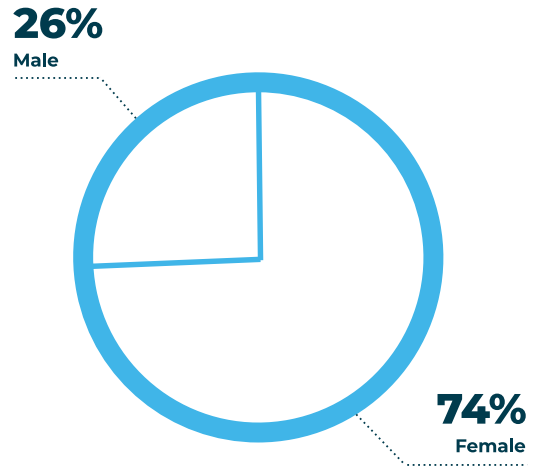
This brief report summarizes the online shopping demands of the Covid consumer, so retailers and brands can meet consumers' changing eCommerce needs. A few key takeaways from this survey's results include:

- After shipping and promotions, easy navigation is the most crucial feature for having an enjoyable online shopping experience.
- Consumers credit retailers for providing more flexibility and transparency in shipping and return policies.
- Content generally isn't a large factor in the ultimate purchase decision, but the kind of content consumers do appreciate seeing is product-related information.

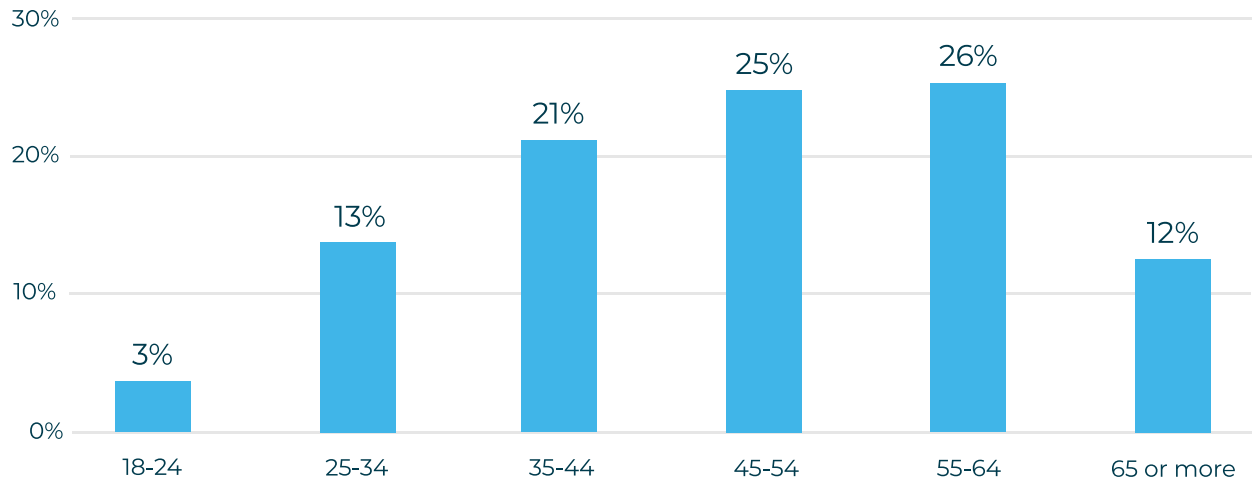


Methodology

Through Bizrate Insights (www.bizrateinsights.com), CommerceNext surveyed 1,030 shoppers between December 2nd and December 9th, 2020. The majority of respondents were female and between the ages of 45 to 64.



Source: Bizrate Insights Panel, December 2-9. n=1,030



Source: Bizrate Insights Panel, December 2-9. n=1,030

In this report, we refer to Millennials as anyone who selected the age group 25-34 or 35-44 (n=350).



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2020: Consumers Stayed In and Went Online

This past year left everyone little choice but to go online—birthday celebrations, doctors appointments, movies and shopping had to be accomplished from the living room couch. This is why it's no surprise that 80% of consumers did more online shopping during Covid times. In addition, consumers spent more time on mobile than ever before and some started shopping on social media.



Source: Bizrate Insights Panel, December 2-9. n=1,030

One group stood out from the rest, however. Millennials' increased digital presence during Covid-19 was significantly more pronounced and varied than the total group. While they similarly shopped more online (81% vs. 80% of the total group), **62% of Millennials made purchases from their mobile phones (vs. 46% of the total group)**. Forty percent used more apps (vs. 33%), 22% pursued shopping from a social media site (vs. 15%) and 59% used more digital entertainment (vs. 51%).

