

Walker Sands

The Future of Retail 2018

How Technology is Expanding the Scope
of Online Commerce Beyond Retail



Table of Contents

Key Findings	02
The Influence of the Connected Lifestyle and the Changing Buyer Landscape	03
The Evolution of Traditional Retail Fueled by Amazon	10
Voice-controlled Devices Go Beyond a Personal Assistant	16
The Growing Opportunity for Brands and Retailers that Optimize the Supply Chain	21
Retail of the Future	25
Methodology and About the Author	27





Commerce isn't what it used to be. Over the last five years, we've dedicated our annual Future of Retail report to uncovering how the retail landscape has changed, and this year's report found that the retail industry is more complicated than ever. If the changes we saw in 2018 are any indication of what's to come, the future of online commerce is much bigger than just retail.

With power players like Amazon, Walmart and Target expanding into everything from grocery to pharmaceuticals to [bees](https://www.cnet.com/news/walmart-to-make-autonomous-robot-bees-pollen-drones/)¹, innovation is happening across the retail industry on a larger scale. Brands and retailers that find new ways to engage consumers beyond the traditional commerce experience will continue to drive forward.

Last year, the most striking findings showed how quickly consumers have embraced voice-activated interactions. A year later, it's clear that Amazon Echo was just the beginning of a voice-activated future across several industries. Now, we're seeing more investments in technology that can facilitate an integrated lifestyle through digital assistants and hands-free devices.

At the same time, fast shipping has become an essential part of the retail and supply chain process, largely due to Amazon's lightning-fast shipping capabilities and the rising number of brands and manufacturers selling direct to consumers.

All of this is supported by a seemingly endless supply of data, which makes it easier

for businesses to connect with consumers at every touchpoint. The key to success will be for brands and retailers to use this data to power more immersive experiences — without compromising consumer trust.

As the lines between retail and other industries blur, brands and retailers need to transform the commerce experience into a more integrated part of the consumer lifestyle. The Future of Retail 2018 study, based on a survey of 1,600 U.S. consumers, outlines key insights about the rise of connected experience and Amazon's influence in a new era of commerce.



Key Findings



Politics plays a leading role in commerce.

Two-thirds (65 percent) of consumers report the current presidential administration has impacted their shopping behavior, up from 40 percent last year.



The popularity of connected devices has skyrocketed.

Seventy-two percent of consumers under the age of 36 own some kind of connected home device (beyond smartphones and tablets). Ninety-three percent of those ages 18-25 own some kind of smart device (including smartphones).



Amazon's dominance forces competing retailers to evolve.

On average, two in five consumers (41 percent) receive 1-2 packages from Amazon per week. That number jumps to half (50 percent) for consumers ages 18-25, and 57 percent for consumers ages 26-35.



Consumers are more comfortable using voice-controlled devices to shop.

Of the consumers who own a voice-controlled device, 64 percent use it at least once a week. Fifty percent have made a voice-controlled purchase in the past year.



Fast delivery is no longer optional. It's a must.

Forty-four percent of consumers have used some kind of same-day delivery service in the past year, indicating they are growing more comfortable with and reliant on these services.



01

The Influence of the Connected Lifestyle and the Changing Buyer Landscape

Traditional channels are dying. Consumers are now more focused on owning connected devices and less focused on traditional elements of the home like cable, and shopping is changing as a result.





Consumers break away from traditional habits across channels

It's normal for consumers to stray from traditional transaction options for nearly everything they buy – from TV shows, to take out to car rentals. Consumers are more connected, digitally savvy and open to the sharing economy more than ever before. They want more for their money, and expect seamless access to tools and channels of

information when and where it's convenient for them.

In fact, this year's report found that cable use continues to decline, with less than a third of consumers surveyed (31 percent) now reporting they have a traditional cable package. This is down significantly from the

more than half of consumers (51 percent) who reported subscribing to traditional cable services last year.

Not surprisingly, younger consumers lead this trend. In fact, only 23 percent of consumers 18-25 have a traditional cable package, down from 45 percent last year. And less



