Emerging Channels Can Level Up a Unified Commerce Strategy

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Today, more than ever, standing still means falling behind. The rapid evolution of technology has proven that businesses can no longer rely on traditional ways of connecting with consumers. As new digital channels emerge, organizations must make the most of them to meet evolving customer expectations.

So, what are the emerging channels worth knowing—and how can businesses integrate them to gain a competitive edge?

Socializing the shopping experience: Social commerce
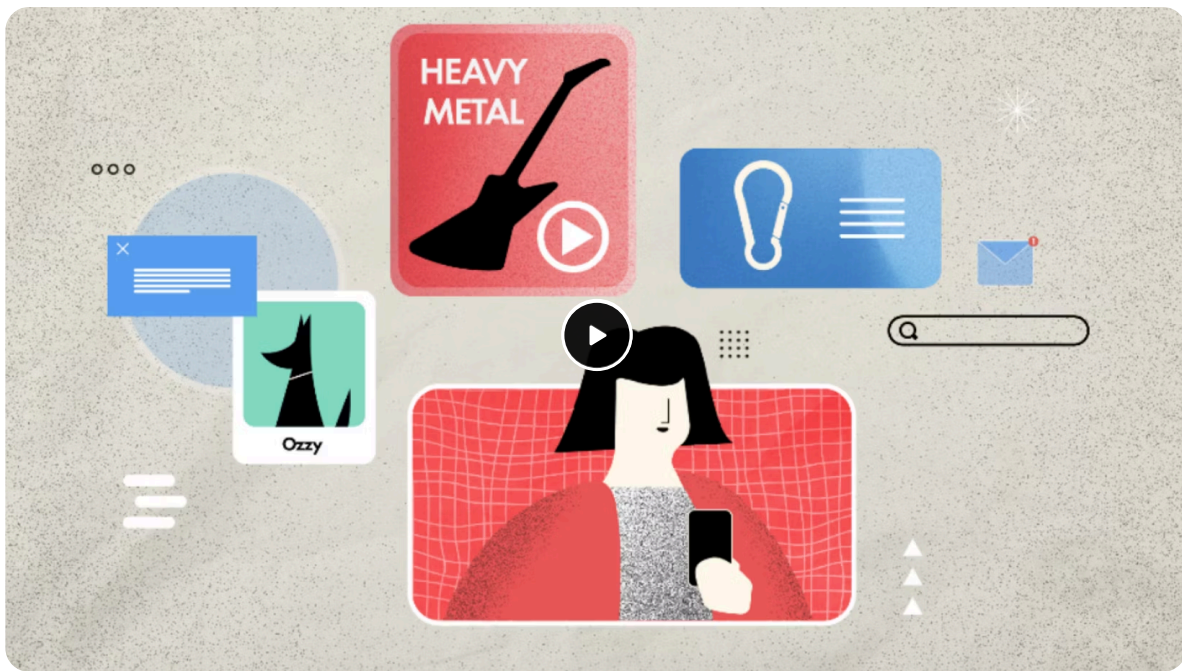
[Social commerce](#) seamlessly merges the worlds of shopping and social interaction, leveraging the power of social media to enable buying and selling. Platforms like Meta, Instagram and TikTok have become key players in this space, offering businesses a direct line to consumers already engaged with content. The beauty of social commerce is its ability to provide a frictionless shopping experience within a platform where users are already spending their time.

By 2030, social commerce is [expected to generate $6.2 trillion in global revenue](#) ↗.

What opportunities does it create?

Social commerce taps into the power of social- and community-driven marketing. It enables brands to reach new audiences, engage with consumers in real-time and create unique shopping experiences. Brands can draw from a customer's profile and past interactions to guide consumers on individualized shopping journeys.

What challenges does it present?

How can a company stand out in a sea of content? Brands must navigate the complexities of shifting algorithms and ever-evolving platform features.

What best practices should companies follow to make the most of it?

Authenticity is key—and companies need data to understand what resonates with their customers. Consumers are more likely to engage with content that feels genuine and relatable. Use data to select influencers that align with brand values, amplify reach through partnerships and leverage targeted ads to boost visibility and drive conversions.

Your word is our command: Voice commerce

As smart speakers and virtual assistants become household staples, voice commerce is rapidly gaining traction. Generative AI is poised to further transform this channel, enabling voice assistants to sound more natural and conversational.

What opportunities does it create?

Voice commerce provides a hands-free, convenient shopping experience. It opens new avenues for personalized interactions and significantly enhances accessibility for users with disabilities.