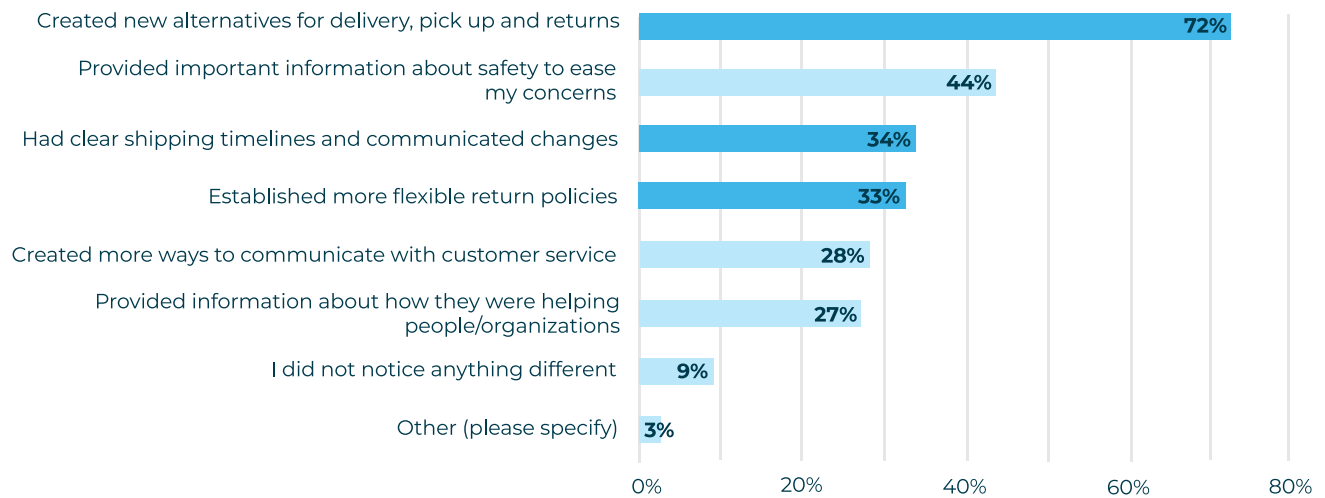


Shoppers Noticed A Difference in Covid-era eCommerce

Almost all respondents (91%) noticed brands and retailers taking different steps to respond to the pandemic. In addition to noticing updates on safety measures, the steps most identified were related to alternative options for shipping, delivery and returns which should be encouraging given the effort made to deal with these issues last year.



From brands and retailers that responded well during the Covid-19 pandemic, what did you notice? (Select all that apply)



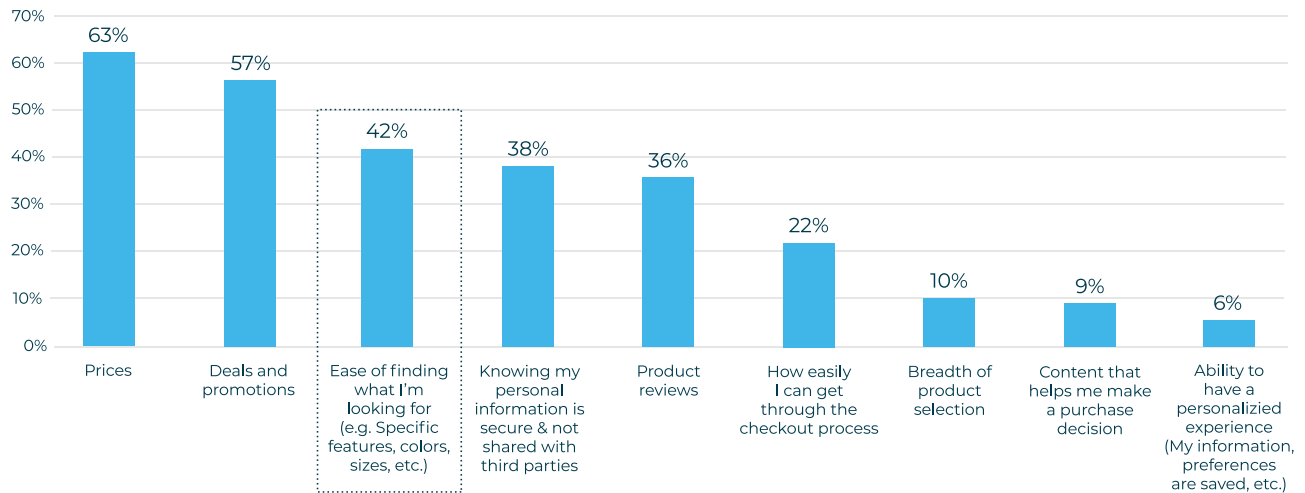
Source: Bizrate Insights Panel, December 2-9. n=1,030



2021: Navigation and Search Will Be King

After pricing and promotions (which are table stakes), easy navigation is the top attribute consumers find valuable when shopping online. Other important factors when online shopping included privacy and security, product reviews and ease of checkout.