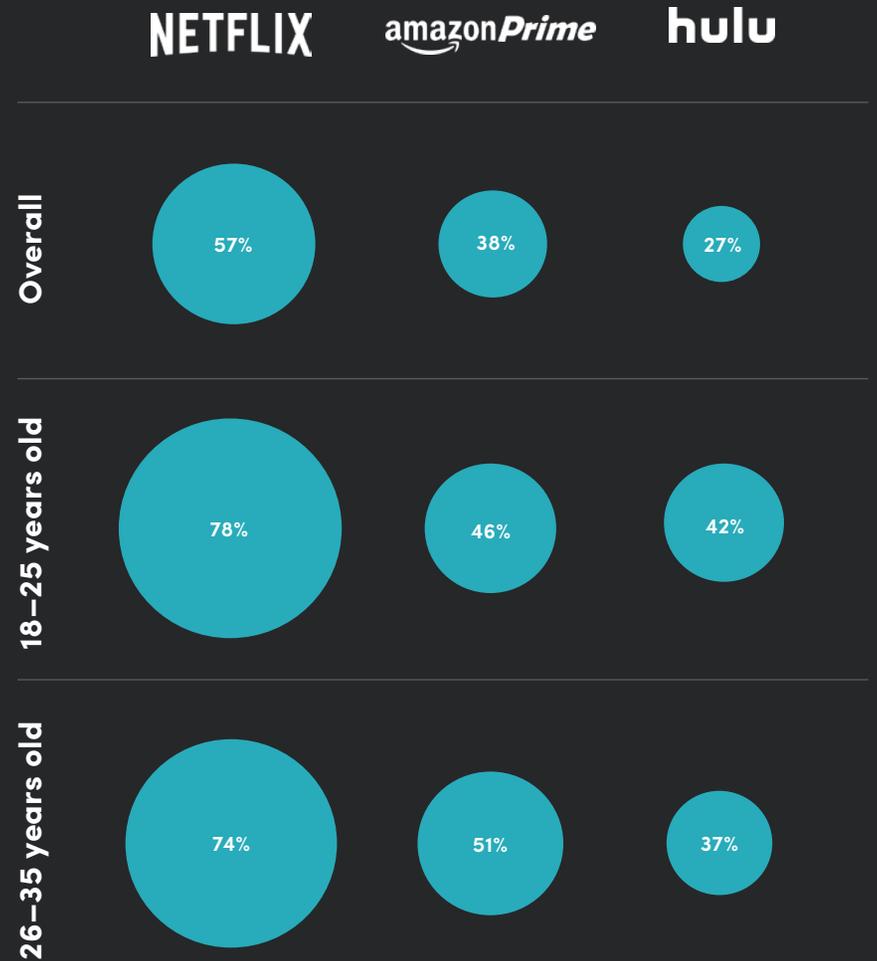


than a fourth (23 percent) of consumers 26-35 have a traditional cable package, down from 52 percent last year.

Seventy-two percent under the age of 36 own some kind of connected home device (beyond smartphones and tablets). Ninety-three percent of those ages 18-25 own some kind of smart device (including smartphones).

In a more connected world, consumers are also participating in the sharing economy, with 38 percent of consumers reporting they use ride-sharing services. And despite Uber's newsworthy corporate debacles, they remain a favorite by younger consumers (42 percent).

The Top 3 Streaming Services





Fast and free shipping influences consumer purchases across all channels.

While the number of consumers who shop online seems to have hit a consistent stride, the frequency at which they shop across different categories continues to shift.

Nearly one in 10 (7 percent) consumers ages 18–25 shop online daily, with 6 percent of consumers ages 26–35 reporting the same. According to a recent report by [Forrester](#)², nearly all adults – 98 percent – go online at least once a day for various reasons. Opportunities for brands and retailers to deepen customer relationships appear endless.

Consumers have also grown to expect fast and free shipping, and they no longer consider these offerings added perks. For the fifth year in a row, fast and free shipping are top online purchase drivers.

Consumers under the age of 25 are even more likely to value fast and free shipping. Our report reveals more than half of consumers under 25 (54 percent) say same-day shipping is their number one purchase driver, followed by next-day shipping and free returns or exchanges (53 percent).

What would make you more likely to shop online?

Please select all that apply.

THIS YEAR LAST YEAR



Social media has also grown as a commerce channel. While buy buttons didn't gain the initial traction many expected, new and more integrated forms of social shopping, like Instagram ads, have been a key tool for retailers.

In fact, more than half of consumers (54 percent) report using social media as part of their path to purchase in some capacity, whether it's to browse, research, gain inspiration or purchase. As consumers become more comfortable purchasing

goods across categories online, they're also expanding the channels on which they shop and purchase on a regular basis.

However, not all social media channels are created equal when it comes to commerce. According to recent data by Avionos, 40 percent³ of consumers have made a purchase via Facebook, 13 percent have made a purchase through Instagram and 12 percent have made Pinterest purchases. As consumers' social media habits continue to evolve, we'll likely see new patterns emerge

regarding when and where people use social media to buy.

Beyond social media, this year's study reveals more evidence that the future of retail will require a highly intentional mix of channel offerings depending on the consumer's goal. Different channels reign supreme depending on the buyer's intent, whether it's to browse, purchase, or research.

³ <https://www.avionos.com/consumer-expectations/>



The Top Reason Consumers Shop Across Channels



29% shop online to browse



42% shop in store to purchase



25% shop on mobile to browse



10% shop on voice to research



A shifting political landscape brings new questions for consumers

A year and a half into President Trump's administration, the study found that the political landscape has impacted consumer shopping habits and their view of the economy. In fact, almost two thirds (65 percent) of consumers say the current presidential administration has impacted their shopping behavior, up from 40 percent last year.

When asked how the political landscape has impacted their shopping behavior,

consumers were optimistic. More than a fourth (28 percent) of consumers reported that they shop more often this year because they believe the economy is better (up from 16 percent in 2017).

Consumers are also paying more attention to brands' social policies after the election of President Trump (49 percent, up from 40 percent last year). And personal viewpoints have shaped the commerce landscape even more so for younger consumers, with

the majority of consumers ages 18–25 (54 percent) reporting their awareness and concern of a brand's social policies has increased. Nearly one in five (21 percent) report they shop less often at retailers that openly support President Trump.

The repeal of the net neutrality law has also caught the attention of consumers — many of which worry about how a world without net neutrality might impact their access to the internet. A third of consumers (32 percent)



think the repeal of net neutrality will negatively impact their freedom online, a number that jumps to 44 percent for those 18–25. Additionally, nearly another quarter of consumers (22 percent) believe a repeal would negatively impact small retailers and businesses. Just eight percent of consumers trust internet service providers to not slow down or block content.

Net neutrality is an interesting parallel to the consumer data discussion happening in commerce right now, and perhaps sheds light on the freedom that consumers have grown to expect when shopping online. Brands and retailers offering solutions for data privacy will likely see increased loyalty from consumers.

Brand sustainability becomes an important part of the buyer experience

Politics has become such an integral part of consumer lives today that many now expect businesses to take a stand on important social and political issues. And sustainability is at the top of the list for issues that are important

to consumers. In fact, 45 percent of consumers believe all brands should take a stand on environmental issues, according to a 2017 research report by [Sprout Social](#)⁴. An additional 34 percent believe brands should take a stand if it directly relates back to their products and services.

