# Pandemic Purchase Patterns Shake Up Holiday Performance Marketing Campaigns

It was challenging enough for performance marketers to plan Black Friday, Cyber Monday and annual holiday campaigns pre-pandemic.

For 2020, they have to factor in seriously changing consumer habits to reach or exceed 2019's $730.2 billion in holiday retail sales. Data from Cardlytics about exactly where consumers are spending their money will help marketers with that campaign planning.

Cardlytics shared data from its firsthand view of $3 trillion in annual consumer spend. Financial institutions like Bank of America work with Cardlytics on loyalty programs that give bank customers deals on what they're already buying.

"Cardlytics has visibility into where, when and how much consumers spend across industries," Cardlytics Communications vp Angie Amberg said. "And we've been using these insights to help marketers like Starbucks, Amazon, Walmart and Airbnb drive commerce."

Those card transactions between March 12 and Oct. 15 show that if performance marketers were banking on most pandemic product purchases arriving online, the reality check will be a surprise. Spending at brick-and-mortar stores is down only 14% year over year, leaving in-store buying as the No. 1 conversion location. (About 75.2% of 2019 holiday spend happened in physical stores, according to transactions from Cardlytics' 157 million bank customers).

While online spend increased 25% year over year during the

pandemic, many web shoppers stayed loyal to store brands.

“Brick-and-mortar dot-coms have been the fastest growing retail channel during [the pandemic], up more than 75% YoY,” Amberg said.

That increase catapulted brick-and-mortar ecommerce growth far beyond the slow “dipping a toe in the water” 4.4% year-over-year rise that Cardlytics found the proprietary sites had been seeing pre-pandemic.

But it appears as though coronavirus concerns may have merely gotten retailers moving faster on changes shoppers already expected them to make. Research the National Retail Federation (NRF) released in January showed nine in 10 consumers who bought products online and picked them up in stores found it “convenient.” In order of popularity, survey respondents told NRF they wanted to buy online and pick items up in stores at the register, curbside, via trunk delivery or by using a locker code.

The federation also reports consumers will only want more of this convenience during the holidays in 2020. NRF media relations coordinator Mia Weinand wrote in August that “last year, 56% of consumers reported they would make their holiday purchases online; of those, 48% planned to use ‘buy online, pick up in store.’ With the increase in online purchasing and BOPIS as a result of the pandemic, it would be unsurprising to see these numbers much higher this year.”

The NRF numbers raise the question of how many retailers are attributing BOPIS (Buy Online, Pick Up In Store) sales to online vs in-store tallies. Because the NRF also said out of the $730.2 billion holiday 2019 income, “Online and other non-store sales were up 14.6% over the year before at $167.8 billion and are included in the total.” (Hence, NRF agrees with Cardlytics that in-store sales still dominate.)

Regardless, Amberg said performance marketers planning holiday

2020 campaigns need to know that online sales are only going to grow.

“Comparing spend the week of Oct. 8 of this year to the same week last year, several categories have seen a sharp rise in online spend and a corresponding decline in in-store spend,” she said, indicating what may happen on Nov. 27 and beyond.

Amberg added that performance marketers wanting to convert beauty product and cosmetics buyers should enhance online calls to action (in-store spend decreased 20% and online went up 21.5% year over year ); shoes and athletic footwear (in-store down 18.1%, web rose 38.8%year over year); and apparel (in-store dipped 15.6%, retail increased 3.8%).

Continue Reading

Pages: 1 2

---

Join Adweek for **Commerce Week, a live virtual summit on Nov. 9-12**, to explore the rapid transformation of the commerce landscape, and what’s next. Register now.

Heather Fletcher
Heather Fletcher is a freelance reporter for Adweek. She covers performance and direct marketing.

Recommended articles
https://www.adweek.com/performance-marketing/pandemic-purchase-patterns-shake-up-holiday-performance-marketing-campaigns/