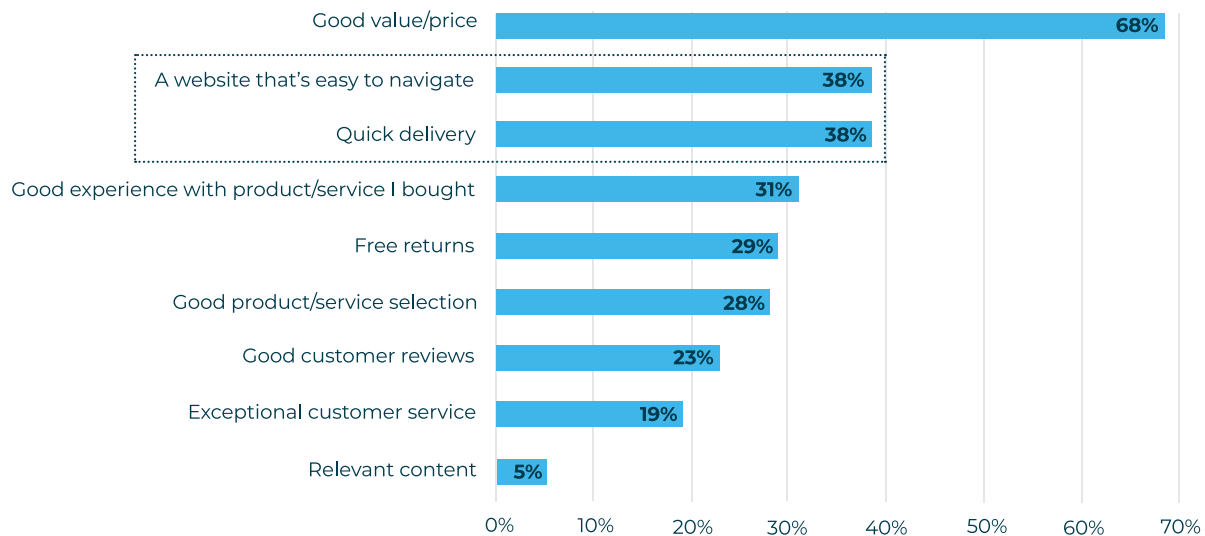
Q: What do you look for in a website when shopping online? (Select up to 3)



Source: Bizrate Insights Panel, December 2-9. n=1,030

Navigation is also the biggest reason they'll return again—it's now as big of an asset to a brand as expedient delivery.

Q: What aspects of the online shopping experience make you want to purchase from a website in the future? (Select up to 3)