This data is supported by [Nielsen's Global Corporate Sustainability](#)⁵ report which reveals two-thirds of consumers (66 percent) will spend more on a product if it comes from a sustainable brand.

Similarly, our report finds that about a fifth (20 percent) of consumers are significantly more likely to purchase from brands and retailers that are committed to sustainability, and just 29 percent say a brand's sustainability habits have no impact on their purchase behavior. The emphasis on sustainability increases among younger consumers — a fourth (24 percent) of those ages 18–25 report they're significantly more likely to make a purchase from a brand or retailer committed to sustainable practices.

⁴ <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/data/championing-change-in-the-age-of-social-media/>

⁵ https://www.huffingtonpost.com/ryan-rudominer/corporate-social-responsi_9_b_9155670.html



02

The Evolution of Traditional Retail Fueled by Amazon

The rise of Amazon has deeply impacted the way consumers think about and expect shopping experiences to occur. As they've continued to expand their reach they have become a go-to source for consumers across categories.



Amazon pressures retailers to find new ways to attract buyers

Amazon's growth is impressive not only because of the massive, loyal customer base the retail giant has built, but also the frequency at which consumers make purchases on the marketplace. On average, two in five consumers (42 percent) receive 1-2 packages from Amazon per week. That number jumps to half (50 percent) for consumers ages 18-25, and 57 percent for consumers ages 26-35.

Given the volume of purchases the average consumer makes on Amazon, it's not surprising that perceptions about Amazon are generally positive.

Outside of its core offerings, Amazon's other services such as music, Pantry and Fresh have been slower to take off. Despite this, Amazon has grown in new sectors, such as private-label goods, and will likely keep exploring partnerships that open the door for new categories to shift online.

When asked about their reactions to Amazon's recent acquisitions and general growth in the retail industry:

29 percent of consumers are excited about Amazon's expansion because it provides them more convenient buying experiences

23 percent are neutral — they don't care who they buy from, they care about price and convenience

16 percent are excited about it because it provides them less expensive buying experiences

Amazon drives digital expansion in sectors beyond retail

One of the most notable changes in retail over the past year has been the expansion of Amazon beyond its traditional retail roots, plunging headfirst into grocery with its more than \$13B acquisition of Whole Foods⁶. Amazon has also made several

Consumers' Reactions to Amazon

+

29% of consumers are excited about Amazon's expansion

-

23% of consumers are neutral — they don't care who they buy from

+

16% of consumers are excited for less expensive buying experiences



inroads into other industries like pharmaceuticals, healthcare and B2B.

Other big-box retailers are quickly following suit with expanded partnerships, like Target's acquisition of [Shipt](#)⁷ and recent partnership with [Tesla](#)⁸, and Walmart's acquisition⁹ of Flipkart. Amazon's acquisition of Whole Food has not only threatened several more traditional businesses across industries, but it's also impacted customer experiences and expectations in new ways.

Overall, consumers (especially younger consumers) are excited about the way Amazon could change historically slow-moving industries like pharmaceuticals. In fact, more than a third of consumers (35 percent) would use Amazon to fill prescription orders online. Top reasons include the ability to ship quickly (61 percent), existing trust in Amazon (54 percent) and an easier ordering process due to Amazon's access to customer information (43 percent). Younger consumers are more willing to use Amazon pharmaceuticals (46 percent of those 18-25 and 51 percent of those 26-35). Comparatively, those over the age of 61 are least likely to use

the service (just 12 percent were open to using the service).

When asked about how they feel about Amazon's potential move into the prescription drug space, nearly a third (29 percent) of consumers report they're excited about the new and more convenient experience Amazon provides. Another 16 percent report being excited about the cost savings it provides.

It's interesting to see Amazon expand into pharma, as most older consumers have already found a rhythm with prescription drug orders. The key to the continued vertical expansion for retailers will be to focus on the places where organizations have previously built trust. While [Amazon](#)¹⁰ is potentially placing pharma on hold for now, it will be interesting to see where we go from here.

Amazon's success to-date across industries has largely stemmed from its access to information about the products consumers buy. Now, it's shifting to include what consumers eat and how they cook — the company has found ways to understand the

⁷ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-12-13/target-to-buy-shipt-for-550-million-in-bet-on-same-day-delivery>

⁸ <https://electrek.co/2018/04/24/target-tesla-chargepoint-electrify-america-charging-stations/>

⁹ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-05-09/here-s-what-wall-street-is-saying-about-walmart-s-flipkart-deal>

¹⁰ <https://www.pharmacytimes.com/publications/issue/2018/may2018/amazon-is-out-of-the-game-for-now-back-to-business-as-usual>



consumer more deeply and provide more value at every stop. With only one in 10 consumers (11 percent) reporting concerns about Amazon creating a monopoly, it doesn't seem that consumer loyalty will weaken anytime soon.

The growth of experience-driven brick-and-mortar

Brands and retailers across industries should again look to offer experience-driven in-

store concepts and integrate new and emerging technologies to better connect with consumers. For example, brands like REI and Lululemon are finding new ways to connect with consumers outside of the traditional shopping experience by hosting events like runs and yoga. Nordstrom is rolling out small local shops with no inventory¹¹ and Lowe's is using augmented reality¹² to improve in-store navigation.

These retailers are smart to do so. While consumers purchase more goods online

overall, some categories have seen a renewed preference for in-store buying.