What challenges does it present?

Understanding voice search behavior is critical, as it differs from traditional text-based queries. Privacy concerns and the need for seamless device integration can also pose hurdles.

What best practices should companies follow to make the most of it?

Optimize product listings for voice search queries by using natural language and focusing on long-tail keywords. Develop voice apps that enhance the shopping experience and ensure smooth, intuitive interactions between users and devices.

Shopping on the move: Mobile commerce
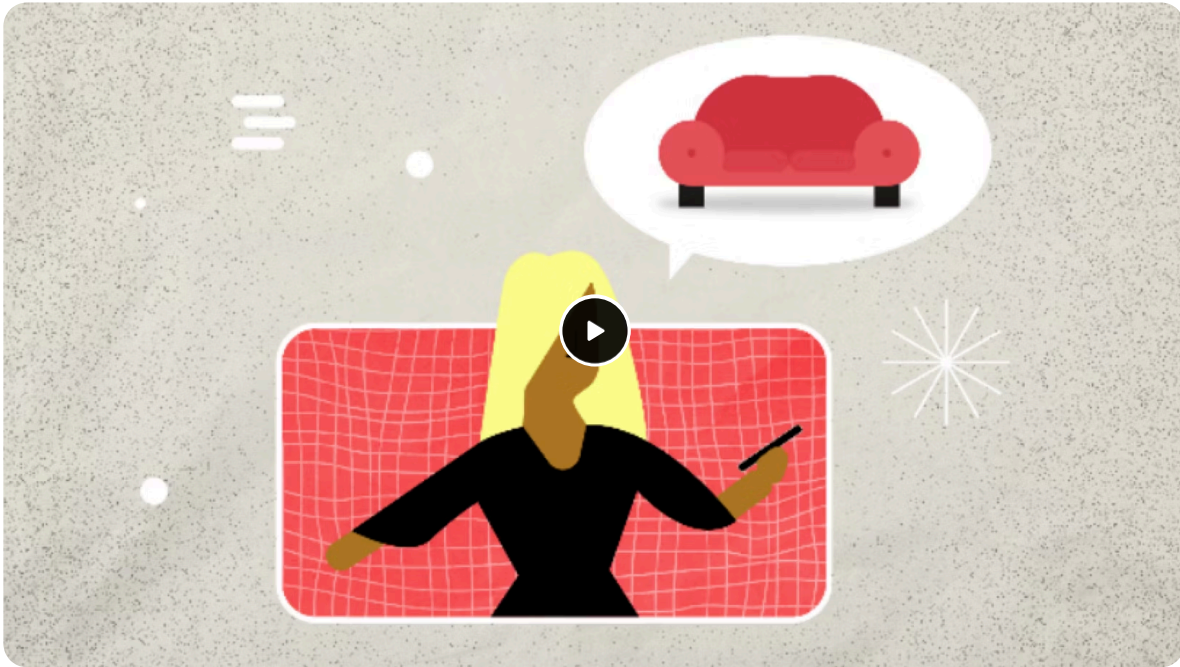
There are more mobile devices now than ever before. In 2023, the number of mobile [phones exceeded the world's population for the first time](link) ↗. With this growth comes a surge in mobile shopping. Mobile commerce empowers consumers to shop anytime, anywhere, using their devices. Given the proliferation of smartphones and tablets, prioritizing mobile shopping is essential for brands.

What opportunities does it create?

Mobile commerce provides unmatched convenience and accessibility, allowing brands to engage customers at every touchpoint in their journey.

What challenges does it present?

Ensuring seamless user experiences across devices and optimizing for mobile-specific challenges such as load times and security can be demanding.

What best practices should companies follow to make the most of it?

Focus on creating mobile-friendly interfaces and optimizing website load times to enhance the browsing experience. Provide secure, convenient payment options to build customer trust and foster loyalty.

Bringing products to life: Augmented reality (AR) commerce

AR commerce takes the shopping experience to a whole new dimension, allowing consumers to visualize products in a virtual environment before making a purchase. This has a tangible impact on customer journeys, with [AR increasing purchase intent by 17 percent.](#) ⬀

AR technology is particularly impactful in industries like fashion, furniture and beauty, where visualization can significantly influence purchase decisions by boosting customer confidence in their product selections.

AR is only projected to grow in the coming years. Statista estimates that by 2029, the [AR and virtual reality market will reach $62 billion](#) ⬀, which suggests that consumers will increasingly expect these shopping experiences.

What opportunities does it create?