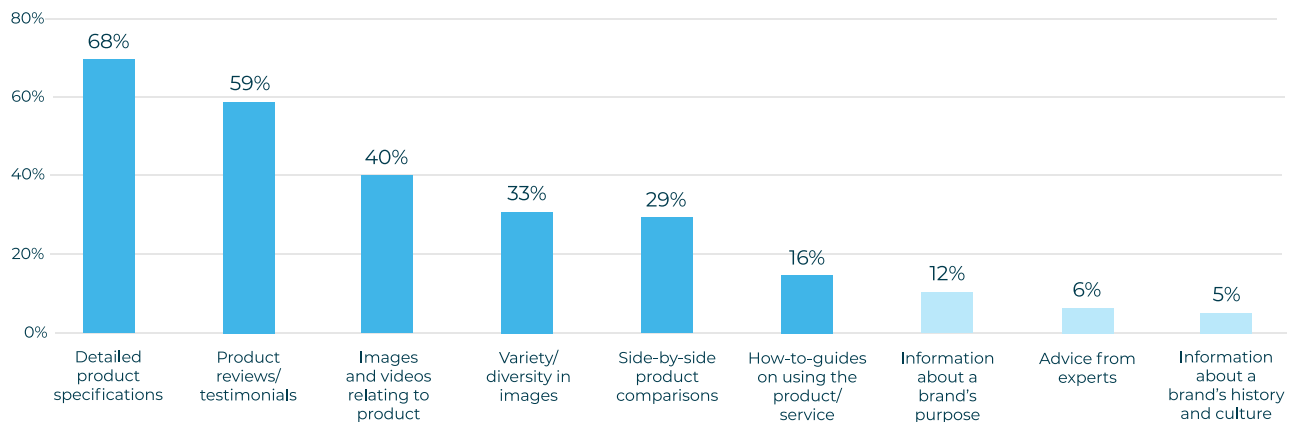


Source: Bizrate Insights Panel, December 2-9. n=1,030

Surprisingly, only 5% of consumers now look for content to help them make a purchase decision when shopping online. But, the content they appreciate the most relates to products and product descriptions, including: specs, reviews, images, videos and side-by-side comparisons. One of the things CommerceNext heard from brands last year was that brand.com sites saw more growth than retailer.com sites during the pandemic. This could be because brand.com sites generally have this type of product-specific content readily available to help consumers navigate purchase decisions.



What type of content is most helpful to you when shopping online?
(Select up to 3)

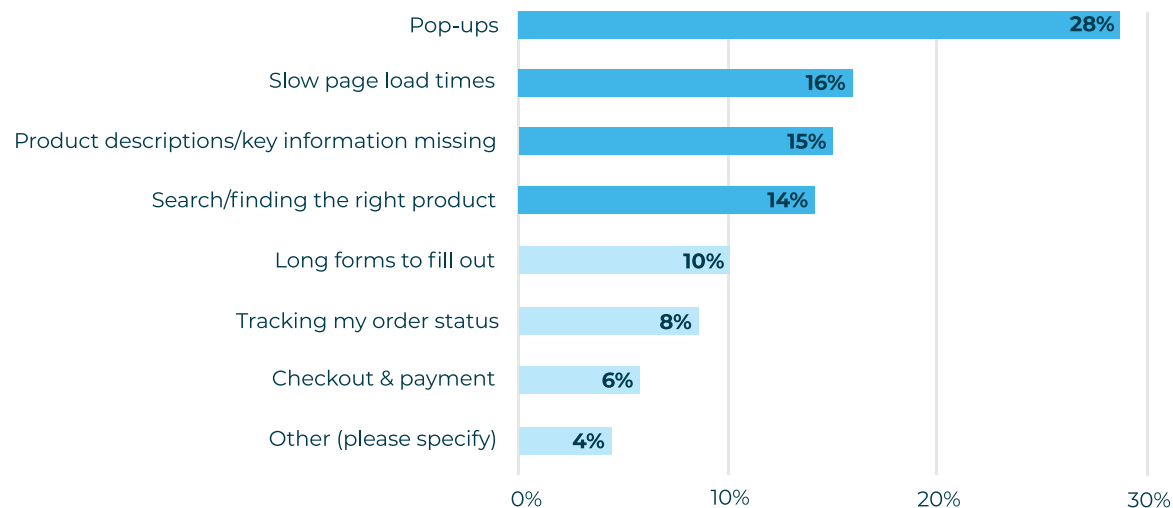


Source: Bizrate Insights Panel, December 2-9. n=1,030

With navigation so critical for consumers, it follows that they are also most frustrated by navigation impediments, e.g. pop-ups, slow page loads, missing product information or trouble finding the right product.



What part of the online shopping experience do you find most frustrating?
(Select one)



Source: Bizrate Insights Panel, December 2-9. n=1,030

Turning Consumer Insights Into Growth

With so much eCommerce growth going into 2021, brands and retailers will continue feeling the heat on delivering world class user experiences. The Covid consumer not only bases their shopping decisions on price, shipping options and promotions, but also lends near equal weight to their ability to feel as comfortable shopping online as they would in-store. Poor navigation and lack of product information hinder online shopping experiences, so investing the time to improve those eCommerce experiences is critical for both conversion and retention.

The other 2021 digital conundrum for retailers and brands is how to satisfy the consumer desire for easy navigation and comprehensive product content in a mobile experience. And, with so many consumers ditching the desktop and grabbing their phones to shop, we predict we'll see mobile-first builds and social strategy baked into a lot more product roadmaps this year.



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About Contentsquare

Contentsquare empowers brands to build better digital experiences. Their experience analytics platform tracks and visualizes billions of digital behaviors, delivering intelligent recommendations that everyone can use to grow revenue, increase loyalty and fuel innovation. Founded in Paris in 2012, Contentsquare has since opened offices in London, New York, San Francisco, Munich, Tel Aviv, Tokyo and Singapore. Today, it helps more than 700 enterprises in 26 countries deliver better digital experiences for their customers. Learn more at contentsquare.com

Acknowledgements

CommerceNext would like to thank BizRate Insights, who partnered with us and provided their panel of consumers for the shopper insights that are part of this brief. Learn more at bizrateinsights.com

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