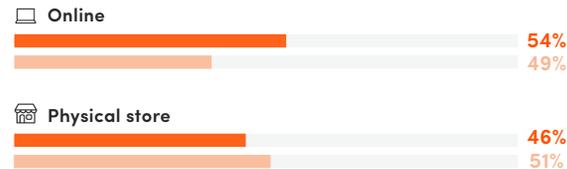
Although consumers have grown more comfortable shopping across channels, there are some in-store experiences that online stores have yet to replicate or replace.

Many brands and retailers struggle to keep up with evolving customer expectations for in-store experiences – a key factor in the record number¹³ of brick-and-mortar chains that have closed their doors in the past year.

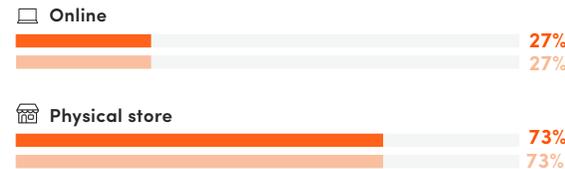
How do you prefer to shop for the following products?

THIS YEAR LAST YEAR

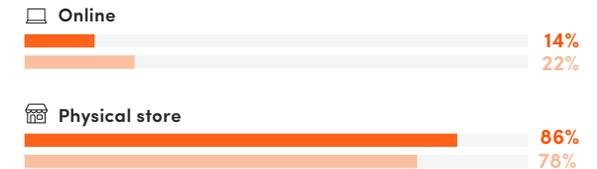
Books



Clothes and apparel



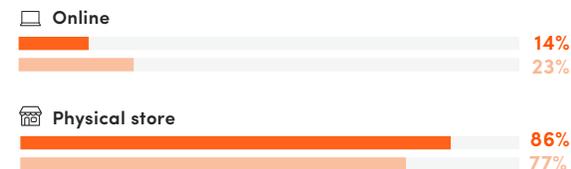
Consumer Packaged Goods



Food/groceries



Furniture



Luxury goods



¹¹ <https://www.cnn.com/2017/09/11/nordstrom-to-roll-out-small-nordstrom-local-shops-with-no-inventory.html>

¹² <http://www.lowesinnovationlabs.com/instorenavigation>



“
**Ultimately, brick-and-mortar isn't dead,
 it's just changing.**”

With one in four consumers (25 percent) reporting that they believe the online experience has already surpassed the in-store experience, it's clear that brands and retailers are struggling to create the personalized, experiential in-store offerings consumers now expect.

Even so, there are still consumers who believe that's not the case at all. In fact, 24 percent believe the online experience will never surpass the in-store experience. Interestingly, the in-store experience is playing a larger role with younger consumers — 18-25 year olds are among the most likely to make in-store purchases for certain goods. Ultimately, brick-and-mortar isn't dead, it's just changing.

Increasingly, brands and retailers need to think about what's important to convey online and what's important to offer as part of a unique, in-store experience. For brands like

Amazon and Nordstrom, that means showcasing products and offering branded, digitally-driven experiences in stores instead of driving customers to purchase online. Retailers should look to market leaders for examples of how to leverage brick-and-mortar in new and innovative ways.

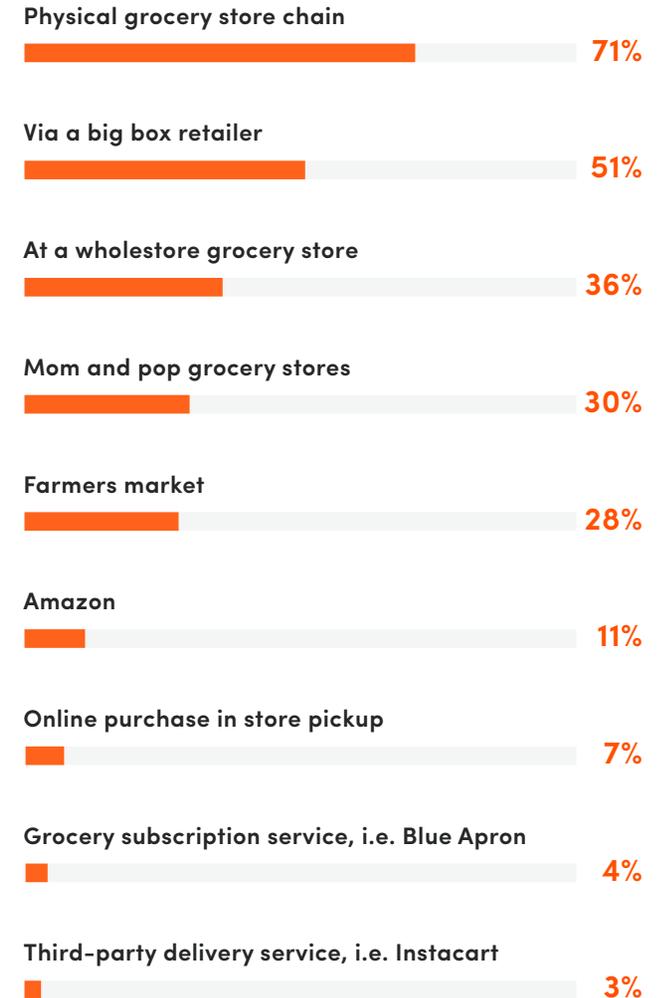
New grocery opportunities emerge with a push forward from Amazon

While just a year ago many grocery brands and retailers were hesitant to embrace online delivery options, Amazon's acquisition of Whole Foods and similar moves in the space have breathed new life into online grocery.

So how do consumers feel about grocery? Physical stores still dominate the marketplace. Most consumers (78 percent) have shopped at a physical grocery store within the past year.

From which of the following places have you purchased groceries in the past year?

Please select all that apply.