AR creates immersive experiences that can enhance product discovery and reduce return rates by providing accurate product representations.

What challenges does it present?

The cost and complexity of developing AR experiences can be a barrier for some businesses. Additionally, ensuring seamless integration and compatibility across devices and platforms remains critical.

What best practices should companies follow to make the most of it?

Invest in creating interactive AR experiences that engage users, facilitate informed purchase decisions and create memorable shopping experiences.

Real-time shopping: Livestream commerce

Livestream commerce, a dynamic blend of entertainment and shopping, is revolutionizing how brands engage with consumers. This approach enables businesses to broadcast product demonstrations, promotions and sales events in real-time, fostering direct interaction with audiences.

What opportunities does it create?

Livestreaming provides an authentic platform for showcasing products, answering questions and driving impulse purchases through real-time engagement. This also enables brands to build community with customers.

What challenges does it present?

Businesses need to build strategies to maintain viewer engagement and manage technical aspects like streaming quality. Coordinating live events requires careful planning and execution.

What best practices should companies follow to make the most of it?

The three most important aspects of livestream commerce are authenticity, interactivity and spontaneity. Incorporate chat features and polls to help drive participation and create a sense of urgency to boost conversions.

To build a robust omnichannel e-commerce strategy, integrate

How can businesses deliver a seamless and personalized customer experience across all touchpoints? By integrating their channels into a unified commerce strategy. This approach involves [aligning data](#), messaging and systems to ensure consistency and reduce friction throughout the customer journey.

A good path to purchase in a multichannel environment requires building a cohesive journey that guides customers from discovery to conversion. For example, a consumer might first encounter an ad for a trendy coffee table in their social media feed. They could use their smart speaker to request product reviews to learn more about it. Following the ad to the retailer's app, they may visualize the table in their living space. Finally, a livestream event could provide a discount code to entice them to complete their transaction. Together, these channels create a unified, seamless path to purchase.

Business leaders must take a modern approach to creating exceptional experiences—and they need modern technology to do this. Various tech stacks enable unique experiences, giving organizations a wide range of options. The challenge lies in determining which solutions best align with their goals and customer needs.

"Traditional platforms offer stability and simplicity, making them a reliable choice for companies seeking a more unified solution. In contrast, composable platforms offer flexibility to integrate best-of-breed solutions and adapt quickly to evolving customer trends.

"Building a robust omnichannel e-commerce strategy depends on your goals and needs. Modern architecture stacks thrive when they balance flexibility and best-of-breed solutions. Whether blending in a composable and traditional platform approach or adopting a fully composable approach, businesses can tailor how they build their tech stacks to specific use cases and deliver experiences that align with customer needs.

"To meet those needs, building an architecture that supports agility and innovation is key. And leveraging the right platforms ensures brands can align their technology with their vision, creating seamless, omnichannel experiences."

Giancarlo Anania, Director, Global Strategic Alliances, Publicis Sapient

So, what should organizations do to get started?

1. **Build the right tech stacks.** The foundation of a unified commerce strategy lies in having the right technology stack. Tools such as customer relationship management (CRM) systems, enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems and AI solutions streamline operations, enhance personalization and analyze vast amounts of data to discover insights and predict trends.

2. **Integrate across channels** Cross-channel integration [ensures that the customer experience remains consistent](#), regardless of how or where consumers choose to engage with a brand.

3. **Synchronize data for real-time insights** To achieve a truly unified strategy, organizations must synchronize their data across all channels. This real-time data integrationprovides a comprehensive view of inventory, customer behavior and preferences, enabling businesses to cater to individual needs and preferences. Real-time insights empower businesses to make informed decisions and respond swiftly to market changes or consumer demands.

4. **Optimize operations to go beyond personalization** A unified commerce strategy isn't just about personalization—it's about fostering unique, one-to-one experiences between brands and customers. Brands need data analytics and advanced technologies to do this. For instance, machine learning algorithms can anticipate customer needs, tailor solutions and engage with customers in real time based on behaviors and preferences. This deeper level of personalization not only enhances satisfaction but also builds stronger, more meaningful relationships and experiences that keep customers coming back for more.

The future is agile

Agility is no longer a luxury—it's a necessity. By embracing emerging channels and integrating them into a multichannel optimization strategy, businesses can stay ahead of the curve to deliver personalized, engaging experiences that meet consumers where they are.

Become a Best Seller in People-First Commerce

Commerce isn't about transactions—it's about relationships. Transform your sales strategy with innovation that prioritizes connection and delivers results.

Learn more →

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