While they're open to making more grocery purchases online, it appears that consumers haven't seen much in the past year to make them more likely to make an online grocery purchase. Thirty-nine percent of consumers say they are at least somewhat likely to make an online grocery purchase in the next year, down slightly from 45 percent last year.

Major players in the grocery space need to make big moves for non-traditional grocery services to take off. Amazon and Walmart will likely play a large role in this evolution, but it will require the entire industry to make online services more accessible and appealing for grocery to achieve widespread consumer adoption.

New forms of payments make headway, but no clear leader has emerged

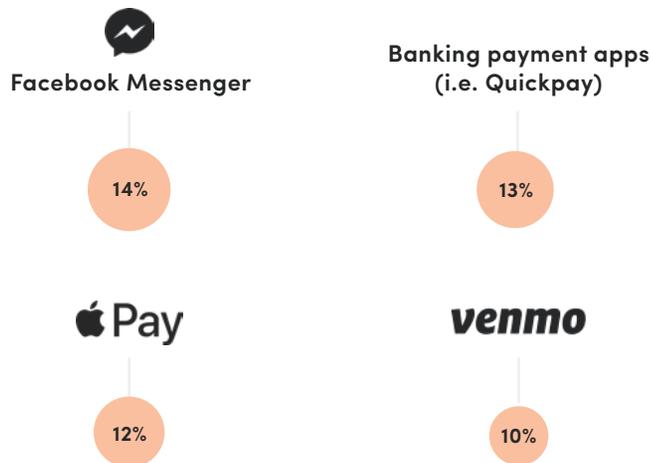
Continued demand for contactless payments, the volatile world of cryptocurrency and rumors that major player like Amazon may enter the banking space have led to many discussions surrounding the future of payments in the commerce landscape.

At the same time, there still seems to be little agreement about what moving beyond cash should look like.

Adoption of peer-to-peer and mobile payment applications is still relatively thin.

Despite the growing discussions around cryptocurrency, just 10 percent of consumers report they have invested in bitcoin or another cryptocurrency. While that number is certainly on the rise, with about three in four of those who have invested having done so in the past few years (51 percent in 2017 and another 25 percent in 2018), just seven percent say they are very likely to use cryptocurrency with a brand or retailer. Although brands and retailers should pay close attention to new trends among their audiences, a clear leader in new payment forms has yet to emerge in the retail space.

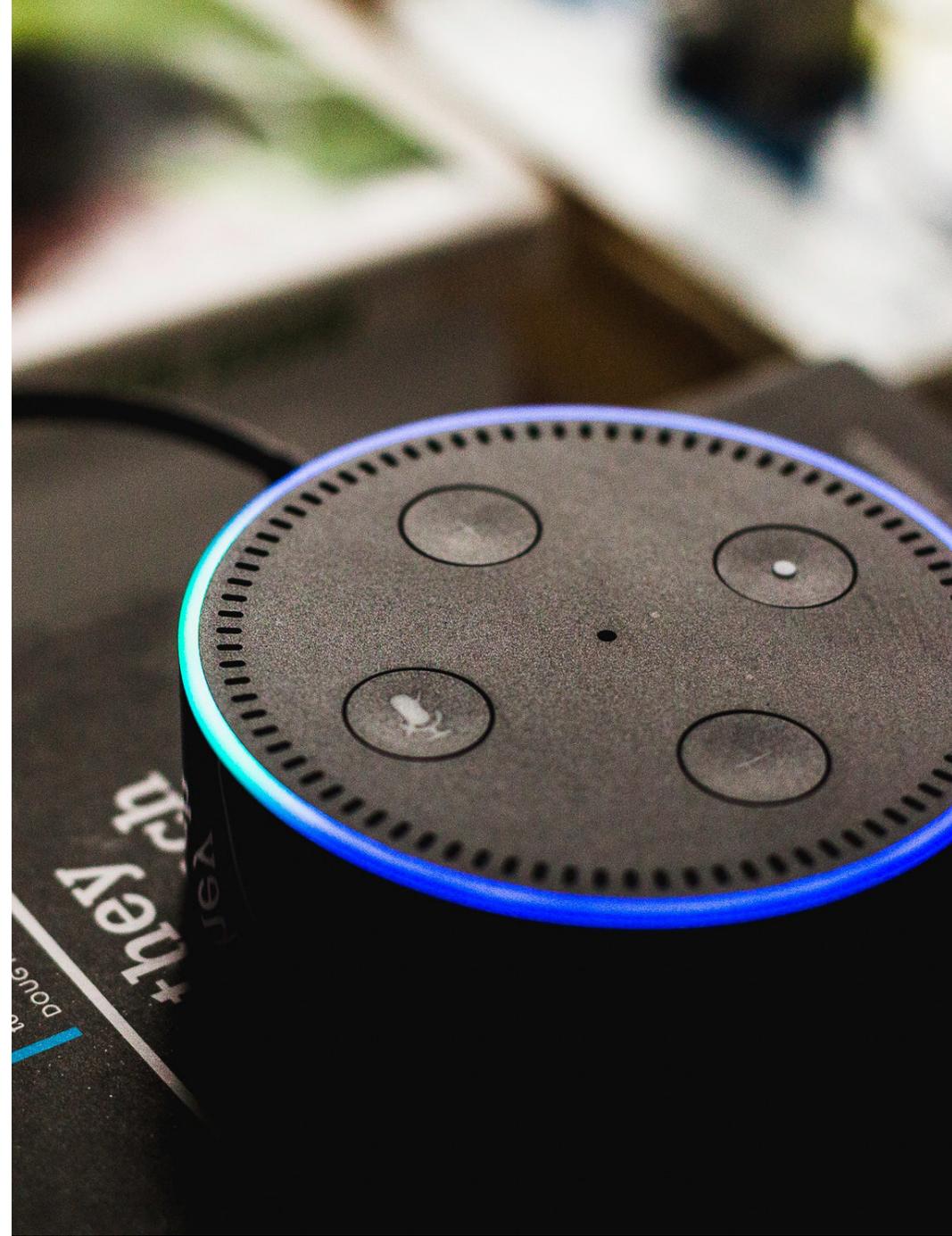
Which of the following peer-to-peer payment applications have you used in the past year?



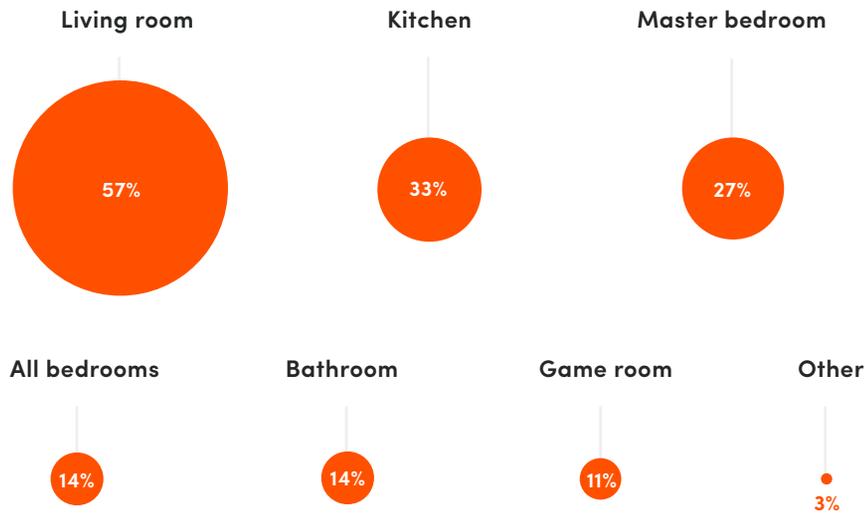
03

Voice-controlled Devices Go Beyond a Personal Assistant

The rapid adoption of voice-controlled devices in the past year demonstrates a hunger by consumers to have more opportunities to connect and has brought the conversation about the future of Zero UI experiences to the forefront.



Where do you have a voice-controlled device in your home?



Digital assistants become more integrated into consumer lifestyles

The use of voice-controlled devices among consumers has skyrocketed since last year's report. Most notably, owners of voice-controlled technology continue to buy more devices and use them more frequently. Of those who own a voice-controlled device, nearly two in five (39 percent) report owning at least two voice-controlled devices, and seven percent report owning four or more devices. Additionally, 64 percent of those who

own a voice-controlled device use it at least once a week and nearly one in five (18 percent) use their voice-controlled device at least three times a day. It's clear that just shortly after their launch, consumers find voice-controlled devices valuable.

The majority of those who own a device use it to complete basic tasks, like playing music, looking up information or checking the time. In fact, more people have used Amazon in

the past year to hear jokes than to connect to their smart home (25 percent vs. 19 percent), indicating that consumers aren't using their devices to their full potential yet.

The placement of voice-controlled devices within homes makes sense given respondents' reported use cases. Top locations include the living room (55 percent), kitchen (33 percent) and bedroom (27 percent). Fourteen percent of consumers



who own devices even report placing them in their bathrooms.

Commerce offers the biggest growth opportunity for voice technology

The biggest potential for voice-controlled devices lies with their ability to enable frictionless transactions. Fifty percent of those who own a voice-controlled device have used it to make a purchase in the past year, and

consumers under the age of 36 are the most likely to have made a purchase using a voice-controlled device (25 percent).

Additionally, expect to see consumers use voice in more unconventional ways. Consumers noted they would like to see more hands-free commands in the car (41 percent), on TVs (38 percent), with in-home appliances (24 percent) and in the shower (19 percent). Another 13 percent of consumers wanted more voice-

“



Nearly one in five (18 percent) use their voice-controlled device at least three times a day.

How have you used your smart device in the past year?



controlled options for hands-free commands while on the toilet.

As more consumers adopt voice-controlled devices this year, we expect Alexa will become more than just a tool to learn the weather. She will evolve to an all-encompassing personal assistant that can restock your favorite yogurt, make clothing recommendations, facilitate returns and more.

CPG is a category ripe for disruption, where notably only 30 percent of

consumers reported they would never be interested in making a purchase via voice. Additionally, consumers tend to make repeat purchases of CPG products, making this an even easier category for voice purchases.

As brands begin to identify ways to create deeper connections with consumers, their ability to drive repeat purchases through voice will undoubtedly bring major opportunities in the future.



What would you never be open to buying on a voice-controlled device?



Roadblocks for voice commerce adoption include lack of visuals

In terms of barriers to the adoption of voice commerce, consumers are most concerned about security (45 percent) and privacy (42 percent). This is no surprise because it's been a common theme among new and emerging technologies, similar to consumer concerns about drones we explored in Future of Retail 2016.

Consumers also list the lack of visuals like images and videos (35 percent) as a roadblock, which Amazon has already begun to address with the Echo Show.

But while lack of visuals is cited as a concern, it's notable that more than one in five consumers who own a voice-controlled device (21 percent) would pay more than \$50 for a first-time ordered product on Amazon via voice without seeing it first.

Voice commerce has come a long way in just a year, but retailers have a lot of work to do before the channel achieves widespread adoption. For now, Amazon has focused on finding new ways to make incremental improvements to consumer lifestyles through voice, even if that just means learning the weather or movie times at a nearby theater.

The growth and influence of voice-controlled purchases will only grow in the years to come. More than a third (21 percent) of consumers reported they are at least somewhat likely to purchase a voice-controlled device in the next year and more than half (36 percent) say they're at least somewhat likely to make a purchase via voice in the next year.



04

The Growing Opportunity for Brands and Retailers That Prioritize Supply Chain Optimization

Consumer expectations for not only speed, but also transparency of delivery are higher than ever before. But expectations surrounding who is delivering those packages have also changed, indicating an opportunity for more third-party partnerships and new and emerging technologies.



Immediacy is the name of the delivery game

With fast and free shipping as a key driver for online and cross-channel purchases for the fifth year in a row, the biggest opportunity for brands and retailers lies with creating more efficiencies in the supply chain.

More frequent online purchases have driven consumers to explore new routes for delivery and pickup, like two-day, one-day, same-day and even two-hour shipping. Consumers also used options like in-store pickup and Amazon lockers more frequently this year, creating new opportunities for brands and retailers that aren't able to provide competitive shipping options.

However, consumers still look to Amazon as the model for speed and price — a fourth (26 percent) report they have purchased a product through Amazon because it was faster and less expensive than other options. And it seems that consumers care more about the shipping speed of the item than the price (when comparable). Fifteen percent of consumers report they have purchased a product through Amazon because it was faster than other options, even

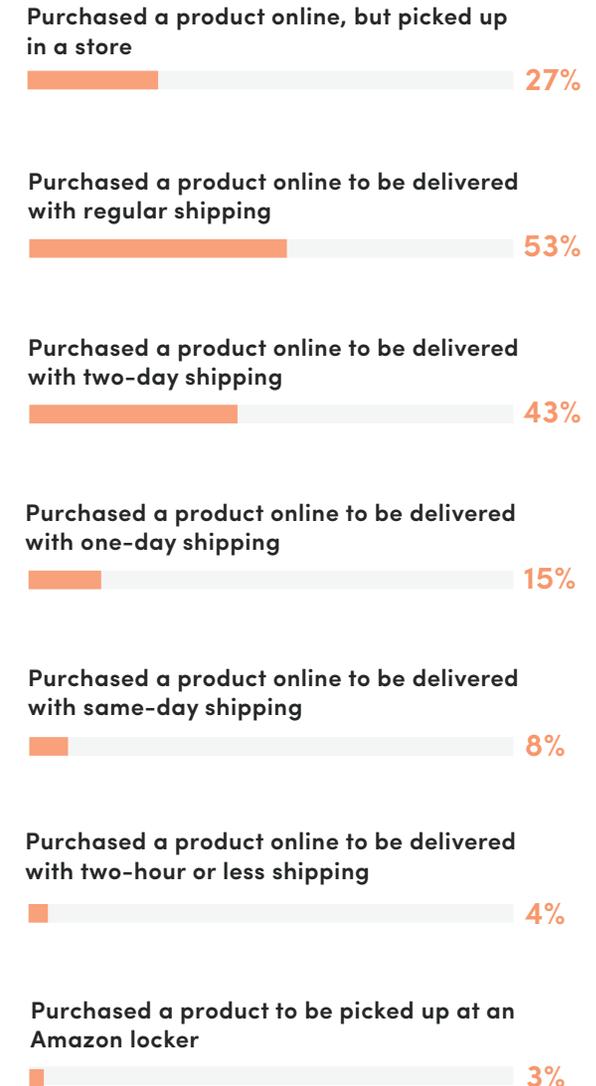
if the product was more expensive. Nearly half of consumers (43 percent) have purchased a product through Amazon because it was less expensive than other options.

Comparing Amazon's speed of delivery with other retail competitors further illustrates consumer frustration with present options. Just 15 percent of consumers report that online retailers always offer shipping options that meet their needs for speed-of-delivery, compared to 30 percent that report the same for Amazon.

So, how can brands and retailers offer faster and less-expensive delivery options? The growth of third-party delivery services and partnerships could be a good start for some. In fact, 44 percent of consumers have used some kind of same-day delivery service in the past year, indicating they are growing more comfortable and reliant on these services. When it comes to trusting third-party delivery services, 66 percent of consumers reported they would trust delivery in at least one product category.

Which of the following have you done in the past year?

Please select all that apply.



Consumers are most open to third-party delivery for books, clothing, CPG and office products, indicating an opportunity for brands to get creative with partnerships and branding in these categories. While lower, it's also interesting to note the growth of consumer willingness to use third-party delivery services for categories like grocery and luxury goods.

Communication drives customer satisfaction

Brands and retailers should also look for new ways to be more transparent in the supply chain process. Only 30 percent of consumers rate retailers' communication with them about the status of their online order as 'excellent,' compared to the 42 percent who say the same about Amazon.



How often do online retailers offer shipping options that meet your expectations for speed of delivery?



How often does Amazon offer shipping options that meet your expectations for speed of delivery?

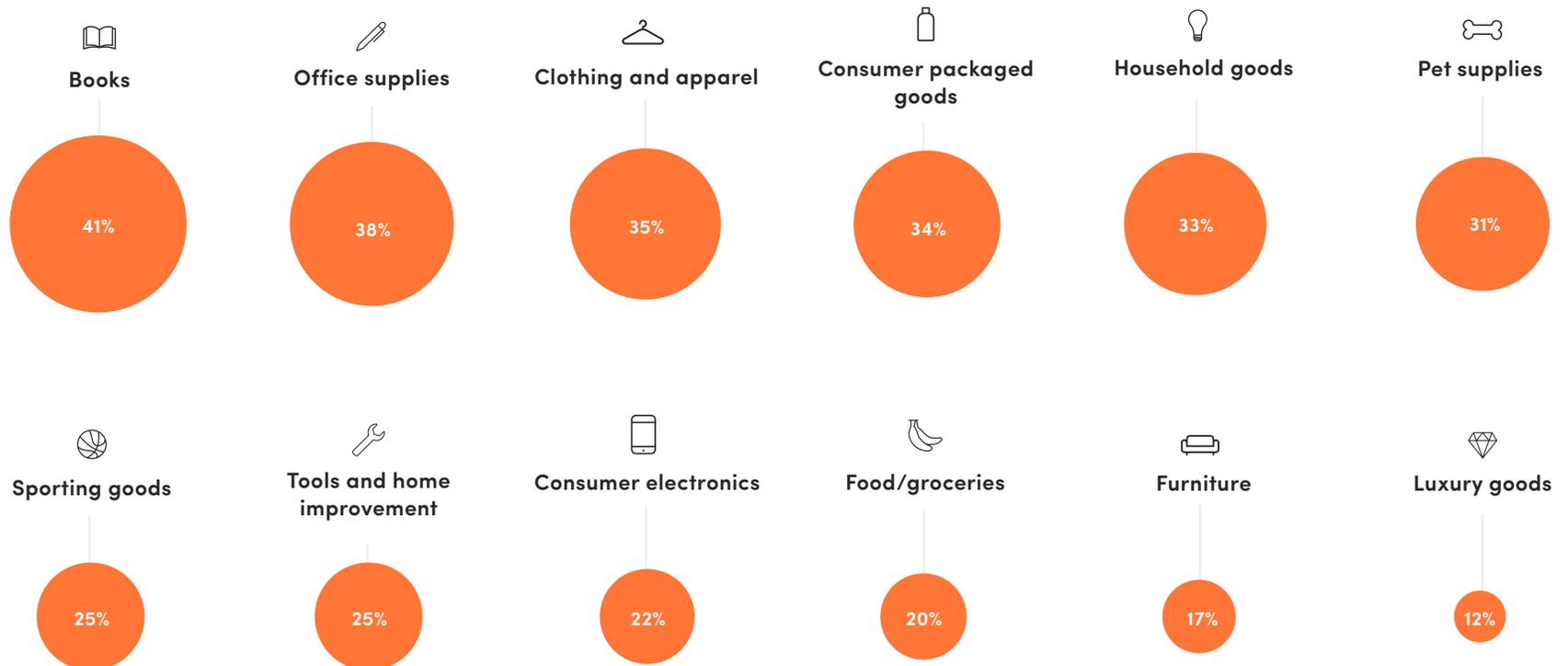


Solutions for brands and retailers are numerous and include tracking software, better analytics capabilities and other tools that provide consumers more communication and transparency in the logistics process.

Operationally, retailers and suppliers should work together to find new ways to improve the customer experience and minimize costs for both the business and buyer.

As consumers grow more comfortable purchasing big-ticket items online, transparency and fast-shipping options will become even more important.

For which of the following products would you trust a third-party to deliver packages you ordered from a retailer? Please select all that apply.



Retail of the future

The retail industry has pushed the envelope when it comes to embracing technology to improve the consumer experience. And the onset of a more connected lifestyle has empowered buyers to browse, research and purchase without friction. As a result, retailers are starting to move beyond retail and drive non-traditional sectors like grocery and pharma online.





For brands and retailers looking to stay on the cutting-edge of the industry, we offer the following key takeaways:



Connectivity isn't just about technology.

Connectivity is a way of life. Don't treat commerce as an intentional act, but rather as a daily activity that happens while consumers dig through the fridge, look at their calendar or drive to work. Retail has become so much more complex than a simple exchange of goods and money.



Use voice to engage with consumers beyond commerce.

Find ways to be present in people's lives beyond traditional retail. The more brands and retailers can do this now, the more prepared they will be to drive consumer adoption to purchase through voice when the technology matures — and when consumers are ready to embrace it.



Don't ditch your physical presence, just change it.

While a record number of brick-and-mortar have closed in the past year, the in-store experience isn't going anywhere. Consumers rely on physical stores to make purchases across various categories, and many successful online-first stores have found value in a physical presence. Retailers and brands looking to keep customers coming back to this channel should focus on offering unique experiences beyond immediate transactions.



Methodology

The Walker Sands Future of Retail 2018 study surveyed 1,600 consumers across the United States on their shopping habits, preferences and views on emerging retail technology. The survey was conducted online in February 2018, and has a 2.44 percent margin of error at a 95 percent confidence level.



About the author



Erin Jordan

Senior Account Director
Walker Sands Communications
erin.jordan@walkersands.com

Erin leads the retail and supply chain technology PR team at Walker Sands, managing strategy across a diverse group of B2B clients, focusing on the intersection of retail, marketing and technology. Her team's areas of expertise include e-commerce, supply chain and logistics, product content and data management, digital marketing and marketing technology.



Retail technology is evolving at an incredibly fast pace. Read our case studies and view our client list to see how we use an integrated approach to public relations and digital marketing to help retail technology companies keep up:

walkersands.com/retail-and-e-commercetechnology



About Walker Sands

Walker Sands is a public relations and digital marketing agency for business-to-business technology companies. With an integrated approach to creative services, Walker Sands helps clients build brand awareness, enhance credibility and drive new business. Walker Sands is a five-time Inc. 5000 honoree and regular recipient of some of the industry's most prestigious awards from organizations including Entrepreneur, Holmes Report and Hermes Creative. Walker Sands was founded in 2001 and has offices in Chicago, San Francisco and Seattle. To learn more, visit walkersands.com or walkersandsdigital.com.

